

**TALES FROM THE LOOP**

PILOT EPISODE

"LOOP"

Written by

Nathaniel Halpern

Fox 21  
6th & Idaho  
Indio

FADE IN:

Blue. Textured with thin cracks and refracted light. A sense of wonder as we --

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

EXT. LORETTA'S HOUSE - MORNING

We had been CLOSE ON an ICICLE hanging lonesome from the roof in the cold blue morning light.

WIND causes the sleepy snow covered house and the barren branches of surrounding trees to creak like aching bones.

INT. LORETTA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

LORETTA (10)

Lies awake. Warm under the covers.

Not ready to brave the initial shiver of getting out of bed, she peers through the fogged window to observe --

THREE COLOSSAL COOLING TOWERS

In the near distance. Looming large over the region. Each outfitted with a single glowing light at its center.

The towers are feasibly rooted in our world as far as technology goes and yet their presence feels odd to our eyes. These are not structures we would see in our own towns. That is because none of us live in a town quite like this.

Loretta takes a breath and climbs out of bed. Rubbing her arms as she tip toes to her dresser.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Loretta, now dressed in winter clothes, pours hot coffee into a sleek thermos at the counter.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

Thermos in hand, Loretta makes her way to a closed sliding door. She places her ear against it. Listening. She slides the door open to enter --

PEARL'S STUDY

Book shelves brim with worn hardbacks. Embers from last night's fire still aglow in the fireplace while snow is glimpsed through the window.

REVEAL

PEARL (40's) asleep at her desk.

Her head in the crook of her arm. Papers with physics equations strewn about.

Loretta approaches and places the coffee thermos on the desk.

She observes Pearl who has a pen between her fingers. Careful not to wake her mother, Loretta takes the pen from Pearl's sleeping grip and places it on the desk.

The low WHINE of WIND.

Loretta ventures to the window -- finding it open an inch.

She closes it. The wind muted.

ANGLE ON

THE GLOWING EMBERS in THE FIREPLACE

No longer fanned. Their glow fades to grey.

EXT. LORETTA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Loretta exits and sets off for the day. Bundled up and sporting a backpack. The CRUNCH of snow under boots.

EXT. ROAD - MORNING

Alone, Loretta walks along a road cut between fields. No cars or people in sight. Her breath visible.

In the snow frosted field stands a large --

ROBOT

Impressive in design, it dwarfs Loretta and stands motionless on four legs. Covered in a thin layer of frost. Not having been active for sometime. It's a marvel to behold, but it doesn't earn a glance from Loretta -- for like the cooling towers it is a mundane sight in her world.

No more of note than a rundown farm tractor in ours.

EXT. TOWN - MORNING

Loretta moves through the vibrant town. People walking every which way. A timeless quality to the buildings and businesses conducted within.

-- there's the town square with a sleek single glowing lamppost at its center.

-- and there's the cemetery across the street from the library and barber shop.

-- and over there is the entrance to the LOOP. An open space bordered by fencing. In its center a small structure. Angular in design. A ramp leading to its entrance with a string of ADULTS queued up to enter. It seems there's no way the structure could house so many people. And yet...

THE FOG HORN SOUNDS FROM THE COOLING TOWERS

-- Loretta hurries along. Approaching THE SCHOOL. A large building on the edge of downtown.

To stroll these streets one is reminded of the mythic American Midwest as described by the author Sherwood Anderson while also being heavily influenced by the simplicity of Scandinavian design.

Listen as a crisp winter wind shakes the tree branches. And there beneath the wind and creaking wood, you can hear the faint sound of the hopes, dreams, disappointments, love and sorrow of the people who live here.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - MORNING

Boots in rows outside classrooms. Snow melting off them. Puddles gathering on the floor.

INT. CLASSROOM - MORNING

We PAN around a circle of desks. Kids silent. Taking a test. The scribbling of pencils and scrubbing of erasers.

We arrive at Loretta. She glances up to look out the

WINDOW

Where she sees a figure walking along a hill. A dot of black against the white snow. It's --

PEARL

Dressed in a winter coat. Her work bag slung over her shoulder. The thermos Loretta prepared peeking out.

ANGLE ON LORETTA

Watching Pearl until she moves past her line of sight.

Loretta's gaze lingers.

Waiting to see if Pearl will reappear for she is a woman who is both her mother and also a source of mystery. The adult world Pearl belongs to as alien and strange to young Loretta as this town is to us.

Loretta becomes aware the TEACHER is looking at her. This prompts Loretta to return her attention to the test.

INT. SCHOOL LUNCHROOM - DAY

Loretta sips from a carton of milk. Listening to the kids she sits with at one of the many tables. All talking over each other so that no conversation can be followed.

Loretta goes to say something but a LOUD GIRL chimes in over her. Loretta takes another sip of milk. Having missed her window to join in. To belong.

CUT TO:

EXT. LORETTA'S HOUSE - LATER

FROM ABOVE

We observe Loretta in the snow. Head tilted back. Eyes wide. Tongue out. What is she doing?

REVEAL

Loretta stands beneath the icicle hanging from the roof.

DRIP... DRIP...

She attempts to catch the drips in her mouth and finally manages to do so. Pleased.

INT. HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

Having come inside from the cold, Loretta goes to enter her bedroom when she hears -- singing.

She makes her way along the hall. Careful to be quiet as she finds the bathroom door half open and

PEARL

In the tub. Her back to Loretta. Steam rising from the water.

Pearl croons the song "Blue Moon" to herself. Her voice fragile. Vulnerable. Bringing a smile to Loretta's face as she listens. Pearl unaware she's there.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Loretta cooks dinner.

Skillful in dicing ingredients and tending pots on the stove. She knows her way around the kitchen. A self-sufficient little girl. Tasked with the responsibilities of an adult.

LATER

Loretta and Pearl eat dinner. Loretta eyeing a CHESSBOARD on the table. Mid-game. She makes a move. Then waits in eager anticipation while Pearl surveys the board.

PEARL

You need to think ahead.

LORETTA

I do.

PEARL

Then you need to be smarter.

Deflated, Loretta watches Pearl move a pawn to the far back row and promote it to a queen.

LORETTA

You can't do that. It's not in the rules.

PEARL

But, it is. You've just never seen it happen before.

LORETTA

It doesn't make sense.

Pearl considers Loretta.

PEARL

You'll find in life not everything makes sense. Your move.

Loretta struggles to accept this as she looks to the chessboard. Unsure of her next move.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Loretta on a footstool. Washing dishes in the sink.

THE FRONT DOOR SOUNDS

Confused, Loretta leans forward to peer out the

WINDOW

Glimpsing Pearl. Vanishing into the long shadows of night.

LORETTA

Wipes her hands with a dishrag before hopping down from the footstool to hurry to the

FRONT HALL

Where she grabs her jacket and boots. Eager to follow in Pearl's wake and see where she's going.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

ANGLE ON THE NIGHT SKY

The awe inspiring sight of shimmering ribbons of green light draped across myriad stars. Despite appearances, this is no supernatural occurrence. Rather it is the result of electrons colliding with the upper reaches of Earth's atmosphere.

TILT DOWN TO FIND

LORETTA

Keeping her distance as she follows Pearl in the dark. Who appears in near silhouette. Strolling along.

Just the CRUNCH of footsteps.

Loretta's breath visible in the crisp air as she looks to the passing homes. Their windows aglow. Intimate domestic vignettes glimpsed within.

Up ahead, Pearl stops. Prompting Loretta to stop as well.

ANGLE ON PEARL

Gazing up at the sky. Appreciating the sight as she exhales a frosted breath.

ANGLE ON LORETTA

Doing the same. Trying to see what Pearl sees.

ANGLE ON THE NIGHT SKY

The shimmering ribbons of green light are mesmerizing.

ANGLE ON LORETTA

Looking back at Pearl to see she has begun walking again. The distance between them greater than before.

CUT TO:

EXT. TAVERN - NIGHT

With the cautious footsteps of someone who isn't supposed to be there, Loretta approaches the tavern on the main drag of town. Sleepy at this hour. Not many people around.

A MAN (40's) can be seen shoveling ice from a storefront and sprinkling salt. The scrape of his shovel audible as Loretta inches up to the light of the tavern window.

Peering in through the frosted window at

PEARL

Seated with a group of adults. She's the life of the party. Everyone leans in to hear her story. Which remains inaudible for Loretta outside. The adult world forever beyond glass and around corners. Just out of reach.

LAUGHTER erupts from the group and Pearl smiles as she takes a swish from her drink.

In the cold, Loretta appears puzzled. This is a far cry from the Pearl she knows at home as her mother.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

A STONE skips across the surface of the water.

REVEAL LORETTA



Retrieving another flat stone from the ground to skip.

Out in the large lake are a string of odd VANE TURBINES. Like the cooling towers, they provide an unique sci-fi element to an otherwise familiar rural setting.

Skipping the stone, Loretta hears something. Faint. Not quite able to make it out.

CLINK. CLINK.

The stones at her feet vibrate. Making a CLINK sound as they nudge into one another. The more powerful sound comes from beneath the stones. Somewhere underground.

Loretta places her hand on the stones. Feeling the vibration.

She puts her ear to the ground. Hearing what can only be described as a persistent --

MECHANICAL HEARTBEAT

Loretta closes her eyes. Listening as the sound grows louder and louder still. Its source a mystery.

CUT TO:

INT. LORETTA'S HOUSE - DAY

Loretta enters the back door and hears an

ARGUMENT in the living room.

She remains in the hall. Listening. It's Pearl and a MAN but their words are hard to make out. Loretta creeps forward so as to hear better.

MAN (O.S.)

Well, someone stole it. This is bigger than your theories, Pearl. It's about limits.

PEARL (O.S.)

Which are there to be tested.

MAN (O.S.)

And respected. We all have the same question when it comes to the Eclipse. But there's a right and wrong way to pursue answers.

PEARL (O.S.)

I've done nothing.

MAN (O.S.)  
 We both know you've done plenty.  
 Just put it back.

PEARL (O.S.)  
 Or what?

MAN (O.S.)  
 Or --

PEARL (O.S.)  
 Yes? Or?

At this, the MAN unexpectedly exits the living room and makes for the front door. He sees Loretta out of the corner of his eye. Looks to her. His expression softening. He then exits the house. Silence.

ANGLE ON THE LIVING ROOM ENTRANCE

From our vantage point we observe both Loretta in the hall and Pearl pacing in the living room. Hidden from each other by a wall.

Pearl stops pacing. Frustrated. She forcefully KICKS a couch side table, causing a lamp to fall and break on the floor.

Fearful, Loretta takes a step back. CREAK...

PEARL (CONT'D)  
 (listens; beat)  
 Loretta?

Loretta runs off. Exiting out the back door.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Loretta runs through the woods. Struggling in the snow.

Exhausted, she finally collapses and lies on her back.

She stares above at barren branches and lets out a frosted breath as the distant HONK of GEESE can be heard.

Then, sensing she's not alone, Loretta sits up to see a --

ROBOT

Roaming nearby in the woods. Unlike the previous robot, this one has two long thin legs and its movement are reminiscent of a grazing deer.

It stops and turns to observe Loretta from afar.

They look at each other.

Sensing no threat, the robot moves on. Leaving Loretta upset and alone.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Loretta and Pearl eat dinner in silence. Pearl makes a chess move but Loretta remains disinterested.

PEARL

Check.

Loretta keeps her eyes on her meal.

Not one to be ignored, Pearl RUNS her finger around the rim of her whiskey glass -- causing the glass to emit a haunting and other worldly sound.

Loretta looks up. Intrigued by this "trick".

LORETTA

What do you do? At work.

PEARL

Why?

LORETTA

Curious.

PEARL

"Curious" she says.

(off Loretta's look)

You'll learn. One day. Do well in school and you'll work at the Loop. Same as me.

Pearl returns to her meal. Unwilling to say more.

INT. LORETTA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

An upbeat POP SONG plays while Loretta DANCES in front of her mirror. Putting on a show for herself.

Spinning. Stomping her foot. She'd be mortified if anyone saw her -- but in private she indulges this bit of fun.

It's endearing to observe how much her heart's in it -- but she can't dance a lick.

The music warps. Then shuts off. Odd.

Loretta goes to inspect the speaker when she hears

AN EERIE NOISE

from downstairs. A distortion of the mechanical heartbeat Loretta heard earlier when she placed her ear to the ground.

The lamp light flickers and goes out. Loretta moves for the door. Feeling her way. She peers into the upstairs hall --

All the lights are out.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Loretta creeps down the dark hall. She approaches Pearl's study, which appears to be the source of the eerie noise.

BLUE LIGHT

Spills into the hall from the open inch of the sliding door. An inch Loretta peers through to see --

PEARL

Her back to Loretta as she monitors high-tech equipment on the desk. The blue light and eerie sound coming from her experiment.

ANGLE ON LORETTA

One eye and part of her face visible through the crack in the door as she observes Pearl.

FROM LORETTA'S POV

The blue light and sound die off. A second later -- CRACK. The glass of the windows splinter but do not shatter.

Frustrated, Pearl looks over her shoulder at

THE DOOR

Where we see Loretta is gone.

INT. LORETTA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Loretta hurries into bed and draws the covers tight under her chin. The window is cracked like the one downstairs. Her breathing slows. Eyes on the open doorway. No sound coming from the rest of the house.

EXT. LORETTA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The house dark in the night. All is still. Wood CREAKS.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

ANGLE ON THE CHESSBOARD

In cold blue moonlight, water creeps onto the board, causing the QUEEN to drift forward while other pieces remain.

INT. LORETTA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Loretta awakens from her dream and reaches for a glass on the bedside table -- the water frozen solid within.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Loretta enters and crosses to the refrigerator. The glass of the windows are cracked here as well.

Loretta opens the refrigerator door. Light spilling out to

REVEAL

PEARL seated at the table. Staring forward. Expressionless.

Taking a sip of water, Loretta jumps upon seeing Pearl. She drops her glass and it SHATTERS.

Loretta observes how Pearl's mind is somewhere else. Distant.

LORETTA

Pearl?

No response. Pearl continues to sit in complete stillness.

Unnerved, Loretta closes the refrigerator. Casting Pearl back into darkness as Loretta retreats from the room.

Worried all is not right with her mother.

EXT. LORETTA'S HOUSE - MORNING

The house in the morning light. The FOG HORN from the distant cooling towers can be heard.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Loretta pours a pot of hot coffee into the thermos. Going about her morning routine.

INT. HALLWAY - MORNING

Thermos in hand, Loretta ventures down the hall and finds the study door SHUT. She places her ear to the door -- silence.

She debates. Still unnerved by last night.

Loretta then leaves the thermos at the foot of the door.

EXT. LORETTA'S HOUSE - MORNING

Dressed for school, Loretta drags a TRASH CAN to the end of the driveway. She looks back at the house. Cracked windows and no lights on within.

She then continues on her way.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The Teacher hands graded tests back to the students.

She arrives at Loretta and gives her test back --

TEACHER

Your mother will be proud.

The teacher moves on as Loretta smiles at her grade.

EXT. LOOP ENTRANCE - DAY

Standing near a guard station situated outside the previously seen gated fence, Loretta waits with test in hand. Eager to show Pearl.

Adults file out of the structure. Headed home for the day.

Loretta scans the crowd -- searching for Pearl as she begins to notice the odd looks adults give her as they pass.

Whispers. No doubt about her. Do they know something?

The last of the adults walk off and Loretta looks back to the structure beyond the closing gate. No one else emerges.

Disappointed, she pockets her test and walks off.

EXT. LORETTA'S HOUSE - DAY

Arriving home, Loretta drags the empty trash can up the driveway when her eyes narrow in confusion --

REVEAL

A snow covered VACANT LOT where her house once stood.

FROM ABOVE

We see how small and helpless Loretta is compared to the flat empty white of the land encircled by barren trees.

LORETTA

Pearl?

ANGLE ON LORETTA

Breathing heavy. Starting to panic.

She spins. Looking every which way. No trace of Pearl or her home.

FLASH TO

Pearl on the hill as seen from Loretta's classroom window. Only now she stops and waves to camera. Seemingly in goodbye.

BACK TO LORETTA

Teary eyed. Unsure what to do.

LORETTA (CONT'D)

(choked up; calling out)

Pearl!

A VEHICLE sounds from nearby. Loretta turns. Spotting the vehicle speeding along the road.

She takes several steps in its direction, raising her hand as if to ask for help -- but the vehicle is already long gone. Its sound fading off.

Alone again, Loretta removes her glove and places her bare hand on the cold snow. Pristine. No trace of home. She can't believe it.

Then. Something up ahead. Peeking out of the snow. Loretta hurries over and retrieves a jagged black

SHARD

Not wood nor stone nor metal. Smooth to the touch and yet has the texture of volcanic rock.

Loretta continues to inspect the shard. Unsure what to make of it. No closer to understanding why her home vanished.

The FOG HORN sounds from the distant cooling towers as Loretta peers up to see A FLASH OF COLOR up ahead in the woods. Someone is there.

LORETTA (CONT'D)  
(wipes tears away)  
Pearl?

The color fades from view as Loretta hurries forward. Determined to catch up.

LORETTA (CONT'D)  
Wait!

EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Now in the woods, Loretta turns in a circle. Searching for whoever she saw. Holding onto the hope it's Pearl.

Loretta glimpses the flash of color again in the near distance. There one second. Gone the next. Masked by trees.

Loretta hurries on. Deeper into the woods.

Finally catching up. And when she does -- she deflates.

REVEAL

COLE (10)

Up ahead. The flash of color Loretta had seen was the color of his winter coat.

He searches the ground for something. The previously seen deer like ROBOT standing nearby.

SNAP

Loretta has stepped on a twig. Causing Cole to look over.

They stare at one another. Twenty yards apart. Neither thinking to speak.

Disinterested, Cole returns to his search and locates a rock.

Gripping it, he winds up and HURLS the rock at the robot.



-- CLANG

It bounces off its metal head. The robot remains stationary.  
No response.

LORETTA  
(angry)  
Hey.

Cole searches for another rock. Ignoring Loretta as she approaches.

Finding a rock, Cole winds up and hurls it at the robot.

-- CLANG

LORETTA (CONT'D)  
What are you doing?

COLE  
Hit it in the eye and it's good  
luck.

Cole picks up another stone but Loretta grabs his hand before he can throw it.

LORETTA  
Stop.

COLE  
Why?

LORETTA  
How would you like being picked on?

Cole looks to the robot. Then back at Loretta.

COLE  
But. It's a robot.

Loretta lets go of Cole's hand and walks off.

Alone again, Cole gives it a think and drops the rock. He then retrieves a stick and uses it as a walking stick as he follows in Loretta's wake.

UP AHEAD

Loretta walks along. Resuming her search for Pearl. Sensing Cole behind her. Curious.

She glances back at him. He stops. Then as she faces forward he begins trailing her again.

COLE (CONT'D)

Ever wonder where robots come from?  
My brother says they're part of  
what our parents do underground.  
Like they made them. Or found them.

(no response)

What you doing out here anyway?  
These are my woods.

LORETTA

No, they're not.

COLE

Well -- not officially -- but what  
are you doing?

LORETTA

Looking for someone.

Cole catches up and walks beside her.

COLE

You lost?

LORETTA

No. She is.

COLE

Who?

Loretta stops. Eying something up ahead.

ANGLE ON A HUNTING CABIN

Dark and decrepit. Weather beaten. A large barren tree fell  
sometime in the past and rests heavy on the slanted roof.

ANGLE ON LORETTA AND COLE

COLE (CONT'D)

You don't want to go in there.

(off her look)

Haunted.

Loretta looks from Cole to the cabin door. Unsure whether to  
listen to him.

She then marched ahead.

Loretta nears the cabin door. Nervous. An eerie atmosphere.  
The windows half shattered. Hinting at only darkness within.

Taking a breath, Loretta goes to enter. Struggles. And then  
manages to nudge the door open --

## INSIDE THE CABIN

Daylight spills in from the open doorway as Loretta takes a cautious step forward. The floorboards CREAKING.

There's no one here. And there hasn't been for a long time.

Where the roof has caved in, a branch from the fallen tree reaches down into the cabin like long gnarled fingers. Bringing with it a shaft of light and gentle falling snow -- despite the fact it's not snowing outside.

The cabin is one open room. Minimal furnishings. A cot with mildew stained sheets. A kitchenette. An old freestanding fireplace. It's a lonesome place. Especially in winter. Beer bottles and junk litter the floor.

Cole appears behind Loretta. Surveying.

He pokes at the trash with his stick. Uncovering a

DEER SKULL

Which he retrieves and runs his finger over the grooved teeth. Counting them.

LORETTA

Nears the shaft of light surrounding the barren branch.

She holds her hand out into the light and snow. Observing the snow is not falling -- it's rising from a thin mound on the floor. Strange.

Cole drops the deer skull and approaches the shaft of light. Observing the reverse falling snow with Loretta.

COLE (CONT'D)

Told you. Haunted.

Loretta removes her hand from the light and snow and marches out of the cabin. Cole follows.

OUTSIDE

Loretta stares off at the surrounding woods. No idea where to go next.

COLE (CONT'D)

Who you looking for?

LORETTA

Pearl.

COLE  
Your friend?

LORETTA  
(voice shaking)  
My mom.

COLE  
Oh.

A beat. Cole can see Loretta is putting on a brave face but no doubt is worried.

Cole spots a pinecone on the ground and retrieves it.

COLE (CONT'D)  
(off Loretta's look)  
I collect the good ones.  
(beat)  
Where do you live?

Loretta considers Cole as he pockets the pinecone. Unsure if she wants to tell him what happened.

EXT. VACANT LOT - DAY

Loretta and Cole emerge from the woods to take in the vacant lot where Loretta's house once stood.

LORETTA  
I came home and then --

Loretta gestures to the pristine layer of snow covering the vacant lot.

COLE  
Your house was here?

LORETTA  
What do you mean?

COLE  
I've just never seen it.

LORETTA  
Because it's gone now.

COLE  
I know.

Beat.

LORETTA  
You think I'm lying?

COLE  
No.

Long beat as they observe the vacant lot.

COLE (CONT'D)  
Your mom work underground?  
(she nods)  
So do my parents. Maybe they know  
where she is.

CUT TO:

EXT. WILLARD HOUSE - DAY

Loretta and Cole approach

THE WILLARD HOME

A modest house with a separate garage situated off to the side. Unlike Loretta's reclusive home, this one is situated on a populated street of similar looking homes.

INT. WILLARD HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Cole and Loretta enter and take off their boots. The house uncluttered and cozy.

COLE  
My mom should be in her study.

IN THE HALL

Cole leads Loretta to the study as she eyes framed family photos on the wall. We glimpse Cole's older brother Isaac (17) and his Father (40's) in the photos. Among the photos is a painting of

COLE'S MOTHER

Loretta observes the painting. Finding something odd -- but then snaps out of it upon hearing

THE STUDY DOOR SLIDE OPEN

Cole peers in. Finding his

MOTHER (40's) and RUSS (70's) seated across from each other. Russ holding a cup of tea.

The study is similar to Pearl's. Perhaps more orderly.

The Mother and Russ continue their conversation while Cole waits in the doorway. Timid. Loretta listening nearby. Out of sight from the adults.

RUSS

Limits are there to be respected.

MOTHER

And yet you as project leader have pushed them time and again at the Loop.

COLE

Mom?

MOTHER

(to Russ)

Risk and discovery. They go hand in hand.

RUSS

There's a world of difference between risk and recklessness.

COLE

Mom?

Frustrated, the Mother looks to Cole in the doorway.

MOTHER

Can't you see? Adults are talking.

COLE

I just --

MOTHER

(stern)

Cole. I'm with your grandfather.

Cole looks from his Mother to Russ. Who nods at Cole. Warm. Taking a sip from his tea.

Cole closes the study door. We linger with Mother and Russ.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

(re: Cole's interruption)

Sorry.

RUSS

He's just a boy.

MOTHER  
He knows better.

RUSS  
So do you.

This lands on the Mother while we remain unsure what exactly is being referenced.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Cole approaches Loretta. Sheepish.

COLE  
My mom --

Loretta gives a slight nod. Understanding Cole's relationship with his mother is probably similar to her own with Pearl.

COLE (CONT'D)  
Come on. I'll show you my room.

They venture off.

UPSTAIRS

Loretta follows Cole along the hall. Stopping to glance through the half open door of a --

BEDROOM

Where COLE'S FATHER stands at the window in pants. A tired DOG lying at his feet. Gazing up at him. Absently tapping its tail on the floor.

The Father is missing his right arm and listens intently to a HOCKEY GAME broadcast from a radio on the bedside table.

The Father retrieves a ROBOTIC ARM from the bed and sets about attaching it to himself. Exposed metal and plastic without an artificial skin casing. Yet another mystery belonging to the adult world -- one that a whole later episode will explore.

COLE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Psst.

Cole gestures for Loretta to follow him into --

INT. COLE & ISAAC'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Loretta and Cole enter to find

ISAAC (17) lounging on his bed with a book. Half finished comic drawings pinned to the wall above his head.

There are two beds and a single desk to be shared. Decorated with odds and ends. A globe. Homemade comic books. Etc...

COLE

This is my brother.

Isaac sits up with his book.

COLE (CONT'D)

She's looking for her mom.

Cole retrieves the pinecone from his pocket and adds it to his curated collection on a shelf.

ISAAC

Did you tell mom?

COLE

She's -- busy.

ISAAC

Figures.

COLE

What are you reading?

ISAAC

Black holes. You might find this neat --

Isaac turns the book so Cole and Loretta can see a diagram. There's a shy kindness to Isaac. Far from an older brother who couldn't be bothered with his younger sibling.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

When a star dies. It doesn't always supernova.

LORETTA

What's that?

ISAAC

Supernova? It's like a bright explosion. So, instead -- it can just vanish. Quiet. Like switching off a light.

Isaac SNAPS his fingers to illustrate.



ANGLE ON LORETTA

Listening.

FLASH TO

Wide on Loretta's house. No movement.

ISAAC (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Then all that's left is its  
phantom. The gravitational pull. A  
black hole.

The strange sight of shingles lifting from the roof of the house. Drifting quiet into the sky. Weightless.

BACK TO LORETTA

As she makes for the bedroom door. Isaac and Cole looking to each other. What got into her?

INT. FRONT HALL - CONTINUOUS

Loretta grabs her boots. Starts to put them on. Frustrated with the laces.

Cole approaches.

LORETTA  
I have to keep looking.

Boots now on, Loretta gets to her feet.

COLE  
Maybe my dad might --

Loretta retrieves the SHARD from her jacket pocket.

COLE (CONT'D)  
What's that?

LORETTA  
Pearl took it.

COLE  
From where?

LORETTA  
(points to floor)  
Down there. Underground.

COLE  
 (takes shard; inspects it)  
 What material is this?

Cole tests if he can break it with his hands.

LORETTA  
 Careful. She wasn't supposed to  
 have it. I think it's why she's  
 gone.

Realizing something, Cole gradually lets go of the shard.  
 Sliding his fingers away to see --

The shard floats. Not hovering. Just holding its position in  
 the air. Loretta's eyes widen.

COLE  
 Cool.

Cole presses the shard with his finger and it moves down an  
 inch. He then pushes it to the side an inch.

COLE (CONT'D)  
 Must harness anti-gravity matter.

Loretta snatches the shard from the air and pockets it.

They look to each other. Cole then grabs his jacket.

COLE (CONT'D)  
 I'll come with you.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Loretta and Cole walk along the previously seen road. The  
 large four-legged ROBOT motionless in the field. A CROW  
 resting on the robot's head takes flight with a loud CAW.

LORETTA  
 Your dad. I saw his arm --

COLE  
 He doesn't talk about it.

LORETTA  
 And your mom?

COLE  
 (shrugs)  
 I don't know. She's not around  
 much.  
 (thinks)  
 (MORE)

COLE (CONT'D)

When she is -- she's not really there. Here. She's thinking about other stuff. Work I guess.

LORETTA

Sounds like Pearl.

They walk in silence. Then --

COLE

Why don't you call your mom "mom"?

LORETTA

She doesn't like it.

COLE

Yeah. I don't think my mom likes being a mom either.

Loretta stops. Irked.

LORETTA

That's not what I sad.

COLE

I just meant --

He can see how much she's worried about Pearl.

COLE (CONT'D)

We'll find her.

At this, they hear something, prompting them to head off for a nearby

BARN

It looks very much like a barn one would see in a rural environment. But with one big exception --

An advanced transmission tower has been erected on its roof. In addition, two massive crescent shaped pieces of tech featuring glowing lights pierce the rooftop and curl skyward.

The past and future. Fused together.

Loretta and Cole approach. Slip through a fence to get closer -- where they peer through an open window to see

A MUSICAL QUARTET

Seated in a circle. Playing the beautiful and haunting score for the series.

In this moment, we realize what we presumed was score in all previous scenes has in fact been diegetic sound. Rooted within this world.

Loretta and Cole watch the musicians. Listening to their performance. Curious.

DISSOLVE TO:

The music continues to play over the following

PAINTERLY SHOTS OF THE REGION --

-- The Echo Sphere. A large hollow steel sphere. Resting like an enormous egg in a snow covered gravel pit. Russ is nearby. Playing fetch with his dog (the dog seen in Cole's house). He takes a knee to playfully wrestle the stick from his dog's mouth.

-- A pack of TEENS hang out at the foot of the stationary robot in the field. Isaac among them. Stealing side glances at a GIRL who talks with her friends. We will come to know her in later episodes.

-- From afar, we see FELIX (40's) repairing the wiring of what is known as a "field hat" with a remote controlled robotic arm attached to the roof of his vehicle. It is the same vehicle that passed Loretta earlier. We will learn in a later episode Felix is Cole and Isaac's uncle.

-- Wide on The three colossal cooling towers.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STUDY - DAY

Cole's Mother. Alone at her desk. She opens a small wooden box of keepsakes.

CLOSE ON COLE'S MOTHER

Her thoughts drifting.

INT. BEDROOM - DAWN (BLACK & WHITE)

PEARL

Wearing a slip, standing in the center of the bedroom. Lit by light pouring in from the window. A small moth flaps through the air (in 2/3 speed). Dreamy.

BACK TO:

INT. STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Cole's Mother continues to go through her keepsakes as Cole's Father, dressed to leave, enters from behind.

Sensing his presence, she shuts the box as he rests his hands (one robotic) on her shoulders.

He places a tender kiss in her hair. Inhaling.

She leans her head back so she can look directly up at him. A shared slight smile. Genuine affection between them.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Lapping water on the shore.

PAN TO FIND

Loretta and Cole on the narrow beach of flat stones.

Cole gazes out past the string of vane turbines to the dark sight of a sizable

ISLAND

In the middle of the lake. Veiled in fog.

Loretta searches the ground nearby as the musical performance that carried us through the preceding interlude comes to an end. Replaced by lapping water.

COLE

Maybe your mom is out there. On the island.

Loretta keeps searching. Not listening.

COLE (CONT'D)

My brother says a monster lives there.

NOTE: A later episode features the island monster.

CLINK. CLINK.

Loretta finally finds what she's after --

The stones at her feet vibrate as they did before. Making a CLINK sound as they nudge into one another.

LORETTA  
Here. Come here.

Cole joins her. Observing the vibration of the stones.

Loretta lies on the ground. Gesturing for Cole to join her.

LORETTA (CONT'D)  
Put your ear like this.

COLE  
It's cold.

LORETTA  
Don't be a sissy.

Cole does as he's told and they both lie with one ear to the ground. Facing each other.

COLE  
I don't --

LORETTA  
Shh. Listen.

They begin to hear the muffled MECHANICAL HEARTBEAT Loretta heard before.

LORETTA (CONT'D)  
Hear it?

COLE  
(nods)  
What is it?

LORETTA  
I don't know.  
(retrieves the shard)  
But I think it has to do with this.  
My mom. And whatever they're doing  
down there.

WE RISE ABOVE

To observe the pair lying on the stones. Continuing to listen.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LOOP ENTRANCE - DAY

ANGLE ON THE GUARD STATION

GADDIS (40's) seated within. Dressed in a MP style uniform.

He raises an eyebrow as

LORETTA AND COLE

Approach. Peering up at him.

GADDIS  
Yes?

COLE  
Hi.

LORETTA  
I'm looking for Pearl.

COLE  
Her mom.

LORETTA  
She works here.

COLE  
She disappeared.

GADDIS  
I see. Well, I can't --

Gaddis sees the look in Loretta's eyes. Her struggle to remain composed.

GADDIS (CONT'D)  
Give me a sec.

Gaddis picks up the phone receiver in his guard station and dials.

GADDIS (CONT'D)  
(into phone)  
Hey. I've got a girl here. Looking for her mom.

LORETTA  
Pearl.

GADDIS  
(into phone)  
Yeah. Pearl?  
(beat; listens)  
You sure? Okay. Well. Thanks.

Gaddis hangs up.

GADDIS (CONT'D)

Don't know how to tell you but --  
doesn't seem like your mother works  
here.

COLE

What?

LORETTA

That's wrong.

GADDIS

I'm just trying to be helpful.

LORETTA

You're lying.

Loretta marches off. Cole left with Gaddis.

COLE

Sorry.

Cole heads off. Catching up with Loretta as Gaddis watches  
after them. Something dawning on him as he makes another  
call. Waits for the person on the other end to pick up.

GADDIS

(into phone)

Hi. It's Gaddis. Cole was just  
here. With a little girl. Yeah. I'm  
calling because -- the oddest  
thing. She said her mother's name  
was Pearl.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN. WILLARD HOUSE - DAY

We see Gaddis has called Cole's Mother, who stands with the  
phone to her ear before hanging up. Her expression  
unreadable.

A TEA KETTLE WHISTLES on the stove.

Her mind elsewhere, the Mother turns off the stove -- the  
kettle whistle fades to a whine as she then walks offscreen  
to the counter.

We PAN RIGHT

Only the Mother isn't there.

WE TILT DOWN



To find her seated on the floor. Back to the drawers. Hugging her knees to her chest. Expression still unreadable. But clearly the phone call has shaken her on some level.

CUT TO:

EXT. TAVERN - DAY

Loretta and Cole peer in through the tavern's frosted window. Behind them we glimpse a flatbed truck passing on the road. Industrial sized SUPER MAGNETS strapped to the flatbed.

Loretta scans the crowd inside. Searching for Pearl.

COLE

You see her?

Loretta shakes her head "no" and makes for the door.

COLE (CONT'D)

We're not allowed in there.

Ignoring Cole's words, Loretta finally crosses the threshold into the adult world by entering

THE TAVERN

Which feels as if it's been here as long as the town has. Sawdust on the floor. Framed photos on the wall depicting the early days of the Loop project. A thin layer of smoke hangs in the air.

Adults huddled at tables and at the bar. Conversing. Stealing side glances at

LORETTA

As she walks the length of the tavern. Dwarfed by faceless adults. Careful not to get in their way.

BACK OUTSIDE

Cole waits. Nervous. Peering through the window.

He turns to see someone approaching and hurries over to the mouth of the nearby alley so as not to be seen himself.

IN THE TAVERN

Loretta reaches the end of the bar and turns. Surveying the patrons.

The BARTENDER (20's) a woman who will come to play a more significant role in later episodes, leans on the bar. Addressing Loretta --

BARTENDER

Sweetie.

(off Loretta)

You looking for someone?

Before she can respond, Loretta spots someone who has just entered the tavern. Her eyes light up --

LORETTA

Pearl!

Loretta rushes forward and throws her arms around a woman. Embracing her.

Adults raise curious eyebrows as Loretta peers up. Her expression sinking in embarrassment upon realizing her mistake.

The woman she embraced is not Pearl. It's --

COLE'S MOTHER

Staring down at Loretta. Dumbstruck.

Mortified, Loretta lets go and steps back. Glancing at adults who observe her from afar. Side whispers.

Loretta looks back to the Mother. Locking eyes.

All that can be heard is the fragile sound of CRACKING ICE.

The Mother appears bewildered. She lifts her hand. As if to reach for Loretta --

CUT TO:

EXT. LORETTA'S HOUSE - DAY

ANGLE ON THE HOUSE

The fantastic sight of the house silently breaking into hundreds of pieces. An acceleration of when the roof shingles began to rise.

Each piece weightless as a snowflake. Vanishing into the air like falling snow in reverse.

BACK TO:

## THE TAVERN

The momentary spell broken between Loretta and the Mother as Loretta hurries outside.

We linger with The Mother as she attempts to gather herself. Patrons returning to their conversations.

## ANGLE ON THE MOTHER

Her mind racing --

## INT. BEDROOM - DAWN (BLACK &amp; WHITE)

## COLE'S MOTHER

Wearing a slip, stands in the center of the bedroom. Lit by light pouring in from the window. A small moth flaps through the air (in 2/3 speed). Dreamy.

Exactly the same as with Pearl.

BACK TO:

## THE TAVERN

Where the Bartender addresses Cole's Mother.

## BARTENDER

You know whose she is?

Without responding, the Mother rushes

## OUTSIDE

Where she looks up and down the street. No sign of Loretta.

CUT TO:

## EXT. ROAD - DAY

Upset, Loretta marches along the road. Cole follows.

## COLE

What happened?

## LORETTA

I knew something was wrong. This morning. I should of gone in. Like I always do.

COLE  
Gone in where?

LORETTA  
Then maybe Pearl would still be  
here. Maybe --

Loretta's expression shifts from sadness to anger. She removes the shard from her jacket pocket and HURLS it away --

But it fails to land in the snow. Instead, after losing momentum it ends up floating a few feet above the ground.

They stand there. Silent. Loretta frustrated with the shard. As if it's taunting her.

Cole then ventures over and plucks the shard from the air and returns it to Loretta.

LORETTA (CONT'D)  
If I had a kid. I'd never do this.  
I'd never make them --  
(beat; sad)  
I'd be there for them. Always.

Wanting to make her feel better --

Cole suddenly awkwardly hugs Loretta. Never having hugged a girl in his life. Loretta's arms stiff at her sides.

Eventually, Loretta rests her head on his shoulder. Accepting his affection.

ANGLE ON THE COOLING TOWERS

The sun sinking behind them.

Night has arrived.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ANGLE ON THE TV

The film *Paddle to the Sea* plays. A small wood carving of a Native American in a canoe traverses rough waters.

PAN TO REVEAL

Loretta and Cole on the couch. Nibbling grilled cheeses.

Isaac sits on the floor. An open yearbook on the table before him while he draws a portrait of the girl he was looking at in the field -- using a photo in the yearbook as reference.

Cole looks to Loretta. Still in her coat. Ready to go at a moments notice. He sees she's not really paying attention to the film on TV.

Loretta gets to her feet. Plate in hand.

LORETTA

Done?

COLE

Not yet.

Loretta exits with her plate. Isaac watching her go.

ISAAC

(eyes on his drawing)

What do you think happened to her mom?

COLE

I don't know.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Loretta rinses her plate in the sink.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Loretta wanders down the hall. Observing the framed family photos. Everyone smiling. She stops at the

PORTRAIT OF COLE'S MOTHER

Now recognizing her as the woman she mistook for Pearl.

Turning, Loretta peers into the study. Curious. She enters --

IN THE STUDY

Loretta switches on a lamp.

The low WHINE of WIND as Loretta discovers the window is open an inch. She ventures over and shuts it. Silence.

She then sees the small box on the desk that Cole's Mother had opened earlier.

Loretta approaches and opens the box...

CUT TO:

EXT. VACANT LOT - NIGHT

Cole's Mother walks up the driveway. Her breath frosted as she takes in the flat blanket of snow where Loretta's house once stood. The surrounding barren trees CREAK in the wind.

BACK IN THE STUDY

Loretta discovers an assortment of hand written notes and photographs in the box. Relics of a woman's past.

AT THE VACANT LOT

Cole's Mother removes a glove and takes a knee.

ANGLE ON HER BARE HAND

As she places it in the snow.

BACK IN THE STUDY

Loretta removes a familiar piece of YELLOW PAPER from the box and unfolds it. Lying it flat on the desk.

REVEAL

It's the test she got back at school. Her name written on it.

Confused, Loretta retrieves her copy from her pocket and unfolds it to put it next to this newfound copy.

Identical. One far more aged. How can this be?

Cole enters. Sees what Loretta is doing --

COLE

That's my mom's.

Loretta's gears turn. Trying to make sense of it all.

LORETTA

Your mom. What's her name?

Off Loretta, we --

CUT TO:

EXT. VACANT LOT - NIGHT

FATHER (O.C.)  
Loretta?

Cole's Mother still has her hand in the snow as vehicle headlights light her from behind.

Cole's Father (GEORGE) has gotten out of his parked vehicle.

The Mother turns to face her husband as he approaches.

MOTHER  
(amazed; to herself)  
It happened. It really happened.

GEORGE  
What did?

The Mother reflects back --

MOTHER  
Over time the memory faded. Made me  
think it was all a dream. The girl.  
(off his look)  
She's me.

And with that, the pieces of the puzzle come together and we realize Cole's Mother is in fact Loretta as an adult.

Loretta has seemingly wandered into the future after picking up the shard when she discovered her house vanished.

Cole's Mother will now be referred to as ADULT LORETTA.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Lit by moonlight, Loretta runs through the woods. Snow up to her knees as she struggles forward.

Batting away branches that scratch her face.

We hear Adult Loretta speaking with George --

ADULT LORETTA (O.S.)  
The day Pearl disappeared. I looked  
for her. I met a boy in the woods.  
Our son. It was the future -- but I  
didn't know it.

FLASH TO

Loretta stumbling upon Cole in the woods earlier in the day.

ADULT LORETTA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
And it's happening. Again. But for  
her. It's the first time.

FLASH TO

The vibrating flat stones on the shore of the lake.

BACK TO THE WOODS

Where Loretta nears the hunting cabin with the fallen barren  
tree resting on its roof.

ADULT LORETTA (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
What did I do next? I was scared.  
Confused. What did I say? I can't  
remember.

Loretta hurries inside.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Loretta shuts the door behind her. Keeping the howling wind  
out while the cabin CREAKS.

Moonlight filters through windows as Loretta goes to snap  
wood from the branch hanging down through the roof.

Being the resourceful girl she is, Loretta uses the wood as  
kindling to start a fire in the freestanding fireplace.

The dank cabin glows in the light of flames.

Loretta warms her hands by the fire. Her mind reeling. All  
she wants is to have things as they were before.

CLOSE ON LORETTA

Flames reflected in her eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LORETTA'S HOUSE - DAY

FROM LORETTA'S POV

We pass through the house. Moving from room to room. No one  
in sight.

FLASH TO



PEARL'S FINGER

Tracing a loop around the drinking edge of her whiskey glass.  
Emitting the eerie and other worldly sound.

BACK TO LORETTA'S POV

Searching the house. Frantic.

LORETTA (O.S.)

Pearl?

We move down the hall. Approaching the closed study door.

Loretta's hand reaches out to open it --

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN. LORETTA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Pearl seated at the kitchen table in the light of the  
refrigerator. Center frame. Staring into camera. Past it.  
Into the beyond. Then --

SNOWFLAKES

Begin to inexplicably fall inside. The eerie sound of the  
whiskey glass.

Pearl's lips curl into a slight smile. Enigmatic.

The light from the refrigerator fades.

Leaving Pearl silhouetted in the falling snow.

Rendered anonymous. Fading from existence.

PRELAP HOWLING WIND

BACK TO:

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Loretta awakens from her dream. Finding herself on the floor  
in front of the fire. She looks to the window -- the WIND  
HOWLING out there in the dark.

She then observes how the previously seen mound of snow on  
the floor has melted. Now a puddle reflecting the fire's  
glow.

Loretta hugs her knees to her chest. Attempting to comfort herself. Much like how Adult Loretta had in the kitchen. Feeling all alone in the world.

CUT TO:

INT. WILLARD HOUSE - NIGHT

Adult Loretta and George enter the front door. Cole hurries over to greet them.

ADULT LORETTA  
The girl. Where is she?

COLE  
She -- you know about her?

GEORGE  
Cole.

COLE  
She was in your study and then she  
ran off.

Adult Loretta heads for her study.

COLE (CONT'D)  
I told her not to go in there.

INT. STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Adult Loretta enters and finds her childhood

SCHOOL TEST

Lying on the desktop beside the open box. It's the test she wanted to share with Pearl the day she disappeared.

George appears in the doorway.

GEORGE  
Remember where you went next?

Adult Loretta opens a desk drawer and retrieves a flashlight.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Alone, Adult Loretta tromps through snow. The beam of her flashlight leads the way.

Hearing a twig SNAP -- Adult Loretta shines her flashlight off to the side. Illuminating the previously seen deer like

ROBOT

Which tilts its head in recognition and then walks on into the cold night.

Up ahead, Adult Loretta spots the

CABIN

Its windows aglow from the warm fire within.

Adult Loretta approaches. Peering in through the

WINDOW

Where she observes her younger self seated before the fire in near silhouette. Her back to the window. Then, from above --

A WATER DROP

Falls onto Adult Loretta's face and snakes down her cheek.

Adult Loretta shines her flashlight to the roof. Illuminating a single large

ICICLE

Like the one that hung from the roof of her childhood home. It drips again. The drop landing on Adult Loretta's forehead.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

On her feet, Loretta adds kindling to the fire and hears the front door.

She turns to find Adult Loretta. Clicking off her flashlight.

Just the CRACKLING of twigs as they stare at each other.

Adult Loretta moves further into the cabin. Loretta backing away. Tense silence until --

ADULT LORETTA

It's strange. All these years and I haven't been here since that night. Tonight.

(beat)

Do you know who I am?

Loretta nods.

ADULT LORETTA (CONT'D)  
I know it's -- confusing.

Adult Loretta nears the fire. Warming her hands.

LORETTA  
Where's Pearl?

ADULT LORETTA  
She's --

Adult Loretta can't find the words. Loretta realizing.

LORETTA  
She doesn't come back. Does she?

Adult Loretta shakes her head "no".

A tear streaks down Loretta's cheek. Her worst fear confirmed.

Upset, she suddenly grabs a bottle from the floor and hurls it against the wall -- shattering it.

Loretta breathes heavy. A beat.

LORETTA (CONT'D)  
Did I do something?  
(off Adult Loretta)  
To make her go.

Adult Loretta takes this in. Reminded of how she felt. Still feels on some level. She feeds more twigs to the flames.

ADULT LORETTA  
You didn't do anything.

LORETTA  
Then why doesn't she love me?

Adult Loretta looks to Loretta. At a loss.

LORETTA (CONT'D)  
Why did she leave me?

ADULT LORETTA  
Pearl conducted an experiment. I --  
you -- spend years figuring out  
how. The science behind it. But you  
never learn why.  
(beat)  
The truth is -- not everything in  
life makes sense.

Beat. Loretta digesting all she's heard.

LORETTA  
You're me. Right?

Adult Loretta nods as Loretta approaches. Tentative. Like a frightened animal. Studying Adult Loretta.

Loretta runs her finger down the length of her nose. Then, after pausing, does the same with Adult Loretta. Feeling how similar they are.

ADULT LORETTA  
I know you feel alone. But it's not always going to be this way.

LORETTA  
No?

ADULT LORETTA  
My house? It's yours. Cole and Isaac? They're --

LORETTA  
(realizing)  
My sons?

ADULT LORETTA  
(nods)  
You have a family. Here.

Loretta looks to her adult self. Wanting to believe her.

ADULT LORETTA (CONT'D)  
It's waiting for you.

LORETTA  
And Pearl?

ADULT LORETTA  
(thinks)  
Hard as it is to say -- I don't think she wanted to be a mother.  
(off Loretta's look)  
What is it?

LORETTA  
Cole said the same about you.

As the comment sinks in, Adult Loretta looks to the twigs crackling in the fire. An unexpected gut punch. Does her son Cole really feel that way about her?

Loretta retrieves the SHARD from her pocket. Eying it.

LORETTA (CONT'D)

Can you show me where this comes  
from?

Adult Loretta nods. Still reeling from Loretta's comment  
about Cole.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOOP ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Gaddis, in uniform, sits in the guard station at the gate.

He sips from a thermos and sits up upon seeing Adult Loretta  
and Loretta approach from the dark.

From afar, we see but do not hear Adult Loretta interact with  
Gaddis.

Adult Loretta and Loretta then venture through the gate and  
approach the previously seen

STRUCTURE

They stand at the foot of its ramp. Loretta curious. Unsure  
what lies beyond the entrance.

Adult Loretta nods for her to go forward and together they  
make their way down the ramp and enter --

INT. STRUCTURE - CONTINUOUS

Once they're inside, the structure is revealed to be an  
entrance down to a cleanly designed futuristic staging area  
which sports several LIFTS to take people deep beneath  
ground. Mystery solved on how so many people were seen  
entering and exiting what seemed to be such a small space.

The Loretta's enter the central lift. Its doors close.

INT. LIFT SHAFT - CONTINUOUS

From an impossible vantage point we observe the lift shaft,  
center screen, taking up a narrow ribbon of space. Bordered  
by vast darkness on both sides.

The minuscule lift, Adult Loretta and Loretta glimpsed  
within, can be seen descending the shaft.

Venturing deep beneath ground.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

The lift doors open. Adult Loretta and Loretta exit into a long curved tunnel. Its walls lined with square boxes of light. Muddied by rippled shadows. Like abstract black & white footage of moving water.

They walk down the hall. The HUM of equipment can be heard.

LORETTA

How far under are we?

ADULT LORETTA

Six hundred feet. The circumference is the size of the whole town.

Adult Loretta looks to Loretta. Nodding in reassurance as they reach the far door and pass through into --

AN ENORMOUS OPEN SPACE

It's something to behold. Reminiscent of the particle accelerator at CERN in Switzerland. Scientific ingenuity at a massive scale. It dwarfs both Adult Loretta and Loretta.

Directly in front of them is a breathtaking octagon shaped open air space. Bordered by eight tubes all leading to what appears to be a colossal super magnet.

ADULT LORETTA (CONT'D)

This -- is the Loop.

Adult Loretta leads Loretta through the facility.

Loretta in awe of the futuristic technology on display.

We see it all through the wonder of Loretta's young eyes.

It is the middle of the night and so only a few people are present. Busy with tasks and monitoring equipment.

Among them is

RUSS

Who Loretta sees from afar. Recognizing him as he looks at her --

FLASH TO

THE MAN who had the argument with Pearl. At the front door. Looking back at Loretta in the hall. His expression softening.

BACK TO RUSS

As we realize he was that young man. Now older.

His expression softens and he nods to Loretta. Bewildered as Adult Loretta and Loretta enter a --

CAVERNOUS SPHERE SHAPED ROOM

At its center sits an impressive

SPHERE

Twenty feet tall. It looms large over the Loretta's. Unlike the rest of the facility, it feels otherworldly. Like Kubrick's Monolith. More at home in space than here on earth.

LORETTA

(re: the sphere)

What is it?

ADULT LORETTA

The Eclipse. The beating heart of the Loop.

(beat)

Everything above ground. The reason you're here now. The Eclipse is responsible.

(beat)

As time passes, you'll see so much. Things you'd say were impossible. And yet here they are. In this town. Things both troubling and full of wonder -- hidden in our woods -- our homes -- and beneath our feet. Waiting to be discovered.

Loretta runs her hand along its black surface. Finding a patch where a small piece has been chipped away.

Loretta then removes the SHARD from her jacket pocket. Realizing it belongs to The Eclipse.

ADULT LORETTA (CONT'D)

Pearl took it for her experiment. She wanted to find where the Eclipse came from.

LORETTA

Is that where she is now?

ADULT LORETTA

No one knows.



Loretta looks to the shard in her hand.

ANGLE ON ADULT LORETTA

Considering her younger self.

ADULT LORETTA (CONT'D)

You'll question if this happened --  
think maybe it was a dream. And  
then one day you'll hear a little  
girl is looking for her mother and  
you'll say these same half-  
forgotten words.

Adult Loretta points to the chipped spot on The Eclipse and Loretta holds up the shard. Letting go. Leaving it to float in the air.

The shard is then drawn by a gravitational pull to its rightful place on The Eclipse. Like a final piece added to complete the puzzle.

A SOUND begins to emit from the Eclipse. Building intensity.

It's the MECHANICAL HEARTBEAT.

Loretta places her hand on the Eclipse. Feeling it.

FLASH TO

When Loretta had her ear to the stones by the lake. Her eyes closed. Unsure what she is hearing.

BACK TO

THE ECLIPSE

Where Loretta looks to her older self. Her hand on the Eclipse.

LORETTA

What now?

Adult Loretta considers Loretta. The life ahead of this little girl. The joy and despair that await her.

LORETTA (CONT'D)

Where do I go?

ADULT LORETTA

(barely audible)

Home.

ANGLE ON LORETTA'S HAND AGAINST THE ECLIPSE

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - DAWN (BLACK & WHITE)

The sound of the mechanical heartbeat continues.

Loretta, like Adult Loretta and Pearl before her, stands in the center of the room. Wearing a cream colored slip. Facing the window. Light pouring in. A small moth flaps through the air (in 2/3 speed). Dreamy.

CUT TO:

EXT. VACANT LOT - DAY

ANGLE ON LORETTA'S HAND IN THE SNOW

The MECHANICAL HEARTBEAT abruptly cuts out.

Realizing where she is, Loretta stands and observes the vacant lot where her house once stood. She has been returned back to the moment she first discovered Pearl was gone.

She's bewildered. Peering around at her surroundings --

-- the nearby woods. No flash of color this time.

-- the garbage can she dragged up the driveway before discovering the shard.

-- the same vehicle driving past on the road. Fading off.

Loretta exhales a frosted breath.

Unsure if her journey to the future did indeed happen.

CUT TO:

INT. LOOP - NIGHT

Adult Loretta remains alone at the foot of the Eclipse.

All is silent.

She places her hand over the section where the shard has been returned. A healed wound.

RUSS (O.S.)

Loretta.

Loretta turns to find Russ standing by the entrance.

She ventures over. Seeming like she will walk past him. But stops short.

LORETTA  
Can we discuss this tomorrow?

RUSS  
(nods)  
Whenever you're ready.

Loretta exits while Russ remains. Looking to The Eclipse.

CUT TO:

INT. COLE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cole tosses and turns in bed. Then, downstairs, the front door SOUNDS.

He looks to his brother Isaac in the other bed -- asleep.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Cole enters to find a figure seated in the dark. It appears to be Young Loretta in silhouette.

He switches on the light to reveal it is in fact Adult Loretta at the table.

COLE  
Mom?

Unlike Pearl who we saw in a similar situation, Adult Loretta snaps out of her daze and looks to Cole.

COLE (CONT'D)  
Did you find her?

He doesn't realize he's asking his mother about herself.

ADULT LORETTA  
I did. Everything's okay now.

The sound of ice shifting in the nearby freezer. KA-CHUNK.

ADULT LORETTA (CONT'D)  
Come here.

Hesitant. Cole approaches. Standing before Adult Loretta as she brushes hair away from his forehead.

COLE

Did I do something wrong?

ANGLE ON ADULT LORETTA

Pained by Cole's words. Seeing the unfounded guilt festering in him. The same guilt that consumed her as a child.

ADULT LORETTA

No. Not at all.

(beat; hard to say)

My mother left me when I was your age. And I want you to know -- I'm here. Okay?

The weight of what she's trying to communicate is lost on Cole. Unable to connect his mother's words with the promise Loretta made herself earlier.

ADULT LORETTA (CONT'D)

I'm here.

Cole nods.

Adult Loretta then holds him close.

His arms rigid. Caught off guard by this rare display of affection and attention.

ADULT LORETTA (CONT'D)

I'll always be here for you.

EXT. WILLARD HOUSE - NIGHT

WIDE ON

The house in the dark of night. Cooling towers looming large in the distance.

The kitchen window aglow. Adult Loretta and Cole visible within. Embracing. An image of warmth on a cold night.

The somber FOG HORN blares over the sleeping town as we hear a reprise of Adult Loretta's words to her younger self. Now seeming to address the audience --

ADULT LORETTA (V.O.)

Everything above ground. The reason you're here now. The Eclipse is responsible.

INT. LOOP - NIGHT

In a continuous shot, we move through the underground facility. Glimpsing all its scientific wizardry.

ADULT LORETTA (V.O.)

As time passes, you'll see so much.  
Things you'd say were impossible.  
And yet here they are. In this  
town. Things both troubling and  
full of wonder -- hidden in our  
woods -- our homes -- and beneath  
our feet.

WE ENTER THE CAVERNOUS SPHERE SHAPED ROOM

To see the powerful and surprising sight of the massive

ECLIPSE

Revolving in place at breakneck speed. The mechanical  
heartbeat louder than ever.

ADULT LORETTA (V.O.)

Waiting to be discovered.

We continue to PUSH IN on the revolving Eclipse.

Getting nearer and nearer.

Its surface whipping past. A blur. Filling the screen as we  
can't help but wonder what new impossibility will be  
discovered next in this town...

CUT TO BLACK.

END PILOT EPISODE