



UNIVERSAL CABLE PRODUCTIONS

TREMORS

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Pilot
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FADE IN:

EXT. NEVADA DESERT - DAY

The middle of nowhere would be a metropolis compared to wherever the hell we are. Cacti raise their thorny arms in indignation to whatever unmerciful God banished them to this relentless desert.

A RED PICK-UP TRUCK speeds down a dusty, single-lane road. On the side is painted, **VAL MCKEE: Graboid Hunter & Handyman.** The Black Crowes' "Hard to Handle" is blasting from the radio but drowned out by:

VAL (O.S.)
*Hey little lady labeedabetabeda,
Cause mama I'm so hard to handle...*

VALENTINE MCKEE sings with the passion of a guy who doesn't know how awful he sounds. Or cares. 50's. A much older version of the coolest guy from your high school. Or a much older version of the coolest guy from a movie you saw when you were *in* high school. Trouble in a beat up cowboy hat.

He races past a sign "WELCOME TO PERFECTION Pop. 43" sign. There's a logo of a giant worm-like monster with sharp fangs and tentacles reaching out of its mouth. Written next to it is "HOME OF THE GRABOIDS" but some well-placed spray paint has changed it to read "HOME OF HEMORRHOIDS."

The entire area is framed by mountains and canyons -- natural isolation. In the distance is a town. One road in, one out. Looming over it are TWO BRAND NEW GIGANTIC TECH WAREHOUSES.

VAL'S TRUCK ABRUPTLY TURNS OFF THE ROAD AND SKIDS TO A DUSTY STOP. He leaps out like a man possessed and runs to the edge of a deep canyon and for a second we wonder if he's going to jump... Until he unbuckles his pants to take a piss. But nothing comes out. Annoyed, he glares down at his penis.

VAL (CONT'D)
Come on, really? I don't have time
for this. Not today.

He does up his buckle and heads for the truck... But stops halfway there and quickly yanks down his pants again because THIS IS HAPPENING RIGHT NOW. Except again, nothing happens.

VAL (CONT'D)
It's not funny you little prick.
(then, conciliatory)
Look, we're a team you and me.
When I was a baby we used to do it
non-stop. Out drinking...
(MORE)

VAL (CONT'D)

sometimes we couldn't even make it to the bathroom in time. Hell, peeing's so easy we've done it in my sleep. And how about that time we wrote Rhonda's name in the sand? Rhonda Penelope LeBeck. It was the War and Peace of piss. So let's just relax and let it out.

Val closes his eyes. Breathes deeply, then... Nothing. He tilts his head toward the heavens, trying to stay calm.

VAL (CONT'D)

God, I know we don't talk much but *you see what I'm dealing with here, right?* So if there's any way you could work some of your holy magic-

A HIGH PITCHED SHEIK echoes around the valley. Val cautiously looks up to the heavens and asks...

VAL (CONT'D)

Is that a no?

Then from beneath his feet comes FAINT RUMBLING. Val immediately tenses and looks down at the ground, terrified. He knows exactly what's coming and he's scared to death.

He checks the truck. 25 feet away. Can he make it? Has to. Takes a few soft steps... but the rumbling gets closer. Too close. Val freezes. Braces for the unfathomable. Tries not to make it worse by screaming and/or pissing his pants as --

A SEAM IN THE GROUND RIPS OPEN --

And out pop six adorable desert moles. No joke, MOLES. Tiny rat sized rodents with no eyes and big claws.

Not at all what Val was expecting and even with no one around it's humiliating... Compounded further when he has dance out of their way as they run under his feet causing him to --

TRIP AND FALL. He lands on one of the little guys and SMASHES HIS SHOULDER INTO THE GROUND. He yells out in pain.

VAL (CONT'D)

Goddamn rats.

The mole squeezes out from under Val and limps away to chase after the others.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

Val's truck speeds off. SWERVES TO MISS CRUSHING THE MOLES racing through the desert. CAMERA TRACKS BACK to find the injured mole still way behind. He stops to nurse his wounds.

WE'RE CLOSE ON the mole when deep in the background we see a RIDGE RISE UP IN THE DIRT. Big, just below the surface. Ominous as hell. Then it starts to move. Fast. Displacing dirt and rocks as it speeds toward the unsuspecting mole --

Who finally *senses* it coming and without looking back starts to run *as fast as it fucking can*. The subterranean predator DIVES DEEPER INTO THE SAND and disappears from view. The mole never breaks stride until --

IT'S SUCKED UNDERGROUND. THWAP! And it's gone, just like that. Then with cruel indifference, the desert returns to its preferred state of languid stillness...

Until a few yards away, THE MOLE POPS BACK UP OUT OF THE SAND and keeps running like it never stopped. Fuck yeah, mole! Except a big chunk of it's side has been ripped out. But he's too busy escaping death to notice. CAMERA RACES TO CATCH UP but the second it does --

The mole is SUCKED UNDERGROUND AGAIN. Shit! Shit, shit, shit. A moment of mournful silence passes. Whatever keeps dragging him under is just as committed but much better equipped for the fight. Shit.

BUT WAIT! THE MOLE POPS BACK UP TO THE SURFACE. It's a goddamn mole-miracle. Except...

His hind legs have been torn off, leaving a bloody mess and limiting his forward progress to the power of his tiny arms and oversized claws. Goddamit. It's nearly impossible to watch but his courage demands our observance.

He lurches slowly forward until he just can't. Then THE SAND AROUND HIM STARTS TO SINK. He tries to climb out but is dragged down by the sand until he's gone. Beat. Beat.

CAMERA SLOWLY PULLS BACK. Respectively leaving the area... Until something EXPLODES OUT OF THE GROUND AND SOARS HIGH INTO THE SKY. THE MOLE.

It lands with a thud. A bloody, mangled carcass. And in a gruesome tableau behind it are THE FIVE EQUALLY BLOODY AND MALIGNED BODIES OF THE OTHER MOLES IT WAS CHASING --

TITLE: TREMORS

FADE IN:

EXT. PERFECTION - DAY

A small town with a big identity crisis. Main Street is a collection of quaint, old-timey ma and pa shops... But crammed in between them are box-like office complexes and mini strip malls that reek of fast, cheap 90's design. The general vibe is an old town that got too big, too fast.

But the conflicting styles are unified by two themes. The first is failure. All the offices and stores are boarded up and create a depressing ghost town feel.

The second is Graboids. Images of the worm-like monster are everywhere. Graboid Grocery, Grab-a-Coffee, Worm Pose Yoga. And in the center of Main Street, A GIGANTIC GRABOID STATUE WITH A LIFE-SIZE VERSION OF VAL RIDING IT LIKE A COWBOY.

HARLAN (PRELAP)

What if none of this is real?

CUT TO:

INT. CHANG'S MARKET - DAY

Just off the main drag. Groceries, household goods and a greasy diner. Chang's does everything the stores on main street used to. And it's built for way more customers than the two it currently hosts. Heavy on Graboid decor.

HARLAN FOGLE, the guy we just heard, is a scruffy mess in his late 40's. He sits at the counter talking to NICO GARZA, 20's, eating at a table nearby. Nico's a rugged, cool, cowboy-type wearing coveralls labeled, "Earl's Graboid Waste Gobbling."

NICO

Definitely feels like a nightmare.

As they talk we get a look at the framed newspaper and magazine articles covering the walls: "MONSTERS ATTACK SMALL TOWN," "TERROR TUESDAY IN PERFECTION," "GRABOIDS KILL 10,"

Then, "NO MORE MONSTERS," "WHERE'D THE WORMS GO?" "PRESIDENT BUSH DECLARES: GRABOIDS GONE FOR GOOD!"

Most of the articles feature photos of Val, then a mid-20's, dreamy matinee star and press darling...

"HANDSOME HERO SAVES TOWN", "HUNKY GRABOID HUNTER", "VALENTINE MCKEE WORMS INTO AMERICA'S HEART." Even Patrick Swayze's "SEXIEST MAN ALIVE" 1991 PEOPLE MAGAZINE cover has a photo of Val in the corner with the caption, "Graboid Hunk is Pure Perfection." Every article is from that same time.

HARLAN

There's a theory that everyone projects their thoughts onto the physical plane and the ones we all subconsciously agree on become our perceived "reality."

NICO

I sure didn't agree to any of this.

HARLAN

Rejection can be as powerful a creational force as acceptance.

JIA CHANG suddenly clears Harlan's unfinished breakfast plate. She's 17 with the coolness of a teen assassin. Harlan starts to protest but LIN CHANG yells at him --

LIN

I warned you. No more Zen crap.

Lin owns and operates the place. 60's. Acerbic, intimidating, scary and... sill sexy. Harlan ignores her.

HARLAN

You want to leave because you hate it here. But if you *did* help create this environment, the aspects you hate will follow you.

NICO

You think I'm going to turn Miami into a wasteland with just my mind?

HARLAN

Maybe you already have. Maybe that's why you're still here.

SMACK! A BOTTLE OF "GRABOID BLOOD" ketchup HITS HIM ON THE HEAD and squirts on his face. Harlan sighs and wipes it up. Shoots Lin with a "was that necessary" look. She shrugs.

LIN

Don't tell him shit isn't real. He smells it every day.

The door opens and A GROUP OF MEN WALK IN. Five of them park at a table. TOBY KINDT, a black professional type with a big smile and twinkle in his eye approaches Lin.

TOBY

Good morning, I'm Toby Kindt. Datalux transitions liaison.

Lin's not interested. Toby is undaunted.

TOBY (CONT'D)

I'm pleased to announce the data centers are all done. *Completely* unmanned. So these boys are the last geeky strangers you'll see lurking around your lovely town.

Lin turns away and walks behind the counter.

TOBY (CONT'D)

And to thank you for your patience over this last year, Datalux would like to buy everyone breakfast.

HARLAN

Your timing couldn't be better.

But Lin pulls out a shotgun and points it at Toby who nearly shits his pants. The others have seen this move before.

LIN

LIARS.

HARLAN

Okay Lin, put the gun down.

LIN

Where's the tech boom?

TOBY

Excuse me?

LIN

Google BOOM. Facebook BOOM. AOL BOOM.

TOBY

You thought we were... terrorists?

JAI

The booms are meant to signify growth. No idea what AOL is--

HARLAN

Datalux was our last hope... Your business and the business we thought you'd attract.

LIN

You said we'd be the Silicon Valley of the South West Valley.

TOBY

No, that's... ridiculous.

HARLAN

She's thinking of a different non-Asian. Who convinced us to give you guys the cheap land lease.

JAI

I mean, that slogan alone--

Lin wields the gun like it's angry, pointing finger.

LIN

But you never even came in for food or beer... Even porn. You going to tell me computer geeks don't like porn?

TOBY

We tried to have as little impact as possible. Datalux is America's basement. A quiet, out of the way place to keep your memories.

HARLAN

Shoot him.

Toby can't believe how bad his luck just turned.

TOBY

You were on my side.

HARLAN

Until I remembered corporate monsters like you lull people into a false sense of security while letting 15 year old Ukrainian hackers bend us over, whip out their codes and screw--

The door bursts open. Toby braces for death. It's Val, preoccupied and oblivious.

VAL

Great news and weird news. Weird is I was just attacked by desert moles, scared out of their goddamn--

Then he sees Lin's shotgun and ducks out of the line of fire.

VAL (CONT'D)

Jesus Lin, can't you just spit in the guy's food?

HARLAN

He's from Datalux. They're shipping out and she never got to put a Chang's on every corner.

Val takes perverse joy in this. Jai hands him a beer for which he politely nods his thanks then,

VAL

Put down the gun Lin, it's your own damn fault. I told you all not to listen to Melvin. He's a weasel that grew up into a shithead.

Lin reluctantly lowers the gun. Toby breathes again.

TOBY

Thank you. Toby Kindt. Datalux transitions liaison.

Val knows the name and impressively switches into supercharged charm mode.

VAL

Sure, I left you some messages a while back about choosing Graboid World for all your event needs. Parties, corporate retreats, bar mitzvahs. We bring thrills to your joyous occasions. How about a going away party?

TOBY

I'm afraid we're the last ones here and these boys are headed home.

But Val's bounces back instantly. He's too excited to care.

VAL

Timing's bad for me anyway. My daughter's coming into town--

HARLAN

Emily's coming? That's great news.

VAL

This morning. Surprise visit.

LIN

I have news too. Your park's flooded.

VAL

Aw, damn it. I'll check later.

LIN

Now. Before it spreads.

It's going to mess with his timing but...

VAL

Yeah, I guess we can't afford to lose Graboid World.

LIN

No, before it spreads here.

VAL

(laughs)

That's what your worried about? Why, was Chang's just named America's 112 top tourist destination? Or featured in season one of Road Rules? Spreads here...

He's still laughing on his way to the door. Nico follows.

NICO

Hold up, I'm coming with you.

VAL

Relax, Junior. If I take a dump I'll be sure to holler.

NICO

I can't let you near any pipes without an Earl's employee present.

Val stops, eyes Nico. What the fuck?

VAL

Says who? *Earl*? He send a royal proclamation from his toilet throne in Bixby?

NICO

If by proclamation you mean text...

VAL

Well, it's my damn park. And fixing things is what I do.

NICO

Not if it involves Earl's pipes. He says you always talked better than you actually did.

VAL
If it weren't for my doing, he'd be dead.

NICO
He thinks you got lucky.

Val glares, anger rushing to his face.

HARLAN
(quickly)
Nico, why don't you get your tools--

VAL
Earl's plan was to *die*. To hide from the last Graboid and starve to death. You don't see his picture up here, do you?

NICO
Probably too busy getting rich. He just expanded into a sixth county--

He points to his Earl's Graboid Waste Gobbling patch as he heads out the door --

VAL
Only proves how full of shit he is.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHANG'S MARKET - DAY

Nico rifles through his truck as Val and Harlan step outside.

HARLAN
That's great about Emily. Feels like forever since she was here.

VAL
Nineteen months.
(knowing confidence)
Finishing her degree is gonna be a game changer.

HARLAN
How so?

Val's smile is big and knowing and full of certainty.

VAL
I gotta feeling you'll be seeing a lot more of her around here.

It takes Harlan a second to work out the basis of his certainty. When he does, he tries to temper expectations.

HARLAN

Val, you guys made that deal a *long* time ago.

VAL

Don't you always say time's like a pancake? And everything we do has already happened and will happen again, and again and again? So yeah, me and Em might have ordered that tall stack of flapjacks twenty years ago, but we also ordered it twenty seconds ago too. And there's tons to go around so relax and pull up a chair.

Harlan smiles. As nonsensical as his explanation may be, Val's excitement is infectious.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - TUNNEL - DAY

TWO CARS emerge from a dark tunnel then pull off the side of the road. From one car steps MELVIN PLUGG. 40's, annoying. Not nearly as slick as he wants to be. Behind him is JESSICA FLORENCE, also 40's. Smart and accomplished well beyond the shitty situation she now finds herself in. She gets out and looks at the Perfection skyline down the road.

JESSICA

Yeah, I recognize it now. But I still don't remember you.

MELVIN

There were only eight survivors.

JESSICA

I remember the hot guy who was on TV a lot. The one who killed all the Graboids.

MELVIN

Right, I did the Pat Sajak show. Although Blossom totally cockblocked my segment--

JESSICA

No, really hot. Cowboy eyes and amazing hair. My best friend had his poster in her locker.

(MORE)

JESSICA (CONT'D)

(then, remembering)

The highlighting hair cream he sponsored gave her third degree burns and she never even took down the poster--

MELVIN

Yes, Val. And you know what he's been doing since? After the press and Army and tourists got sick of waiting around for Graboids to show back up? Fuck all. While I'm trying to redevelop this hell hole out of the jaws of ruin.

She looks around at the empty desolation.

JESSICA

How's that been going?

MELVIN

This is my last genius idea and their last hope...ungrateful bastards. So why don't you stop acting like a fan-girl and start engineering.

JESSICA

I can tell you right now this tunnel can't be opened up.

She says it with certainty that fills Melvin with fear.

MELVIN

You haven't even measured or scanned or x-rayed--

JESSICA

Trust me. It looks like it was built over a weekend.

MELVIN

Post-Graboid expansion happened fast and cheap. Just find a way to sign off because I need a bigger road.

JESSICA

Sorry. I'd lose my license.

Melvin changes tact. His tone becomes more repulsive...

MELVIN

You're an aging black woman playing a young, white-man's game. And your hard-on for safety and civic infrastructure sounds like nagging which is why you're out here in the middle of nowhere with me. I need your integrity and you definitely need my job.

JESSICA

You're an asshole, you know that?

MELVIN

Asshole, hero. Let's let destiny be the judge.

Jessica doesn't need destiny's confirmation --

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

The DATALUX VAN turns North off the main drag and onto the road heading out of town. Old-school RV's are sprinkled around the desert here. Laundry hangs out on clothes lines. We see some cattle, horses and dogs.

The van doesn't care. It races past them then past the entrance to GRABOID WORLD --

EXT. GRABOID WORLD - DAY

Set back from the dilapidated entrance archway is a shell of a third rate amusement park. Empty. From a distance it looks like it's probably haunted. Up close it looks old and dangerous. Among the attractions is a Graboid shaped roller-coaster and a water slide down a Graboid's tongue. Big puddles of water are everywhere.

Val and Nico trudge through the water and mud. Similar build, cockiness, handsomeness... Seeing them next to each other like this, Nico looks like Val's Mexican mini-me.

NICO

When's the last time anyone came here?

VAL

You don't know shit about the amusement park business. It's cyclical. Why do you think Walt Disney froze himself?

(MORE)

VAL (CONT'D)
Just shut off the main valve and
I'll check the pipes.

NICO
When does Emily get in?

VAL
Can't see how that matters to you.

NICO
No, you probably can't.

VAL
What's that smirk supposed to mean?

NICO
Nothing.

VAL
Let me save you some humiliation,
kid. You've got decent hair but
Emily's way out of your league and
if you knew her at all, I wouldn't
have to tell you.

Nico tries and fails to let the insult pass...

NICO
Actually we spent a lot of time
together on her last trip.

Bullseye. He's got Val's attention now.

NICO (CONT'D)
Driving around town, trying to find
you. Then hanging around on your
porch all night to make sure you
didn't go back out for more booze.
So yeah, I know her well enough to
know she's out of everyone's
league.

It's so loaded. Val tries to save face...

VAL
Right. Exactly.

He opens the door to a small structure tucked behind the
Graboid Tilt-a-Wheel and steps inside.

CUT TO:

INT. PUMP ROOM - DAY

Val climbs down into what amounts to a very narrow hallway. Claustrophobic and dark, the pipes on the ceiling force him to duck and he's immediately up to his knees in water.

We hear THE SAME HIGH PITCHED SHRIEK HE HEARD EARLIER.

Huh? Val ventures deeper into the walkway to hear better... Where the tight surroundings feel even tighter.

Suddenly there's the sound of something slicing through the water. Like a torpedo. More than one. More than two. Cutting above and below the surface, splashing against the walls, zig-zagging. What the fuck is it?

To find out, Val CROUCHES DOWN, SLOWLY SUBMERGING HIS HEAD UNDER WATER and now we're in nightmare mode. Too dark to see anything clearly. Every sound shrouded in a distorted echo. SOMETHING SLIDES RIGHT PAST HIM. Big. Fast. He spins to see what it was but it's gone. He rises to the surface --

Completely freaked out from what just happened. He TURNS AND SLOGS BACK THROUGH THE TIGHT SPACE but the water level's rising and he's in horrible shape and his progress is slow.

SUDDENLY HE SCREAMS and yanks up his arm on which we see a big fresh gash. He's bleeding like crazy and picks up speed. Like any second *SOMETHING'S GOING TO GET HIM FROM BEHIND*.

He finds the ladder to the pump room and climbs. Barely staying ahead of the rising water. One rung, two rungs... Suddenly, he FEELS THE LADDER JERK. Like it's being YANKED OFF THE WALL. He looks down into the dark water but can't see shit and scrambles up into the room right as the LADDER IS RIPPED OUT OF ITS BRACKET and disappears into the water.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRABOID WORLD - DAY

Val bursts out of the pipe room. Nico casually announces...

NICO
Water's off--

VAL
Graboid.

He's too out of breath to be understood. He bleeds and limps away from the room as fast as he can.

VAL (CONT'D)
Run. It got my arm.

The pipe room door is BLOWN OFF IT'S HINGES. Water blasts out of the small room and into the park.

But it's just water and dissipates quickly. Then nothing. Val curiously stares inside but it's empty.

Nico picks up a small CHUCKWALLA LIZARD that's been dumped out with the water.

NICO

Is this the Graboid that bit you?

Is it? Shit. Val tries not to look humiliated.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The emptiness of this wasteland can't be overstated. In the distance, the DATALUX VAN drives into view.

As it moves across frame we see something in the space it just vacated. The ground seems to be moving. Dirt is displaced and a RIDGE EMERGES OUT OF THE EARTH. Just like the one we saw in the first scene. Oh fuck...

SOMETHING IS CHASING THE VAN FROM UNDER THE GROUND.

Building speed. Getting closer and closer to the unsuspecting van. Until the road snakes behind a rock formation and both the van and predator disappear from view.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY

CAMERA TRACKS WITH A BICYCLE TIRE rolling along the desert floor. *Bouncing, dragging and slamming* into the ground. It's a constricting view that suggests imminent danger.

But the rider is unaware. Jai only cares about the height she gets from jumping boulders as she works the terrain like an expert BMX racer.

On her left is the back of a housing development. Jai spots A WOMAN walking along the desert side of the fence. It's not a walking sort of area so she stands out. Jai rides over.

JAI

Looking for your house, doc? Try the other side of the fence.

The woman smiles through her awkwardness of being caught out here. DR. MINDY STERNGOOD, 30's.

Blond hair, mischievous eyes. She's dressed casually and carries a purse... AND A METAL BRIEFCASE.

MINDY
Just walking. To clear my head.

Jai eyes the briefcase but Mindy jumps in before she can ask--

MINDY (CONT'D)
(quickly)
Where you off to?

JAI
Delivery for the Deliberates.

MINDY
I can't believe those freaky
hipsters... No, love-cultists? Alt-
hippies? What are they?

JAI
Trust-funded sugar-millennials.

MINDY
I can't believe they're still here.

JAI
They're never leaving. They get
off on Perfection's energy vibes.
(then)
Look who's calling the kettle lame.
Why are you back so much? Your
mom's gone - you should be in the
city sexually harassing hot nurses.

MINDY
(shivers)
That gives me bad residency
flashbacks. They're too nurturing.
And this is still my home.

Jai shakes her head as she gets on her bike. A TRUCK RUMBLES BY. It's Val and Mindy's attention spikes. Jai sees it.

JAI
Dude, he's a hundred.

MINDY
No, he's not.

JAI
You're a freak.

MINDY
He saved my life.

JAI
You were nine. Maybe he was just showing off.

MINDY
No, I was dead. Bouncing on my pogo stick was like begging the Graboids to kill me. With Paula Abdul *cranked* on my Walkman so I wouldn't have even heard me scream.

JAI
Walkman? You're a hundred.

She rides off.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN ROAD - TUNNEL - DAY

Melvin struggles to find a signal for his phone while Jessica takes measurements inside the tunnel.

The Datalux van appears coming over the crest of a hill, heading towards them. Melvin calls out to Jessica so she can move her equipment out of the way. She does. But as the bus comes down the slope, it picks up speed and...

CONTINUES RIGHT OFF THE ROAD. MOVING QUICKLY THROUGH THE DESERT... UNTIL IT SMASHES INTO A CACTUS. THEN NOTHING.

Melvin and Jessica share a what-the-fuck-was-that look.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHANG'S MARKET - DAY

Nico and Val get out of Val's truck. A ripped t-shirt wrapped around Val's arm like a bandage and trying not to use his hurting shoulder. Nico's enjoying himself.

NICO
What were you going to do if it had been a Graboid? Kill it with your old man smell?

Nico continues as they walk into --

INT. CHANG'S MARKET - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

NICO

Challenge it to a duel? Fax it an
angry note? Pump it with viagra?

Val's finally had enough and bears down on Nico.

VAL

I'm not too old to beat you into a
steaming pile of smartass--

EMILY (V.O.)

Hey, dad.

Val spins around to see EMILY at the counter. Early 20's.
So magnetic and appealing it's impossible to notice all the
walls she's built around herself.

VAL

Princess.

His wraps her up in a wet, dirty, stinky hug. Emily's laugh
is part affection, part suffocation.

EMILY

What happened to your arm?

VAL

Nothing. I'm so proud of you.

He's beaming. As Harlan and Mindy rush inside.

HARLAN

And they said it couldn't be done.

Emily jumps off the stool to greet him.

EMILY

Only you said that. And you said
it *shouldn't* be done.

HARLAN

Because you're too interesting for
a life of science. Trust me.

MINDY

Congratulations, Emily. You too,
Val. What amazing genes you must
have. Let's have a spin...

She motions for him to spin around. Val laughs her off.

HARLAN

Lin, your least disgusting special
for my young friend here.

VAL

Hell, no. Me and Emily have plans.

EMILY

We can stay. It's been so long
since I've seen--

VAL

These lazy bastards can get their
own brilliant daughters. Where's
your stuff?

She hesitates at answering what seems like a simple question.

EMILY

Can we talk outside?

VAL

'Course.

Val shoots Harlan a confident, I-told-you-so wink as he
follows her outside.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHANG'S MARKET - DAY

Val can't wipe the smile off his face as he and Emily stroll
down the Market steps. Emily's energy is nervous but she's
like that. Always working fast. Always looking ahead to the
next thought.

EMILY

So dad, here's the thing...

VAL

Hey, why don't I grab us a couple
of ice cream sandwiches? Remember
how we used to eat them on the
steps when we had our big talks?

EMILY

I had ice cream. You had beer.

VAL

I could get us a couple beers...

EMILY

What I wanted to say is I've had a
tough year.

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)

Between exams and internship applications I barely got my thesis in on time. Which is why I haven't called much. And didn't visit this summer.

VAL

Hell, I never got my school stuff in on time either.

EMILY

I've been going through it all with a crew of girls and before we all split off we wanted to have one last blow out together. In Vegas.

VAL

Perfect. So close.

EMILY

But I'm going tonight.

VAL

Like when the sun sets, tonight?

EMILY

It was supposed to be next week but one of the girls... I'm sorry.

VAL

So you'll swing by after?

Silence. This is the hard part.

EMILY

You know those internships I mentioned? I got one. A good one. But it starts Monday in Greenland. For two years.

VAL

Whoa. That's a lot of years.

EMILY

I'll be working with one of the world's top biologists. An old colleague of mom's.

Val takes it all in. Trying to shove aside his deep sense of disappointment with a brave face.

VAL

I guess I could come visit, right? Knock Greenland off my bucket list.

(MORE)

VAL (CONT'D)

(then)

Give me a good reason to make a bucket list.

EMILY

So you're not mad?

VAL

We'll just make the most of the time we got. Starting with a special bacon-grilled-cheese-french toast graduation lunch.

Her relief is palpable. Val goes to open the passenger door of his truck when a car comes barreling down Main Street and skids to a stop. Melvin leaps out, frantic.

MELVIN

I saw Mindy's car. Is she here?
MINDY!

VAL

She can't help you, Melvin. What you need a head shrinker.

Jessica comes out the passenger side, shaken. Val notices. But he's more struck by the strange sight of such a beautiful visitor in town.

VAL (CONT'D)

Howdy, ma'am. I know Melvin's incapable of attracting a woman as attractive as yourself and judging by the look on your face, I assume you're here against your will. Nod if you need me to call the police.

MELVIN

Shut up, Val. MINDY!

Mindy comes rushing out of Chang's.

MINDY

What the hell, Melvin?

MELVIN

There's a dead guy in my car.

Stunned silence. Then Mindy rushes to investigate. Harlan and Nico come out of Chang's to see what's happening. The back door of Melvin's car is open where sure enough,

The Datalux driver is sprawled across the seat.

HARLAN
It's the Datalux driver.

EMILY
What happened?

MELVIN
The van smashed into a tree.

NICO
Where are the other guys?

EMILY
What other guys?

HARLAN
He was driving the last techs to
Bixby. Someone needs to tell that
liaison lackey who was here.

NICO
Toby. He left his card.

He runs inside Chang's.

MINDY
I've got a pulse. No. Maybe.
Melvin, drive him to the clinic.

She gets in the seat next to him and shuts the door. Melvin
jumps in the driver side and speeds off -- leaving everyone
baffled. Harlan looks out at the desert.

HARLAN
So where'd those other four vanish
to?

VAL
Where, what, why and how all lead
to the same answer. Graboids.

They all turn to him like he's insane.

CUT TO:

EXT. DELIBERATES COMPOUND - DAY

Well past the end of Main Street is an abandoned school
that's been converted into a communal, Millennial utopia.

Jai pulls up to the front doors on her bike. Slings the
saddle bags over her shoulder then removes the front tire.

The door opens to reveal ARTHUR ZIEGLER. 20's, blissed out smile, red eyes and a beard as baggy as his harem pants.

ARTHUR
My delicate Oriental flower.

JAI
Not any of those things.

She holds out the tire. He's awash with awe and gratitude.

ARTHUR
Unbelievable. How do you get it?

JAI
My secrets are what costs so much.

Arthur whistles back inside the school and TWO DELIBERATES appear. One of them empties the saddle bags while the other swaps Jai's tire with an identical one. Arthur hands her two envelopes. She checks to make sure the money is right.

ARTHUR
We just harvested some brussel sprouts, can I make you a smoothie?
(off her reaction)
Chakra cleanse? Humility bath?

JAI
This is good, thanks.

ARTHUR
Is it? *Good?* Because embracing the earth's most powerful energy vortex is *glorious*. Join our quest for harmony and see that stack for the worthless paper it truly is.

JAI
I have intimacy issues. Vortex hugs freak me out.

She turns and leaves. Arthur closes the door steps inside. The walls are covered in art and graffiti. Music blares. At least a dozen DELIBERATES are painting, skateboarding, making out on the steps... Expressing themselves.

ZOE appears at the top of the stairs and everything stops. Mid 20's. A mosaic of ethnicity. Trembling with fear.

ZOE
I had the dream again.

CUT TO:

INT. DELIBERATES COMPOUND - MEDITATION ROOM - DAY

The windows have been blacked out and the floor is lined with pillows. Arthur and Zoe sit inside a circle of SIX DELIBERATES, all frantically sketching in large sketchbooks.

Zoe's eyes are closed. Arthur hangs on her every word.

ZOE

The sun was beating down but I was shivering. Lost in the desert.

ARTHUR

Go deeper. Put yourself *in* the dream.

She nods. Breathes herself into a new level of stillness.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Now look around. What do you see?

ZOE

Sand. Rocks. Mountains on my left. Half a mile away. Jagged. Three peaks.

Arthur's eyes light up. The circle of artists sketch away.

ARTHUR

That's new. Good, Zoe. So good.

ZOE

The ground starts to tremble. Suddenly I'm rising up into the air. Higher and higher...

ARTHUR

Look down. What's lifting you?

ZOE

I'm too high. I'll fall.

Arthur's tone is soft but commanding. Their exchange is intense. Unsettling. Zoe nears her breaking point.

ARTHUR

It's just a dream. What's beneath you? Look down.

ZOE

I'm afraid.

ARTHUR

You can do it. Look down.

ZOE
I can't... I--

She SCREAMS. It's like a shockwave blasting through the room. Her entire body stiffens and her eyes pop open. She's white as a ghost, her body shaking.

ZOE (CONT'D)
 It was the Graboid. Again.

Arthur takes her in his arms but it's his eyes that well up with tears.

ARTHUR
 She's just a messenger. The vortex is reaching out to you. Beckoning. Trying to get your attention however it can. Mother Earth is in pain and she needs our help.

He gestures to the group who reveal their sketches. Each one a different depiction of Zoe's dream. She studies each of them carefully, but one sketch sends chills up her spine.

ZOE
 Here.

CUT TO:

INT. CHANG'S MARKET - DAY

Melvin, Harlan, Jessica and Lin gather around Val who passionately tries to make his point.

VAL
 What else would made the desert rats so scared?

MELVIN
 Everything. They're blind.

VAL
 So what else was under Graboid World?

MELVIN
 Literally anything but Graboids.

JESSICA
 I thought you killed them all?

MELVIN
 Others helped, but--

JESSICA

No, him.

VAL

Maybe I didn't. Maybe they've been hiding. Maybe they hibernate for 25 years - we don't know anything about them.

MELVIN

You're like a freaked-out PTSD vet at a fireworks convention.

He laughs at his joke. Jessica recoils. Lin too.

VAL

Yeah, I was there.

MELVIN

So was I.

VAL

You spent the entire time on a roof, screaming like a little girl.

JESSICA

Do girls scream louder than boys when they're attacked by monsters?

It takes a second for Val to realize he's being called out for sexism.

HARLAN

There has to be a more reasonable explanation.

VAL

You're on his side?

HARLAN

Hoping not to be slaughtered isn't a side. We've had false alarms before--

VAL

Maybe they weren't as false as we thought.

MELVIN

Hey, I hope you're right. That by some miracle you're not as stupid as we think.

Val and everyone else is surprised to hear this.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

If the Graboids came back, the town would explode again and whoever wasn't killed would be rich.

He let's this sink in... Then pulls the rug out.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

But they're not coming back and Perfection is dead and if you keep listening to Val you're all going to die with it.

LIN

(dripping sarcasm)

Is that why you put up those giant tombstones?

MELVIN

I'm well aware that Datalux didn't bring in the business I hoped--

HARLAN

None of your schemes do. An EDM festival, luxury desert spa--

MELVIN

We have to evolve to survive--

VAL

We're fine. You're trying to turn us into something we're not--

MELVIN

You're ignorantly waiting around for the end to come.

HARLAN

So what's the new plan to save us?

All eyes on Melvin. He soaks up their focus, but only offers a shit-eating grin...

MELVIN

When I'm ready, I promise you'll be kissing my ass to get in line.

Harlan looks to Jessica but she wants no part of this.

JESSICA

I'm going to wait outside.

VAL
Ma'am, with these reinforced glass
floors, you're safer in than out.

LIN
Stop talking about Graboids.

VAL
Fine. Bury your head in the sand--
The worst possible place to be if
I'm right, by the way. I'm going
to fire up the Early Warning
System.

HARLAN
It's broken.

Val's full head of steam turns into angry vapors.

VAL
What? Since when?

HARLAN
Five years ago? Ten, maybe?

VAL
We've been sitting ducks?

MELVIN
Except there's nothing coming after
us.

HARLAN
All those precautions take money to
maintain...

VAL
Then I'll fix it myself. Emily's
here for gods sake.

HARLAN
I'll fix it, I built the thing.
You need to spend time with her.

He nods to a booth at the back but when they turn, Emily's
not there --

CUT TO:

EXT. CHANG'S MARKET - DAY

Val charges out of the store. No sign of Emily. But
Jessica's there. Standing on top of a picnic table,
stretching to find cell service.

VAL
You see my daughter from up there?

JESSICA
Nope. Sorry.

VAL
Careful. Things around here have a
fondness for falling apart.

She nods in a "don't patronize me" kind of way seconds before
A BOARD BREAKS AND SHE TOPPLES OFF THE TABLE.

Val rushes to catch her. And does -- just before she crashes
to the ground. But the gallant move YANKS HIS BAD SHOULDER.

JESSICA
You okay?

He nods/winces in a really strained way because he's still
holding her in his arms. She slides out of his arms then
stumbles, noticing that the heel on her shoe has broken off.
Of course it did. What a fucking day...

VAL
Let me take a look.

He picks up the broken heel. Jessica doesn't want him to.

JESSICA
I'll have it fixed. If I ever get
out of this... place.

He takes the shoe out of her hand and walks to his truck.
Grabs an empty coffee cup from the passenger seat, breaks it
into strips of styrofoam and stacks them into a neat pile.

VAL
Perfection isn't always welcoming
to outsiders.
(then, considering)
Or insiders either, I guess.

He takes a gasoline container and pours a little onto a piece
of metal then rubs the styrofoam stack into it. Slowly, the
styrofoam breaks down and creates a sticky goo.

JESSICA
But you love it here.

With a pen knife from his pocket he scrapes up the glue,
applies it to the bottom of the shoe and carefully sticks on
the heel -- then pulls out a hip flask, pours some alcohol
onto a rag and wipes away the excess glue.

VAL

I know what it can be.

He hands her the shoe and flashes his flirtiest smile. Then jumps into the truck and drives off. Jessica looks down at her shoe. Wiggles the heel but it doesn't budge. She couldn't be more surprised. Looks up to Val walking away.

HARLAN (V.O.)

Yeah, I know...

She turns to see Harlan standing on the market steps.

HARLAN

Just when he seems easy to peg.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Deserted as ever. And yet something's definitely going on in one of the stores: GRABOID TOURS HQ.

INT. GRABOID TOURS HQ - DAY

A STEADY, EERIE, PROGRESSION OF RHYTHMIC JOLTS rattle a glass case of electric Graboid-rods, a rack of camo-jumpsuits and framed photos of young Val posing with tourists.

Someone is gasping for breath. It gets tighter and more desperate and BUILDS INTO A SCREAM. Then everything stops.

A CURTAIN PARTS TO REVEAL EMILY coming out of a changing room. Half naked. Rummages around, picking up her clothes. Fast. Nico follows her out, protesting and also half naked.

NICO

Stay. You can be the Graboid this time.

EMILY

You couldn't handle it. And I have to see my dad.

NICO

This second? You've avoided him for two years.

She can't find something. Searches with growing anxiety.

NICO (CONT'D)

I wish I knew you were coming.

EMILY

You couldn't feel my whole body shaking?

He holds up her phone. Ahh. She goes to get it but as she leans in, he playfully pulls it away and kisses her. She admires the move and enjoys the kiss. Nico snaps off a quick selfie and hands her back the phone.

NICO

Because I know you're already trying to forget this happened.

She can't help but smile. His awareness chips away at her anxiety.

EMILY

Long-distance relationships are an exercise in sustained delusion.

NICO

Then maybe I should go to Greenland with you.

Oh shit. Emily's heart stops cold and she quickly reverts to get-out-of-here fast mode.

EMILY

I'm going to be so busy. And you know it's freezing right? The Vikings called it "Green" land to trick people into coming.

NICO

Smart. I'll bring extra socks.

EMILY

Let's not rush into anything.

NICO

Exactly the opposite of what you were yelling twenty minutes ago.

EMILY

(coquettish)

We're a summer fling. That's why it's so hot. You don't want to make it less hot do you?

VAL (O.S.)

Em?

Shit. She throws on her shirt and as Val walks past the window. He sees movement inside and presses his face against the glass.

VAL (CONT'D)
Em? You in there?

He tries the door then steps inside. The sight of Em and Nico together is as confusing as it is horrifying.

VAL (CONT'D)
What's going on?

EMILY
Chang's was getting pretty heated
so we went for a walk.

He desperately wants to accept this explanation.

NICO
Did you solve the Graboid crisis?

VAL
It's being monitored, smart-ass.

EMILY
Ready for our celebration lunch?

Emily shoots Nico a look as she leads Val out of the store.

CUT TO:

INT. VAL'S TRUCK - DAY

Val and Emily drive down Main Street. Val is preoccupied, his eyes darting to the open desert to their left.

EMILY
So how've you been?

VAL
Really good. Great. How's your
mom? Still with Terrence?

EMILY
Tim. Nine years strong.

VAL
Good. She deserves to be happy.

EMILY
Doesn't everyone?

VAL

Your mom's special. I was never equipped to do right by her. Too different. But Lord knows I tried.

A small, suppressive sigh from Emily.

EMILY

So you've said.

VAL

Yeah, I did everything I could to keep her here. Both of you. Why, does she say otherwise?

EMILY

She barely talks about that time. I guess that's one of your differences.

(looks outside, notices)

Aren't we going to the house?

VAL

I want to check something first.

She sees the Datalux van in the distance. Can't believe it.

EMILY

You're looking for Graboids.

VAL

It'll only take a second.

EMILY

We have one afternoon together and you want to spend it worm shopping?

VAL

I just want to make sure--

EMILY

It's okay, do what you want. I'm the one who screwed up this trip--

VAL

Done. Nothing to see here, which is great, so let's go home.

He makes a sharp U-turn and heads back in the direction they came when they both notice a BRIGHT REFLECTIVE SURFACE SHOOTING THE SUN INTO THEIR EYES. Odd.

He looks to Emily, tentatively. She gives him a "be my guest gesture" and Val eagerly stops the car to investigate.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

A SILVER BRIEFCASE COVERED IN BLOOD, half buried in the sand. Exactly like the one we saw Mindy holding earlier.

Val fishes it out. It's been beat up like someone was trying to open it with an ax. The lock is broken. Val opens it to find temperature-regulating casing with numerous cutouts of varying different sizes. All of them empty.

VAL

Think these are for data flops?

EMILY

Floppy disks? No. But ironic that the data they needed most was the lock combination.

VAL

Maybe they were too scared to remember it.

Val scans the desert... Empty and desert-like. Too empty. He grabs a walkie-talkie from the truck.

VAL (CONT'D)

(into walkie)

Harlan, you there? You get anything from the sonar yet? Over.

HARLAN (V.O.)

I tried. It's dead. Over.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. GRABOID COMMAND - DAY

An above ground cement bunker filled with outdated monitors and computer equipment. Their guts have been ripped out and are spilling onto the floor.

Harlan is sitting on the ground. As far from the tech as possible. He's anxious.

VAL

Then build it again.

HARLAN

Maybe it's better not to. I don't want to legitimize your fears.

VAL

And yet you're the one who sounds like a scared little girl--
(checks Emily, corrects)
Scared little Melvin.

And Harlan is scared more than Val can even detect.

HARLAN

If I start getting swept up again--

VAL

I'm just asking you to turn on the machine. After that you can magic crystal yourself back to health--

HARLAN

That's not how it works--

VAL

Explain it to me when you're done.

HARLAN

I broke your leg--

VAL

We all had a little Graboid fever back then--

HARLAN

Because you refused to take me into the mountains--

VAL

You were convinced you could hear them out there... Laughing at us.

HARLAN

It was four in the morning and we were blind drunk. And the leg thing only happened *after* I lit your hair on fire.

VAL

Deep down I know you still want to know. Isn't that why you stayed?

HARLAN

No, I stayed to *overcome* those impulses. All the weakness my Graboid obsession exposed.

VAL

Then this is the perfect test. Over.

Harlan looks at the mess of shitty technology before him.

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Three jagged peaks in the distance look just like the one from the sketch Zoe responded to. ARTHUR AND ZOE SIT NAKED in the middle of a rope circle. Incense burn at the four points of the compass. Eyes closed. Attitudes, committed.

ARTHUR

We are humbled by your divinity and offer our minds, souls and bodies.

Arthur dips his hands into a bowl between them and scoops out some mud... Which he then spreads on Zoe's body. The look on her face tells us how horrible it smells. He knows.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

We've forgotten what *life* smells like. After centuries of distancing ourselves from Mother earth we're strangers to the very force that sustains us. But today we return... And let her feed on our energy to help heal.

Zoe nods and applies mud to his face and chest. Then climbs on top of him. Then they start to have sex.

CUT TO:

INT. EMERGENCY CLINIC - DAY

Mindy is connecting pads, probes and suction to the Datalux driver who lays motionless on a hospital bed. Melvin barely pays attention while playing Q Billion on an ancient Gameboy.

MELVIN

Is he alive?

MINDY

Stable but unresponsive. Coma at best, brain dead at worst.

MELVIN

First Val, now him. This brain
dead thing is spreading.

MINDY

There's no functioning equipment
here, we have to get him to Bixby.
(worried, then)
Look for a syringe in the closet.

Melvin puts down the game and opens the supply closet.

MELVIN

It's weird we don't hang out more
in Bixby, don't you think?

She doesn't. He hands her a syringe and Mindy carefully
draws a blood sample from the driver. Melvin finds an
exercise ball and starts dribbling it. BANG BANG BANG.

MINDY

My hours are crazy--

MELVIN

You find time to come here.
(BANG BANG BANG)
You know Adele's? I'm putting them
into one of my new urban live well
spaces. I'll get the chef to do a
tasting menu for us. Friday?

MINDY

I'm on call.

SUDDENLY THE PICTURE FRAMES ON THE WALLS START TO RATTLE.
Mindy stops what she's doing and looks around, confused.

MINDY (CONT'D)

What is that?

MELVIN

Shitty walls. Saturday, then.

BANG BANG BANG. He dribbles to show false indifference.

MINDY

I'll be recovering from my shift.
So what's your secret plan to save
Perfection?

MELVIN

Recover with me and maybe I'll tell
you.

He's smile is gross. BANG BANG BANG... RATTLE. The walls shake even more. Mindy watches them. Until her attention swings to the monitoring machines that suddenly come alive. PING PING PING.

MINDY
He's having a seizure.

MELVIN
He's not even flopping around.

MINDY
He should be.

She rummages through the medical cabinet. Can't find what she's looking for. BANG BANG BANG. RATTLE. PING PING PING. It's a symphony of foreboding that grows louder and more intense.

MELVIN
Use the paddle things.

MINDY
It'd kill him. Bring me that briefcase.

She points to the metal briefcase. Melvin grabs it and brings it to her... THE WALLS TREMBLE with more force. Melvin stumbles and the suitcase drops to the ground.

MINDY (CONT'D)
CAREFUL.

She grabs the case and carefully sets it on the table. Punches a combination into the digital lock and the case opens. She takes out a medicine vial then hurries to close the case but Harlan stops her just in time and looks inside --

It's filled with VIALS OF BLOOD, TISSUE AND CULTURE SAMPLES. Same exact configuration as the case Val and Emily saw. She slams the case shut but Melvin has seen. She covers badly.

MINDY (CONT'D)
Work from the hospital.

MELVIN
That you brought here?

BANG BANG BANG. RATTLE. PING PING PING. Mindy's running out of time.

MELVIN (CONT'D)
Cool with me. I don't trust a girl without a dark side...

BANG BANG-- SHE GRABS THE BASKETBALL, STABS IT WITH A SCALPEL and throws the deflated leather into the trash. Swish. Then turns back to the patient and is shocked to see that...

THE NUMBERS START TO DECLINE and the PINGS slow down. The walls stop shaking. Mindy watches the machine dials as every indication of his seizure disappears. Then realizes...

MINDY

He's not in a coma. He's trapped
inside his body.

(then)

He was scared.

She looks around the room. The symphony has stopped...

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT ROAD - DAY

Val and Emily driving. They turn into--

EXT. HUNTER'S POINT CUL-DE-SAC - DAY

A completely abandoned subdivision. Three different home models line the street in a semi-random order. Sticking out like a sore thumb at the end of the cul de sac is a bright yellow pick up truck with a big pink ribbon on the hood.

CUT TO:

INT. VAL'S TRUCK - DAY

Val pulls into the driveway right behind the yellow truck.

EMILY

Did I miss your birthday?

VAL

No, that's... Harlan's. He left it
one night. Too much to drink.

EMILY

(concerned)

He's drinking again?

VAL

Just that once. But he's fine now.
Probably shouldn't say anything.

EMILY

Why is there a bow on it?

VAL

If I had a nickel every time I had
no idea what he was thinking I'd be
the richest man in Perfection.

CUT TO:

INT. VAL'S HOUSE - DAY

Emily refamiliarizes herself with the surprisingly charming
two bedroom house. Framed photos everywhere. Family shots
when Emily was a toddler. Happy times.

VAL

I'll get your graduation lunch
going.

He leaves for the kitchen. Emily keeps walking. She turns
down a hallway and into her old bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. VAL'S HOUSE - EMILY'S BEDRRROM - DAY

A lovingly decorated toddler's room. With a smattering of
pop culture updates over the years. Bratz dolls, VHS tapes
and Twilight books. Remnants of summer vacations.

Emily's confused by a nearly brand new iMac on the desk.

EMILY

(calls out)

Why is there a computer on my desk?
You hate computers.

VAL (O.S.)

No, I love them now. I'm a
computering whiz.

EMILY

It's not plugged in.

VAL (O.S.)

Afraid my lightening fast typing
might set the old wiring on fire.

EMILY

There's no mouse.

Val pops into the room with a mouse in an unopened box.

VAL

I keep it with me. In case I want
to do any mousing on the road.

EMILY
(cautiously)
Dad, is this for me? Did you think
I was coming back... to stay?

VAL
No.

EMILY
And the truck? Harlan falling off
the wagon is a terrible thing to
lie about--

VAL
Fine, the truck's for you. How
else did you want to get around
town? There's no way your roller
blades would still fit.

EMILY
Is this all about the deal we made?
When I was six?

VAL
You always knew what you wanted.

EMILY
I wanted to sell cotton candy at
Graboid World for a living.

Val is suddenly struck with a brainstorm of an idea --

VAL
Hey. What if you did your
internship here?

EMILY
Study the pelagic process of the
Greenland Sea?

VAL
Forget that. You could lead your
own project.

EMILY
Dad...

VAL
Your mom never finished her work.
None of them did. Graboids are
still a mystery. Hell, you could
change their name to Emilys.

EMILY
All their evidence led nowhere.

VAL
Because they quit.

We can see how much this bothers Emily but she holds back.

EMILY
Mom didn't quit. Her funding was pulled.

VAL
Things might be very different now.

EMILY
Can we talk about *anything* else?

Suddenly a LOUD SIREN IS HEARD IN THE DISTANCE...

EMILY (CONT'D)
I think your grilled-cheese french toast is burning.

VAL
It's the Early Warning system.

He takes out his walkie talkie.

VAL (CONT'D)
Harlan, you there? What's going on...? Over.

HARLAN (V.O.)
This thing's a mess. I'm getting false readings all over the place.

VAL
Keep at it.

He hangs up and turns to Emily.

VAL (CONT'D)
It's not safe here.

EMILY
He just said it's broken.

VAL
Too many coincidences for one day.

EMILY
This isn't one of them. It was broken before and it still is.

VAL

I want to see for myself and until I'm sure you need to be in a safer place.

CUT TO:

EXT. EDGE OF TOWN - DAY

The siren is blaring louder here. Nico is waiting alone. Until a car pulls up and Toby gets out. They have to yell to hear each other.

NICO

Any word from the techs?

TOBY

No. What can I do for you?

NICO

I need the money you owe me for last month.

TOBY

That's not how our billing cycle works but I'm sure we can arrange something. Why?

NICO

I'm done. Leaving tonight.

TOBY

Is this a joke? I've got four missing men and a driver in a coma. Now's not a good time.

NICO

Earl's got plenty of people to take my place and you can make the same arrangement with whoever does.

Toby's genial nature takes a very dark turn. Still smooth but fucking deadly.

TOBY

You don't call the shots here, Nico. Mr. Zeilzer does.

NICO

But I'm the one with all the secrets he wouldn't want me to spill.

TOBY

And with everything you know, do you really think Mr. Zeilzer will give you the chance to do that?

Nico isn't so confident anymore.

TOBY (CONT'D)

You want to risk it? How well you can judge a man from the smell of his shit?

CUT TO:

INT. VAL'S TRUCK - DAY

Val races through the subdivision. Siren still blaring. Emily rides shotgun, worried about Val's speed.

VAL

How about we do your graduation lunch in the Graboid bunker?

EMILY

It's okay. Just forget it.

VAL

Tons of good stuff there. Freeze dried cake, freeze dried ice cream--

EMILY

Just watch the road.

VAL

You love the bunker. It's where we had your favorite birthday.

Emily turns and looks out the window.

VAL (CONT'D)

You were turning six. We stayed there all day watching movies. Way after we knew it was a false alarm.

(then, realizing)

How much you wanna bet the It Takes Two VHS is still down there? We can watch it today.

EMILY

I don't care about the Olsen Twins. Never did. I loved that birthday because I got to be with you and mom. For the last time.

THUD. They've hit something and the truck LEAPS INTO THE AIR. On the landing Val smashes his bad shoulder.

Through the back window they see a HUGE BUCKLE stretching right across the road.

VAL

That wasn't there a second ago.

EMILY

Have you been drinking?

BOOM! The TRUCK HITS SOMETHING ELSE and jumps up in the air. Once again, Val smashes his shoulder and yells in pain. There's an IDENTICAL BUCKLE IN THE ASPHALT BEHIND THEM.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Must be seismic. Probably what was tripping up Harlan's system--

Val TURNS THE CAR OFF THE ROAD and into the desert.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

HE SWERVES TO AVOID A ROCK, rumbles over uneven ground.

VAL

I can't lead this thing into town.

EMILY

Thing? Dad, stop.

BOOM! The truck SOARS INTO THE AIR... Then comes crashing back down hard. In the desert behind them is A LONG, HIGH RIDGE protruding from the ground. Oh goddamit...

VAL

Looks like we've made a friend.

There's a boyish excitement in his voice. His eyes are wide and twinkling and if his shoulder hurts you'd never know it.

VAL (CONT'D)

But I got all the friends I need.

HE MAKES A SHARP TURN and paces toward the edge of a cliff.

VAL (CONT'D)

You gotta trust me.

EMILY

Stop the car.

He slams down on the gas. Checks the rear view mirror.

VAL
It's right behind us.

Emily turns back but there's nothing to see. Val has brought the truck to its very top speed. The whole thing is shaking like it might burst. BUMPING UP AND DOWN AGAINST THE GROUND, FLYING OVER ROCKS...

EMILY
STOP THE CAR!

They're just a dozen feet from the edge and from here they can all see the HUGE, EMPTY CAVERN THAT AWAITS THEM.

He SLAMS ON THE BREAKS AND YANKS THE WHEEL. The truck skids, spraying dirt everywhere as it drifts toward the edge...

THEN STOPS. Just a few feet from the 200 hundred foot drop.

VAL
You think I'm crazy? Look.

He jumps out of the car, runs to the edge and peers over.

VAL (CONT'D)
Any second, a Graboid is going to shoot out the side and crash to bottom of the canyon. This is how I beat them last time. Hulk Hogan named a wrestling move after it. The "Valentine Bamboozle." Cause these dumb bastards don't realize they've run out of ground.

Emily looks over too. But nothing comes shooting out of the cliff. Nothing. Finally, Emily goes back to the truck --

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. CHANG'S MARKET - DAY

Val's truck skids to a stop. Emily jumps out. Val rushes after her.

VAL
Em, I'm sorry.

EMILY
We could've died.

VAL
I thought they were coming for us--

Emily stops and turns back to him. Livid.

EMILY

You want them back so badly. Just like the good old days. Like how you want everything. Look at your clothes. Your hair. You're trying to live in a memory that doesn't exist anymore because everything else has changed. Including me.

VAL

I know that. Of course--

EMILY

How? You visited once.

Harlan, Mindy, Melvin, Jessica, Nico, Jai and Lin all come out to see what's going on.

VAL

I didn't want the move to be any harder for you than it had to be.

EMILY

That was twenty years ago. I've adjusted.

VAL

When your mother left she made it very clear--

EMILY

Don't you dare blame her. You left us. You were an angry drunk who couldn't handle not being a hero anymore and you pushed us away. How come you don't remember any of those stories? Disappearing for days to sign autographs at a grocery store opening in bumfuck Idaho? Passed out in your truck, or on the lawn, or in the bathtub and scaring the crap out of us. Accusing mom of breaking up the family whenever she told you about a job offer and when she finally got the job of her dreams, refusing to come with us. You broke her heart, of course she didn't want to talk to you. But she never wanted you to stay away from me. She's the reason I kept coming to visit. She's the only reason I'm here now.

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)

To say goodbye because we both know
you're not coming to Greenland.
You can never leave because out
there people would see you for who
you really are and your fantasy
would shatter.

She storms off. Nico chases after her. No one says a word.

OFF VAL, too shell-shocked to move --

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Zoe has wiped most of the mud off her body and is getting dressed. Arthur is still naked, still covered in muck and sitting on the ground with his head in his hands. Crying?

ZOE

We'll try again.

ARTHUR

You probably just described the
location wrong.

ZOE

I mean, it was from a dream, so...

ARTHUR

You have to want this, Zoe.

ZOE

You think I don't?

ARTHUR

If I felt you drifting, so did she.

ZOE

There were rocks driving into my
back and you driving into my--

Her face suddenly has the pallor of death. She stares over Arthur's shoulder at one of the missing DATALUX TECHS CRAWLING TOWARD THEM...

Leaving a trail of blood. HIS LEG HAS BEEN RIPPED OFF leaving just a bloody stump. Zoe and Arthur run to him.

ARTHUR

What happened?

The guy's too terrified to speak.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)
How did this happen?

The tech tries to answer. They both lean in close to hear...

DATALUX TECH
RUN.

Arthur and Zoe look to each other. Run? Why? Where?

SUDDENLY, THE GROUND STARTS TO SHAKE BENEATH THEIR FEET. Arthur and Zoe scramble away, but man is stuck. HE SCREAMS AS THE GROUND OPENS UP AND HE'S YANKED UNDER. Disappearing without a trace beneath the desert floor.

Arthur and Zoe's expressions equal parts terror and elation.

ANOTHER SCREAM IS HEARD, bleeding in from...

CUT TO:

EXT. PERFECTION OUTSKIRTS - DAY

Emily SCREAMS as she runs into the desert between Chang's and Main Street. Nico chases after her.

EMILY
I HATE THIS PLACE.

NICO
Let's go. Right now.

Emily is just despondent and angry enough to hear him out.

NICO (CONT'D)
To Vegas, then Greenland.

EMILY
Nico, no.

NICO
I've stayed here, making as much money as possible so I could have the life of my choosing. And I choose Greenland. I choose you.

EMILY
You make a decision and think the universe is going to bend to your will? It doesn't.

NICO
I know you have feelings for me.

EMILY

Not enough to survive a year in the snow.

NICO

I don't believe you.

EMILY

I can't deal with this right now.

NICO

Just like your dad. You'd rather hide than deal with real emotions.

The accusation hits her hard.

CUT TO:

INT. CHANG'S MARKET - DAY

Val is drinking a beer. Not his first. He looks gutted. Harlan is next to him. Mindy, Lin, Jai and even Melvin all keep their distance.

HARLAN

Tolstoy said "There can be nothing better than what is. Wanting something different is blasphemy."

VAL

I'm not drunk enough for--
(then, realizing)
You think wanting Emily to move back is blasphemous?

HARLAN

Of course not, but by itself desire isn't active--

VAL

I stayed away for her sake. I didn't know anything about raising a little girl. And believe me, Rhonda never missed a chance to tell me how bad I was screwing up.

HARLAN

She was worried. About your drinking, about the future--

VAL

So I did the right thing and let them start over.

(MORE)

VAL (CONT'D)

Knowing some day I'd get my chance.
That's what kept me going.

HARLAN

All I'm saying is the present can
suffer when our focus is elsewhere.
Look at how fixating on Graboids
robbed you of time with Emily.

Melvin can't help but stir the pot...

MELVIN

Not his fault. Like Emily said,
he's delusional. It's a disease.

Val looks like he might hit him. Mindy intervenes.

MINDY

If he'd been right we'd owe him our
lives. Again.

MELVIN

He saved you, not me. He used me
as bait. Like the self-centered
chicken-shit he really is.

HARLAN

That's enough, Melvin.

As the three of them get into it, Jessica quietly sits next
to Val, offers --

JESSICA

For whatever it's worth, my dad was
a real bastard when I was growing
up and I never had the guts to tell
him. Probably because I didn't
care enough to want him to change.

Val takes in the odd encouragement. Surprisingly moving
coming from a stranger. He regards her with curiosity.

THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN. Arthur and Zoe enter. Arthur goes
right to Lin who seems to have been expecting him and leads
him into the back. Everyone reacts to his trail of stench.
He looks back for Zoe, who has stayed at the counter.

ARTHUR

Coming, Zo?

She shakes her head. Arthur disappears with Lin.

JESSICA

Is anyone's internet working?

JAI
No and my phone's out too.

JESSICA
(to Melvin)
Then I need to get back to
civilization to finish.

Zoe takes a seat right next to Val. Really close. Which is weird given all the empty seats in the place. Val slides over to give her more room but she grabs his arm. Hard. She looks freaked out and stares at him with uncomfortable intensity. But says nothing. Then when it looks like Val's about to turn away, in a low, terrified voice --

ZOE
When you looked into the eyes of
the Graboid... Did see Godliness?
Or a monster?

Her fear is unnerving. Val's about to answer when Arthur appears holding a big box and yanks her away. Zoe manages to convey one last look of terror as she disappears.

Val spins to Harlan, excited.

VAL
Did you see that?

HARLAN
I smelled it.

VAL
The fear?

HARLAN
The shit. That kid is disgusting.

VAL
I'm talking about the weird girl.
I know that look. She saw
something.

HARLAN
Val...

VAL
(panicked, realizing)
I gotta find Em.

He runs outside --

CUT TO:

EXT. CHANG'S MARKET - DAY

Val comes tearing out the door just as Emily comes rushing up the steps. He's shocked to see her. But so relieved.

EMILY

I'm sorry.

VAL

It's okay--

EMILY

I don't think we should leave things the way we did...

VAL

It's fine. Right now you have to go. Go see your friends.

His sudden change in attitude is hard to process.

EMILY

What? No, it's fine. I think we should talk.

VAL

Not now. Go to Vegas. Take the yellow truck.

EMILY

And just leave it there?

NICO

I'll drive you.

VAL

No.

EMILY

No.

Nico ignores them and runs off. Jessica appears with Melvin.

JESSICA

I'm heading to Bixby--

EMILY

(to Val, frustrated)

What's going on?

(then, realizing)

Is it Graboids again? Dad, stop.

Don't use them to hide from--

Val interrupts her with a meanness we've never seen.

VAL

You're right. Me leaving here...
visiting you... it's a choice.
That I haven't wanted to make.

Gut punch. Emily's shocked and hurt but she's sure as fuck
not going to cry. She slowly turns away and nods to Jessica.

EMILY

Yeah, I'd love a ride.

Then grabs her suitcase from the back of his truck and brings
it to Jessica's car. Val heads for Chang's.

Harlan opens the passenger door for Emily. She gets in and
Jessica drives away.

Harlan approaches Val who turns to watch the car disappear
into the distance. And only now do we see how truly painful
it was to make sure Emily left.

HARLAN

Was that necessary? Based on a
terrified expression from some
weird hippie?

VAL

She saw something, I know it. I
can live with Emily hating me but
if she ever got hurt...

MELVIN

If you're so sure it's Graboids,
why are you still here?

VAL

Everyone needs to leave. I have to
tell the others first.

MELVIN

You do that, Chicken Little.

MINDY

I'll help.

HARLAN

Me too.

Melvin can't believe their devotion to him. Val is moved by
it. Not sure if they believe him but grateful for the help.

MINDY

What's the plan?

VAL

See what the hippies are up to.
I'll grab some stuff and catch up.

He goes to his truck. Mindy follows, calls to Harlan.

MINDY

I'll go with Val.

She jumps in the passenger seat and Val drives away. Melvin turns to Harlan...

MELVIN

After you.
(off Harlan's look)
I want to be there when you all see
Val for the fraud he is.

LIN (O.S.)

Yoga man!

Now what? Harlan shakes his head as he lumbers to the steps of the market where Lin is waiting, her face in a scowl.

But when he gets there, out of Melvin's earshot, her scowl morphs into a look of genuine concern. She whispers...

LIN (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

He gives her a "what else am I supposed to do" look.

LIN (CONT'D)

What if he's right?

HARLAN

Val? Suddenly you're a believer--

LIN

It's not him I'm worried about.
Show me your hand.

She picks up his hand and he holds it in the air, like a gunslinger proving his steadiness. But his hand is trembling. Lin frowns.

LIN (CONT'D)

Squeeze my boob.

HARLAN

I've been feeling better. The
medication--

LIN
Then squeeze. Hard.

He checks to make sure Melvin isn't looking then squeezes one of Lin's boobs. It hurts a little. Him, not her. But the squeeze satisfies her enough to say:

LIN (CONT'D)
Try not to be stupid.

Harlan nods. Then after making sure that Melvin isn't looking, she gives him a quick but loving kiss --

CUT TO:

EXT. DUSTY ROAD - TUNNEL - DAY

Jessica's car races down the dusty road but comes to a sudden stop outside the tunnel entrance. Because --

THE TUNNEL HAS COMPLETELY COLLAPSED.

Jessica and Emily get out of the car to take a closer look.

JESSICA
Can't say I'm surprised.

A TRUCK speeds up the road behind them. Skids to a stop. It's Nico. Emily can't believe he followed them.

EMILY
Seriously?

JESSICA
What do we do now?

EMILY
Only one other way out of town.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRABOID TOURS HQ - DAY

Val and Mindy load Val's truck with weapons and other equipment from the Tour Center. Val winces in pain as he throws a pile of Graboid-rods into the back.

MINDY
What's wrong with your shoulder?

VAL
Nothing.

She moves behind him and expertly slides her arm through his and around to the back of his head. Val stiffens.

MINDY
Breathe and relax.

Val doesn't do either. So Mindy presses against him and pulls back his shoulder, demonstrating her control.

MINDY (CONT'D)
I'm not going to ask again.

Val submits. And as he lets out a deep breath, Mindy yanks his arm back and pops his shoulder -- then turns him around so their faces are just inches apart.

MINDY (CONT'D)
Feel better?

She eyes him like a toy. Killer coquettishness. Val's head is spinning. Uncomfortable and intrigued and confused --

MINDY (CONT'D)
It's okay, I'm all grown up.
(smiles)
You should see how I handle a pogo stick now.

HARLAN (V.O.)
Val, you there?

Val is frozen. Mindy's body still pressed against his. She slowly reaches down to his crotch -- where the walkie talkie hangs from his belt. She hands it to him. Val responds...

VAL
Yeah, Harlan. Over

HARLAN (V.O.)
We've got Arthur. Near Trident Rock. Things are getting weird.

VAL
On our way. Hold tight.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - DAY

Emily, Jessica and Nico stand in front of a HUGE CAVERNOUS CRATER that prevents them from entering the mountain pass.

EMILY
Seismic?

Jessica crouches down and points to the side of the walls.

JESSICA

Except those marks on the side walls were made by debris shooting up. Most likely from explosives.

NICO

Someone did this on purpose?

Emily starts walking around the edge of the crater.

NICO (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

EMILY

Not staying here. Someone sabotaging the town seems as ridiculous as monsters, but I'm not taking any chances.

JESSICA

We don't know how stable that perimeter is...

Emily's carefully making her way to the base of the mountain - - which would allow her to dangerously scale across to the otherwise inaccessible mountain pass.

EMILY

I'll walk until I can get cell reception and call for help.

NICO

There might be another way. Wait.

He's going to reveal a secret he doesn't want to say in front of Jessica so he runs to where Emily is.

EMILY

What other way? What are you talking about...

THE GROUND GIVES WAY BENEATH THEIR FEET AND THEY FALL. Both scrambling not to get swallowed up by the deep crater.

Emily stops her fall by grabbing the end of a large protruding rock. But Nico's descent is deeper and he barely manages to dig his feet into the side of the crater.

NEITHER WILL BE ABLE TO HANG ON FOR MUCH LONGER --

CUT TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY

Harlan quietly leads Val and Mindy to a huge boulder. Melvin is already hiding behind it. A few dozen yards ahead ARTHUR, ZOE AND SIX OTHER DELIBERATES ARE GATHERED IN A TIGHT CIRCLE.

MELVIN

They've been circle jerking like that for half an hour. Is this what you were hoping to see?

Val ignores him and passes out lightweight jump suits.

VAL

Put these on. They're made of dyneema fiber. Graboid proof.

Takes out various pairs of boots and helmets.

VAL (CONT'D)

These will cut down on vibration and these will keep your breathing in check so they won't hear--

MELVIN

Oh get over it.

He reaches past the protective clothing and grabs a shoulder-fired missile launcher.

VAL

Melvin, don't be an idiot--

But Melvin's up before Val can stop him. He throws the launcher over his shoulder and steps out in front of the boulder. Call out to the Deliberates:

MELVIN

Any of you losers see a big worm around these parts?

The Deliberates all turn to see him. None of them surprised. Or worried about the weapon in his hands.

ARTHUR

Big worm? As a matter of fact...

He and the others all take a step away and reveal they've been hiding--

A HOLE IN THE GROUND. Covered with ripped clothing and fresh blood and guts. Lots of blood. It's a horrific sight.

Val and the others are watching from behind the boulder. They know immediately what the hole is. And realize that goddamn, Val was right. THE GRABOIDS ARE BACK.

HARLAN

Oh shit--

VAL

Go back to the truck. Slowly.

MINDY

What are you going to do?

He doesn't answer. Instead, he moves out from behind the boulder and starts toward the Deliberates.

VAL

You guys happen to know when that hole was last used?

ARTHUR

Val. We were hoping you'd come.

Val glances to Zoe who gives him a half-apologetic shrug. Yep, she was the lure. But Val's focus is fixed on the very big problem at hand. Fear has made way for swagger. His confidence and command is sexy. He knows this is his moment.

VAL

You got me. You tricked the old man, good for you. But now you all need to very slowly make your way to that boulder behind me. I'll drive as many people back to town as I can then come back for the rest. In the meantime, the Graboids respond to sound and vibration. So don't move. Don't talk. Because if they know where you are they'll kill you. But they'll only know if you tell them.

ARTHUR

Actually, we had something else in mind.

He pulls out a gun and points it at Val. Then moves it a few inches, right at Mindy.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Doc, come on over here. And put down the bazooka, dipshit.

He's talking to Melvin, who bristles at the nickname but puts down his weapon. Mindy slowly walks toward Arthur.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

We're not running from the Graboid.
We came to Perfection to help her.

VAL

You're stupider than you smell.

ARTHUR

We cut communication with the
outside world so no one's coming.
And the exits out of town have been
shut down so no one's leaving.

MINDY

But you're lazy, self-entitled
millennials...

ARTHUR

Labels are so Gen Y. We've been
preparing for this since Zoe's
first contact with the Queen, five
years ago in Brooklyn.

VAL

There was a Graboid in Brooklyn?

ZOE

She came to me in a dream during a
meditation.

ARTHUR

She can be anywhere she wants.
She's the apotheosis of the earth's
suffering and so her psychic power
is limitless.

VAL

Just put down the gun.

ARTHUR

After you make amends for you did
to them.

VAL

To the Graboids? Really? What do
you want me to do, apologize?

ARTHUR

Sacrifice yourself. It's the only
real way to say I'm sorry.

VAL

Look kid, maybe the shit you rubbed over your body seeped into your brain but you're playing with fire - - if fire was a cold-blooded killing machine that ate fire for breakfast. So put down the gun and let me stop these bastards like I did last time.

ARTHUR

Stop them? You didn't stop them. You consecrated the land with their blood and their murdered spirits turned this place into an energy vortex. That's how they've been regenerating. Building an army to punish mankind and bring balance back to our ailing earth.

HARLAN

What the hell kind of pseudo spiritual bullshit--

ARTHUR

Give me your gear, Val. And everyone else on the boulder. The teen heart throb's life is finally going to have meaning.

Val starts to undress. Zoe and all the other Deliberates climb onto the boulder. So does Harlan. Melvin too. Val pretends to struggle with his boots, but really hops closer to Melvin where he can whisper --

VAL

Launcher. Wait for my signal.

MELVIN

You don't tell me what to--

ARTHUR

Keep talking and she'll know where to find you, dipshit.

Melvin stops. Val eyes the dumb bastard then throws his boots, jumpsuit and helmet at Arthur who gets dressed.

ARTHUR (CONT'D)

Now sing. As loud as you can. And dance. Like her life depends on it, because it does.

VAL
 You don't want to do this.
 Whatever you think is going to
 happen, isn't. I promise.

ARTHUR
 I SAID DANCE, OLD MAN!

He brings the gun closer to Mindy's head. She winces. Val tentatively stomps out a beat. Then sings...

VAL
*25 years and my life is still.
 Trying to get up that great big
 hill of hope...*

It's 4 Non Blondes' "What's Up?" Each time his foot hits the dirt we can practically feel the vibrations shoot through the ground. Every horribly off key note sounds like a siren.

The spectators on the boulder watch nervously.

Arthur uses the gun to lead Mindy away from Val and toward another, smaller boulder.

VAL (CONT'D)
*And I scream from the top of my
 lungs, what's going on?*

MINDY
 Val!

THEN THEY ALL SEE IT. A hundred yards away. Dust in the air. MOVEMENT JUST BENEATH THE SURFACE. A Graboid. Coming closer. Fast. Arthur's eyes go wide in ecstasy.

30 feet, 25 feet, 20 feet...

Val subtly gestures for Melvin to grab the launcher. Melvin does and SHOOTS. But nothing happens. Val's heart sinks.

MELVIN
 Nothing works. I hate this place.

Arthur turns to see what's going on just as Melvin throws the gun down in frustration and sure enough, IT FIRES. Sending Val's last hope of survival shooting way up into the sky...

ARTHUR
 Dipshit.

The Graboid hasn't slowed. 15 feet, 10 feet. Val reaches into his pocket and throws his keys to Mindy.

VAL
When it's busy with me, run to the
truck and get out of here.

MINDY
We're not leaving you.

VAL
Well, I'm leaving you.

5 feet, 3 feet... Val braces for the inevitable as the
creature arrives at his feet --

THEN GOES RIGHT PAST VAL

And straight to ARTHUR, who barely manages to say --

ARTHUR
But I'm wearing the boots--

THE EARTH OPENS AND A GRABOID EMERGES FROM ITS DEPTHS.

More massive than the old photos. More disgusting. Its huge
mouth opens -- a dark, wet cesspool of teeth and fangs -- and
THREE SMALLER WORM-LIKE MONSTERS POP OUT.

They hover around Arthur's head for a moment. Like their
assessing him. Before SHRIEKING IN HIS FACE.

Then inexplicably, they withdraw back into the Graboid's
mouth. And even more inexplicably, the Graboid DIVES BACK
UNDERGROUND AND DISAPPEARS as quickly as it appeared.

HARLAN
What the hell just happened?

VAL
Doesn't matter. We gotta go.
Arthur and nose-piercer get to the
rock. Harlan, Mindy and the two
white rappers run to my truck.

Everyone does as their told. Except Arthur who doesn't move.

VAL (CONT'D)
Arthur, RUN.

Doesn't even flinch. Something's wrong. Then Mindy
recognizes the frozen expression of terror on his face.

MINDY
He's paralyzed. Like the driver.
Trapped in his body. The Graboids
are freezing their victims.

VAL

They can't do that. And they don't wait to eat. They just kill.

MINDY

Maybe they're getting food for someone else in the pack.

VAL

Trust me, I've been through all this before. They don't play well with others. They don't plan or strategize. There's no pack.

HARLAN

Tell that to them...

He points at the ground around Val and Arthur where THE DIRT OUTLINES OF SIX ENORMOUS SNAKE-LIKE MONSTERS RISE UP IN THE SAND in a tight semi circle. Very much an organized battalion that's been lurking beneath the surface. Waiting.

Val can't believe what he's seeing. Then they SUDDENLY START TO BREAK THE SURFACE --

VAL

RUN FOR THE TRUCK.

He turns to run --

CUT TO BLACK:

END OF PILOT