

Street Rat Allie Punches Her Ticket

by
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FADE IN:

EXT. THE BUBBLE - STREET - DAY

Skateboard wheels clatter over cracked concrete. Two ancient boards, beat to hell, guided by two pairs of feet in mismatched shoes, equally wrecked. Racing fast.

Feet slap down, push hard, roll, repeat.

JAMMER (18) leads, a bruiser of a girl. Patchwork ragged clothing, dirt-smudged, rat's nest hair tied back with rusty wire--but she looks like a legend on wheels.

Street Rat ALLIE (16) follows, trying hard to keep up. Same scruffy clothes and street edge, but lacks Jammer's hardness.

A massive city stretches away behind them, streets and buildings as ragged as them. Could be any big city after a hundred years of supercharged entropy.

ALLIE

Jammer, not so fast!

JAMMER

Train's about to split, Allie. Roll like you mean it!

They round a corner; the buildings end. The street falls steeply into huge piles of trash, but a fifty-foot train trestle keeps a single set of train tracks high above it.

The trestle runs right into the Bubble Wall--a shimmering dome that encases the entire city. It runs up a thousand feet and side to side as far as can be seen.

Special glass, or energy, or who knows what--it's seriously advanced tech. Mirrored at ground level, transparent above. A high, pink, hazy sun shines down through top.

The Train sits half-in half-out of a port in the Bubble Wall--the only break in its smooth surface. Much more advanced than the old trestle that holds it.

The girls stop right before the trestle begins, kick boards up into their hands, then slip them onto their backs in harnesses made of rope and duct tape.

A line of huge BOT GUARDS block the tracks. Gleaming metal bodies, constantly rotating 360-degree heads. Impenetrable.

Against them surges a mass of bipedal, biological CREATURES. Some human-animal hybrids, some just plain nuts.

It's like a century of insane genetic experiments became the total norm. Not a human among them--except Jammer and Allie.

All beg to get through, to get to the Train, to get out.

A BLUE-SKINNED MAN with bulging chameleon eyes tries to leap around a Bot Guard. The Bot catches him, impales him with a spiked hand, and tosses his corpse over the bridge.

That calms the crowd a little. But just a little.

Jammer reaches the mass and plunges right in, shouldering aside the beasts and holding up a little red paper ticket.

Allie has no ticket, but follows, desperate to keep up.

ALLIE

Jammer, wait! Not yet!

Jammer reaches the Bot Guards, who part when they see her ticket. But they close after, blocking Allie.

Now fully on the tracks, Jammer faces the TICKET TAKER, a many-armed bot that looks like a giant mobile trash can. Jammer gazes at the waiting Train, a prize like no other.

TICKET TAKER

Ticket...

ALLIE

Please! I don't know what to do!

The pure need in her voice stops Jammer, who turns back. Allie strains against the blocking Bot Guards. Tears.

Jammer walks back to her. The din seems to fade. Could be just them on that bridge. Sympathy overwhelms Jammer.

JAMMER

Course you know. You have to lead the Street Rats now.

ALLIE

But how will we eat? I can't keep the Rats safe like you did. Stay longer, teach me. I'm not ready.

JAMMER

You knew this day was coming. It's my time, Allie. No tears.

ALLIE

Take me with you.

Jammer reaches out, slips a hand behind Allie's neck, and pulls the younger girl's forehead to hers. Allie clings to Jammer with both arms, tears flowing freely now.

JAMMER

I believe in you, Allie. Wouldn't be leaving if I didn't. This ain't easy for me either. One day I'll find another ticket and send for you, and you'll follow me out into the big world. It'll be your time.

ALLIE

When? How will you get me a ticket?

The Train blows a warning whistle.

JAMMER

Gotta go, Allie. I'll see you again.

She has to pry Allie's hands off. She walks backwards, pointing back at Allie with a wink.

JAMMER

If you're strong enough.

The Ticket Taker punches Jammer's ticket, passes her through. Jammer hops onto the back car of the Train.

Allie shouts to her tearfully from behind the Guards.

ALLIE

Don't forget me! I'll be waiting!

The Train rolls out through the port, which closes with a hiss of steam, billowing out, blurring everything...

SUPER: TWO YEARS LATER

EXT. THE BUBBLE - STREET - DAY

A single skateboard clatters over concrete, guided by two feet in wrecked shoes. One has copper wire for a shoelace.

One foot goes down, the other kicks up the board; Allie (now 18) grabs it. She looks forged out of nails and rusty barbed wire. Wears "homeless street urchin" like a suit of armor.

Allie squints at a far street corner like it's a math problem. Pulls a cube of purple bubblegum from her pocket. Unwraps carefully--precious goods. Chews. The rush makes her dizzy.

Pedestrians pass, but no humans. A menagerie of biological creatures and shabby-looking bots hurry by on various errands.

They ignore Allie. She looks animal by comparison--even next to the ones that are actual animals.

The SCRAPE of WHEELS approaches. MOONPIE (16) rolls up on her board. A bit shorter, less hardened, same ragged clothing.

MOONPIE
What's the plan, Allie?

It's in Moonpie's eyes, in her voice--she worships Allie. Allie nods at something across the street.

ALLIE
Gog is the plan.

At the far corner, GOG looms behind a cart of food. Like a cross between a giant octopus and John Goodman. Big, strong, purple, scary. Stands on two legs, has eight tentacle arms.

Gog waves one tentacle across its wares--a bunch of similar severed tentacles sitting in ice.

GOG
Gog!

Moonpie sees the monstrous Gog and wilts.

MOONPIE
Allie, that thing'll kill us. It ain't worth it.

A FUR-COVERED WOMAN pays Gog, takes a tentacle.

ALLIE
You only say that because you've never had fresh gog before.

MOONPIE
(confused)
Wait. It is Gog, or it sells gog?

ALLIE
Both. Gog's a regenerator.

Moonpie watches as Gog lifts a cleaver in one tentacle, chops off one his other tentacles, and drops it into the ice. The severed stump immediately starts growing a new one.

GOG
Gog!

MOONPIE
Um...

ALLIE

Come on. Just one of those could feed all of us, and we need it bad. The whole Bubble's been scarce of food lately, more than ever. You wanna eat today, right?

Moonpie nods.

ALLIE

And you're a Street Rat, ain't ya?

Moonpie nods.

ALLIE

Ok. Gog could kill us for sure, but we've got the three things.

MOONPIE

The three things?

ALLIE

Need, skill, and guts.

MOONPIE

Maybe you do.

ALLIE

We both do. You'll have to lead the Rats one day, so you better know how to do this. Ready?

MOONPIE

No.

ALLIE

When I signal, skate in fast and grab one gog. When Gog chases you-

MOONPIE

Chases me?!

ALLIE

-throw it back real high. And remember, Gog is way faster than us.

Allie skates to the side of the street Gog is on.

MOONPIE

Wait!

Allie crouches, slides her board into the harness on her backpack, wheels facing out. She flips onto her back, riding the board reverse until she's under Gog's cart, unseen.

GOG

Gog!

Allie gives an urgent wave to Moonpie. Moonpie takes a breath and skates hard at the cart. Thirty feet away. Twenty. Ten.

Gog spots her coming, turns its big alien gray eyes to her. She leans in, snatches one tentacle, and skates away hard.

Gog roars after her, swinging his cleaver. Waaay faster than Moonpie. Moonpie throws the tentacle up high.

But not high enough. Gog snatches it with one arm and grabs Moonpie with the other. Raises the cleaver...

ALLIE (O.S.)

Hey everybody! Free gog!

In front of the cart, Allie kicks out with her hands and feet, knocking out the cart supports and spilling the ice and all the goods into the street. Gog squeals.

GOG

Gog!

It races back, all slimy arms and muscle, and hurls the cleaver at Allie. She swings her board, batting it away.

With the nose of her board, she slings a tentacle from the ground in a high arc. Moonpie catches it, keeps rolling...

Allie skates backwards. Gog chases, but creatures pour in from all around, racing toward the spilled gog.

Gog shrieks in frustration and hunches protectively over his wares, trying to put it all back together.

EMPTY STREET

Allie rolls up to a beaming Moonpie.

MOONPIE

That was effing brilliant! How did you learn to do that?

ALLIE

Jammer taught me, way back.

Awed, Moonpie hands Allie the gog, who stuffs it in her pack.

A rhythmic CLACK of METAL on STONE echoes up the street. The girls flip from triumphant to fearful in a heartbeat.

ALLIE

BotCop. Roll!

A silver-skinned BOTCOP marches around the corner. Heavily armed. Its metal head rotates in constant 360-degree motion. Voice both deafening and robotically smooth.

BOTCOP

Remain still, prepare for correction.

Allie and Moonpie skate away hard, barely dipping around a corner before the BotCop fires electrified cables from its chest. The cables smash into brickwork, knocking bits away.

Allie and Moonpie dive through an empty window frame...

OLD BUILDING

The girls bounce and dodge through the crumbling interior with perfect skill. The terrain like their own skin, the boards extensions of themselves.

The BotCop smashes through, chasing, using brute force.

Allie and Moonpie reach a big iron culvert pipe in the far wall and dive in, pulling boards to stomachs like sleds...

The BotCop peers into the pipe. Calculating. Probability of capture: minimal. It turns and marches back the way it came.

PIPE

The girls glide through the pipe, speeding toward a growing circle of light at the end. Two seconds before hitting the light, they twist sideways on their boards.

STREET

Allie and Moonpie burst out over a three foot drop--they get feet to boards before they hit, wheels to ground, rolling...

Right into a ring of five GUTTERSUCKERS. Human teenage boys, dirtier even than Allie and Moonpie. And far crueler.

Heads shaved except for two ragged lines of hair, forehead to neck. If you've seen a Guttersucker, you've seen ugly.

Allie and Moonpie go back to back, wielding their boards like baseball bats. But the Guttersuckers have chains with little balls of scrap metal twisted onto the ends.

ALLIE

Back off, Guttersuckers.

The HEAD GUTTERSUCKER (19), tall and mean, leers forward.

HEAD GUTTERSUCKER
It's Gutterboys, Allie. Now give up
the gog. I got mouths to feed.

ALLIE
The Rats are starving as much as
you, and we stole it fair and square.

HEAD GUTTERSUCKER
Rats deserve to starve. Give it, and
we won't bash ya.

Moonpie whispers sideways to Allie.

MOONPIE
Fight?

ALLIE
Too many.

A YOUNG GUTTERSUCKER whips his chain. Allie swings her board--
CRACK!--knocking the ball right back into the kid's face. He
squeals, and the other Guttersuckers close in.

ALLIE
Tall girl, Moonpie!

Allie throws out a leg; Moonpie two-step jumps to Allie's
shoulders, then somersaults over the Guttersuckers.

A Guttersucker grabs for Moonpie; Allie bashes his head with
her board. He falls, she leaps, and the two girls race away.

They're fast, but so are the Guttersuckers. Inches between
them and the swinging chains and grasping fingers.

ALLIE
(to Moonpie)
Bubble Wall, and fast!

At a street corner ahead, a huge, six-armed woman with candy-
red skin, STACY, dances by her cart of scrap metal.

ALLIE
Right turn, Stacy!

Stacy grins, throws out two of her big forearms. The girls
use them as levers to swing the turn, now heading right for...

The Bubble Wall. At street level, it's mirrored. Allie and
Moonpie see their warped reflections as they race toward it.

The Guttersuckers are almost on them. The girls throw up
their boards as if to go horizontal, leaping onto the Wall.

The Wall flexes as the boards hit it, and they loop a five-foot arc up, around, and down as the Guttersuckers crash into the barrier. The boards leave little glittering trails.

The girls turn down a sharp, San Francisco-style downhill. The Guttersuckers chase, but wheels and gravity are better than feet, and the girls sail away.

EXT. HOME STREET HOME - DAY

Allie and Moonpie roll up a thin, crooked street crowded in by old buildings. A hidden place. Slivers of sunlight.

Both exhausted, but Moonpie looks especially rough. She slips and almost faceplants, but Allie grabs and supports her. Studies Moonpie's face, full of concern.

ALLIE

Let's get you inside.

MOONPIE

Sorry, Allie. Feelin' stumbly.

ALLIE

You need food. Come on.

Allie stomps on the bars of a big sewer grate in the pavement. The grate lifts up until it clacks against a chain lock.

PUSHPOP (14) scowls at them with her one good eye. An eyepatch covers the other, an etched picture of a rat in the center.

PUSHPOP

What's the password?

ALLIE

Give it up, PushPop. You can see us. Besides, there ain't no password.

PUSHPOP

That...is the correct password.

PushPop undoes the chain, and the grate opens.

INT. THE RAT'S NEST - DAY

Allie and Moonpie scramble down the ladder into the Rat's Nest--an old sewer access room, fifteen by fifteen. Wood crate in the center: their "table." Candles provide light.

A maze of pipes covers the ceiling. Four tiny wood plank-beds hang from the walls, each full of old blankets.

A stream of sludge water flows lazily through the center, out of one big drainage pipe and into another.

Allie reaches the floor. Looks PushPop over, confused.

ALLIE
PushPop, what happened to your hair?

PushPop has a kind of greased-up faux-hawk. She pats it.

PUSHPOP
It's like a shark fin. Guppy did it.

Guppy (11) crawls in from one pipe, bright-eyed and eager.

GUPPY
She's air-dynamic now. Did you bring anything to eat?

All four girls huddle around their box table. PushPop and Guppy look hopeful. Allie fakes a sad face.

ALLIE
Sorry, Gup. Just didn't happen today.

Guppy tries to hide her heartbreak.

GUPPY
It's ok. We ate on Tuesday.

Allie slams the gog on the table. Guppy shrieks.

GUPPY
(in awe)
What is it?

ALLIE
The best meal you ever ate. Find me a hotpipe!

The girls blur into motion, climbing the walls, using the backs of their hands to test pipes.

PUSHPOP
Number six is boiling!

Allie carries the gog up, produces a knife, and slices it up on top of the pipe. It sizzles.

Guppy holds her stomach like she's been punched.

GUPPY
Smells like fish.

PUSHPOP
Liar. You ain't ever had fish.

GUPPY

I had fish once. Too many feathers.

LATER

The four girls hunch around their crate, each with a piece of warped tin as a plate. Homemade knives and forks. Sawed-off plastic soda bottles as cups, each filled with water.

Allie dishes out the cooked gog--it looks like grilled whitefish. Guppy is in awe. Wipes at a tear.

GUPPY

There's so much.

Allie lifts her cup. The rest raise theirs.

ALLIE

To the Street Rats.

GIRLS

To the Rats!

But Moonpie points her raised cup at Allie.

MOONPIE

To Street Rat Allie. She did this.

The girls dig in. It's life, it's heaven, it's everything.

GUPPY

(through mouthful)

This is my favorite food.

PUSHPOP

You always say that. You said it last week when we found that potato.

GUPPY

Potato was my favorite food last week. Now it's gog. Do you think we'll eat tomorrow, Allie?

ALLIE

We'll try.

PUSHPOP

Listen to Guppy, wanting to eat every day. Thinks she's queen of the Bubble.

GUPPY

Do not. I just like eating.

Guppy lets out a huge burp.

GUPPY

See?

The girls burst out laughing. This is their joy.

LATER

The Rats clean up their tiny sewer home. Getting dark; almost no daylight through the grate. They light more candles.

Guppy climbs into her wall-bed, one of the lower ones.

Allie uses trickling water from an unscrewed pipe to wash the "plates." Moonpie leans in, almost whispering.

MOONPIE

Guppy wants you to talk her to sleep.

ALLIE

You can do it tonight.

MOONPIE

She wants you, Allie.

Allie leaves her work and sits by Guppy's bed. A hanging sheet and a candle inside gives them almost a private space.

Guppy has an ancient, beat-up Earth globe in her hands.

ALLIE

Got your Earth, eh?

Guppy turns it around, traces cities with her finger.

GUPPY

What city did the Bubble used to be?

ALLIE

Nobody really knows.

GUPPY

But you have to guess.

Allie points to Miami.

ALLIE

My-yam-ee.

GUPPY

Why?

ALLIE

I just like the sound of it. Jammer swore it was New York, but she didn't know either. What about you?

Guppy turns the globe to France and points at Paris.

GUPPY

Paris.

ALLIE

If this was Paris, we'd be speaking Parisian, silly.

GUPPY

But maybe this is what Parisian sounds like.

Allie looks confused, then impressed.

ALLIE

Wow, look at the brain on you, girl.

GUPPY

Are there really other cities out there like the Bubble? Ones the Train goes to?

ALLIE

Oh yeah, but better. They say if you get on the Train, you can go to cities where humans are still in charge.

GUPPY

No way. Humans in charge?

ALLIE

Just like it used to be, before the Bots took over and people did all the science and turned themselves into oddbodies.

GUPPY

Wow. And you're going there one day?

ALLIE

It's what we do. Street Rats all move on to the big world eventually. Like Jammer, and Wrecking Girl, and Go Go Red before her.

GUPPY

(nervous)

But you're not going soon, right?

Allie's expression darkens. Pain there.

ALLIE

Nobody inside the Bubble has tickets 'cept the big bosses, and they ain't giving them up. Jammer said she'd send me a ticket, but that was a long time ago. Probably forgot. I don't blame her. She was way better than me. A legend.

Allie fishes an ancient stuffed rabbit out of Guppy's blankets and puts it in Guppy's arms.

GUPPY

It's not weird or anything, me still having bunny.

ALLIE

Not even a little. Night.

Allie blows out the candle.

GUPPY

Hey, Allie? I think you're a legend.

ALLIE

That's sweet. But you can't be a legend till you're gone.

She draws the curtain.

INT. THE RAT'S NEST - NIGHT

Deep night. One candle burning. Allie lies awake in her bunk, staring at the wall above her. Crookedly etched into the stone are the words "HEAD RAT" followed by a list of names.

The bottom four in order: "Go Go Red," "Wrecking Girl," "Jammer," and "Street Rat Allie." Allie runs her index finger across Jammer's name, deep sadness in her eyes.

The sewer grate rattles. Allie jerks up, instantly tense. SNUFFING at the grate. A beast-like GROWLING. The grate shudders, lifts up, but the chain keeps it closed.

After a moment, the grate falls back into place. SHUFFLING of HEAVY LIMBS as something drags itself away. Allie falls back. You've never seen someone look so exhausted.

EXT. THE TRAIN BRIDGE - NIGHT

The port in the Bubble Wall opens. The Train slides in. Doors open; several gleaming BOTS step off and hurry on their way.

Various waiting BEASTS and BOTS unload crates of food and goods under the watchful eyes of the Bot Guards.

Unseen by anyone, a BEETLEBOT--like a metal ladybug the size of your fist--crawls from the Train doors. With a squeal of effort, it launches into the city air.

Wings fluttering, it loops around obstacles, building eaves, rotting telephone poles, clumsy in its flight.

It pauses to rest by a sludge-water stream. A slimy FEATHERED FISH leaps out and bites one leg, trying to pull it in. The Beetlebot squeals, jerking back, barely freeing itself.

It flies high again, making frustrated noises. Bobs along. Descends toward a sewer grate, flattens, and crawls in.

INT. THE RAT'S NEST

The Beetlebot crawls down the side wall, reaches Allie's bunk and taps the sleeping girl's hand with one foreleg.

Allie jerks awake, ready to fight. She sees the harmless bot and stills, curious. It curls into a perfect little ball.

Allie picks it up, and it opens into a hollow half-dome. A hologram of Jammer's smiling face blooms to life above it.

JAMMER

Hey kid. Thought I'd forgotten, didn't ya? Hope you still got both feet, because your time has come.

Allie's eyes fill with tears. Hands trembling.

JAMMER

Feast your eyes on this.

An opening appears at the bottom of the half-dome. Inside sits the kind of nondescript, tiny red-paper "ADMIT ONE" tickets we used for everything in way-back Earth.

Allie plucks it out, holding it with reverence.

JAMMER

Now listen good. It took a lot of work for me to get that for you. And you have to use it right now. Rumor has it this Train is the very last one. Something's gonna happen to cut the Bubble off from the other cities forever. You get me?

The words spark a deep worry in Allie.

JAMMER

But there's nothing you can do about that. Get to the Train, use the ticket, don't hesitate. You'll be feeling guilty about the rest of the Rats, but they gotta stand on their own, just like you did.

Jammer winks.

JAMMER

I miss ya, kid. See you soon.

The hologram vanishes. Allie mouths back: "I miss you too."

Moonpie watches from her bunk. Her tears also flow--but while Allie's are pure joy, hers are pure pain.

INT. THE RAT'S NEST - DAY

Allie stands in the center of the room. Holds the Beetlebot with the ticket inside. A mix of excited, nervous, and sad.

ALLIE

Everybody up! Rat meeting.

The girls rise sleepily from their bunks, assemble. PushPop's faux-hawk leans slept-on sideways. Guppy reshapes it upright.

Moonpie knows what's coming. Looks ready for a death sentence.

ALLIE

I wasn't expecting it, but Jammer got me a Train ticket. It's my time.

She holds up the red ticket. Gasps of shock and upset.

GUPPY

But...you can't...not yet.

PUSHPOP

How are we gonna eat?

ALLIE

Moonpie will be Head Rat now. She's just as good as me.

MOONPIE

I'm not. Not even close. You do everything for us, Allie.

ALLIE

I was worried when Jammer left, too, but I got it done. You will too.

(MORE)

ALLIE (CONT'D)

And one day I'll send a ticket for you, just like Jammer did for me, and Wrecking Girl did for her.

MOONPIE

But there won't be any more Trains. This is the last one ever.

PUSHPOP

Last Train? But how will the Bubble get any food?

Allie shoots Moonpie an accusatory stare.

ALLIE

You were listening.

Moonpie stares at her feet, ashamed.

ALLIE

That's just a rumor. The Train's never stopped coming in a zillion years. I don't believe it.

MOONPIE

Jammer does.

ALLIE

If I could stay longer, I would. But Jammer needs me. All Street Rats move on to the big world-

THUMP--the muffled sound of something big hitting the street above them. All the girls look up. Know the sound instantly.

GUPPY

Body drop. Right on our street!

They all turn to Allie.

PUSHPOP

You gotta help us salvage it. Please!

A tortured second of hesitation from Allie, then a nod. She stuffs the Beetlebot--with ticket inside--in her coat pocket.

ALLIE

Bring the SparkStick.

Moonpie grabs a forearm-length rod from the corner as the girls scramble up the ladder, boards on their backs.

EXT. HOME STREET HOME - DAY

The girls dash up the street, half-rolling, half-running. Up ahead, a FIGURE lies face-down. Gray skin, blue hair, tiny eyes, pooling blood. Dead...but well-clothed.

ALLIE

Push and Gup, you search pockets,
Moonpie and I will get the shoes.

Before they can pounce, four GUTTERSUCKERS round the corner, ball-and-chains ready. The gangs face off over the body.

Moonpie raises the SparkStick, hits a button. The end makes a ZAPPING SOUND. It's an old-style cattle prod.

Allie raises her board battle-style. The Guttersuckers are taller, nastier, but the Rats are ready to fight.

ALLIE

Eff off! The body dropped on our
street. We have the Right of Pockets!

HEAD GUTTERSUCKER

Eff your rights. We saw it first.

GUPPY

We heard it first!

PushPop dives in, reaching for a coat pocket. A Guttersucker swings his chain, forcing her back. Guppy snakes in, grabs, and ducks out before the SMALLEST GUTTERSUCKER can swing.

GUPPY

I got a button!

ALLIE

We want the whole coat, Gup.

Moonpie leaps in, ducking a chain, and jams the end of the SparkStick into the Head Guttersucker's ribs. ZAP! He shrieks and falls back. He leaps back up, raging mad.

HEAD GUTTERSUCKER

Paint 'em red, boys!

The Guttersuckers charge; the Rats meet them head-on. It's a full-on knuckle-and-bone battle. Chains snap, boards swing.

The Guttersuckers are brute force, but the girls coordinate much better, using each other for leverage. Ducking and slinging feet, fists, and boards off each other's backs.

A Guttersucker gets a chain around PushPop's neck, dragging her back. Moonpie leaps over, knees him hard in the face.

Guppy takes an elbow to the jaw, and Allie goes wild, bashing the attacker's nose in with her board. The Head Guttersucker tackles Allie from behind, and they go down in a heap.

The Beetlebot tumbles from Allie's pocket. He sees it, eyes going wide. Grabs it and finds the red ticket inside, awed.

HEAD GUTTERSUCKER

A Train Ticket...

He's too mesmerized to see Allie coming. She soccer-kicks his head. He drops the ticket and rolls away, squealing.

The boy with the caved-in nose retreats with him. The last two Guttersuckers know they're beaten and flee with the rest.

The girls all stand. Bloody, bashed, bruised, but victorious.

Moonpie limps to the prone creature's body and searches its pockets. Comes out with lint.

MOONPIE

Nothing but gullyfluff. What a waste.

ALLIE

Not totally. Guttersuckers won't creep our street again for a while.

MOONPIE

You'll be gone anyway.

The words bite at Allie. She looks at the ticket in her hand.

Guppy turns to PushPop, holding her bruised jaw.

GUPPY

PushPop, look, I lost a baby tooth.
It hurts somethin' major.

She shows a newly missing back tooth and bloody gums.

PUSHPOP

That was a woman tooth, Gup.

GUPPY

Oh. When does my next one grow in?

PUSHPOP

Sorry, that was it. Gone forever.
But it's not so bad. See?

PushPop shows the rights side of her mouth, revealing three random gaps where teeth used to be.

PUSHPOP

Try to keep at least ten. For chewin'.

Allie brushes herself off.

ALLIE

Ok. Get the coat and the boots, and--

BAM! A gigantic fist comes outta nowhere, slams Allie in the stomach. She crumples, dropping the ticket. The other Rats raise their boards, then lower them in fear...

Two HARDHANDS step from the shadows. Huge, scaly green bastards with stone hands. Jutting jaws like car bumpers.

The Rats stand their ground, but fighting would be suicide.

The SCARRED HARDHAND--face like a plow ran over him--reaches down and plucks up the tiny ticket between two fingers.

SCARRED HARDHAND

What's this? Rats got their dirty little fingers on a ticket? Good thing we heard all that fighting.

Allie tries to rise, coughing out words.

ALLIE

That's mine.

ONE-EYED HARDHAND

Yours? Big Green runs this hood, and you human filthies ain't ever paid taxes. This'll do.

PUSHPOP

Big Green sucks!

The Scarred HardHand glares at PushPop, and she retreats a step. He tucks the ticket into his pocket.

SCARRED HARDHAND

Big Green thanks you.

The two beasts stride away, chuckling as they go.

Allie watches them from hands and knees. Shame, anger, and desperation. Her life's dream just stolen from her hands.

She rises, holding her stomach. Stuffs the empty Beetlebot in her pocket. Puts foot to her board.

ALLIE

Get back to the Nest.

(MORE)

ALLIE (CONT'D)

Clean your wounds, then get to Market Street and beg. You need food today.

MOONPIE

Where are you going?

ALLIE

To get my ticket back.

This terrifies all the girls.

MOONPIE

But Allie, that's suicide.

PUSHPOP

Big Green's a killer for real.

GUPPY

Like super for real.

ALLIE

Do as I say. That's an order. My last request as Head Rat.

A serious thing. The girls reluctantly relent, but look hurt. Allie rolls away on her board, and they watch her go.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Allie creeps low behind the HardHands, board harnessed on her back. Quiet, stealthy, turning down alleys littered with garbage, old bot parts, and strange scurrying creatures.

A FLYING BOTCOP passes over--like a big ironing board with air jets and a grumpy face. Allie hides. Even the HardHands duck into the shadows for a moment until it passes over.

EXT. BIG GREEN'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Allie watches from a distance as the HardHands pass two HARDHAND GUARDS to enter a rusty metal door in a brick wall.

She scans for more entrances--none. Gazes up four stories to the rooftop. The Bubble dome glitters high above.

EXT. BIG GREEN'S HEADQUARTERS - ROOFTOP - DAY

Allie scrambles over the wall onto the rooftop, out of breath. She rolls down, crouching and ready, but sees no guards.

She finds an access hatch. About to descend when she hears a YOWL of pain somewhere inside. Pauses, unsure of herself.

She looks back at the horizon, spotting the distant trestle and Train next to the gleaming Bubble Wall. The sight galvanizes her. She takes a breath and climbs in.

INT. BIG GREEN'S HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY - DAY

Allie creeps along a poorly lit hallway. Tin sheet walls. Pools of blood on the floor. MOANS from behind locked doors.

Two big HARDHANDS amble up the hallway, carrying a body. She ducks into an open doorway, waiting, totally freaked out.

She glances at the room behind her. Shocked at what she sees.

Crates and crates of food, piled high, the room overflowing. Wrapped and sealed potatoes, fruits, vegetables, packaged goods. Lifetimes of food here. Her shock turns into anger.

She hurries on, peering into each room she passes. All stuffed with food, again and again. Some contain giant vats underneath black lights, growing a thick algae-like substance.

But then one is different...

It has a little four-legged, PORCUPINE MAN in a shabby suit and glasses, beaten and tied to a chair. He sees her and squeals, chittering loudly for help in some unknown language.

Allie races away, but HardHands pour into the hallway from both sides, alerted by the noise. Allie skids to a stop as they surround her. Fakes a confident demeanor.

ALLIE

I'm here for a Train ticket. Hurry
up and fetch it for me-

Huge stone hands reach out and grab her.

INT. BIG GREEN'S HEADQUARTERS - THE WAREHOUSE - DAY

Two HardHands drop Allie in the only chair in the middle of an empty warehouse. Looks like prep for some weird interview.

She's nervous as hell. Unwraps a piece of bubblegum and chews like her life depends on it. Hands trembling.

Big Green's ASSISTANT (30s) approaches, seen only from the shoulders down. Mottled green skin, dark suit, and gigantic, bare, clawed feet. She offers Allie a bottled water.

THE ASSISTANT

Would you like a water?

ALLIE

No thanks.

THE ASSISTANT

Have a water. I'm told it helps the first time one sees Big Green.

Allie just stares. The Assistant sighs.

THE ASSISTANT

Remain seated when he arrives, no matter how upset you become. Trying to run would be...counterproductive.

The Assistant walks away, claws clacking on the cement floor.

After a moment, two double doors open in the side of the warehouse. The sound of WHEELS MOVING.

Two HardHands appear, struggling to pull a large wheeled platform into the room. The edge of it comes into view...

When Allie sees what's on it, she nearly vomits. Grips the chair to still herself. Shoves more cubes of gum in her mouth.

The WHEELS STOP. The thing on it--BIG GREEN, though we do not see him--makes terrible WET, SQUISHING SOUNDS. The sound of SLIME SPLATTERING the floor.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

Hello.

ALLIE

Um, hey.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

Do I upset you?

Allie coughs out the words.

ALLIE

No way. I'm good.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

You're the one they call Street Rat Allie. I've long wanted to meet you. But these are unhappy circumstances. You broke into my home.

ALLIE

Because you stole my ticket.

More squishing sounds. A delicate, prehensile tendril of green slime appears before Allie, holding her red ticket.

BIG GREEN

This ticket?

Allie grabs for it, but the tendril snaps it back.

ALLIE

It's mine. You stole it.

BIG GREEN

Haven't you stolen anything before?

ALLIE

Yeah. But just to feed the Rats.

BIG GREEN

It is the same with me and my family.
I steal to survive and prosper.

ALLIE

It ain't the same. You have more
food than you can ever need, and
we're out in the city starving.

BIG GREEN

Ah, but this is the essence of
commerce, Allie. Some have more than
others, which necessitates an exchange
of goods for services. That's the
reason you're sitting before me now.

She shifts in the chair, unsure what's about to happen.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

I have a job that needs doing, and
you need your ticket. Goods for
services. I could have simply kept
your ticket, but I'm giving you the
opportunity to truly earn your way.

ALLIE

You already have those big HardHand
things working for you.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

Yes, and they're all very useful,
but the Bots who run the Bubble have
been paying extra close attention to
my activities lately. And I have
rivals always probing into my affairs.
It's become quite difficult for my
people to move sensitive things around
without notice. But little human
street rats can do things quietly.

Allie just glares, chewing her gum.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

Do you know what this is?

Active SQUISHING SOUNDS get closer. Allie coughs up her gum in a fit of nausea--a huge purple wad lands on the floor.

A tendril of slime reappears, now clutching a silver sphere the size of a softball: the ITEM. Allie shakes her head.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

That's good. Have you ever seen the Ticket Taker who guards the Train?

ALLIE

'Course.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

It works for me...unofficially. I want you to take this to the Ticket Taker without anyone else seeing.

ALLIE

Why? What is it?

BIG GREEN

That is my business. If you want your ticket, this is the job.

Allie stares at the proffered ticket. Then at the Item.

ALLIE

That ticket is mine by right.

BIG GREEN

You should know by now that in this city, ownership is what you hold in your hands and nothing more.

Allie wars with herself. Hands become fists.

ALLIE

Eff you. Eff you and your effing HardHands and your effing commerce. Whatever that thing is, it's bad for everybody. I ain't helping you.

The tendril retracts the Item and the ticket. When Big Green speaks again, some of his refined edge has become anger.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

You are emotional. I will be merciful and give you time to reconsider. It's my experience with street urchins that incentives are more effective than threats. But only up to a point. You have the day to change your mind.

The HardHands lumber up, taking Allie's arms again.

INT. BIG GREEN'S HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY - DAY

The HardHands lead Allie down the hallway. Just before the exit, she twists away and races back. They roar in protest.

She dashes to one of the overstuffed food storage rooms, grabs three gigantic apples, and stuffs them in her coat.

The HardHands charge her, but she flips onto her back and sails under them on the wheels of her harnessed board.

They turn just in time to see her flipping them both off as she rolls away, somersaulting out the door into the sunshine.

EXT. HOME STREET HOME - DAY

Allie reaches the grate above the Nest. Pulls out the three apples. Brings one to her mouth. It glistens in the sun. She almost bites it. Fights herself. Tears, she wants it so bad.

Instead, she takes a long smell and stuffs them in her coat.

INT. THE RAT'S NEST - DAY

Moonpie tinkers with her board's wheels. Basic maintenance. PushPop and Guppy hunch together next to the sludge-water stream, studying the ripped page of some ancient magazine.

GUPPY

What's that word?

Guppy points at "child" in a block of text.

PUSHPOP

It means a little kid.

GUPPY

Kild?

PUSHPOP

No, like this: "ca-hild."

GUPPY

Ca-hild.

A STOMP on the grate; Moonpie lets Allie in. Allie slides down the ladder; the rest of the Rats jump up.

MOONPIE

Did you get the ticket?

Allie shakes her head. The girls look relieved.

ALLIE

Score anything? Any pockets picked?

PUSHPOP
Nobody gave up nothing.

MOONPIE
(ashamed)
BotCops all over, and everybody seemed
real watchy. Sorry, Allie.

Allie sighs, further disappointed. She drops the three apples
on the table. Guppy picks one up like it's made of gold.

GUPPY
Apples are my favorite food.

MOONPIE
(to Allie)
Where's yours?

ALLIE
Already ate mine.

The girls each take one. Their eagerness forces a smile out
of Allie. PushPop and Guppy devour theirs, core and all.

Moonpie hesitates before biting hers.

MOONPIE
(to Allie)
You really already ate one? Promise?

ALLIE
Promise.

Moonpie looks suspicious, but takes a bite of hers.

Allie watches them a moment, then crawls back up the ladder.

EXT. HOME STREET HOME - DAY

Allie rolls a few paces away from the grate.

MOONPIE (O.S.)
Allie, wait.

Allie stops. Looks back. Moonpie stands there, offering the
rest of her half-finished apple.

ALLIE
I want you to have it. Really.

Moonpie lowers the apple. Gives Allie a vulnerable look.

MOONPIE
You wouldn't leave us without saying
goodbye, right?

ALLIE

Never.

Allie turns and rolls on. Moonpie watches her go.

EXT. THE TRAIN BRIDGE - DAY

Allie sits atop a garbage heap, the Train high above her. She replays the Jammer hologram, her eyes full of regret.

JAMMER HOLOGRAM

Get to the Train, use the ticket,
don't hesitate. You'll be feeling
guilty about the rest of the Rats,
but they gotta stand on their own,
just like you did.

(winks)

I miss ya, kid. See you soon.

BAM! A chain smashes Allie across the shoulder. The Beetlebot tumbles away. Allie goes down, holding her arm in pain.

HEAD GUTTERSUCKER (O.S.)

Gotcha.

The Head Guttersucker, smirking, pulls back his chain and picks up the Beetlebot, but it retracts into a ball. He smashes it against the ground until it cracks.

Seeing him break it is like a knife in Allie's heart.

The Head Guttersucker digs inside. Abruptly furious.

HEAD GUTTERSUCKER

Where's the ticket?

ALLIE

Big Green took it.

The Head Guttersucker knows to be afraid of the name "Big Green". Hurls the bot down in disgust and tramps off.

HEAD GUTTERSUCKER

What a waste.

Allie retrieves the Beetlebot. Plays the hologram. Jammer is now frayed and pixilated, skipping like an old record.

JAMMER HOLOGRAM

-miss ya, kid. See you soo-...-miss
ya, kid. See you soo-... miss ya-

Allie shuts it off. Stares at her reflection in the bot's dull side. The reflection changes, growing clearer...

INT. BIG GREEN'S HQ - THE WAREHOUSE - DAY

Allie's reflection now stares back at her from the side of the softball-sized, silver Item.

She's back in the warehouse, in the chair. The Item is in her hand. Thinking. Finally, she stuffs it in her jacket.

ALLIE

I'll do your job. Gimme the ticket.

BIG GREEN

Ticket after, not before.

ALLIE

How can I trust you to give me my ticket after it's done?

BIG GREEN

I'm as good as my word. But I also have the leverage, Allie. Your trust is a requirement, not a luxury.

If she could burn him alive with a glare, she would.

ALLIE

I'll have it done and be back in an hour. Have my ticket ready.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

The job may sound easy, Allie, but there are quite a few hostile parties who would prefer I not be successful.

A sliver of doubt creeps into Allie.

ALLIE

What happens if I mess it up? Like if somebody bashes me and steals it.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

My entire business would be over. But not before I made you...over.

Allie tries to look tough despite her fear. She stands.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

The Train will stay until sundown two days from now. I suggest you go straight there, deliver the Item to the Ticket Taker. Speak to no one, make no unnecessary stops. And above all, don't get robbed or detained.

ALLIE

Don't worry. This is what I do.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

Then your ticket awaits.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Allie emerges into an empty lane. Leans against the stone wall. Checks to make sure the Item doesn't show in her jacket.

She gazes into the distance--the Train Bridge is barely visible, maybe five miles away. She skates toward it...

But she pauses. Conflicted. She promised to say goodbye to the Rats. After a moment's hesitation, she turns around and skates deeper into the city.

EXT. MARKET STREET - DAY

Allie skates hard, reaches the busy hum of Market Street.

It's all color and movement. Full of creatures. Motorbikes race by--some rumble on wheels, some whiz through the air.

Creatures and Bots sell their wares, food and tech and everything in between. Most hold weapons; all have cages or razor wire protecting their carts.

Allie notes the many pathetic, starving creatures begging for food along the lane. None are successful.

A BotCop patrols the far side of the street, head constantly rotating, silver eyes shining, armored like a tank.

A FLYING BOTCOP glides just above the street, cameras roving.

The only humans in sight are the Rats--Moonpie, PushPop, and Guppy--performing for the passing crowds.

Guppy is the barker, shouting for anyone to listen.

GUPPY

Have a heart, give to the humans!
There ain't many of us left, but we
still have our talents, and we offer
them for your entertainment!

She holds out a ragged old boot for donations. Still empty.

GUPPY

Watch as two humans become one right
before your eyes!

Moonpie throws out a leg, and PushPop leaps up, standing on Moonpie's shoulders. Wobbly for a second, then stable. PushPop drops a sheet that covers Moonpie's head and torso.

GUPPY

Behold, the tallest girl in the world!

Every passerby ignores them.

GUPPY

And now, a stranger sight still...the girl with feet for a head!

Taking great care, PushPop inverts to handstand on Moonpie's shoulders. Now only feet show above and below the sheet.

A passing Bot glances their way, tosses a coin into the boot.

GUPPY

Thank you, kind Bot! There's a real beating heart in that metal chest!

Allie watches them perform. Love in her eyes--and heartbreak that she will say goodbye. PushPop climbs down, spots her.

PUSHPOP

Allie!

Allie makes a "shhh" signal, motions for them to come.

SIDE STREET

Allie leads them down the empty side street for some privacy, stopping under a window with half-broken glass.

Guppy shows her the nickel.

GUPPY

Three more and we can buy a cracker.

ALLIE

You're a champ, Guppy.

Moonpie sees something in Allie's eyes.

MOONPIE

What's happened?

The girls go somber, sensing a bombshell.

ALLIE

I got my train ticket back. Or I will, once I do a job. I just...had to come tell you before I left.

The girls look like they've just been stabbed in the heart.

MOONPIE

A job for who?

ALLIE

Big Green.

The girls go from heartbroken to horrified.

MOONPIE

But you can't do a job for Big Green.
He's a monster.

PUSHPOP

It's bad enough you're leavin', but
helping Big Green is like kickin'
every one in this city in the face.

Guppy can't bring herself to say anything mean, but she looks
as hurt as the others. And Allie looks guilty.

ALLIE

I'm not helping much. Just doing a
delivery, it's no big deal. He's got
me all twisted. I've got no choice.

MOONPIE

But what if you're delivering
something bad, like a bomb, or a box
of people's eyeballs or something?

ALLIE

It's just some stupid sphere.

Allie scans the alley. No one in sight. She pulls out the
Item, holds it up to the light with her right hand.

ALLIE

See?

CRACK! The window above explodes. A nightmare bursts through--
the BITER. Huge. Like a cross between a salamander, a shark's
mouth, and Steve Buscemi.

Fast as a striking snake, it chomps Allie's arm to the elbow,
swallowing the Item too. Disappears back through the window.

Whole thing is over in two seconds.

Guppy sees Allie's neatly severed arm, gushing blood, and
screams. PushPop screams. Moonpie screams.

Allie stares at her arm stump, spurting bright red in the
afternoon sun.

Opens her mouth to scream, but as the blood flows, she gets a dreamy look in her eyes.

She focuses on PushPop with a fascinated expression.

ALLIE

PushPop, your hair looks craaaaaazy.

Allie falls forward face-first and thuds to the ground.

INT. BREAKABLE'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Allie opens her eyes. Draws a shuddering breath.

Takes in her surroundings. On the rusted ceiling above, bot cameras and guns rove, clinging with little grapple legs.

She lies on a grungy operating table. Shelving full of discarded tech and old machines all around her.

A face fills her vision--BREAKABLE (70s). Grease-stained human woman, goggles on her forehead. Seen everything and way past the point of giving a shit about any of it.

BREAKABLE

There she is. Wake up, rat.

The faces of Moonpie, PushPop, and Guppy join Breakable's. Utter relief in all of them.

PUSHPOP

Allie, your arm got ate.

Breakable rolls back--she's strapped at the waist to an old rolling office chair. Legs from thigh to shoes are emaciated and useless, but her fingers are delicate and nimble.

The girls help Allie sit up. Allie looks down at her right arm--and finds a full arm and hand still there. But something's off--she brings it closer.

It's like her old arm, but fabricated. The "skin" has seams and joints. Stitched into her regular arm above the elbow.

ALLIE

Effing eff.

BREAKABLE

They got you to me just in time.
Another pint of blood loss and you'd
be a meat pile.

PUSHPOP

We were carrying you and screaming
the whole way.

A PAINED METALLIC WHINE rises from another part of the shop.

Breakable rolls to another table, where a badly CRUSHED BOT lies. Eyes still glowing, but fading. Breakable tinkers with its insides a moment, then gives up. Its eyes go dark.

Breakable pulls a lever; the table rolls to a huge cylindrical tank with attached wiring. A hatch opens in the side; the table dumps the Crushed Bot's body through the opening.

The hatch closes. Breakable pulls another lever. The machine tank hums and vibrates. At the other end, grimy liquid metal pours down a chute into a big iron pot.

The girls wince at the casual body-melting disposal.

Breakable rolls back to Allie.

BREAKABLE

That'll be \$200 for the synthetic blood and \$300 for the new arm.

ALLIE

I don't have any money.

BREAKABLE

I know. But word on the street is you're doing a job for Big Green, so I wager you'll be able to pay soon.

ALLIE

Word on the street? How could anyone know about that? I only took the job an hour ago.

MOONPIE

You slept for eighteen. All night and morning and half the afternoon.

Allie leaps up, totally freaking.

ALLIE

But I've got to get the Item to--

Then it hits her.

ALLIE

It's gone. I'm dead.

The girls watch Allie, unsure how to respond. Allie sees each of those faces and is able to pull it together.

ALLIE

I'll find it.

(MORE)

ALLIE (CONT'D)

(to Breakable)

I'll get your money. You can trust me.

Breakable pulls out a cross between a gun and a syringe.

BREAKABLE

No, I can't.

Breakable jams the syringe end of the gun into Allie's upper arm and presses the trigger. THWACK! Allie yelps.

BREAKABLE

That's a timer bomb I just injected into your elbow. If you don't bring me my money in forty-eight hours, it'll explode that arm right off.

Allie rubs the spot and glares at Breakable.

ALLIE

Geez, gimme a week at least. I'm already in the muck with Big Green.

BREAKABLE

That's me being sweet, girl. I usually give twenty-four.

Allie gives the new arm a few test grabs.

ALLIE

So I can crush rocks and stuff now?

BREAKABLE

You wish. That's not even as strong as your old human arm.

Allie glares at the arm with acute disappointment.

BREAKABLE

Oh, and don't get it wet.

ALLIE

(incredulous)

Don't get it wet?

BREAKABLE

Buy an arm on credit, you get a garbage arm.

ALLIE

But I've gotta be fast and strong, find the thing I lost, or Big Green's gonna kill me.

BREAKABLE

The price of making a deal with a monster. You must not be very bright.

ALLIE

I'm plenty bright. I just...had some bad luck.

Breakable rolls to monitor. Checks views of the street--clear. Flips a switch--the ceiling guns point toward a blast door.

She slaps a red button. The blast door rises; sunlight floods in. Moonpie, PushPop, and Guppy all roll out on their boards.

Allie rolls out just past the door. Turns back to Breakable.

ALLIE

We're both human. You could have cut me a break.

BREAKABLE

Don't get me wrong, kid. I'm rooting for ya. But I know what this city does to our kind, and I got my own life to save. Food getting scarcer than ever, people saying this Train is the very last one. Scary times.

But Allie's not having it.

ALLIE

You put a bomb in me.

Breakable shrugs.

BREAKABLE

I opened my door for a bunch of penniless rats too, didn't I?

She slaps the button; the big metal shield slams down.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Allie rolls up to the other Rats, testing out her new arm. The girls wait with somber faces. Allie faces them.

ALLIE

I got myself in this mess. I'll get myself out of it. I don't want any of you risking your skins for me.

MOONPIE

We're the Street Rats. None of us alone. You put us in it when you made the deal.

ALLIE

Not this time. I'm the only one getting a ticket.

GUPPY

But if you don't get out, none of us ever do. That's how it works, right? You get out, then you send a ticket to Moonpie, then she gets out...

PUSHPOP

Not if this is the last Train.

ALLIE

It's not the last Train. The Bots would never let that happen.

MOONPIE

None of us want to help Big Green. But if it's a choice between that or you getting dead, then we're in.

Allie watches them, ashamed, but grateful for their help.

MOONPIE

What's the plan? Hit the corners, ask about that big toothy thing?

Allie chews on this. Takes a breath. All together it is.

ALLIE

Maybe that big biter left a blood trail. We could start there.

VELVET (O.S.)

Or you could let me help you.

The girls jerk back as a unit, boards up and ready to fight.

In the shadows behind them stands a seriously tall FIGURE. Seven and a half feet, clothed in flowing fabrics.

Into the light steps VELVET, age unknown. Her body is all voluminous red robes, topped by a human neck and head.

Iron spikes protrude laterally right out of her skull like a nightmare version of the Statue of Liberty.

The girls know who she is. And they know to be afraid.

ALLIE

We don't want your help, Velvet.

VELVET

Why not? I'm in the mood for a partnership, and word is you're doing an important job for Big Green. I offer my services for a mere half of your earnings. As soon as I make this delivery from my last job-

Her robes part down the center. One of four fleshless mechanical arms extends out, holding the severed head of some beast with two horns and a big gold nose ring.

VELVET

-my schedule will be newly open.

Guppy winces at the sight, but the gold ring entrances.

GUPPY

Can I have that nose ring?

VELVET

Of course.

Velvet reaches to pluck off the nose ring, but Allie throws an arm out, waving Guppy off.

ALLIE

No! We don't want your gifts or your partnership. The Rats work alone.

VELVET

Are you sure? It's far better to have me as an ally than a competitor. What chance do you have otherwise, just the lot of you?
(motions at Guppy)
This one is only a child.

ALLIE

Hey, careful with the c-word.

GUPPY

(defiant)
Yeah. And it's pronounced "ca-hild."

Moonpie shoots Guppy a confused glance.

ALLIE

We say no. Leave us alone.

Velvet shrugs. Retracts the severed head into her robes.

VELVET

Very well. See you soon, little rats.

Velvet glides back into the shadows. Allie lifts her board, using the metal struts to reflect sunlight there. But it's just a wall. Velvet is gone. Allie shudders.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING - DAY

Moonpie stands on Allie's shoulders and peers into the broken window the Biter burst out of to chomp Allie's arm.

MOONPIE

Nothing. Some broken glass, but no blood trail or tracks.

Allie lets her jump back down. Thinking hard.

ALLIE

Breakable said everybody already knows I'm doing a job for Big Green. Someone could have sent that Biter on command. And Big Green said he has rivals. I can think of one.

Moonpie looks alarmed. Knows what Allie is thinking.

MOONPIE

No way. You can't.

ALLIE

I'm gonna ask Crybaby.

PushPop and Guppy freak.

PUSHPOP

But she's batty mad. A killer too.

ALLIE

I'm dead anyway if I don't find the Item. I'll take batty mad over Big Green hunting me down any day.

Allie looks up at the red sun. Near to setting.

ALLIE

I've got 24 hours left. You three get to the Nest, hide out till morning. I'll be back when I can.

MOONPIE

I'll come with you.

ALLIE

Can't risk it. Crybaby's too dangerous. Protect the others.

MOONPIE

But Allie-

Allie skates away into the city.

ALLIE

I'm counting on you!

EXT. OLD THEATER - NIGHT

Allie peers from behind a pile of old Bot carcasses. Empty shells and lifeless eyes, hunks of rusted metal.

Across the street is a decrepit old theater, once grand, now garbage. Double doors guarded by two iron-skinned BOT THUGS. Big, dangerous, but much cruder than the gleaming BotCops.

Allie searches for a way to get in. Spies a gutter pipe on the side of the building, leading up to the roof.

ROOFTOP

Allie pulls herself up the gutter pipe and rolls onto the roof. She twists her new arm going over; it twitches as if in malfunction. She holds it until it stills, nervous.

A SCRAPING NOISE. She turns. The gutter pipe rattles.

She raises her board like a weapon, hisses a warning.

ALLIE

Show yourself!

Moonpie's sheepish face peers over the edge.

ALLIE

Damn it, Moon. Are the others here?

MOONPIE

I sent them to the Nest. Couldn't let you do this alone.

ALLIE

If you're ever gonna lead, you gotta learn that orders have to be followed, or nobody will ever follow yours.

MOONPIE

I'll never be a leader like you. And if you die, we'll fall apart for sure. But if you get out of the Bubble, it might give us enough hope to keep going. Maybe.

Allie sees the need in Moonpie's face. Gives in.

ALLIE

Come on.

The girls crawl to an old air vent and wiggle inside.

INT. CRYBABY'S THEATER - DAY

Allie and Moonpie pull themselves out of the end of the vent-- on the high ceiling--and creep onto an old suspended heating duct. They really do look like scurrying rats.

Below them lies a stage and a theater full of old audience bucket seats in rows. Shoddy-looking BOTS fill many of the seats, scuffed and missing parts.

On the sides of the stage stand bigger, battle-ready Bots.

CRYBABY lounges in a big red chair, center-stage. A big female-design bot, fully clothed. Metal-skinned, powerful, hard angles, eyes glowing red like coals.

She has the skinned flesh of a human face stapled against the matching parts of her own metal skull. Various ancient department store mannequins line the edges of the stage.

TOAST, a skinny, spindle-armed bot with a head like a toaster, stands at her side, holding a spray bottle full of water.

CryBaby leaps up, walks to one of the mannequins. Caresses its nose, cheek. Lets out a miserable, theatrical wail.

CRYBABY

Oh, what's even the point of it all?
I'll never be human no matter how
hard I try.

TOAST

You look very human, ma'am.

CRYBABY

They used to run everything, you
know. Built it all, lost it all. So
perfectly imperfect. They had such
style. Such soul!

She sobs dramatically and holds her face out. Toast uses the squeeze bottle to squirt water into CryBaby's eyes, simulating tears. Crybaby pretends to wipe them on her sleeve.

High above, Allie and Moonpie share a very nervous glance.

CRYBABY

Have we found out what Big Green is
smuggling yet? This rumor about the
end of the Trains has me worried.

TOAST

No ma'am.

CRYBABY

He knows something. We have to intercept this Item, whatever it is, or we're rubbish.

TOAST

Our scouts say he gave it to a human girl.

Crybaby bursts into new tears. Toast squirts more water.

CRYBABY

See? Humans have all the fun, even now.

TOAST

We'll find her.

Crybaby spins in frustration and stomps. Her foot splinters the wood underneath it. But she pauses, abruptly tense, and turns to one of the big Guard Bots.

CRYBABY

Give me your slicer.

The Guard Bot ejects a sword-like weapon from its forearm. Crybaby takes it, spins, and hurls it up at Allie and Moonpie.

It slices right through the air vent's old supports. One end of the giant duct falls down to the stage. Allie and Moonpie slide down and tumble right to Crybaby's feet.

Crybaby looms over them, eyes glowing behind the human mask.

ALLIE

Um, hi.

Crybaby lifts a girl in each hand like they were feathers, examining them, twisting them this way and that.

CRYBABY

Humans. So weak, so fragile, so flawed, so hideously ugly.

Crybaby sets the girls to their feet, then drops her face into her hands, wailing. Toast squirts more water.

CRYBABY

I want to be you!

She steps back, eyes hopeful, and motions to herself.

CRYBABY

Give me your honest opinion.

Crybaby readjusts her putrid human skin. Mimics an exaggerated human walk. It's a nightmare.

CRYBABY

Could I pass for human if you saw me on the street?

ALLIE

Um, yeah, definitely.

Moonpie is too horrified for words. Allie elbows her.

MOONPIE

It's perfect. I love it.

It's music to Crybaby's ears.

CRYBABY

Really? Thank you, I'll never forget this. Guards, remove their skins.

The Guards surge forward, slicing weapons emerging.

ALLIE

Wait! I thought you loved humans!

Crybaby holds up a hand; the Guards pause.

CRYBABY

Yes, but you broke into my home. A capital offense. I have no choice.

ALLIE

But there are so few humans left. Wouldn't you be extra sad if we all disappeared forever?

Crybaby mulls this over.

MOONPIE

Maybe we can do something for you?

Crybaby considers. Nods. Sits back in her plush red chair.

CRYBABY

Sing me a song. If it's good, I'll let you live.

ALLIE

A song?

CRYBABY

Humans make beautiful music. It's one of the things your species did best. We Bots are terrible at it.

MOONPIE

But we don't know any songs.

Crybaby shrugs, motions to her Guards. They approach, cutting weapons emerging...

ALLIE

Wait, we do know a song! I promise we do. We just need a minute.

Allie pulls Moonpie close, whispers in her ear. Moonpie's expression shows utter confusion.

The two girls turn back, present themselves. Hold hands.

With halting, atonal, out-of-sync voices, they sing.

ALLIE AND MOONPIE

Have a birthday for you, have a birthday for you. Happy birthday miss Crybaby, have a birthday for you. And many days more...

It's as bad as it gets. The girls make a little bow.

Crybaby rises, strides to them. Looks utterly unimpressed. The girls hold their breath.

Crybaby bursts into sobs, falls to her knees, and hugs them.

CRYBABY

That was the most beautiful thing I've ever heard in my life. I love you both very much. You may go.

ALLIE

Can we ask a question? You know so much about the Bubble.

Crybaby nods.

MOONPIE

What city did this used to be?

CRYBABY

London. Right?

She looks back at Toast, who shrugs.

TOAST

I heard Toronto.

Allie punches Moonpie's arm.

ALLIE

No, that's not our question. A biter ate my arm. We gotta find it. Big round head, round body, mouth as wide as it was, full of teeth. Little stubby legs, but moves real fast.

Moonpie pantomimes the creature as Allie describes. Crybaby makes a disgusted sound.

CRYBABY

Bah! That's Bottom Dog's pet. He sends it out to kill his enemies, fetch things he wants. It's torn up my own employees plenty of times. Look what it did to Harold.

Crybaby points at a pile of crushed metal parts on the floor-- HAROLD. Part of a chewed head looks up at them.

HAROLD

I'm doing fine.

Crybaby glares back at the girls, suspicious.

CRYBABY

But why would you want your arm back? Surely it would be digested by now, nothing but bones.

ALLIE

Um...arm bones have sentimental value to humans.

CRYBABY

Or maybe it took something else of value? Something Big Green gave you?

ALLIE

No ma'am. Never met Big Green and never want to. We're just lowly street rats. We want our arms and something to eat, that's all.

Crybaby studies her for a moment, then nods at the door.

CRYBABY

Go in peace, little Rats.

Allie and Moonpie run for the exit, disappear through it.

CRYBABY

So Bottom Dog has it. Can you get it
for me?

Velvet steps from the shadows, looming high, her head spikes
glinting above her flowing red robe.

VELVET

Meet my price, and I can get anything.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Allie and Moonpie race through streets. Foot down, push,
cruise, repeat. Hopping curbs, dodging beasts, bots, bikes.

Some old street lights still work; sometimes there are torches
in sconces. Much darker than our cities at night.

MOONPIE

How'd you know that birthday song?

ALLIE

I think I learned it when I was a
baby. Hard to remember.

MOONPIE

Do you have a birthday?

ALLIE

Course. So do you. Everybody gets
born on a day.

MOONPIE

But how do we know when our day is?

ALLIE

I think somebody's supposed to write
it on our skin, but they forgot ours.

A big HUNCHED THING in a cloak, face hidden, swipes at them
as they pass, growl-laughing. The girls barely dodge.

ALLIE

We shouldn't be out at night. Gotta
get to Bottom Dog's, get this done!

They pick up the pace.

EXT. BOTTOM DOG'S - NIGHT

Allie and Moonpie crouch behind an ancient telephone box,
peering at the entrance to an old underground parking garage
across the street. Sloping concrete down to darkness.

A human WOMAN FIGHTER and MAN FIGHTER stand guard. She has a baseball bat with protruding spikes. He holds a flamethrower.

ALLIE

Bottom Dog's human bashers. Worse even than Guttersuckers. Humans should be friends, what with the bots and the beasts everywhere.

MOONPIE

We got lucky with Crybaby. She was crazy. But Bottom Dog is just bad.

ALLIE

We still have our three things.

Moonpie glances at her, still filled with doubt.

ALLIE

Say it.

MOONPIE

(hesitant)
Need, skill, and guts.

ALLIE

Right. Let's go.

EXT. BOTTOM DOG'S - NIGHT

Allie and Moonpie creep over the top of the garage entrance, boards on backs, glancing down at the two fighters on guard. They creep into a broken window in the structure above.

INT. BOTTOM DOG'S - ELEVATOR SHAFT - NIGHT

The girls climb down an old swaying hoist cable in an empty elevator shaft. Hand by hand, legs twisted, careful. Firelight somewhere far below, echoing VOICES.

Allie's artificial arm sparks under the tension. Twitches once. She pauses, shakes it out. They keep going.

INT. BOTTOM DOG'S - NIGHT

Allie and Moonpie peer upside down from the elevator shaft's bottom-floor opening. A sconce torch burns beneath them. MONSTROUS RETCHING echoes from somewhere ahead.

BOTTOM DOG (O.S.)

Come on, cough it up. Good girl.

The space is cavernous. Once a multi-tier parking garage, the sloping lanes have been knocked out, making a high-ceiling space. Furniture, torches, some electric lights.

Forty or more grubby humans circle the center, most armed, some not. Gang-like. A couple of women hold babies.

Allie focuses briefly on the mothers and babies. Has a confused, inward look, as if trying to remember something from long ago. She shakes it off and focuses on the center.

BOTTOM DOG (40s) holds court. Short, stocky. Bowler hat. Like a bull terrier turned human and got a Napoleon complex.

The Biter that chomped Allie's arm sits before him, a giant toothy slug with feet, trying cough something up.

BOTTOM DOG

That's it, girl. You can do it.

A GRIMY MAN steps closer, peering at Biter.

GRIMY MAN

We could wait till she poops it out.

Bottom Dog backhands the Grimy Man.

BOTTOM DOG

Idiot. 'Member when she ate Jerry?
Took her a week to poop his bones.

Bottom Dog nods at two BIG GUYS, then at the Grimy Man. The Big Guys grab the Grimy Man, hold him tight. He squeals.

Bottom Dog forces the Grimy Man's hand near Biter's mouth. Biter almost snaps it, but Bottom Dog yanks it back.

BOTTOM DOG

No treats till you give it up.

Biter makes a frustrated roar. Tries to vomit again, retching loudly. After a moment, it pukes out Allie's partially digested arm--still holding the sliver sphere.

The gathered people gasp in appreciation.

ALLIE

That was my favorite arm. It's ruined.

Moonpie puts a comforting hand on Allie's shoulder.

BOTTOM DOG

(to Biter)

That's my love. Good girl.

He forces the Grimy Man's arm back to Biter, who chomps it off up to the elbow--same amount it took from Allie. The Big Guys toss the shrieking Grimy Man aside.

Bottom Dog palms the Item, holds it up.

WOMAN IN CROWD

What is it?

BOTTOM DOG

That's what we gotta figure. If Big Green's moving it, it's valuable.

Allie climbs down, quiet as a mouse, and creeps toward the crowd. Moonpie freaks, hiss-whispers at her.

MOONPIE

Allie, wait! Too many!

Allie waves her off. Everyone else is watching Bottom Dog and the shiny sphere. Allie gets closer.

She grabs a homemade spear from a stack leaning against the wall and holds its sharp metal point in one of the torch flames until it almost glows.

Creeps closer. Eyes on the Biter, which lounges by Bottom Dog's legs, chewing contentedly on the chomped-off arm. Fifteen feet. Ten. Five. She rises and rears back...

She hurls the glowing spear tip right into Biter's huge rump.

The Biter roars up, bucking like a wild horse and biting anything in range. Chaos! Everyone is too close, can't get away. People go flying. The Biter can't dislodge the spike.

The Biter slams Bottom Dog into a column. The Item flies from his hand, rolls into the scramble. Allie dives. Gets nearly trampled. People scream and flail. Boots and fists.

She grabs it! Wiggles back, dodging kicks and the Biter's roaring fury. She runs back to the elevator shaft.

Just before she leaps in, Bottom Dog spots her. Furious.

BOTTOM DOG

Rats! In my house!

Allie glances back. Bottom Dog points at her.

BOTTOM DOG

Tear 'em apart, and bring me my prize!

Moonpie's arm shoots down. Allie grabs it, swings up onto the hoist cable, and climbs like mad.

Bottom Dog's entire army charges after them.

EXT. BOTTOM DOG'S - NIGHT

Allie and Moonpie scramble down the side of the building, leaping onto their boards and skating away just as Bottom Dog's thugs spew out of the tunnel entrance.

The pursuers spread out, half chasing around the block one way, half the other, trying to cut them off.

STREETS

The streets here are flat, making foot faster than board. Allie and Moonpie sling boards into their harnesses and run, dodging right through and alley and left into another.

Fighters chase, right on their heels. Some hurl spears and projectiles that clatter off concrete and stone walls.

The girls dodge left and right, but finally face a wall of charging thugs both in front and behind--nowhere to turn.

ALLIE

Short girl, Moonpie!

Allie and Moonpie charge the attackers. Right before the clash, they flip onto their backs, using the board wheels to sail right under them, tripping people as they go.

Up again. They run. Ahead, a sludge river fills an old concrete channel. Moving slow like oil. Too far to jump.

A massive ELEPHANTINE BEAST wearing a stitched-up purple canvas onesie hunches on its knees by the dark water and drinks through a long facial trunk.

ALLIE

Tall girl!

Allie leaps to the beast's back. As it jerks up in shock, she launches herself off its shoulders. Moonpie follows.

Both girls go flying...flying...

They hit the far bank hard, roll to their feet. Scramble up the bank to a retaining wall, climb steps to the street above.

The Elephantine Beast flees, honking furiously. Bottom Dog's people bunch up at the water, unwilling to swim the murk.

Allie and Moonpie look down on them from the top of the retaining wall. Out of breath, nearly dead, but victorious.

Bottom Dog glares up at her from beyond the sludge river.

Allie pulls out the Item. Holds it up in her right hand for Bottom Dog to see. Eyes full of triumph.

BEEP. Allie looks at Moonpie, confused. BEEP. Where's the beeping coming from? BEEP. BEEP. Getting faster. BEEP BEEP BEEP. Allie looks down at her own right arm. Uh-oh.

Her right arm explodes just above the elbow. Moonpie screams. The bottom half of Allie's arm--Item still in hand--tumbles away down to the near bank of the river.

Blood gushes out of the ragged hole left by Breakable's bomb.

Allie looks down. The arm--and Item--lands in the hands of a GUTTERSUCKER, shaved head gleaming oily in the streetlight.

He grins up at her and dashes away with the arm and the Item.

ALLIE

Effing eff...

She tumbles back into Moonpie's arms.

INT. BREAKABLE'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Allie opens her eyes. Roving cameras above, piles of tech and wetware all around.

Breakable leans over Allie, face filling her vision.

BREAKABLE

There she is again. Wake up, rat.

Breakable helps Allie sit up on the table. Allie looks down at her right arm--shockingly, she actually has one. Looks similar to the last artificial arm, but a bit higher quality.

She glances at the blast door. Moonpie, PushPop, and Guppy sleep in a pile on top of each other by the wall.

Allie gives Breakable a death stare.

ALLIE

You said I had forty-eight hours!

Breakable raises her palms in apology.

BREAKABLE

My fault. Timer screen was cracked when I programmed the bomb, and my eyesight ain't so good anymore. Gave you eight hours by accident.

Breakable holds up an ancient, cracked digital timer that reads "08".

With the cracks and some bad eyesight, the zero almost looks like a four.

ALLIE

I had it in my hand. You made me lose it. Probably my life, too.

Breakable actually manages to look slightly embarrassed.

BREAKABLE

Look, I screwed up, yeah. But people lose arms all the time.

ALLIE

Not at your prices. This new one better be on the house.

BREAKABLE

Dream on. I actually gave you a decent arm this time. I expect to get paid.

Breakable reaches for her little bomb-syringe-gun on the table, but Allie puts a restraining hand on top of it.

ALLIE

I'm effing serious. Your old eyes probably just killed me.

BREAKABLE

These old eyes saved your life.

Allie doesn't take her hand away. Breakable searches Allie's face. Sees the desperation there, the weariness. She lets go of the syringe gun. Allie nods in satisfaction.

Allie studies her new arm, thinking hard.

ALLIE

I'd bet a whole apple you put a tracker in that last arm so you can get your tech back. Am I right?

Breakable glares; the girl's guess is spot on. She rummages through junk, tosses Allie a dusty old tablet. The screen shows a city grid with a blinking dot in the center.

BREAKABLE

Location. But you won't like it.

Allie studies the grid map. Doesn't look happy.

BREAKABLE

Keep it.

Allie turns to stuff the tablet in her pack. With a deft movement, she fingers a silver candlestick from the nearby shelf, throws it in. Breakable never sees.

Allie slides off the table. Looks over at the sleeping Rats.

ALLIE

Did you give them anything to eat?

BREAKABLE

Why would I? That's your job.

Deep worry flashes through Allie. She walks to the girls, gently wakes them. Utter joy in their eyes. They pull her into a group hug.

GUPPY

Allie, you gotta stop 'sploding. I don't like it.

ALLIE

Me either, Gup.

She helps them stand, studies them. They look weaker than ever, especially Moonpie.

ALLIE

What did you all eat last?

PUSHPOP

Them apples you stole.

BREAKABLE

Girls, wait outside a sec. I need to finish up some business with Allie.

Breakable hits the blast door button. It rises, and the girls walk into the harsh sunlight. Guppy pauses, looks back.

GUPPY

Hey Breakable, what city did the Bubble used to be?

BREAKABLE

Berlin.

GUPPY

Berlin!

BREAKABLE

Least that's what my Da used to say. I never really cared, and if the Bots know, they ain't tellin'. Now go on, I need a moment with Allie.

The girls shuffle out. Allie watches Breakable, suspicious. Breakable pours herself a cup of brown liquid from a bottle.

BREAKABLE
What next, Allie?

ALLIE
What do you mean?

BREAKABLE
You either get that Item back or you die. If you get the Item, what next?

ALLIE
I take it to the Train, get my ticket back from Big Green.

BREAKABLE
Then what?

ALLIE
I move on to the big world and find Jammer, out in the good cities. She's waiting on me.

BREAKABLE
Sounds real nice. You miss her a lot, I guess.

Allie looks at her shoes, uncomfortable. Breakable takes a long swig of the brown drink. Holds it in a moment, swallows.

BREAKABLE
Twice now them Rats have brought you in, bleeding all over, crying their eyes out and begging me to fix you.

ALLIE
That's what we do. We help each other.

Breakable looks at the empty glass.

BREAKABLE
I been alive a long time. Longer than just about any human in the Bubble, I guess. Every kind of person or thing has come through my doors with every kind of problem. But in all my time, I've never seen anyone or anything love somebody much as them girls love you.

The words really bother Allie.

ALLIE

Why are you telling me this? I can't stay. I'm either dead or I'm gone. It's the way it's gotta be, just like it's always been.

Breakable shrugs.

BREAKABLE

Just had to be said. Take it however you want. Good luck out there.

The words torture Allie. She glances out of the door at the silhouettes of the Rats, waiting for her in the sunlight.

EXT. BREAKABLE'S WORKSHOP - DAY

The blast door slams shut behind Allie. The Rats are waiting.

ALLIE

How long did I sleep this time?

MOONPIE

All night.

Allie wilts a bit. Squints at the morning sun. Calculating.

ALLIE

Ten hours left.

She looks over the Rats, sees expectant eyes. Eager to help, but they look barely able to stand.

ALLIE

Go back to the Nest. Look for something to eat on the way, but make sure you get water and sleep.

PUSHPOP

Come with us.

ALLIE

I gotta find the Item, or I'm dead.

MOONPIE

You know where it is?

ALLIE

(brief hesitation)
No. But I have to look.

MOONPIE

Then I'll come with you.

ALLIE

You can barely stand. The others
need you more right now. Look,
PushPop's eyepatch needs cleaning.

PUSHPOP

No it don't.

Allie reaches for PushPop's eyepatch. PushPop moves to block,
but Allie gives her a warning look, and PushPop relents.

Allie lifts the patch--underneath is a socket covered by
raggedly-stitched skin with an ugly red tinge. PushPop tries
to look fierce, but mostly just looks vulnerable.

ALLIE

See? You gotta make her clean it
with the special water Breakable
gave us. She won't do it on her own.

PushPop pulls the patch down, scowling.

PUSHPOP

I'm just as good as ever, you know.

Allie puts a reassuring hand on PushPop's shoulder.

ALLIE

I know you are. I see it every day.

PushPop straightens a bit, injected with new confidence.

Allie pulls Moonpie aside, hands on Moonpie's shoulders.

ALLIE

It's time for you to lead. Do the
right thing, take care of the Rats.

MOONPIE

But-

ALLIE

No. I'm counting on you. And no tricks
this time, no following. Promise me.

It's killing Moonpie, but she nods. Allie sees that pain
too, Breakable's words still affecting her.

Allie hesitates, thinking she should say more, then skates
away. Moonpie watches her go, eyes full of loss.

EXT. GUTTER DISTRICT - DAY

Allie skates a downward slope through shadows. An oddly slimy
part of the city. Condensation, mold on everything.

Sunlight sparkles on the sickly muck. Rainbow oils and chemicals.

No others around here. A single FLYING BOT passes by overhead, cameras roving, and sails on.

Allie checks the tablet Breakable gave her. The blinking dot is close. She harnesses her board and goes on foot.

She edges up to the corner of a building, peers around.

Ahead, a bridge spans over the street. Under it lies the carcass of some giant, long-dead beast. Mostly just rib bones and a skull now.

Cardboard and blankets cover some of the rib bones, forming a makeshift shelter.

Two young GUTTERSUCKERS (12 and 14) stand outside, playing catch with Allie's first replacement arm and the Item. The silver sphere glints in the sunlight.

As Allie watches, the Head Guttersucker pushes aside a piece of cardboard and scowls out from between two ribs. Furious, he jumps out, slaps one boy and punches the other.

HEAD GUTTERSUCKER

Don't break it, you stains. Bottom
Dog ain't gonna pay for a special if
it's in pieces.

The boys rub their faces where he hit them, set the arm and the orb down, and crawl inside the rib cage shelter.

Allie hurries toward the discarded Item, creeping-quiet. Eyes on the rib cage-shelter. Murmuring inside, shuffling.

She grabs the Item, pockets it. Creeps backwards, eyes only on the shelter...back...back...she spins to run, and-

WHACK! The Head Guttersucker whips his ball-and-chain, coiling it around her legs. Jerks back, slinging her off her feet. She lands hard. The Item flies from her hand, rolls away.

HEAD GUTTERSUCKER

Got ya!

More Guttersuckers pour from the shelter with their chains. They surround Allie, swinging hard, going for blood.

She twists and dodges, feet still bound, metal sparking metal right by her head, missing by inches.

HEAD GUTTERSUCKER

Paint her red! Paint her red!

Allie crunches up and tries to leap away. The Head Guttersucker yanks again, crashing her down, but she manages to pull the silver candlestick she stole from Breakable.

She tosses it away. The younger Guttersuckers go gaga, shoving each other out of the way to chase the shiny metal.

YOUNGER GUTTERSUCKERS
(overlapping)
My silver! No, mine! Get off!

Allie spins several times, undoing her ankles from the chain. She leaps up, pulling her board, and smashes the Head Guttersucker across the shoulder. He squeals.

Allie grabs the Item and runs for her life.

HEAD GUTTERSUCKER
Get after her! She's got the special!

Allie dashes uphill. The whole pack chases, the Head Guttersucker closest, swinging his chain.

STREETS

She's fast, but they're close behind. She dodges up a few streets, hitting the corners tight, pouring on speed.

Getting into the populated areas. Now she dodges pedestrians, bots, creatures, market carts.

She races around a corner...

MARKET STREET

And skids to a stop--motorbikes zoom by just inches away, whizzing along the lane between the vendors and their carts.

Thwack! The Head Guttersucker slams into her back; they both tumble into traffic.

The Item flies from Allie's hand, rolling some thirty yards.

She stays flat, hands over her head, as motor bikes scream by, racing above and around her body.

The Head Guttersucker leaps up. A speeding motorbike slams into him; his body flies ragdoll through the air, lands on the sidewalk, unmoving. The other Guttersuckers run to him.

The motorbike swings wide, spinning 180s through the air, jets screaming in protest. Other vehicles screech to a halt.

The spinning bike smashes into a covered wood cart pulled by horses, driven by a FEATHERED MAN in body armor.

The cart explodes, showering the street with huge, wrapped loaves of bread and brick-sized hunks of cheese.

Everyone freezes. It's treasure like most have never seen.

Allie leaps to her feet. Looks at the Item, lying thirty yards away, glinting in the sun. Then at the food.

The Item. The food. The Item. The food.

Creatures scramble to steal the spilled goods. Bread and cheese disappear into bags and cloaks. It will soon be gone.

She needs the Item. But the Rats are starving.

She goes for the food. Dives into the melee. Backpack open, stuffing cheese and bread inside. Kicked and punched, slammed by shoulders, slapped and scraped. Getting her ass kicked.

But she's scoring big. Making out like a bandit. Two rolls of bread. Three. Two bricks of cheese. Four!

A looter raises the alarm.

LOOTER (O.S.)

BotCops!

BotCops swarm in from all sides, firing electrified cables from their chests, zapping and wrapping up looters. Allie dodges left and right as creatures go down around her.

She slings her backpack on, rolls out of the squirming crowd. She races to grab the Item--and freezes.

It's gone. Instead she finds the flowing hem of a bright red cloak. Follows it up...up...up...to Velvet's smirking face.

Velvet clutches the Item in one clawed metal hand. Nods to Allie in thanks, tucks it away, and vanishes around a corner.

Allie races to the corner, but the street beyond is empty. Velvet and the Item have vanished.

EXT. HOME STREET HOME - DAY

Allie rolls up the street. Angry, hurt, worn down. Cuts, scrapes, bruises. Beaten over and over. Taking its toll.

She reaches the sewer grate. Stares down at the Nest.

INT. RAT'S NEST - DAY

The girls lie around the floor. Worn out, vaguely ill.

THUMPING on the grate. Moonpie hurries to the ladder.

Moonpie shoves back the lid, sees Allie, unlatches the chain, lets her in. Allie slides down the ladder after Moonpie.

PushPop and Guppy stand and Moonpie huddles in, making a semicircle around Allie. Pure reflex at this point.

MOONPIE

Did you find it?

ALLIE

No. It's gone.

Allie unzips her backpack. Pulls a foot-long bread roll from the bag, slaps it on the crate. The Rats gasp.

A second bread roll. A third. Then the cheese--one brick, two bricks. Three, four. In a few moments, she's just laid out more food than the Rats have ever seen in one place.

The Rats are struck speechless. Guppy just bursts into tears.

ALLIE

Bread and cheese. You can put them together to make a sandwich.

PUSHPOP

(awed whisper)
Saaand-wich.

A foreign word, full of magic.

ALLIE

Eat it slow. This could last you a week or more if you're careful.

Moonpie flinches at the word "you." Watches Allie nervously.

Allie climbs into one of the outflow pipes.

INT. SEWER TUNNEL - DAY

Allie climbs from the pipe into a sewer tunnel. Water and sludge from a hundred pipes, everything slimy, uninhabitable. A tiny sliver of sunlight from the street above.

A private space where she doesn't have to be the leader.

She wiggles a loose stone out of the back wall. Pulls a box of grape bubblegum out from behind it. Two pieces left.

She sits the box beside her. Puts her back to the wall. Looks utterly defeated.

Moonpie's face peeks out of the pipe.

MOONPIE

Allie, can I talk to you?

Allie nods. Moonpie crawls in, sits next to her. Both girls illuminated by the only shaft of sunlight.

Moonpie looks in the box of bubblegum.

MOONPIE

Almost out?

Allie pulls out the last two pieces, tosses the box.

ALLIE

One of the best scores I ever made.

She offers one piece to Moonpie. Moonpie is awed.

MOONPIE

Geez, Allie, I can't. It's your special purple gum.

ALLIE

Course you can.

Moonpie takes it. Both girls unwrap, chew at the same time. The rush of flavor hits them simultaneously, nearly knocking them out. They chew in silence for a long moment.

MOONPIE

Thanks for getting the food.

Allie offers a weary smile.

Pain--and shame--washes over Moonpie's face.

MOONPIE

You shouldn't have to though. Get all the food.

ALLIE

I saw it, went after it. That's all.

MOONPIE

That's what I mean. I never bring in food. I never see things like you do. I-

Moonpie's words catch in her throat. She swallows a sob.

MOONPIE

-think something's wrong with me.

Allie gives her a questioning look.

MOONPIE

When I imagine you being gone, I know it should make me want to be the leader. To be tougher, step up, be the Head Rat. But I just feel...sick. All I can see is bad things, and the dark, and I just want to crawl under my blankets.

ALLIE

Moon-

Moonpie's voice catches. Hiccupping out the words.

MOONPIE

I'm sorry I'm not tougher. I'm so sorry. I wish I could be like you.

Allie pulls her in, arm around her shoulders, squeezing hard.

ALLIE

You're everything you need to be. You're tough as rocks. I've seen it a thousand times.

MOONPIE

I'm tough when you're standing next to me. But what if I'm not made like you? Not a leader. There will only be three of us now. And I'll be the Head Rat who screws up and gets us dead for good. Guppy's so small, and-

Her voice breaks again. Sobs.

MOONPIE

I'm sorry. I know you didn't cry when Jammer left.

FLASHBACK TO: THE TRAIN BRIDGE

Younger Allie sobs hard as Jammer boards the Train.

BACK TO PRESENT

ALLIE

I bawled my head off.

Moonpie wipes at her tears, a bit shocked by this.

ALLIE

You're as strong as anything in this city. I know it, I see it. You just need time. It's not fair for me to spring this on you now.

Moonpie puts her head on Allie's shoulder. Allie puts an arm around her. Looks up at the sliver of sun through the grate above. Seems to come to a decision.

ALLIE

Not fair, now or ever.

EXT. BIG GREEN'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Allie marches up to the two HardHand Guards blocking the entrance to Big Green's headquarters.

The Guards reach out to each other across the door, smashing stone hands together with a CRACK to block the way.

ALLIE

Move, FatHeads. Or Big Green's whole operation is effed.

The Guards glance at each other--it's a crazy demand, but her confidence worries the hell out of them.

INT. BIG GREEN'S HQ - WAREHOUSE - DAY

Allie in the chair again. All nerves and angry determination.

As she waits, a HardHand pushes a wheelchair up beside her with a blue-skinned man, RABBIT (30s) lashed to it with rope. Foot-long ears, big eyes, white hair in a bowl cut.

He's taken a bad beating. Cuts, bruises, bleeding. He glances over at Allie.

RABBIT

Boy, are you in trouble.

ALLIE

Huh? You don't know me.

RABBIT

I know a screw up, and Big Green hates screw ups. You're gonna get it real bad.

ALLIE

You're tied to that chair.

RABBIT

These are courtesy ropes.

The guy seems delusional. Allie can't figure him out.

ALLIE

Looks like his guys bashed you good.

RABBIT

That was just for fun. Big Green loves me. I'm his favorite.

Big Green's Assistant arrives, looms over the two.

ASSISTANT

No speaking until spoken to, please.

The door opens. HardHands pull the platform into the room. Allie winces, tries to hide her disgust.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

This is quite a surprise, Allie. I didn't expect to see you again until the job was done.

Rabbit strains to lean forward, smiling as wide as he can.

RABBIT

Hey Big Green, it's Rabbit, remember? I'm your best guy.

Allie gives the news straight, clear, and loud.

ALLIE

I lost the Item.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

You...lost the Item.

RABBIT

I love working for you, Big Green.

Allie ignores Rabbit.

ALLIE

That's right.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

And you've come to tell me this why?

RABBIT

The best part about me is I'm loyal. Good 'ol steady Rabbit, that's me.

BIG GREEN (O.S.)

One moment, Allie. I have some quick business with an employee who failed his performance review.

The Assistant steps behind the wheelchair. Pushes Rabbit toward Big Green--they pass out of view.

Big Green's SQUISHING SOUNDS grow more intense.

THE ASSISTANT (O.S.)
Head first or feet first, sir?

RABBIT (O.S.)
I love you, Big Green!

BIG GREEN (O.S.)
Feet first, please.

Rabbit SCREAMS. DISSOLVING SOUNDS join the SQUISHING.

Allie uses every ounce of her willpower to keep her eyes forward, to look strong and steady while facing the nightmare. The dissolving sounds diminish, grow silent.

BIG GREEN
Now...you said you lost the Item.
Here to try to beg out of our deal?

ALLIE
Here to change it. You're gonna give
me four tickets instead of one.

A loooooong silence. The two HardHands who dragged in the platform glance at each other--is this girl insane?

BIG GREEN
Why would I do that?

ALLIE
You still need me to do the job. One
of your rivals has the Item now.
I'll steal it back and take it to
the Ticket Taker, but only if you
give me what I want. Four tickets.

Big Green's voice is barely-contained rage.

BIG GREEN
I have already been kinder to you
than any other creature in all my
life. Our original deal stands. You
must honor it, or I'll digest you
right here and now, and then do the
same with your little Rat friends.

ALLIE
You won't. You're out of time. The
Train leaves again in just six hours.
I'm your only shot.

Big Green bellows rage. Sloshing and boiling sounds.

Allie's gaze rises...and rises...focusing on something growing taller.

Frightened, but she doesn't budge an inch, even though the HardHands stumble back a few paces.

With a plopping sound, Rabbit's picked-clean skeleton lands in front of Allie.

BIG GREEN

(roaring)

I welcomed you after you broke into my home, gave you a chance to make it right, offered you value for value, and this is your answer??

ALLIE

It's like you said: this is commerce. Some have more than others, which necessitates an exchange of goods for services. But now you need my services more than I need your goods.

A very long, tense moment passes.

BIG GREEN

(strained)

I...agree to your terms. Four tickets, if you complete the job.

ALLIE

Will you deliver? You said you were as good as your word. Or was that more goeey crap like the rest of you?

BIG GREEN

I will put them in your hand myself. I swear it.

Allie walks away without a backward glance.

ALLIE

Have 'em ready.

EXT. BIG GREEN'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Allie rolls away from the building. As soon as she gets behind the first corner, she sucks in panicked breaths, letting out all the fear she bottled up while inside.

Then she freezes. Hears the softest sound of wheels rolling. Stop. Wheels rolling. Stop.

ALLIE

Come out. I can hear you.

PushPop and Guppy peer out from behind the wall, then scurry to join her. Moonpie follows more slowly.

ALLIE
You shouldn't have followed me.

PUSHPOP
What did Big Green say? Did he let you out of the deal?

ALLIE
I made a new one. For four tickets.

The girls look confused for a moment, then it sinks in.

MOONPIE
You mean...

ALLIE
We're all getting on that Train.

The girls don't know quite what to think.

GUPPY
So you have the tickets now?

ALLIE
No. I still have to deliver the Item for Big Green.

PUSHPOP
But...you know where it is?

Allie shakes her head. Their expressions darken.

MOONPIE
Does that mean Big Green will kill all of us now?

GUPPY
I'd rather stay in the Bubble than be dead.

ALLIE
It's the same thing.

PUSHPOP
No it ain't. We survive here. You should have asked us.

ALLIE
We're all getting out, and nobody's gonna get dead. I'm doing this for us. We'll find Jammer together.

Guppy stares at her shoes.

GUPPY

I don't care about Jammer.

ALLIE

Don't say that. She was the best of us.

The girls look forlorn. Allie can't understand it, and it infuriates her.

ALLIE

What's wrong with you? This is our shot! All of us!

MOONPIE

But it's either serve Big Green or die.

PUSHPOP

He's killing the Bubble. If we help him, we ain't the Street Rats anymore.

ALLIE

Don't think like that. Just do what I say and we can all get out and get to the big world, get to Jammer. That's all that matters.

The girls say nothing. Bad feelings all around.

ALLIE

Fine. I'll find it on my own, and get us out of the Bubble on my own. I may not know where the Item is, but I've got a good guess-

CLANG-CLANG-CLANG! Rapid-fire metal footsteps echo through the alley. In a flash of sliver, three huge BotCops converge on the girls, moving too fast for them to react.

They surround Allie in a heartbeat. Allie gapes up at them.

ALLIE

Um, it wasn't me.

The chest of one BotCop pops open, ejecting a big canvas black bag. Allie tries to leap away, but they hurl it over her head, and everything goes dark.

INT. THE MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Darkness. Panicked breaths. Sounds of struggling.

ALLIE (O.S.)
Take this effing bag off me!

The bag whips away. Light floods in. Allie heaves a breath. She's angry. Her hair, even angrier.

About to shout again when she notices her surroundings--a gleaming office. The utter opposite of the rest of the city.

The contrast accentuates Allie's grungy appearance tenfold.

The three BotCops stand guard behind her.

THE MANAGER sits across from her. Built to look human female. Ageless. Silver skin, hard angles, gray eyes. Your refrigerator has more personality.

THE MANAGER
You are Street Rat Allie.

Allie squares her shoulders.

ALLIE
Says who?

THE MANAGER
The Manager.

ALLIE
Manager of what?

THE MANAGER
Of this city.

ALLIE
Yeah? Well you ain't managing very good, 'cause your city sucks.

The Manager frowns.

THE MANAGER
It is my understanding that you have intimate knowledge of the criminal operations of the gangster Big Green-

ALLIE
Never heard of him.

THE MANAGER
-and may possess an illegal item of some importance he is attempting to smuggle. Is this true?

ALLIE
No.

The Manager leans toward Allie. Her eyes flash blue. Allie's form goes x-ray, her skeleton briefly popping bright white.

THE MANAGER

The Item is not on your person. Where is it?

ALLIE

I don't even know where my next meal is.

THE MANAGER

I repeat: tell me the location of the Item.

ALLIE

I don't know where it is. Can I go?

The Manager regards Allie for a long moment. She presses a button on her desk; a port opens in the wall next to her.

Flames roar deep inside. Heaps of ashes and coal-fired black bones over glowing coals. Fire licks everything. Allie winces.

THE MANAGER

If you are honest with me now and help me recover this Item, I will release you with no charges. But if you say nothing and are later found for any reason to have been involved with this, there is only once sentence.

The Manager motions toward the ever-burning fires.

Allie stares at flame-blackened bones and jutting rib cages among the hot coals.

THE MANAGER

Tell me now. It is the only option. This is your one and only chance, Street Rat Allie. I will not hesitate to execute you if you prove guilty.

Allie seems for a second like she might give in. Deep breath. Her expression hardens.

ALLIE

Wanna kill me? Get in line.

THE MANAGER

You have been warned.

ALLIE

Tell me something. What's the point of the Bots running this place if everything's still such garbage?

THE MANAGER

The point is the preservation of life and survival of this city.

(to the BotCops)

Return her where you found her.

The BotCops close in; one raises the bag.

ALLIE

Wait!

The Manager raises a hand; the BotCops pause.

ALLIE

What city did the Bubble used to be?

THE MANAGER

One of the big ones.

Whoosh! The bag comes down.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Whoosh! The bag comes off. Allie blinks against the light. Right where she was. No BotCops in sight.

She looks up at the sun. Already mid-afternoon. Four or five hours left.

She drops her board and skates on, a little unsteady.

STREET - DAY

Moonpie, PushPop, and Guppy skate aimlessly through the city, searching left and right. All look downtrodden.

PushPop and Guppy stop skating. Worn out. Moonpie looks back at them, incredulous.

MOONPIE

Come on, you lumps! There's no time!

PushPop and Guppy don't move.

GUPPY

It's useless. We can't find her. She doesn't even want us to.

Moonpie can't believe what she's hearing.

MOONPIE

What the eff are you saying? All that matters is she needs our help. So we roll this city until our feet bleed and our skin falls off looking for her. We roll till we die.

PushPop shoves her hands in her pockets.

PUSHPOP

We're already dead. She started this. We didn't want it.

Moonpie skates back, plants herself in front of them.

MOONPIE

It ain't about us. We'd all be dead a thousand times already if it wasn't for her. Who's brought you just about every meal you've ever eaten for the last two years?

Both girls look down, murmur something unintelligible.

MOONPIE

Who??

PUSHPOP AND GUPPY

Allie.

MOONPIE

And who's kept us safe, taken care of us, fought the Guttersuckers and anyone who's come to bash us?

PUSHPOP AND GUPPY

Allie.

MOONPIE

Guppy, who found you, made your board, taught you to skate? Who gave you your little Earth and talks you to bed? Who busted you out of Bot jail when you were caught stealin' candies?

GUPPY

Allie.

MOONPIE

And PushPop, who lost three teeth fighting Bottom Dog's boys when they tried to snatch you for their gang?

PushPop, hands still in her pockets, kicks at a piece of trash. Even more embarrassed with herself.

PUSHPOP

Allie.

MOONPIE

And that's just a tiny bit of what she's done. There's so much I can't even count it. And all Allie needs is us to help this once, and you can't even do that?

PushPop and Guppy feel like crap. Properly shamed. Moonpie softens, puts a hand on both their shoulders.

MOONPIE

We owe her. Allie is the greatest Street Rat there ever was.

Both girls are amazed at the statement.

GUPPY

Better than Jammer?

Moonpie nods.

PUSHPOP

Better than Wrecking Girl and Go Go Red?

MOONPIE

Better than any of them. And even if we help her now, it's just a drop in the bucket compared to all she's done for us. Right?

Both girls nod.

MOONPIE

So move your butts, and use your eyes!

Moonpie sprints away, dropping her board and jumping onto it. PushPop and Guppy do the same, following with a scream.

EXT. CRYBABY'S THEATER - DAY

Allie hides behind the pile of old dead Bots. Watches the Theater--it's guarded by the same big Bot Thugs as before.

She looks up, following the line of a ladder to the roof, where she got in last time--more BOTS standing guard up top.

She pops in a piece of bubblegum, chewing, thinking...

Glances at Bot parts around her. Her eyes lock on something--a bot knee joint. Silver, round--about the size of the Item.

INT. SEWER TUNNEL - DAY

Allie crawls through a darkened sewer tunnel, passing exit grates, turning this way and that, navigating by instinct.

Real rats scurry by her, but she pays them no mind.

She makes almost no sound at all. She pauses, listening. VOICES somewhere above, behind stone and metal.

INT. CRYBABY'S THEATER - DAY

Allie creeps out of a vent in the floor. Rear of the theater. Seats above her--and the rear of some CRUMBLING BOT's head.

She wiggles out, peeking toward the front of the theater.

Crybaby hunches on the stage in her big plush chair. Holds the Item in one hand, turning it back and forth in the light. Toast waits patiently at her side.

CRYBABY

Well, what is it?

Velvet leans by the wall, smoothing her robe with one hand.

VELVET

Difficult to say. I only know Big Green considers it valuable.

CRYBABY

That pompous blob. He's not even really green. More of a lime color.

Crybaby hands it to Toast, who studies it.

TOAST

It's quite dense. The outside appears unbroken. I can see no way to access the contents, if there are any.

CRYBABY

What if it's nothing? Maybe I should just destroy it.

VELVET

Whether it's something or nothing, we had a deal. My fee for delivery.

CRYBABY

Yes, fine. Pay the woman, Toast.

Allie wiggles closer, slinking around each row of seats.

Crybaby throws her head back and wails. Toast hurries to spray on her fake tears.

CRYBABY

Oh, what's the point of it all? I don't know what this thing is, I can never be human, and in 700 years, my batteries will run out, and it will all have been for nothing!

Velvet simply counts her cash.

TOAST

(to Crybaby)

You make a lovely human.

CRYBABY

My skin is rotting.

TOAST

We'll get you some more.

Crybaby takes the Item back from Toast, looks at it, disgusted, and tosses it. It rolls off the stage to the floor.

Allie's eyes lock in--holy shit. She wiggles closer.

CRYBABY

(to Toast)

Go to Big Green. Tell him we have his precious whatever-it-is, and if he wants it back, he'll give me twenty thousand and rights to all his territory south of Market Street.

TOAST

Quite reasonable, I'd say.

Allie wiggles forward, grabs the Item, replaces it with the silver knee joint, and wiggles backward.

Crybaby glances down. Sees the round glint of the knee joint, doesn't notice the difference.

Allie wiggles further. Further. Almost back to the vent.

Velvet glances at the knee joint with keener eyes. A chain fires from her robes, smashes it, revealing the deception.

Everyone looks up. They spy Allie with the orb. Allie freezes. Velvet is quite impressed.

VELVET

Truly remarkable.

Crybaby leaps up, furious, rips the human skin from her face with one hand. Eyes like hot coals.

CRYBABY

Kill that rat and bring me back what's mine! Her skin, too!

All the Bots in seats and the shadows spring up at once.

Allie sees the small army facing her--uh oh.

EXT. CRYBABY'S THEATER - DAY

Allie bursts through the doors, racing past door guard Bots before they can react.

Four seconds later, Crybaby's gang of grungy Bots explode out after her, a surging mass of metal parts.

Allie races down the empty lane leading away from the theater, pushing as hard as she can. But the lane is flat. They're gaining. She's off the board and on foot, sprinting...

Looking left and right for a downhill. Bits of metal whiz by her head; Bots hurl parts of themselves at her.

She scrambles around a hard turn and runs right into...

Bottom Dog and his entire gang. Humans in mass, wielding cudgels, cutting weapons, sling shots, even torches.

Bottom Dog has his Biter on a leash, all teeth and slobber.

Allie skids to a halt, board in one hand, Item in the other.

The Bots see the humans and stumble to a stop. Crybaby pushes to their front. Glares at Bottom Dog across the distance.

Allie is trapped between the two gangs.

Crybaby reaches out one hand out to Allie.

CRYBABY

Toss it here, sweet girl. I won't hurt you, and I won't take your skin. I can give you food. I can pay you real money.

Bottom Dog edges forward.

BOTTOM DOG

Don't listen to her, love. She'll kill you the second she has it. Give it to us. We're your kind.

(MORE)

BOTTOM DOG (CONT'D)
 Humans on top again, love, don't you
 want that? Bottom Dog can protect
 you.

Allie offers both a nervous smile.

ALLIE
 Or we could all just be nice and go
 our separate ways?

But she knows it can't happen. Pinned. Bottom Dog's gang on
 one side, Crybaby's on the other.

A side street leads away, maybe within reach, maybe not...

She looks down at the Item in her hand.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

A long, sloping street rises up to a high crest above. Hemmed
 in by buildings, glass windows fired pink by the sun.

The SOUND of WHEELS...ANGRY SHOUTING...growing louder...

Allie explodes off the crest of the hill, airborne on her
 board, Item in one hand. She races down, all fear and need.

The hordes burst over the hill behind her. All of Crybaby's
 Bots and Bottom Dog's fighters in mass, chasing after her.

The Biter gallops through the middle, slathering and roaring.
 Velvet glides along the edge, robes unruffled, fast and fluid.

Allie stays ahead--as long as the downhill lasts. But when
 she hits the bottom of the hill, everything is up again.

The slope forces her off her board. She sprints up. There's
 too many of them. Almost on her, when...

MOONPIE (O.S.)
 Two girls, Allie!

Moonpie rockets out of a side street, perpendicular to the
 surging pursuers, one hand out for a catch.

Allie hurls the Item to her. Moonpie catches it and keeps
 going, flying on.

Allie runs the other way. The pursuers scramble to change
 direction, crashing into each other, kicking and punching.

Soon they are on Moonpie's tail, but the hand-off was perfect--
 Moonpie has some space. She waves the Item as she goes.

MOONPIE

Come and get it!

The horde is full-on after her now, shrieking and hurling weapons. But before they can really get close...

PushPop sails out of side street, moving at 90 degrees. Moonpie tosses her the Item. PushPop snatches it one-handed.

The horde has to change direction again, scrambling to keep up. Now they chase PushPop, who leads them up a street, pushing on her board until the slope puts her on two feet.

PushPop hurls the Item into an open culvert.

CULVERT

The Item races down toward the circle of light at the end.

STREET

It bursts out of the other end, right into Guppy's hand. Guppy races away as the horde scrambles around the corner.

Guppy is way out in front. Allie swings around the block ahead. The girls in their element. This is what they do.

But they're outnumbered 100 to 1. One misstep means death.

Bottom Dog is furious at being outmaneuvered.

BOTTOM DOG

Spread out! Every street, till they've got nowhere to go!

The Horde disperses in all directions.

Allie passes Guppy going perpendicular; Guppy hands off the Item. Allie races twenty yards until two Bots block the way.

PushPop leans out of second-floor window. Allie tosses her the Item. PushPop disappears, then jumps out of another window halfway up the block. Running...

PushPop zips around a corner, but Velvet glides into view. Her robes open; claw-tipped chains fire out at PushPop, who yelps in shock and barely dodges.

PushPop races back the way she came. More fighters close in. She runs into Guppy, but a hand-off makes no sense now.

They're almost surrounded. Both girls race up steps to a-

CROSS-BUILDING BRIDGE

The bridge spans over the street below, thirty feet up. No roof. PushPop and Guppy dash across it.

Velvet appears on the far end. They look back; human fighters fill the other. Clubs and knives and swords. Penned in.

A FLYING SECURITY BOT sails up the street. About to pass right under the bridge.

PUSHPOP
 (to Guppy)
 Really tall girl?

Guppy gives a terrified nod.

Both girls leap onto the Flying Bot. It squeals in protest, spinning with both girls attached. They scream. It screams.

PushPop fumbles the Item--then catches it between her feet.

The Flying Bot rockets straight up. And up. And up.

PushPop and Guppy hang on for life. Buildings shrink below.

GUPPY
 Too tall, PushPop!

PUSHPOP
 I know!

GUPPY
 We're gonna hit the top of the Bubble!

PushPop looks up. The apex of the dome is getting closer, a shimmering, glassy surface a thousand feet above the streets.

She looks under the squealing Bot's body--two jets, both aimed down, propelling them upward.

PushPop grabs a jet tube, points it back. They careen sideways, spinning.

PUSHPOP
 Guppy! Get the other one!

Guppy grabs the other, turns it. They rocket forward.

PUSHPOP
 Now down!

They turn the jets again. The Flying Bot dives, way too fast. The girls try to even out. Now they zoom past building tops.

Other Flying Bots rise out of the streets, forming a triangular pack of airborne pursuers, zooming after.

PUSHPOP
(pointing down)
Look!

Guppy looks down. Allie is on a high rooftop, waving madly at them. The girls turn the Flying Bot that way.

As they zoom past her, PushPop drops the Item; it falls right into Allie's hands. Allie spins, watching the girls zoom away, desperate to see them land safe.

Over the next rooftop, both girls drop off and roll. Allie holds her breath until the girls sit up--they're ok.

Allie peers down the side of her building. Fighters scale the old fire escapes. She hurries to another side; same thing.

She leaps across to the next roof. Pursuers swarm after. Then to the next. But that's it. Out of reachable rooftops.

She looks back--they're coming. She looks down--they're all over the street below. She's ten stories up.

An ancient cell tower is within reach...

The pursuers reach her rooftop, race toward her...

She leaps onto the tower. Climbs a few yards. Two Fighters jump after, but miss and plummet to the street below.

CLANG! Far below, Crybaby's Bots begin to ram the base of the tower. It shakes badly, already old and rusted.

The rest of the Rats watch from three rooftops away.

MOONPIE
(across the distance)
Just give it to them! They'll go
away!

Allie looks back. Looks down at the Bots bashing into the base of the tower. It begins to lean...

Allie climbs higher, fast as she can. Pulls the board off the harness in her back with one hand.

The girls understand what she's about to do, even if we don't.

PUSHPOP
Oh, Allie, you can't. It's impossible.

GUPPY
Allie, stop! You'll die!

The tower leans hard. The base cracks. It falls, thirty stories of rail headed for the corner of the next building.

Just before it hits, Allie leaps with everything she's got.

The middle of the tower crashes into the building corner and bends instantly, the top half angling back down.

Allie pulls the board under her. Looks like she's gonna miss...and then...contact!

She flies down the metal rail, sparks flying. Speeding like a fired bullet. Nerves, sweat, fear, and motion.

The Rats hold each other and watch.

The tower top flattens on contact with the street, curving under its own weight. Allie rides the curve up, breaking her momentum. Sails off the end, crashes onto the street.

She's cleared three blocks in a heartbeat. Collapsing bricks block her pursuers from chasing right away. She's free...

If she can just get up. The girls watch her prone form.

MOONPIE

Come on, Allie. Get up.

Allie rises. The girls cheer.

Allie grabs her board. It's snapped clean in half. She limps away, ducking around the side of a building.

MOONPIE

She did it. She really effing did it. Come on, I know where she's going!

EXT. THE TRAIN BRIDGE - DAY

Allie limps up to the line of Bot Guards blocking the tracks. The Ticket Taker behind them emits some beeps and percussive sounds, and they pass Allie through.

She arrives in front of the big cylindrical bot, its many spindle arms splayed outward.

TICKET TAKER

Ticket...

She removes the Item from her pocket, careful to hide it from view. The Ticket Taker snatches it up, whisks it away with incredible speed. Continues as if nothing happened.

TICKET TAKER

Ticket...

It's done. Allie limps back toward the city.

EXT. BIG GREEN'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Allie trudges up toward the rusty metal door entrance. This time, the two HardHand guards part for her without prompting.

INT. BIG GREEN'S HEADQUARTERS - THE WAREHOUSE - DAY

Allie stands next to the chair this time, staring at the unseen Big Green. Two big HardHands behind her.

BIG GREEN
Welcome back, Allie.

Allie holds out her hand, palm up.

ALLIE
My payment.

A delicate tendril of slime appears before her, four little red tickets in its grip. It places them in her hand.

BIG GREEN
As promised.

Allie examines the tickets. They're real.

The HardHands behind her inch forward almost imperceptibly.

BIG GREEN
It's amusing, really, you of all people getting tickets for the very last Train.

Allie looks confused, wary.

ALLIE
Me of all people?

BIG GREEN
Because you've made it possible to stop them forever. Didn't you at least have a guess as to what you were delivering? You've seen my food stockpiles and algae vats. When the Ticket Taker leaves the bomb inside the tunnel, it will explode and irradiate the passage. I'll be the only source of food in this city. Even the Manager and his bots won't be able to say no to me, unless they want every biological creature to starve. I couldn't have done it without your help.

ALLIE
 (looking sick)
 I...

BIG GREEN
 And if you hadn't taunted me, you
 could have been the very last one
 out of the Bubble, Allie.

Allie starts to realize what's closing in on her.

ALLIE
 Could have been?

The two HardHands pounce, stone hands wrenching Allie's arms behind her. Sounds of steaming, boiling slime and slurping wet sounds grow closer.

She fights like mad. Manages to kick one HardHand in the face, getting a groan out of him, but his grip doesn't falter. They drag her closer to the boiling slime.

CRACK! A cinderblock slams onto one HardHand's skull from a great height, exploding on contact, taking him down.

The other HardHand holding Allie stumbles back in shock. She flips backward, twisting out of his startled grip.

The end of a ratty rope lands on the warehouse floor next to Allie. She looks up. High in the warehouse ceiling, Moonpie stares down from a big hole in the top, holding the rope.

MOONPIE
 Hurry!

A roar of anger from Big Green. Renewed squishing sounds, growing closer. More HardHands charge into the room.

Allie leaps onto the rope, scrambling up like mad, just as prehensile tendrils of green slime miss her feet. HardHands grab the rope, shaking it like mad, trying to dislodge Allie.

She reaches the top; Moonpie drops the rope just as Allie leaps off it, scrambling through the hole in the roof.

EXT. BIG GREEN'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Allie and Moonpie scramble down a drainpipe on the side of the building. Big Green ROARS from inside the walls.

ALLIE
 Where'd you get the rope?

MOONPIE
 Breakable.

ALLIE

Good thinking. And... thanks.

They hit the ground with a smack of feet just as HardHands pour from the building, roaring toward them.

Moonpie kicks her board up from a hiding place. Tosses Allie a new board. Allie sees the board and freaks.

ALLIE

This is PushPop's! What happened to her?

MOONPIE

Nothing! It's a loaner! Let's go!

The girls sprint away, barely ahead of the grasping stone hands. They reach the lip of a downhill and sail away.

Allie gazes up at the pink-red sun, now in full decent toward the horizon. She shouts over the rushing air.

ALLIE

Where are the others?

MOONPIE

At the Nest!

ALLIE

We gotta get them and make it to the Train before Big Green's bashers do!

MOONPIE

Why?

Allie thrusts out the four tickets for Moonpie to see.

ALLIE

Because I got what I came for!

EXT. HOME STREET HOME - DAY

Allie and Moonpie sail up the street, kicking and rolling fast as they can. But ahead they see the worst thing possible.

The One-Eyed HardHand and Scarred HardHand (that stole her first ticket) hunch over the sewer grate entrance to the Nest, reaching in as far as they can.

ALLIE

Eff us, we're too effing late!

The HardHands are too big to fit through. One jerks back and shrieks as something POPS loud with electricity. Allie sees PushPop's arm whip out, wielding the SparkStick from inside.

The HardHand grabs his face in pain. PushPop shocks the other. Both go mad. Rabid alligators on two feet. They pound the cement around the grate, cracking the entrance wider.

Allie picks up a rock and whips it side-arm; she's an expert shot. It smashes right into the Scarred HardHand's temple. He jerks up in anger.

Moonpie throws another rock, arm like a slingshot. Pop! It smacks the One-Eyed HardHand, who rises with a roar.

The two beasts charge Allie and Moonpie, drooling through crooked teeth. The girls continue to whip rocks at them.

As soon as the grate is clear, Guppy and PushPop scramble out--but they're stuck behind the HardHands, pinned by the dead end of the alley.

They snatch up rocks and start hurling them at the backs of the HardHands' heads, who roar back and forth, though the rocks do no real damage to them.

ONE-EYED HARDHAND

Smash the little ones, and the big ones'll come runnin'!

The HardHands turn and lumber toward the pinned-in PushPop and Guppy, who throw more rocks to try to slow them down.

Allie roars, sprints at them flat out, and leaps onto the back of the One-Eyed HardHand. Digs her fingers into his one good eye.

He howls in pain. Hurls Allie one-handed like he was throwing a discus; she sails through the air, slams into the brick wall, falls, and crumples.

The Scarred HardHand stomps toward her body as the other one wails, blood leaking from his formerly good eye.

ONE-EYED HARDHAND

Effing rat blinded me! I'm ruined!

Moonpie races flat-out at the Scarred Hardhand.

MOONPIE

SparkStick, Push!

PushPop hurls the Sparkstick like a spear. Moonpie grabs it as she goes down on two knees, sliding right under the Scarred HardHand. She jams it right between his legs and ZAP!

He stumbles back, wailing, but he's not done. Smashes the ground around her with stone fists, going for the kill with every one. Five times her size.

MOONPIE

Use the last resort, Push!

The request terrifies PushPop and Guppy.

PUSHPOP

We can't! It's our home!

Moonpie squirms left and right, barely dodging the blows.

MOONPIE

Do it! Do it now!

PushPop and Guppy race to the far alley wall, leap up jointly onto a hanging rope, and pull with their combined weight.

CLACK! The rope comes off the wall, goes rigid. POP POP! It pulls against a joint high above the street, which tightens two cables attached to the wall above the Nest.

Stone grinds against stone. A huge section of the stone wall above the Nest comes free of its moorings, tipping out.

Moonpie flips backwards and makes an epic leap away. The two HardHands see a shadow forming on the ground, look up...

Too late. BOOM. A metric ton of stone slams down on them. Goey bits of HardHand squirt from the edges.

Moonpie pulls Guppy and PushPop further away, over to where Allie lies. They help Allie up to sitting. She's bloody and dazed, but ok.

A rumbling sound...all the girls hold each other as they watch the Nest cave in, street collapsing, huge stones tumbling down into their home. A fountain of dust shoots up.

PUSHPOP

The Nest...

GUPPY

Our home.

MOONPIE

I'm sorry.

ALLIE

No, I am. You made the right call, Moonpie.

PUSHPOP

But where will we live?

ALLIE

Our new home is out in the big world.
We're getting on the Train. Everybody
get up! I know you're tired, but
we've got to get there before Big
Green's thugs do. Now move!

The girls rise, tired and limping. Three on boards, Allie on foot. They run and roll to the end of the street, fast as they can, as the sun descends toward the horizon.

EXT. THE TRAIN BRIDGE - DAY

The Rats round a corner, Allie in the lead. Still racing, sucking breaths. The Train Bridge appears before them. The Train steams and gleams, ready to take them away.

But Allie hits the breaks. Throws out her arms. The girls tumble into her, stopping on a dime.

Allie's eyes, so full of hope a second ago, fill with despair.

The entire Train trestle, entrance and tracks and all, is utterly surrounded by HardHands. Shoulder to shoulder, armed. Cudgels, knives, beaters, bashers. An impenetrable wall.

Allie searches for a break in Big Green's army, for any way at all to get to the Ticket Taker and the Train beyond.

There is none.

One of the HardHands starts to look her way...

Moonpie jerks Allie and all the girls back behind the corner.

Allie puts her back to the wall, slides down. Eyes vacant. Still clutches the four tickets in her hand. The other rats argue above her, but their voices are like distant echoes.

GUPPY

How do we get in?

PUSHPOP

We have to find a distraction.

MOONPIE

There's too many.

GUPPY

But we have the tickets.

ALLIE

They're useless.

The Rats turn to her, but Allie has that thousand-yard stare.

ALLIE

He knew they would be.

MOONPIE

Ok, so maybe we can't get on this Train. He can't keep his guys here forever. We wait for the next one.

ALLIE

There won't be a next one. The Item I delivered was a bomb. It's gonna blow the tunnel. Then there's no more. No more food either. He'll have all of it now. The whole city.

The world seems fuzzy to Allie, her despair warping it.

ALLIE

(to herself, dazed)

Get out, Allie, get out. Get your ticket, get your life. I did this...

PUSHPOP

Come on, we can't give up, Allie. We never did before.

GUPPY

Yeah. We're the Street Rats.

Allie looks up at them. Three faces, dirty, scarred, ragged, hair like wild things. But with eyes bright as stars. Full of intelligence, fight, and hope.

She looks down at the tickets. Stands.

She hands a ticket to each of them.

ALLIE

Stay here and watch the bridge. When the HardHands all leave, use our tickets and get on that Train.

MOONPIE

Why would they leave it unguarded?

ALLIE

They will. I'll take care of it.

GUPPY

And then you're coming with us?

ALLIE

'Course. Still got my ticket, see?

She holds up her ticket up, then tucks it in her pocket. But the Rats aren't dummies.

MOONPIE

If we don't help you, you won't make it back. We're coming.

ALLIE

Not this time.

All the girls step forward. Not taking no for an answer. But Allie pulls Moonpie far enough away for privacy.

ALLIE

I saw something at the Nest when you fought the HardHands. Something I haven't seen since Jammer left.

MOONPIE

What?

ALLIE

A Head Rat.

Moonpie looks confused, then shakes her head, eyes misting.

MOONPIE

No. No way.

ALLIE

You were fearless. Total warrior. And you made the tough call to drop the wall on them, even though you knew it would bust our home to dust. That's what a Head Rat does. You've got the three things, Moonpie, you always did, and guts most of all. You're effing built from the stuff.

MOONPIE

That doesn't mean we can't help you.

ALLIE

I gotta make right what I made wrong, and I can only do it alone. If the rest of you are there, it doesn't work. I can't do the hard thing if your lives are at risk. But if I know you're here, waiting on the Train, I can do anything.

MOONPIE

We don't need the Train. We can get lost in the Bubble. Keep running, scraping, like always.

Allie shakes her head.

ALLIE

If I don't fix this, there won't be any place in this city Big Green doesn't control. No more food, for us or anyone. What I did will kill everybody. Now promise me you'll keep Push and Gup here until I do what's gotta be done. If I ever meant anything to you, promise.

It's killing Moonpie, but she understands.

MOONPIE

I promise.

ALLIE

And that you'll use the tickets.

Moonpie says nothing.

ALLIE

Promise you'll use them!

MOONPIE

If you promise you'll make it back and come with us.

ALLIE

I will. I can make it.

MOONPIE

Then I promise.

Moonpie looks up at the setting sun. Panicked.

MOONPIE

Now go! The Train leaves in two hours, maybe less. Do this thing and come back to us!

Allie crushes Moonpie in a hug, then runs for her life.

INT. BREAKABLE'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Breakable hunches over some wires, tinkering with circuit boards. Hears a banging on her blast door. Checks the monitor.

The screen shows Allie outside, beating and kicking, shouting something that can't be heard.

Breakable sighs. Slaps the red button.

Allie races underneath the rising blast door, right up to Breakable's table.

ALLIE

I need you to make something for me.

BREAKABLE

Two hundred up front.

ALLIE

You gotta do it for free.

BREAKABLE

Finally got too many lumps on your head, I see. Did your brain in.

ALLIE

If you don't help me, there's no more Trains. Big Green has all the food. The Bots can't take him down. He'll own everybody. Even you.

Breakable gives her a long, dubious look.

BREAKABLE

Or maybe that's just a good story, and this is just another scheme for you to escape this place.

Allie's desperation is palpable.

ALLIE

What I said is true. Every word. But I do want to get out. I can still make it, Breakable. I can get all the Rats on the Train, and if this works, I can go with them. You said you were rooting for us. If that was true, then help me. Please.

Despite her nature, it moves Breakable.

BREAKABLE

Tell me what you need.

LATER

Breakable sits on her rolling chair in front of the big smelting machine, working buttons, typing into a computer as the huge rig hums and steams. Allie watches anxiously.

With a final shiver, the machine ejects something. Breakable takes it, puts it in Allie's hand.

Allie holds it up to the light: It's a silver sphere. Looks just like the Item. Allie tucks it in her jacket.

BREAKABLE

Allie, listen. Don't go. It's a good idea, but not good enough.

ALLIE

I can do this. I can get out. The Rats are waiting on me.

She shows Breakable her ticket, gripping it like a lifeline.

Breakable just looks heartbroken.

BREAKABLE

They're gonna tear you apart, Allie.

She puts a delicate hand on Allie's shoulder.

BREAKABLE

But I'm rooting for you.

INT. CRYBABY'S THEATER - DAY

Crybaby paces on stage in front of her plush chair-throne. Toast and the rest of her Bots watch nervously.

CRYBABY

How can those rats hide so well?

She wheels on the watching Bots. They jerk back in fear.

CRYBABY

And the rest of you...worthless! You let her steal it so easily. I had it right here in my hand!

TOAST

Well, you did toss it into the aisle.

Crybaby snatches Toast up above her head in both hands and rips him in two, sending both halves flying.

She bursts into wails of self-pity, falling to her knees.

CRYBABY

It could be anywhere. Big Green might have it. Or Bottom Dog could have gotten it back, plotting against me. Oh, everything is terrible!

ALLIE (O.S.)

Don't worry.

Crybaby and all the Bots jerk their heads toward the center aisle in the theater. Allie stands there, calm and assured.

ALLIE

I'll sell it to you.

Crybaby's face contorts with rage.

CRYBABY

Bring her.

The Bots move like lightening, snatching up Allie and depositing her on her knees in front of Crybaby.

Crybaby searches Allie's pockets. Nothing.

CRYBABY

Where is it?

ALLIE

I'll put it right in your hands for five thousand cash.

CRYBABY

You're in my hands, little thing, and that's all I need. Hold her.

Crybaby grips the back of Allie's head like a vice. Extends her index finger of her other hand. The tip parts; producing a razor-sharp blade. She holds it under Allie's right eye.

CRYBABY

Tell me where it is, or I'll slice your eye out right now.

Allie doesn't flinch.

ALLIE

You only get it if you give me the cash.

Crybaby pushes the knife point against the skin under Allie's bottom eyelid. No reaction. Pushes the blade in a little. Blood wells, drips down Allie's cheek. Allie's a rock.

Crybaby seems confused. Withdraws her hand.

CRYBABY

Something's changed, hasn't it?

Allie nods. Crybaby sighs.

CRYBABY

Fine. I'll pay. Where is it?

ALLIE
 Know where the Old Things Place is?
 With all the fake stuff?

Crybaby's glowing eyes narrow. Suspicious.

CRYBABY
 Of course.

ALLIE
 Meet me inside in half an hour. Bring
 the cash. Without it, you get nothing.

CRYBABY
 And what's to stop me from skinning
 you on the spot once I have the Item?

ALLIE
 Just your big weepy heart, I guess.

Crybaby tilts her head, trying to understand what this little human girl is up to. She relents. Nods toward the doors.

Allie dashes to them, bursting into the late afternoon sun.

INT. BOTTOM DOG'S - DAY

Big, rough human hands hold Allie's face just inches from the Biter's gaping mouth. It slathers and snaps at her, but she's calm and still, cool as ice.

FIGHTER (O.S.)
 Something's wrong with her, boss.
 She ain't getting scared.

SECOND FIGHTER (O.S.)
 Maybe her brain's broken. I'd have
 pooped myself by now.

Bottom Dog holds the Biter's chain, struggling to keep it just inches from Allie, who is held down on her knees.

He gives up and pulls the Biter away, hands the chain to one of his fighters. He crouches in front of Allie, peering into her eyes with a confused expression.

BOTTOM DOG
 You'd really rather die than tell me
 where it is?

She nods. He sighs, defeated.

BOTTOM DOG
 Five thousand it is. Where?

ALLIE
Know where the Old Things Place is?

EXT. BIG GREEN'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Two big HardHands guard the door at Big Green's headquarters. Staring at the empty street. Bored out of their minds.

Allie steps from behind a corner, staring a challenge. They howl in surprise and anger, raise their fists, and charge.

She pulls the fake Item out of her coat and holds it up. It gleams in the evening sunlight.

The HardHands freeze, nearly tripping over their own feet.

ALLIE
You know what this is.

FIRST HARDHAND GUARD
How'd you get that back?

SECOND HARDHAND GUARD
It's supposed to be at the Train.

ALLIE
And you know what it does.

Allie steps toward them. They step back. Palms up, terrified.

FIRST HARDHAND GUARD
Careful with that, little one.

SECOND HARDHAND GUARD
Big Green'll pay nice, if you give it up now. But real gentle.

Allie glances at the Item as if considering.

ALLIE
Nah. I think I'll sell it to Crybaby.
Or Bottom Dog. Bet they'll pay plenty.
Tell Big Green if he wants it back,
he can bring five thousand to the
Old Things Place. Right now.

She dashes around the corner, and she's gone.

EXT. THE TRAIN BRIDGE - DAY

Moonpie, PushPop, and Guppy stealthily watch the Train Bridge and all the HardHands guarding it. Nothing has changed.

The sun is a huge red disk, almost to the horizon.

The HardHands begin mumbling to each other. Heads turn, getting new information. En masse, they abandon the bridge, hurrying back into the city.

MOONPIE

She did it. She effing did it.

With the way now clear, the Rats hurry toward the bridge.

EXT. THE OLD THINGS PLACE - DAY

A massive, once-attractive gray stone building. Sculpted columns out front, chipped and worn, but still intact.

Crybaby and her army of patchwork BOTS approach, wary, and clatter up the stone steps to the entrance. Only one of the old double doors survives. They push through.

INT. THE OLD THINGS PLACE - DAY

Crybaby and her army pour through the entrance.

It's an old museum. Natural world stuff. A huge gallery hall stretches before them, tall and cavernous.

Model animals still hang from the high ceiling on wires. A massive humpback whale. Prehistoric birds. Some models still stand in old displays, but many lie broken and shattered.

Various bizarre living CREATURES, some on two feet, some four, watch alongside the old animal models. Most skitter away as the Bots march in.

Evening sun streams through old shattered windows, casting the hall in golden beams of light.

Allie stands atop a high dais in the center, next to an ancient, life-size model tiger. She's at the center of four broad, intersecting gallery avenues.

Crybaby freezes as soon as they are fully inside. Her Bots raise their weapons...

Pouring in the far opposite side of the hall are Bottom Dog and all his fighters, weapons ready. The Biter waddles by Bottom Dog's side, clawed feet slapping at the stone.

Both gangs stop, scowling at each other across the distance, Allie on the raised dais in the center.

Bottom Dog spits on the floor, glares across the distance.

BOTTOM DOG

Walking rubbish!

Crybaby shouts back.

CRYBABY
Filth! You don't deserve your
beautiful human skins.

BOTTOM DOG
The girl tricked us!

CRYBABY
Probably hoping we'd wipe each other
out.
(to herself)
How is this supposed to make me feel?

Allie shouts to both of them.

ALLIE
I told the truth!

BOTTOM DOG
You said you'd sell it to me, not to
both of us.

ALLIE
I said I'd put it in your hands. And
I will. But not until I get the money.

In the shadows of a nearby hallway, a tall robed figure glides--
Velvet. Watching, careful to keep herself hidden.

BANG! A third set of doors bang open down another intersecting
gallery corridor. HardHands pour through, all rough green
skin, sullen yellow eyes, and stone hands ready to bash.

Two of them pull a gigantic glass jar on wheels. Clear sides,
thick, open at the top, the size of a mini-cooper.

Big Green fills the jar. Liquid body shaped to its dimensions,
sloshing a bit at the top. Disgusting. Bits of partially-
digested creatures float through his gooey center.

He has a rounded almost-head at the top, big gooey eyes
shifting in constant motion. Puckered mouth. Little tendril
appendages clutch the top lip of the jar.

Crybaby and Bottom Dog are shocked to their core.

CRYBABY
Big Green's never come out in the
open.

BOTTOM DOG
Knew he'd look nasty, but...

Big Green waves a tendril, calling for a stop. He and his HardHands pause far away from Allie on her pedestal.

All three opposing parties stare at each other. Afraid to come in too far, hanging by the exits.

Allie stares hatred at Big Green. He gives it right back.

BIG GREEN

Double crossing me, girl? A fake Item at the bridge, and the real one here? Or the reverse? Either way, I'm going to digest you extra slow.

ALLIE

You already tried to kill me once.

BIG GREEN

But your little rats aren't here to throw you a rope this time.

He's right, and Allie knows it.

CRYBABY

Shut that disgusting hole you call a mouth, Green. I'm here to do a deal with the girl.

(to Allie)

And I better get what I came for, or I'll slice out more than your eye.

BOTTOM DOG

Not before I feed her head-first to my Biter. You promised, rat!

Allie glances at the three little armies. Not close enough.

ALLIE

Come to me, all of you. You'll get what you came for.

BOTTOM DOG

Think we're stupid? It's another trick.

CRYBABY

Why do you want us all up there? Bombs in the floor? Traps in the ceiling? What is it?

ALLIE

No tricks. But I can't give you the Item, and you can't give me the money, if you don't come up here.

BIG GREEN

This rat has a ticket. I gave it to her myself. She thinks she's getting out of the Bubble, so I know she doesn't care about the money. It's a trick. She'll have something nasty waiting on us up there.

BOTTOM DOG

That true, girl? You got a ticket out of Chicago?

ALLIE

This ain't Chicago.

VOICE IN THE BACK (O.S.)

My Ma said it was Disneyland!

ALLIE

It's not Disneyland! Everybody shutup!

BIG GREEN

The Train will leave in just minutes. Look at her sweating. She's trying to get out of here as fast as she can. It's not a real deal, and all this cash is misdirection.

He waves a bundle of cash--the five grand she demanded.

BOTTOM DOG

Then we'll just take it right off her right now.

Bottom Dog nods at a WOMAN FIGHTER holding a spiked club.

BOTTOM DOG

Search her.

Crybaby nods at a ONE-ARMED BOT with two mismatched heads. The Woman Fighter and the One-Armed Bot rush up; both grab and search Allie simultaneously. They find nothing.

The Woman and the Bot hop back down from the dais. But nobody moves closer to Allie.

ALLIE

I'll say it again. No Item unless I get the cash.

CRYBABY

I don't trust her.

BIG GREEN

Because she can't be trusted.
 (to Allie)
 Prove you're really here to deal.

ALLIE

How?

BIG GREEN

Burn your ticket.

Allie looks deeply stricken at the demand.

BOTTOM DOG

Yeah, that'd do it. Burn it so we
 can see, and we'll come to you.

CRYBABY

Give her a flame!

The One-Armed Bot standing beneath her raises his arm; its
 claw flips back, producing a little oil-burning flame.

Allie glances around. It's gone south on her. She needs them
 closer, but it doesn't work unless she does what they ask.

She pulls the little red ticket from her pocket. Holds it up
 to her eye. Stares wistfully at the ADMIT ONE printed there.

ALLIE

(whisper)

I'm sorry, Jammer. And Moonpie. And
 PushPop, and Guppy. I love you all.

Moving like a mourner for the dead, she extends the ticket
 to the flame. It lights easily, burning in a smooth arc. The
 ashes float away right by Allie's eyes.

The gangs now move forward. Bots on one side, led by Crybaby;
 humans another, led by Bottom Dog, and scaly HardHands pulling
 along Big Green in his tank.

They arrive under the dais with Allie and the tiger. She
 looks out at the sea of murderous faces, claws, weapons,
 teeth, all kinds, surrounding twenty deep in every direction.

But it's still not right.

ALLIE

Leaders, come up to me with the cash.

BOTTOM DOG

Show us the goods!

ALLIE

Not yet. I gotta count the cash.

Bottom Dog and Crybaby climb up. She looks down at Big Green.

ALLIE

You bidding?

Big Green slishes up over the tank, halfway out, and extends a tendril holding a bundle of cash.

Many fighters in the crowd hold hands over their mouths at the sight, near to vomiting.

Bottom Dog holds up his stack of ancient cash. A mix of colors. Old U.S. bills, but also Canadian dollars, British pounds, Mexican pesos, deutschmarks, rubles, euros, and more.

BOTTOM DOG

All here. Not that you'll live to spend it. Now where's my prize?

Allie looks at Crybaby. Waiting. A compartment pops open on Crybaby's metal chest. She pulls out similar stack of multicolored cash from it.

Allie takes the cash from each of them, then--to their surprise--hands each bundle to a different leader. Crybaby's cash goes to Bottom Dog, his to Big Green, and his to Crybaby.

BOTTOM DOG

What's this?

ALLIE

Make sure it's five thousand each.

CRYBABY

Why don't you count it?

ALLIE

(embarrassed)

I...only know how to count to twelve.

Fighters on both sides burst into booming laughter.

Among Bottom Dog's people, many look deeply nervous, forcing too-loud, overcompensating laughs.

GRUNGY FIGHTER

(nervous eyes)

She can't count!

GRUNGIER FIGHTER

(laughing too hard)

I definitely know how!

ALLIE
Just do it already!

The three leaders count.

BOTTOM DOG
Yeah.

CRYBABY
All five.

BIG GREEN
It's here.

Allie takes the bundles back from them. Combines them into one giant bundle.

Bottom Dog shouts back to his fighters.

BOTTOM DOG
If I don't get that Item, kill her.
No matter what else happens, she
doesn't leave this place alive!

CRYBABY
I get that Item or I get her skin!

BIG GREEN
She's got nowhere to go now. Even if
she makes it out of here, she won't
live to spend a penny.

Allie looks over the sea of grimy, robotic, and monstrous faces, all ready to tear her apart. But she notes--as expected--a whole lot of them are staring at that giant bundle of cash.

She holds the bundle up high above her head.

ALLIE
Fifteen thousand.

CRYBABY
Enough stalling. Where is it?

ALLIE
Just look up.

Allie hurls the bundle of cash high over the crowd. It separates in the air, tumbling down to the fighters, who erupt in a feeding frenzy for the falling bills.

Allie pulls a rock from her pocket, slings it at the hanging blue whale replica. Crack! The Item tumbles out of its mouth, falling down in seeming slow motion between the three leaders.

Bottom Dog and Crybaby jump for the falling (fake) Item, while Big Green nearly sloshes out of his tank to reach it.

Allie leaps away as utter chaos erupts. It's all-out war, and she lands right in the middle. Weapons clash. Blood and sparks and screams. Blood spatters, robot parts fly.

Half fight each other for the money, half for their gang.

The three leaders fumble the fake Item; it drops into the roiling mass. Impossible to see who might have it.

Allie rolls, dodging the surging legs, both human and metal. Scrambles across the floor. The Biter jumps right over her, chomping into a BOT that swings spiked hands like cudgels.

She's kicked, stomped, bashed. Can barely tell what direction is what. Scrambling for her life.

She sees her escape route--the side hallway. Rolls right, rolls left, and she's up and sprinting down the hallway.

Almost out, until--

Velvet blocks her path, cloak flowing, an impossible barrier. Allie slides to a stop, landing on her butt. Velvet looms.

VELVET

You have my respect. I never thought
a human could accomplish so much.
But I'll take the real Item now. I
know that was a fake.

ALLIE

All I've got left now is my own skin.

VELVET

You won't even have that unless you
tell me where it is.

ALLIE

How about some advice? Get out of
here fast, if you want to survive.

Velvet leans in, impatient. One of her skull's metal spikes pokes Allie's forehead, drawing blood.

VELVET

Stop stalling. I'm not worried about
those brawling idiots.

ALLIE

Wasn't talking about them.

Velvet's confident smile vanishes. She looks up.

VELVET

Fool girl, what have you done?

The windows ERUPT inward. Doors EXPLODE off their hinges.

BotCops surge in from all sides, left and right, up and down. Their chests open, firing out electrified restraining cables.

The gangs fight back, but the BotCops overwhelm them with numbers and firepower.

Two BotCops converge on Velvet, firing out their cables. Velvet deflects, unleashing a barrage of her own metal weaponry, but more BotCops rush her.

She crashes into them with a screech of metal on metal.

Allie races past her, head low. Halfway down the hall, she turns back just long enough to see the BotCops crash into Big Green, breaking his tank, frying him with their cables.

Satisfied, she dives through a crumbled section of the wall.

EXT. OLD THINGS PLACE - DAY

Allie crawls out of the side of the museum. Races away, dodging more BotCops converging on the structure.

She sees the empty street ahead. Almost there...

Until The Manager steps right in front of her, flanked by BotCops. They encircle Allie. No escaping.

THE MANAGER

Street Rat Allie.

Allie stares up at her. Weary, beaten. Knows it's the end.

THE MANAGER

You lied about your connection to Big Green and his Item after I gave you a last chance to confess. You knew the punishment.

ALLIE

Yeah.

THE MANAGER

Then why?

ALLIE

Did you get the bomb I told your BotCops about? The Ticket Taker?

THE MANAGER

We did.

ALLIE

And you got all the gangs inside.

THE MANAGER

Yes.

ALLIE

That's why.

They face off for a long moment. The Manager seems confused.

THE MANAGER

But didn't you want to live?

ALLIE

I wanted my family on the Train.

The Manager's eyes go from ice blue to a slightly muted color.

ALLIE

I know what has to happen now. But I need to see them leave. To watch them get out, know they made it. Then you can...carry out my sentence.

The Manager studies Allie, this half-dead girl, for some time. After a long moment, she steps aside.

THE MANAGER

I pardon you. Go in peace. If you hurry, you can still see it go.

Allie races away without a backward glance, moving as fast as she can, half-running, half-limping.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Allie dashes through streets toward the sunset-fired Bubble Wall. The sun is huge, crimson, halfway under the horizon.

EXT. THE TRAIN BRIDGE - THE TRACKS - DAY

Allie tumbles from behind a corner, sees the Bridge. Near-to-collapse, but she's here. Right in front of the tracks.

The Train is moving out. It blasts a warning horn, picks up speed, sliding out of the port in the Bubble Wall.

Allie screams at the Train, roaring out lungfulls of air. There is everything in that scream: joy, relief, sadness, despair, victory, defeat.

She pumps her fist at it.

ALLIE

Yeah! Go, my Rats! Find a new place!
A better one! Don't forget what I
taught you! Take 'em home, Moonpie!

She falls to her knees at the railing, nothing left in her.

ALLIE

Take 'em home.

The last gleaming bit of the Train slides through. The port door slides down with a hiss of steam, and it's over.

Allie hangs onto the railing, staring at the empty wall.

PUSHPOP (O.S.)

Who the eff are you shouting at?

Allie stiffens. Turns around, almost afraid to look.

Moonpie, PushPop, and Guppy stand behind her, grinning.

But Allie looks stricken. Struggles to her feet.

ALLIE

What are you still doing here? That was your chance!

MOONPIE

There will be more Trains. We saw 'em take the bomb. You did it, Allie.

ALLIE

But things could still go bad. It's the Bubble. That was your chance, all of you! You should have gone, not stayed here to starve with me.

Allie's shaking, fatigue and shock and everything she's been through bubbling up.

She collapses, but the girls rush in, put their arms around her, hug her tight, hold her up.

MOONPIE

We've been ok, Allie. We can keep being ok. But only with you.

PUSHPOP

We're the Street Rats.

GUPPY

We're family.

Allie breaths, finds some calm. The embrace of the girls give her strength.

ALLIE
 (to Moonpie)
 You promised you would use those tickets.

MOONPIE
 We did.

Allie gives her a sharp, confused look.

ALLIE
 You just gave them up? Got them punched and didn't go?

MOONPIE
 Nah.

PUSHPOP
 We ain't total dummies.

Guppy holds up a big fat wad of cash.

GUPPY
 We sold 'em.

Allie gapes at the cash. Barks a laugh. Something happy returning to her. She looks over the girls.

ALLIE
 What'll we use all that for?

MOONPIE
 First, to pay Breakable to make you a new board. Then we run. Big Green will be after us, and Crybaby-

ALLIE
 We don't have to worry about them anymore.

The girls look confused.

PUSHPOP
 What you mean? Big Green's trying to kill us. And Bottom Dog, and-

ALLIE
 I took care of 'em.

GUPPY
 Took care of who?

ALLIE

All of 'em. They're gone.

The girls just stare. Total awe.

MOONPIE

Allie, you really are the best there ever was.

ALLIE

We all are.

Allie links arm and arm with them, starts walking them back toward the city. The last sliver of the setting sun makes them glow a deep golden-red.

MOONPIE

I didn't really wanna be Head Rat anyway. I like being Neck Rat.

ALLIE

Neck Rat? That sounds weird.

MOONPIE

What's after Head Rat? Shoulder Rat?

PUSHPOP

Still weird.

GUPPY

Moon Rat.

ALLIE

No titles. We're all the same.

The girls are becoming silhouettes now, framed against the glowing red city.

GUPPY

We need a new home.

ALLIE

We'll find one.

GUPPY

Another sewer, I hope.

ALLIE

You don't want to be above ground?

GUPPY

Sleep above ground? That's crazy.

ALLIE

Sewer it is, then.

PUSHPOP

But where will we go tonight?

ALLIE

I just happen to know of a newly abandoned warehouse stuffed with a whole city's worth of food. We'll have to give most of it away, but I think we've earned our share.

Guppy lays her head on Allie's shoulder. So does Moonpie, and then PushPop lays hers on Moonpie's.

GUPPY

What kind of food?

ALLIE

Your favorite kind.

GUPPY

Mon Dieu!

As the girls fade into the darkening city, the skyline appears from a slightly different angle, revealing the unmistakable shape of a collapsed Eiffel Tower in the distance.

FADE OUT

THE END