

NAOMI

"Pilot"

REVISED NETWORK DRAFT

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&

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ACT ONE

WE ARE OVER BLACK, THEN FADE INTO...

Out of focus movement in slo-mo. The blur catches speed and gains clarity second by second. Until we realize that the camera is in the ceiling. We're looking down at fingertips. And hands. Attached to arms. That are in the air. Waving like they just don't care. Dancing to the sounds of upbeat party music. Edgy. Cool. Which makes sense, because we're at --

INT. / EXT. NATHAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

An edgy, cool high school party. Food. Music. Laughter. TEENAGERS crammed inside the house and spilling out into the backyard. Carefree and having an absolute blast together.

Some with black nail polish and vintage threads. Some with polo shirts and the hottest sneakers. Teens of all races and ethnicities, a perfect mix of camaraderie and culture. Likeminded TEENS cluster together in small groups -- JOCKS, ART KIDS, GOTHs, SKATERS.

The front door opens and a GIRL enters. We're on her back as she joins the party, starts vibing to the beat. She crosses the room, easily moving between the different groups.

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| NAOMI | MARCUS |
| Whatsup, Marcus. New kicks, I see. | Yep. Got 'em from that spot you told me about. |

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| SOOZE | NAOMI |
| Naomi! Thanks for the AP Lit notes. You saved my life. | Anytime, lady. Dostoevsky is no joke. |

She keeps moving. A NERF BASKETBALL flies through the air. A wild throw. It almost hits her in the head, but she catches it mid-air instead. She turns to see a group of JOCKS.

TREVOR
Damn, Naomi! Nice reflexes. Want to join the team?

NAOMI
Will we finally win a game?

Oh snap! Laughs all around as Naomi tosses the ball back.

And now, we reveal the girl's face -- this is NAOMI MCDUFFIE. One of those girls with effortless style. As in, she can be wearing the same thing that you're wearing, but it looks way cooler on her. It's the confidence that does it. She's not reaching or trying to be someone she's not. She's comfortable with herself. A modern day Ferris Bueller, if you will. But with a dash of Black Girl Magic.

(CONTINUED)

She keeps moving, until she's stopped by DREW. He's filming an INSTAGRAM LIVE. He pulls Naomi into frame. She waves.

DREW

Cameo time! Naomi and I have known each other since we were tiny sixth grade babies.

NAOMI

Fourth. Remember? We met at the base in Germany.

DREW

Damn! Time flies when your parents are dragging you around the world. Hashtag military kid life.

(then, to the camera)

You guys, check this out. Naomi runs the number three Superman fan site in the world.

NAOMI

(playing to the camera)

Not for long. Brazil's number one and the Philippines site is number two. But I'm coming for them.

She ducks out of frame and turns to find NATHAN, watching her. Quintessential jock. Biracial and gorgeous.

NATHAN

For someone so fly, you're sure into some nerdy stuff. I'm just saying... Superman? The guy wears a cape and spandex. One or the other? Acceptable. Both together? I mean, c'mon. Not the coolest.

NAOMI

Um, incorrect. The very coolest. Superman has super speed, super strength and X-ray vision. Dude can shoot laser beams from his friggin' eyes! His eyes, man!

Nathan laughs good-naturedly. These two have a chemistry. They like challenging each other.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

(motions to him to lean in)

But the best part?

(faces close now, sexy)

He's adopted. Which makes him extra special, because adopted kids are chosen. Just like me.

(CONTINUED)

Nathan smiles at her. Damn, she's cute. She smiles back. Damn, he's cute. If they weren't in the middle of a party, there might be a kiss. Instead he whispers playfully...

NATHAN

But also... he's not real.

She pulls back with a laugh and doesn't miss a beat.

NAOMI

Einstein said "Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a persistent one." It was in our AP reading. You actually taking the class, Nathan, or just there to look pretty?

As she walks away, Nathan calls after her, smitten.

NATHAN

(flirty, smiling)
You think I'm pretty?

She turns back and laughs, but doesn't stop moving towards her best friend ANNABELLE (proudly curvy, white) and Annabelle's boyfriend, a sweetheart named JACOB (shy, white).

ANNABELLE

OMG, babe. You're like four hours late. Where have you been?

NAOMI

You know my parents and their firm stance on family dinner.

Annabelle takes a sip of her drink. Makes a face.

ANNABELLE

Ugh, I thought this was ginger ale.

JACOB

I'm on it, hon.

He grabs the cup and runs off. Naomi turns to Annabelle, who avoids her eyes.

ANNABELLE

Don't.

NAOMI

I'm surprised Jacob hasn't gotten a tattoo of your face yet.

Annabelle rolls her eyes, then nods across the room. Naomi turns to see Nathan, surrounded by girls. He smiles at Naomi.

(CONTINUED)

ANNABELLE

Nathan sure knows how to throw a party. And look damn, damn good while doing it. Damn good.

NAOMI

I hadn't noticed.

She definitely has.

ANNABELLE

Right. Because for reasons passing understanding, you broke up with that fine specimen of a man after what... five dates?

NAOMI

Not all of us get to find our soulmate in the fourth grade.

ANNABELLE

Fifth, thank you very much. It's a little thing called commitment. You should try it sometime.

NAOMI

Don't know what you're talking about.

(then)

This is my jam.

She starts to move away from Annabelle, who calls after her.

ANNABELLE

You are literally proving my point right now.

Naomi just waves at Annabelle over her shoulder. Annabelle smiles and shakes her head. STAY WITH NAOMI as she joins other teens dancing, having a blast, partying the night away.

INT. NAOMI'S BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

Naomi is passed out in bed. Sleeping hard, slobber and all, when there's a knock on the door.

JENNIFER (O.S.)

Naomi? Naomi! It's after seven, you up?

NAOMI

Mmm...hmm... mmm up...

JENNIFER (O.S.)

You don't sound up.

(CONTINUED)

NAOMI
I'm up! I'm up!

She's wide awake now. Naomi pushes herself out of bed.

INT. NAOMI'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

JENNIFER and GREG (Naomi's parents, both white) hustle around the kitchen. Greg wears a MILITARY UNIFORM.

GREG
-- try telling that to the base commander. You'd think the President himself was visiting, not the Secretary of the Army.

JENNIFER
Plus the ambassadors from France and Japan and Russia.
(off his look, not helping)
It's going to go well, Greg.

GREG
I get that it's a big deal. We need to make a good impression to maintain important bases overseas. But we're only one stop on their tour. And he's making us crazy.

JENNIFER
You think you've got problems. Try teaching enlisted millennials how to greet a foreign ambassador. I'm a linguist, not a miracle worker.

Greg spots Naomi entering.

GREG
Morning, pumpkin.

NAOMI
Morning.

Naomi moves to the cabinets, starts rummaging for breakfast. She grabs a bagel and starts prepping it.

JENNIFER
Honestly, it's only two lines.
Hello. It's a pleasure to meet you.
How hard is that?

NAOMI
(first in French, then
Japanese, then Russian)
Hello. It's a pleasure to meet you.

(CONTINUED)

Her parents beam. Greg holds up his hand for a high five.

GREG
That's my girl. Up top.

NAOMI
Dad.

GREG
What? High fives are out?

NAOMI
Like ten years ago.

She leans in, gives him a kiss on the cheek instead.

GREG
I'll take that.
(then)
I didn't hear you come in last
night. What time did you get home?

NAOMI
I don't know... three?

JENNIFER
Three. As in three o'clock in the
morning. As in...
(glances at the clock)
Less than four hours ago.

NAOMI
Anna and I went for burgers at
Murray's after the party. You know,
when that Double Decker Colossus
with three kinds of cheese is
calling, you gotta answer.

GREG
I haven't stayed out that late
since 2007. We drove to Portland to
see Fleetwood Mac, remember Jen?

JENNIFER
I sure do. We got our groove on.

Greg starts humming a Fleetwood Mac song and cuddles up to
Jennifer. They giggle. Awkward, but cute.

NAOMI
Little early for all that, folks.

Naomi starts loading schoolbooks into her bag. AP Bio. AP
History. AP everything. Greg grabs her AP Chemistry book.

(CONTINUED)

GREG
Did you finish your chemistry
assignment?

NAOMI
Yep.

JENNIFER
Then what is the dot formulation
for nitrogen trichloride?

NAOMI
(easy)
3 N-Cl bonds and 10 lone pairs of
electrons.

GREG
It's official, Jen. Our kid is a
genius.

Naomi takes a faux bow - then a big bite of her bagel.

EXT. NAOMI'S HOUSE - NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Naomi's on the stoop, stringing up her ROLLER SKATES. Her
parents emerge from the house and head for the car.

JENNIFER
Better hurry. Bell rings in 15.

NAOMI
If you'd let me get a car, you
wouldn't have to worry about me
being late.

JENNIFER
Nice try. No driving until
graduation.

NAOMI
(shrugs)
Then these are the only wheels I've
got.

With that, Naomi launches off the stoop, then waves goodbye
and skates away, bagel in hand. She catches air off the curb
with one giant leap, and lands with a flourish - then takes a
bite of her bagel. Jennifer and Greg exchange a smile.

EXT. PORT OSWEGO - ESTABLISHING - DAY

As Naomi skates, we get our first look at PORT OSWEGO. A
small community nestled in the PACIFIC NORTHWEST. Clean air.
Miles of beautiful forest. Mountains visible in the distance.

(CONTINUED)

Naomi races through her neighborhood. This is military housing. All of the homes look similar, but its occupants are a diverse racial mix of people. She hangs a left, glides onto MAIN STREET. This part of the town is charming and predominantly white. Naomi waves at folks who wave at her.

The businesses are just coming to life for the day. Bakery. Bookstore. Pet store. Diner. Tattoo parlor, whose owner DEE (Asian, muscular), is outside. He offers her just a tentative nod. She skates past ZUMBADO'S USED CARS. ZUMBADO (Black, strong) is in his auto lot. He doesn't wave. He seems to have better things to do. She clocks this, speeds up and skates on. She leaves Main Street, hangs a right, and then blows past a sign: "PORT OSWEGO HIGH SCHOOL. GO DUCKS."

INT. PORT OSWEGO HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The main hallway of the school, lined with lockers. Naomi skates through the mass of students, not slowing until --

PRINCIPAL BROOKS steps out in front of her. Naomi skids to a stop, barely avoiding a collision. He gives her an icy look.

PRINCIPAL BROOKS

This is not the roller derby, Ms. McDuffie. Please be more mindful of your surroundings.

NAOMI

Yes, Sir. Sorry, Sir.

She skates slowly down the hallway. She finally spins to a stop in front of Annabelle, who's wearing sunglasses. Naomi gingerly steps out of her skates, then opens her locker.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Principal Brooks lowkey hates me.

ANNABELLE

He lowkey hates everyone.

Annabelle removes her sunglasses. Her eyes are bloodshot.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

I cannot believe I let you talk me into staying out so late. Eating those massive burgers, no less! Some of us need beauty sleep and proper digestion.

NAOMI

(sincere, sweet)
I think you always look beautiful.

(CONTINUED)

The BELL RINGS. Naomi slips on her sneakers and applies a little lip gloss. Then she slams her locker shut.

INT. PORT OSWEGO HIGH SCHOOL - VARIOUS - DAY

We go to FAST MOTION as Naomi goes about her day. The clock spins. Students move in and out of classrooms. The hallway empties, then fills, then empties again. At last, the clock strikes three and the FINAL BELL RINGS.

Teenagers spill out of classrooms. The day is over. But not for Naomi. She opens her locker, trades out her books. COMPETITIVE DEBATE: A GUIDE. WINNING DEBATES. Naomi shuts her locker, then heads deeper into the school. Moving against the tide of STUDENTS walking toward the exit. She spots ANTHONY (white, cute). Hurries to join him.

NAOMI

Anthony, hey! Missed you last night. I thought you were coming to the party.

ANTHONY

I tried. Ended up out by the plant instead. Not the best place to be in the middle of the night.

NAOMI

That's nowhere near Nathan's house.

ANTHONY

(no kidding)
Your boy gave me the wrong address. That's not how you treat people.

NAOMI

I'm sure it was a mistake.
(off his look)
Come on. Why would Nathan give you the wrong address?

ANTHONY

The military brats hate us townies, Naomi. Always have.

NAOMI

It's a two-way street. Most townies aren't so welcoming to new kids. Also, I'm a military brat and I don't hate you.

ANTHONY

Yeah, but you're... you.

Naomi smiles, touched. He smiles back, smitten.

INT. PORT OSWEGO HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

Debate club. TWENTY-FIVE STUDENTS. Two microphones are set up at the head of the classroom. Naomi stands at one. Anthony sits nearby. ESME BROOKS (white, head cheerleader) stands at the second mic. The teacher, MR. VILLAREAL, moderates.

MR. VILLAREAL

Okay, so here's how this is going to work. Theater is up first, then jazz club, then us. The commander is giving us fifteen minutes --

ESME

That's not enough time for a real debate.

MR. VILLAREAL

It's not a real debate. We're one of many school clubs that will be presenting to the delegation. Because of the nearby base, the DOD contributes to our budget which means our only job that day is to show them it's money well spent.

ESME

I'm gonna talk to Principal Brooks.

Groans from the students.

ANTHONY

We all know he's your dad, Esme. You can just say "my dad."

MR. VILLAREAL

Esme, these are the rules. Let's just abide by them. Now. The topic you've chosen as a class is the elimination of standardized testing. Are we ready to begin?

Esme nods. Before Naomi can respond, her phone BUZZES. Once. Then again. And again. It's blowing up. Anthony notices.

ANTHONY

What's going on?

NAOMI

Something to do with... Superman.

A text from Annabelle: "GET TO MAIN STREET. NOW." Followed by a Superman emoji. Naomi heads for the door.

EXT. PORT OSWEGO - STREET - DAY

Naomi bursts out of the school and hits the ground running. She rounds a corner, hangs a right. She's close to Main Street now. Close enough to hear a commotion. But then suddenly, she starts to feel strange.

She can't breathe. She's dizzy. Naomi tries to keep moving, except now her legs are starting to feel weak. Then they give out completely. Naomi goes down. As she hits the ground, she hears a high-pitched buzzing. Naomi covers her ears, grimacing in pain. The noise is getting more intense.

What the hell is happening to her? Naomi is lying on her back, looking up at the sky. And just before she passes out, she sees a blurry streak of red and blue shoot through the sky overhead. Brief, but unmistakable.

Superman. Then Naomi's world goes dark.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. PORT OSWEGO - STREET - DAY

Moments later. Naomi is where we left her. Still lying on the ground. Her eyes slowly open. The buzzing has stopped. She sits up. Shaken. *What was that?* A beat as she tries to process what the hell just happened to her.

She slowly stands. Tentatively steps forward. She feels totally fine now. So she starts to run.

And she keeps running until she rounds the corner --

EXT. PORT OSWEGO - MAIN STREET - DAY

Then stops short. Main Street is chaos. Overturned cars, some small fires, debris in the street, people running around. Naomi plunges into the crowd. Trying to get answers.

NAOMI

What happened? Was that guy really dressed like Superman? Did he have the cape? The boots?

But everyone is too wrapped up in their own thing to answer. Naomi finally spots Annabelle. She hurries toward her, catching snippets of EYE WITNESS ACCOUNTS along the way.

SOOZE

He just like, appeared out of nowhere! It looked so real!

MILA

It was like a scene from a movie!

PORT OSWEGO LIFER

Sixty-five years in this town, I've never seen anything like it.

DUANE

I dropped my phone. The Superman actor dude was right there and I dropped my phone!

Finally, Naomi makes it to Annabelle, who's beside herself.

NAOMI

Annabelle!

ANNABELLE

Naomi! Can you believe it? Did you know about this? Because if you did and didn't tell me, I'll be soooo mad --

NAOMI

I missed it.

ANNABELLE

What do you mean, you missed it?

(CONTINUED)

NAOMI

All I heard was the buzzing.

ANNABELLE

What buzzing?

Naomi freezes. *Anna didn't hear the buzzing? Wtf?*

NAOMI

That noise. The buzzing. Like someone dragged metal spikes along the world's biggest chalkboard.

ANNABELLE

I didn't hear anything like that, but it was super loud and my mom's been saying for years that I don't listen, so I guess she was right --

NAOMI

Annabelle, focus. Tell me exactly what happened.

ANNABELLE

I don't need to tell you. I'll show you. I got the whole thing.

Annabelle takes out her phone. Pulls up the start of a VIDEO. Superman is featured in the frame. He's hovering in the sky above Main Street. Naomi's eyes widen. *Holy shit.*

NAOMI

It looks so real.

Annabelle presses play -- the video moves forward. But then it moves back again. This isn't a video. It's a BOOMERANG. The same second of footage bouncing back and forth. Annabelle realizes her mistake, looks at Naomi apologetically.

ANNABELLE

Okay, so maybe not the *whole* thing.
(then)
I'm sorry, babe. I thought I had my camera open, not the Gram.

NAOMI

Can you just tell me what you saw?

Naomi takes out her phone, starts filming.

ANNABELLE

Okay. So I was just like walking down the street, on my way home, and all of a sudden I look up, and there's like this light in the sky -

(CONTINUED)

And now we switch to a series of TALKING HEADS.

MILA

-- the dogs were going crazy, they could see it too. So I run out of my store to see where this light is coming from. I look up and I see --

TREVOR

Superman. This guy was legit. He had the cape and everything. He's falling through the sky, but get this. He's not alone --

DREW

-- dude, he was fighting someone. Just like in the movies. It looked like the bad guy was dressed in this weird metal armor --

BRYCE

-- Superman punches him -- pow. Then metal guy throws Superman onto a car -- wham. Then they just keep fighting until -- pow pow -- Superman knocks him out cold --

COLLEEN

-- so Superman grabs him and flies off. Then it's over. The whole thing lasted maybe thirty seconds.

BRYCE

People are doing the most these days for likes and clicks.

TREVOR

True. But best stunt ever.

DREW

Best stunt ever.

ANNABELLE

Best. Stunt. Ever.

BACK WITH NAOMI. She stops filming. Frustrated.

EXT. PORT OSWEGO - MAIN STREET - A SHORT TIME LATER

*

Things have chilled out. Naomi and Anna walk and talk.

NAOMI

How did they do it? Maybe it was a projection. But that would have worked better at night. Must've been wires.

(then)

Why today of all days did I have to stay after school?

*

(CONTINUED)

ANNABELLE

Wouldn't have mattered what day it was. You always stay after school. Tomorrow would have been Spanish Club. The next day is Student Council. The day after that is...
(off Naomi's look)
Face it, babe. You were destined to miss this.

NAOMI

No way. I wasn't destined to miss this, I was destined to...

Naomi trails off. She's looking across the street at a store called VINTAGE COLLECTIBLES. An idea forming.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Come on.

Naomi crosses the street. Annabelle looks around, confused.

ANNABELLE

Was that conversation over?

Then she rushes to catch up with Naomi.

INT. VINTAGE COLLECTIBLES - DAY

A cool, vintage shop. Records and video games and comic books. Naomi and Annabelle chat with LOURDES (Latina, lavender hair), who works at the store.

LOURDES

I'm sorry, I wish I could help. But I have no idea who did this.

NAOMI

You're the only other person in town who hardcore knows the comics world. No way something like this happens here without you knowing about it.

LOURDES

I'm flattered. But I was going to say the same thing to you.

NAOMI

What do you mean?

LOURDES

You always know what's going on. Especially if it's about Superman.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LOURDES (CONT'D)
I figured you had something to do
with it, or knew who did.

Instead of answering, Naomi starts pacing. Frustrated.

ANNABELLE
(sotto, to Lourdes)
Kind of a sore subject.

NAOMI
(processing)
Ten years I've been a fan of these
comics. And someone went through
all this planning to make it look
like my favorite comic book
character was flying through the
skies in our small town. It can't
be a coincidence.
(the conclusion)
This has to be personal.

ANNABELLE
Huh?

NAOMI
Everyone in this town knows how
much I stan Superman. Someone must
be trying to either make me look
bad or make me mad.

LOURDES
But who would do that? If there's
one person in town that no one has
a grudge against, it's you.

Naomi thought so too. But...

NAOMI
What if they do?

LOURDES
Then... they do?

NAOMI
I don't accept that. I'm gonna find
out who did this and fix it.

Annabelle doesn't say anything. She studies Naomi carefully.

NAOMI (CONT'D)
Has anyone bought a bunch of
Superman stuff lately? Maybe they
used it as a reference.

(CONTINUED)

LOURDES
I've only sold five Superman books
in the last two weeks.
(then, thinking)
Did you get a look at his costume? *

ANNABELLE *
I did. I'm no tights expert, but it *
seemed pretty legit. *

LOURDES *
Then it must have come from The *
Costume Palace. It's the only place *
within a hundred miles that rents *
authentic superhero gear. *
(beat)
I'm friends with a guy who works
there. I'll see what he knows?

Naomi nods and her phone buzzes with a SILLY RINGTONE. A text
from her mom: "DINNER IN FIFTEEN. ISSA PARTY!!!!" Naomi texts
back: "ON MY WAY."

NAOMI
I gotta go. Thanks. Text me if you
hear anything?
(off Lourdes' nod)
Or even if you don't.

Naomi smiles and heads for the door. Wait, is she flirting? *
Annabelle thinks so, shoots Naomi a sideways look as they *
leave. Off Lourdes, smitten. *

INT. NAOMI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dinnertime at Naomi's house. Greg mans the stove. Jennifer
sets the table. Naomi has a thermometer in her mouth.

JENNIFER
-- Mila at the pet shop told me
it's going to cost over a thousand
dollars to replace her front
window.

GREG
You're kidding. What a mess.

NAOMI
(mumbling)
Uh juh ih wuhn ihlilitah?

GREG
Come again, Chewbacca?

The thermometer beeps. Naomi takes it out of her mouth.

(CONTINUED)

NAOMI

You're sure it wasn't a military exercise or something from the base? Like a flight experiment or something?

*

GREG

I'm positive. With the delegation arriving tomorrow, dealing with this is the last thing anyone wants. It's all hands on deck to prepare. No one at the base planned this.

Jennifer takes the thermometer from Naomi, studies it.

JENNIFER

Temp's normal. No fever.

GREG

Dinner is served, ladies.

Jennifer gently places her hand on Naomi's cheek.

JENNIFER

You sure you're okay, kid? You've never been one to just faint.

NAOMI

I'm fine. It was just... so weird.

JENNIFER

Sounds like you had a migraine.

NAOMI

(relieved)
Really?

JENNIFER

I used to get them all the time in college. Just like you described. I'd suddenly get really weak, then I'd hear a ringing in my ears.

GREG

They must run in the family.

NAOMI

Dad. You know we don't actually have the same genes.

GREG

(with a kind smile)
Right. I always forget.

(CONTINUED)

JENNIFER

I'd still feel better if you'd let
us take you to the doctor.

NAOMI

I don't wanna miss school. I feel
fine, Mom. Promise.

Jennifer studies her for a beat, then finally relents.

JENNIFER

If it happens again, straight to
the doctor, not a word of argument.

Naomi nods. They move to the table. Naomi's phone buzzes, so
she tries to covertly check it. Greg catches her.

GREG

You know the rules. Time to put it
away.

NAOMI

It's an emergency.
(off their looks)
Okay, not technically an emergency.
I'm waiting for a text from
Lourdes. About the Superman thing.

Jennifer gives her a look. Naomi sighs, then puts it away.

GREG

Lourdes? Which one is she again?

NAOMI

She works at the vintage store.

Off Greg's blank look:

JENNIFER

Purple hair. She has a crush on
Naomi.

NAOMI

Mom!

GREG

Does this mean no more Nathan?

JENNIFER

They broke up last month.
(to Naomi)
I thought you were dating Anthony.

NAOMI

Can we please not talk about this?

(CONTINUED)

GREG

Wait, so you're dating multiple people now?

NAOMI

They're all my friends. I like them for different reasons.

GREG

You know, eventually, you're going to have to choose, pumpkin.

NAOMI

I'm sixteen. You really want me to settle down?

GREG

I'm your father. I want you to live in that bedroom with your stuffed animals until you're eighty.

(then)

It's not about who you're dating. It's about making a choice.

NAOMI

Is this turning into a talk? Feels like it's turning into a talk.

GREG

(laughs)

No. We want you to be happy. You can't be everywhere at once. You can't be all things to all people.

NAOMI

Why not?

JENNIFER

Because when you try to be all things to all people, it's hard to figure out who you want to be.

A serious beat as that lands, then Greg breaks the tension:

GREG

And you were worried this was gonna be a talk.

Smiles all around. Jennifer and Greg go back to eating and laughing. Naomi does too, but there's the slightest crack. We get the sense that her parents have struck a nerve.

INT. NAOMI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Naomi is dressed for bed. She's sitting at her desk, on her laptop. Searching for any helpful information on the Superman incident. From her expression, it's not going well.

Right above the desk hangs a framed COLLAGE OF PHOTOS. The first is an EIGHT-YEAR-OLD NAOMI, standing with her Dad in front of a military base in Japan. She's holding a Superman comic book. She continues to age throughout the collage, posing with that comic book at places all over the world.

Naomi finally sighs and shuts her computer. She glances up at the collage. Smiles.

Her phone BUZZES. A text from Lourdes: "RENTALS DIDN'T COME FROM COSTUME PALACE." Not the news she was hoping for. Naomi sighs, then turns off the light and climbs into bed. A few beats pass, then:

NAOMI

Nah.

She throws off the covers and climbs out of bed.

EXT. PORT OSWEGO - MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Main Street is shut down for the night. Naomi rides through town on her skates. Taking in the mess. She starts snapping photos. A caved in car roof. SNAP. A streetlamp torn from the ground. SNAP. An upended slab of sidewalk. SNAP.

Suddenly, the STREET LIGHTS shut off. Naomi jumps. Startled. She looks around -- Main Street is empty. She glances down at the clock on her phone, breathes a sigh of relief.

NAOMI

The lights are on a timer. Right.
Get it together, girl.

She moves on, but can't shake the feeling that she's being watched. She stops in front of Mila's shop, PUGS AND KISSES. Plywood covers the shattered window. Naomi moves closer --

And that's when she notices the SECURITY CAMERA mounted above the door. It's hanging at a strange angle. Wires have clearly been cut. Almost like it's been intentionally disabled.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

What the hell...

She keeps moving down the street. Looking at more cameras. BOOKSTORE -- same. CAFE -- same. BARBERSHOP -- same. With each shattered camera, we see her become more alarmed.

(CONTINUED)

All the security cameras on Main Street have been disabled.

CLOSE ON NAOMI as she realizes this goes deeper than she thought. Suddenly, she hears a NOISE. She spins. No one is there. She tentatively moves toward the corner of a building--

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Hello?

Silence. Naomi peeks around the corner, into an alley. She doesn't see anyone. Weird. As she turns away and skates off --

A FIGURE steps out from the shadows. A MAN. But his face is hidden. *Who the hell is this!?* And off this mysterious figure, watching Naomi as she skates back down the street...

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. / EXT. PORT OSWEGO - VARIOUS - DAY

A MUSICAL MONTAGE as Naomi investigates.

- She's back on Main Street, standing in front of PUGS AND KISSES with Mila. Naomi gestures up to the broken camera. Mila shakes her head. Naomi walks away. Disappointed.

- Naomi's in front of the CAFE. Same story. She talks to the owner COLLEEN, gestures to the camera. Still no luck.

- Naomi stands outside the BARBERSHOP on Main Street, chatting with the OWNER. She gestures to his broken camera. He nods, motions her inside. Naomi follows, hopeful.

- Inside the BARBERSHOP OFFICE, the owner now sits in front of an OLD COMPUTER. Naomi is behind him. But the screen displays only static. Damn. He looks at Naomi, apologetic.

- Now Naomi is at the school gym. It's cheerleading practice. ESME shares her TIKTOK video of the incident, which is basically all Esme's reactions, not the event itself. Naomi is clearly unimpressed. Esme just shrugs, then walks away.

- Naomi is in the COMPUTER LAB with the CODERS. She sits at a desk, several PHONES in front of her. She's going through VIDEOS from the event. A CODER walks up to her, holds out his hand -- *can I have my phone back?* Naomi just waves him off.

- Now she's at the POOL with the SWIM TEAM. A couple share videos, but Naomi is unimpressed. Her frustration mounting.

- Naomi talks to BRYCE and the FOOTBALL TEAM on the field. Naomi's not happy. She turns and marches off the field.

- Naomi watches the clips. They're just pieces. She's drowning in a sea of mostly unhelpful media.

EXT. ABANDONED DAM - DAY

The MONTAGE ends at an abandoned concrete dam in the woods outside of town. A townie hangout spot for LOCAL TEENS. Some are skateboarding. Others throw rocks into the river. A different vibe from Nathan's multi-cultural party. Anthony, Jacob, and Annabelle are there.

Drew (from the party) is showing Naomi his video of Superman. Except... there's not much Superman. It's mostly Drew recording himself reacting. It ends. Naomi is not happy.

NAOMI

I skipped coding club to come all
the way down here for *that?*

(CONTINUED)

DREW
(hurt)
Harsh, Naomi. Damn.

NAOMI
Sorry, Drew.

He gives her a pound, nods and turns to join his friends.
Frustrated, Naomi moves off in the opposite direction with
Annabelle following her. *

ANNABELLE *
Babe. I say this with all the love *
in my heart. You gotta get a grip. *

NAOMI *
I need those videos, Anna. This *
Superman thing is getting weirder *
by the day. *

Naomi pulls out her PHONE and shows Annabelle the pictures *
that she took on Main Street. *

NAOMI (CONT'D)
The security cameras on Main Street
are all disabled. Like, cut wires.
Blatant tampering. There's
something bigger going on here.

ANNABELLE
Like what?

NAOMI
That's what I wanna find out.
(then) *
I shouldn't have snapped at Drew. *

ANNABELLE *
See, that's your problem, babe. *
You're missing the point. *

NAOMI *
What are you talking about? *

Annabelle considers for a beat, then: *

ANNABELLE *
Okay. You know how you don't like *
those cookies dipped in chocolate? *

NAOMI *
They're disgusting. Is it a cookie? *
Is it candy? Make a choice! *

(CONTINUED)

ANNABELLE
Right. So imagine that's the way
someone feels about you.

NAOMI
Are you really comparing me to a
cookie right now?

Annabelle smiles.

ANNABELLE
This is real life, babe. Not
everyone's going to like you. You
have to accept that.

NAOMI
That's not what this is about.
(off her look)
Okay, that's not all this is about.

Naomi hesitates for a beat, then:

NAOMI (CONT'D)
Ever since the Superman thing, I
just feel... off.

ANNABELLE
Off how?

Naomi processes. She's clearly going through something.

NAOMI
I remember when my dad bought me my
first comic. We were living in
Japan and I was having trouble
making friends. But everyone knew
Superman. Smart kids, jocks, art
kids. So suddenly, I was friends
with everyone. I could move between
these groups like it was nothing.

ANNABELLE
And you've been doing it ever
since.

NAOMI
Yeah. But this is the first time
that it's not made me feel
happy - and free. This whole thing
has me feeling... I don't know...
frazzled, nervous, I think.
Anxious. I don't even recognize the
feeling. But I don't like it.

Naomi looks confused and miserable. Annabelle takes her hand.

INT. PORT OSWEGO HIGH SCHOOL - EDITING BAY - DAY

*

An oversized storage closet that's been converted into a makeshift editing bay. Naomi and Nathan are squeezed inside. It's intimate. Romantic even. Nathan mans the equipment.

NAOMI

Thanks for this. I have all these pieces of video, but none of them make sense on their own.

NATHAN

Anything for you... even though you dumped me.

(off her look)

Kidding. Almost there. Sound just needs a minute to sync...

There are a few beats of silence, then:

NATHAN (CONT'D)

It really was an accident.

(off her confusion)

I hear Anthony thinks I gave him the wrong address to the party.

NAOMI

You don't like him.

NATHAN

No. I don't. Because you do.

A charged beat between them, then Nathan's machine BEEPS, breaking the moment.

NAOMI

Is it ready?

NATHAN

Ready.

Nathan presses play. And now we see what he's done. He's edited together everyone's different pieces of video and shaped it into one clear picture of the day's events. It starts to play. It's a regular day on Main Street, then suddenly, Superman is there, fighting a guy in armor!

The moments unfold as everyone described, but the descriptions don't do it justice. It is incredible. After the video ends, Naomi just stands there, speechless.

NAOMI

Wow.

(CONTINUED)

NATHAN

I knew it was cool, but seeing it like that... it looks so real. How did they do it?

NAOMI

Who's they and how did they do what? We don't even know what we're looking at. If it's a projection, how could it be so clear in broad daylight? If it's a high wire act, where are the wires? I got there three minutes after it happened and I didn't see any. And after a two hour, middle of the night Google spiral, I know more about jet packs than I ever want to know.

Nathan nods, getting it.

NATHAN

Let's look again. Slower this time.

They watch for a few seconds, then:

NAOMI

Hang on, pause it.

She points to the screen.

NATHAN

Is that Dee?

Yep. Dee is standing outside his tattoo parlor. Superman is right above him, hovering in the air. But while everyone around Dee is freaking out, he seems calm.

NAOMI

Can you play this part in slo mo?

Nathan nods. He starts to slowly advance the frame. And as he does, it appears that Dee and Superman EXCHANGE A LOOK.

NATHAN

What the hell...

NAOMI

(wtf)

It looks like they know each other.

Off Naomi, staring at Dee, frozen on the screen...

EXT. PORT OSWEGO - MAIN STREET - DAY

Naomi and Nathan walk down Main Street. A couple of LOCAL REPORTERS are talking to business owners. CITY CREWS are out cleaning up.

NAOMI

It feels weird that Dee would be involved in this.

NATHAN

Sometimes people aren't who you think they are.

They keep walking down the street. They're about to pass Zumbado's Used Cars when Naomi spots Zumbado outside.

NAOMI

Come on.

Confused, Nathan follows her across the street. He gets it when he spots Zumbado staring at them.

NATHAN

Not a Zumbado fan?

NAOMI

He's a bad person. You've seen what happens when businesses like that pop up around military bases. They take advantage of folks who are just trying to do their best.

NATHAN

You do have to be a special kind of asshole to rip off service members.

NAOMI

Zumbado's even worse. He's not just a scam artist. He's dangerous.

NATHAN

What do you mean?

NAOMI

My parents said he used to be in prison.

NATHAN

For what?

NAOMI

I don't know.

Naomi glances back at Zumbado. He's still watching them.

INT. DEE'S TATTOO PARLOR - DAY

The place is empty. Dimly lit. Grungy, but as a choice. The wall is covered with TATTOO DESIGNS. Naomi and Nathan move closer to look. The designs are intricate and beautiful.

DEE (O.S.)

Naomi.

They spin to see Dee standing in the doorway to the back.

NAOMI

Dee, uh, hi.

DEE

You wear glasses.

NAOMI

Ummm... yeah?

Awkward silence. Nathan jumps in, motions to the wall.

NATHAN

I like your designs.

DEE

Thank you. Art has been a valuable tool on my journey to live a more centered and intentional life.

(to Nathan)

It's also been shown to improve the fine motor skills of athletes. Have you ever considered painting?

Nathan and Naomi exchange a look -- *oookay*.

NAOMI

Right. So um, Dee. You and I haven't talked much... or, ever. And you're probably wondering why I'm here.

DEE

I'm guessing it's not for a tattoo.

NAOMI

Uh, your art is really cool and I have always wanted one, but I'm pretty sure my parents would flip. Maybe when I turn eighteen?

DEE

Deal. March 14, right?

(CONTINUED)

NAOMI

(wtf)

That's the day I was adopted. How do you know that?

Dee goes completely still. It takes him too long to answer.

DEE

Social media.

NAOMI

That's not on social media.

DEE

What can I do for you, Naomi?

She stares at him for a long beat, then finally:

NAOMI

We're trying to find out who was behind the Superman thing. In the video we saw, it looked like you knew the guy playing him.

DEE

I don't.

NAOMI

You didn't seem very surprised.

DEE

I was. I was very surprised.

NAOMI

So you're saying that even though you were standing right by the guy playing Superman and even though you exchanged a look with the guy playing Superman... you don't know anything about him.

DEE

Yes. That is what I'm saying.

NAOMI

No disrespect, but - it feels like you're leaving something out.

DEE

(clearly uncomfortable)

I'm not lying.

NATHAN

Naomi, I think maybe we should go --

(CONTINUED)

DEE
(flustered)
Yes, I think you should. I'm
sorry... I'm not... This is not
good for my anxiety.

NAOMI
Please. Can you just give me some
answers?

DEE
I can't give you answers when
you're not asking the right
questions!

NAOMI
What does that mean!?

DEE
It was me, okay? I did it. I
planned the Superman stunt.

And just like that, all the air goes out of the room.

NAOMI
You planned it. Why?

DEE
For publicity. Business has been
slow. I thought it would help. Now
if you'll excuse me, I really
should get back to work.

NATHAN
Dude. You owe people so much money.

NAOMI
So the guy who played Superman...

DEE
He's an actor I found online.

Naomi doesn't look convinced. Dee starts ushering them toward
the door.

NAOMI
Wait, how'd you do it? How does it
look so real? Please talk to me...

Dee ignores her. Pushes them outside. Right before he closes
the door:

NAOMI (CONT'D)
You know I gotta post this, right?

EXT. DEE'S TATTOO PARLOR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Naomi pounds on the door.

NAOMI

Dee, come on! Open up! Dee!

Silence. Naomi and Nathan look at each other, wide-eyed.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. NAOMI'S ROOM - MORNING

Naomi sits at her desk. Dressed for school. She's looking at her site -- the article about Dee being responsible for the Superman stunt is on the front page. But she still feels uneasy. She picks up her glasses. Studies them. Puts them on and takes them back off. Considering. A KNOCK.

JENNIFER (O.S.)
Naomi! Are you dressed? We have something to show you.

EXT. NAOMI'S HOUSE - DAY

Naomi trails her parents outside.

GREG Surprise! JENNIFER Surprise!

Naomi looks around. There's nothing different.

NAOMI
I don't get it.

Greg takes out a set of CAR KEYS and tosses them to Naomi.

GREG
That's your set.

NAOMI
(realizing)
You're letting me drive?

JENNIFER
We're letting you drive.

NAOMI
Seriously? What happened to waiting until graduation?

GREG
(teasing)
We were getting kind of tired of hauling you around everywhere.

JENNIFER
Naomi, you're a great student, a great daughter, a great kid. We're really proud of you.

GREG
But don't think this means we're buying you a car.

(CONTINUED)

Naomi moves toward the car. She's happy, but distracted.

GREG (CONT'D)

Gotta say, we thought there'd be a lot more screaming and jumping and general excitement.

NAOMI

I am excited. Really. It's just...
(then, the truth)
How does Dee know when I was adopted?

JENNIFER

What? The guy who owns the tattoo parlor?

NAOMI

I went to see him yesterday because I thought he might know the guy who played Superman. Turns out he does. Because he hired him. Dee was behind the whole thing.

GREG

Wow. Did not see that coming. Guess you never really know someone.

NAOMI

Except... he seemed to know me. He knew my adoption day. He seemed... surprised that I wore glasses. He said if I wanted answers, I needed to ask the right questions.

JENNIFER

He said what?

NAOMI

(spinning)
What does that even mean? Are you guys friends with him? And why do I wear glasses? I can see fine without them. Sometimes it seems like they make my vision worse.

Jennifer moves toward Naomi. Grabs her shoulders.

JENNIFER

Baby, just take a deep breath.

Greg joins them, puts his arm around Naomi.

(CONTINUED)

GREG

You know why you wear glasses. You have a condition called leber optic neuropathy. It's degenerative. The glasses help.

NAOMI

What about Dee?

(tentative)

Do you think that he knew my birth parents? And that's how he knows when I was adopted or something?

GREG

(gently)

Pumpkin, when they died in that crash it was far, far away from here. The adoption agency said it was in another country. You know that. I don't see how he could have known them.

NAOMI

How does he know all that stuff?

JENNIFER

This is a small town. People talk.

Naomi knows this to be true. She nods, takes a breath.

GREG

You okay, pumpkin? I'm worried.

NAOMI

No. I mean, yes. I'm good. Sorry.

GREG

Never be sorry for needing to talk things through, okay? We're here.

JENNIFER

Always.

NAOMI

(softening)

I know that. I really do.

JENNIFER

Now how would you like to have your first practice session and drive your folks to the base?

NAOMI

The base? What about school?

(CONTINUED)

GREG

Today's the school's presentation.
To the delegation? Did you forget?

NAOMI

No.
(off their looks)
Okay, yes. But I know plenty about
the topic. I'll be fine. Promise.

Greg smiles and opens the driver's side door for Naomi.

EXT. PORT OSWEGO ARMY BASE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

A mid-size Army base on the outskirts of town.

EXT. PORT OSWEGO ARMY BASE - DAY

Naomi carefully guides the car through the checkpoint at the entrance to the base. Her dad rides shotgun, Jennifer is in the back. She drives toward a two-story brick building marked THEATER. MEN and WOMEN in uniform hustle around the base.

Naomi stops the car in front of the theater. Anthony is pacing outside. Naomi gets out. Greg switches to the driver's seat, then pulls away. Anthony hurries to meet Naomi.

ANTHONY

Naomi! We have a big problem.

INT. PORT OSWEGO ARMY BASE - THEATER - BACKSTAGE - DAY

Backstage is buzzing. STUDENTS are huddled in groups, preparing for their portion of the presentation. The GLEE CLUB. The DRAMA CLUB. The JAZZ CLUB is already on stage performing, resulting in MUFFLED MUSIC backstage.

Naomi faces off with Principal Brooks. Esme stands nearby, holding a stack of notecards, looking at the ground.

NAOMI

What do you mean, a change in
topic? We decided on that in class.

PRINCIPAL BROOKS

It was done without my approval.
This presentation is very important
to our school. I feel that
discussing personal responsibility
and genetic determinism is a more
appropriate topic.

NAOMI

Esme, say something.

(CONTINUED)

Esme won't look her in the eye.

ESME
It's his decision, Naomi.

NAOMI
(under her breath)
This is bullshit.

PRINCIPAL BROOKS
Ms. McDuffie! I heard that. That
kind of language is not
appropriate.

NAOMI
Neither is this, sir. You can't
change the topic of a debate at the
last second. We're not prepared...

Naomi stops mid-sentence. She's realized something.

NAOMI (CONT'D)
(to Esme)
Can I see those for a sec...?

She takes the notecards out of Esme's hands.

NAOMI (CONT'D)
(reading)
"Biologically determined
characteristics play a much more
significant role than environment."

Naomi shakes her head, disgusted with them both.

NAOMI (CONT'D)
How'd you have time to prepare
this?

Esme looks like she's about to break. She opens her mouth --

PRINCIPAL BROOKS
Esme.

Esme rethinks, cowed by her father. Turns to Naomi.

ESME
Naomi, I'm sorry, but you're not
from this town. You could be gone
tomorrow, but this is our home.

*
*

There's no more time to argue, because the JAZZ BAND has just
finished playing. Thunderous applause from the audience.
Principal Brooks nods to Esme, who walks toward stage.

(CONTINUED)

PRINCIPAL BROOKS

Good luck, darling.

Then he walks off. Leaving Naomi standing alone. Furious. She has no choice but to follow Esme toward the curtain.

TEACHER (PRELAP)

Next up, we have our Port Oswego Debate Team, represented by Esme Brooks and Naomi McDuffie.

Applause from the audience, which continues as --

INT. PORT OSWEGO ARMY BASE - THEATER - DAY

Naomi walks onto the stage. The theater is completely packed with PARENTS, CIVILIANS, MEN and WOMEN in uniform. The very official looking DELEGATION is seated in the front row. There are a lot of people. It's intimidating.

Naomi spots Annabelle and Anthony. They wave. She sees her parents near the front. They give her a thumbs up. Naomi sees Lourdes, seated two rows in front of Nathan. Naomi smiles in that direction and Lourdes and Nathan wave at the same time, both believing that Naomi was smiling at them. Awkward.

Mr. Villareal is already on stage. He mouths "You got this" as Naomi passes and heads to her microphone.

MR. VILLAREAL

Today's debate question. "Is our behavior determined only by our genes?"

(to Esme)

Ms. Brooks, the floor is yours.

ESME

Thank you, Mr. Villareal. We all know that both nature and nurture play a factor in our development. But which matters more? Many philosophers, including Plato himself, argued that genetics play a much bigger role. That is what I intend to demonstrate today.

Polite applause from the audience. Naomi's turn. A long beat. Naomi looks out over the massive crowd. It's getting awkward. *Is Principal Brooks' plan going to work!?*

NAOMI

(light)

People have been debating this for hundreds of years, but I bet we'll settle it today. Right, Esme?

(CONTINUED)

A ripple of laughter in the crowd. A collective exhale.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

There's a reason why people have been arguing about this for such a long time. It's because there is no easy answer. Which is a hard thing to accept. We want to live in a world where things make sense. We want to believe that if we can just find that one right answer, that one missing piece, everything else will fall into place.

The audience listens intently. Naomi is processing as she talks. Clearly this is about more than just the debate.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

If genetics are everything, yes, that does give us an answer. But maybe it also lets us off the hook. Maybe it keeps us from having to do the hardest thing of all -- decide who it is that we want to be. And to understand that it's okay if that changes. What made you feel happy and free at one point in your life may change, and that's okay.

(beat, then)

If our lives are predetermined, what incentive do we have to grow and learn and change? To be open to new ideas and new ways of looking at things? We have to be willing to keep striving and searching and asking questions. Even when it's hard. Even when we're afraid of the answers. Even when the answers don't seem to make sense.

(the big finish)

In the end, all we can control is our choices, and it's our choices that determine our destiny.

Thunderous applause from the audience. Naomi crushed it. She locks eyes with Principal Brooks. Checkmate, asshole.

MR. VILLAREAL

Thank you, Ms. McDuffie. The first follow up goes to you.

As Mr. Villareal talks, the doors at the back of the theater open and a HANDFUL OF LATECOMERS slip quietly into the room.

(CONTINUED)

MR. VILLAREAL (CONT'D)
Many people argue that all of our characteristics and behaviors are a result of evolution. What would you say to those people?

NAOMI
First of all, I would say... I would want to tell them that...

Naomi stops. Suddenly, she's having trouble speaking. Having trouble breathing. She's getting dizzy.

NAOMI (CONT'D)
What I would say to them is...

Now there's a high-pitched buzzing. This is exactly what happened when she saw Superman. And this time it's very clear that *no one else hears the noise*. The silence is getting awkward. Greg and Jennifer are getting concerned. So are Naomi's friends. Mr. Villareal tries to help.

MR. VILLAREAL
Shall I repeat the question?

NAOMI
No... I heard... I can't... I need a moment please.

Naomi starts to sway. The buzzing continues. She tries to walk off stage. But it's too late. She falls. The crowd gasps. Off Naomi, gasping for air, freaking out, she faints.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. PORT OSWEGO ARMY BASE - THEATER - DAY

The auditorium has emptied out. A small group of OFFICERS chat in the far corner of the room. Naomi sits on the edge of the stage next to Annabelle, who's reading on her phone.

ANNABELLE

Muscle fatigue, buzzing in the ears, blurry vision. Fainting. Anything else?

NAOMI

No.
(tentative)
Annabelle, what if something's like... really wrong?

*
*
*
*

ANNABELLE

Then we'll deal with it, babe.
(re: her phone)
Says here it could be... a panic attack. Something called a vestibular migraine, which kind of sounds like a migraine on steroids. Brain tumor...
(quickly)
Noooo. Definitely not that. Oh! Low blood sugar. Have you eaten anything? I should get you a snack.

*
*
*

Before Naomi can respond, Jennifer and Greg join them.

JENNIFER

Dr. Reilly said he can't be sure without running tests, but he thinks it was a panic attack.

ANNABELLE

Panic attack! The Internet wins.

JENNIFER

We have an appointment tomorrow.

NAOMI

Mom --

JENNIFER

Don't mom me. It's happened twice.

NAOMI

What about the buzzing?

(CONTINUED)

GREG

The doctor said there are sometimes
auditory hallucinations.

(to explain)

People imagine they hear noises.

NAOMI

I didn't imagine it.

JENNIFER

Baby, panic attacks feel very real.
That's why they're so scary.

NAOMI

But what if it's something else?

JENNIFER

Like what?

NAOMI

(the truth)

I don't know. This all started the
day of the Superman thing. Maybe
it's somehow... connected. The same
trick or device...

GREG

But pumpkin, why would it happen
again here? On the base?

Naomi doesn't have an answer for that.

JENNIFER

We're going to get through this.
We're going to sit down as a family
and discuss some boundaries.

NAOMI

Boundaries?

JENNIFER

The doctor says stress is usually a
contributing factor.

GREG

(gently)

This is what happens when you spend
all your time trying to please
everyone else, pumpkin. You don't
have time to focus on you.

JENNIFER

We think it might be time to think
about cutting back.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

NAOMI

What? So now I'm being punished?

GREG

Of course not.

Jennifer's phone BUZZES.

JENNIFER

Greg, it's the doctor.

They step away to talk. Naomi looks shaken. Annabelle senses her friend's worry, knows exactly what to say.

ANNABELLE

Good, they're gone. Now we can talk about what's really important...

(beat, then)

You drive now?

Naomi smiles. Grateful that her friend knows her so well.

NAOMI

Can you believe that?

ANNABELLE

I literally cannot. I thought Jen and Greg would never cave.

NAOMI

I know.

An AIDE enters the theater. Naomi recognizes him as one of the latecomers who came in before her attack.

ANNABELLE

This is a game changer.

NAOMI

(distracted)

I know.

ANNABELLE

Now we just need to get a car. Obviously you can't buy it because you have no job...

Naomi watches as the aide pulls the BASE COMMANDER aside. Slips him a small piece of paper. Naomi tries to read it. But she can't. Annabelle continues to chatter.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

Obviously I can't buy it, because I also don't have a job.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

And let's face it, I don't want to
drive anyway. I want to be
driven....

Naomi remembers her own words, has an idea. She takes off her glasses. And now she can read the paper. " 'S' landing site identified. Red River Forest." Off Naomi, wheels turning...

EXT. RED RIVER FOREST - DAY

Naomi walks through the woods. It's beautiful, haunting. Huge Redwoods and thick pine trees. Finally, she starts to see evidence of a disturbance. Broken trees. Branches on the ground. A human footprint amidst the quiet of the forest.

Naomi starts snapping photos. Close-ups. Wide shots. Different angles. Snaps of footprints on the ground. She wanders around the site -- then spots something partially hidden beneath a pile of leaves. She bends down, picks it up.

It's a SMALL BLACK DISC, about the size of a hockey puck. It seems ordinary -- until Naomi turns it over. There's writing on it. The language is unfamiliar. A confusing jumble of SYMBOLS and MARKINGS. Naomi's PHONE RINGS. It's Annabelle.

NAOMI

Okay, before you say anything, I know I said I was coming back to school, but I'm in the woods because... well, it's a long story, but I think whatever's going on with this Superman thing is way, way bigger than we thought --

ANNABELLE (O.S.)

... Naomi... what do you... woods!?

The connection is terrible.

NAOMI

Annabelle, I can't hear you. Anna, are you there?

ZUMBADO (O.S.)

Not much service out here, is there?

Naomi almost jumps out of her skin. She turns to see Zumbado emerging from the trees. She lowers her phone.

NAOMI

What are you doing here?

(CONTINUED)

ZUMBADO

It's a beautiful day. I'm hiking.
What are you doing here?

NAOMI

I was umm... I was just...

ZUMBADO

You were taking pictures.

Holy fuck, how does he know that?

ZUMBADO (CONT'D)

I'm guessing they're for that
Superman web site of yours.

NAOMI

How do you know about my site?

ZUMBADO

Do you know what I find
interesting, Naomi? That of all the
comic book characters in the world,
you chose Superman. Why is that?

(off her silence)

Clearly, you feel some connection
to that character.

NAOMI

We're both adopted.

Zumbado laughs dismissively. It's chilling.

ZUMBADO

You're either clueless, full of
yourself, or not ready to face the
truth. Probably all three.

(then, exasperated)

I'm going to need that disc.

Naomi goes completely still. Freaked out.

NAOMI

What?

ZUMBADO

Don't play dumb, Naomi. I know
you've been looking for it. First
on Main Street. Now here.

NAOMI

I don't even know what it is.

(then)

Wait, how did you know I was on
Main Street?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NAOMI (CONT'D)
(realizing)
You were following me. Did you
disable the cameras too?

Zumbado doesn't answer. He just holds out his hand.

ZUMBADO
The disc.
(off her silence, smirking)
You can't even read it.

NAOMI
And you can?

ZUMBADO
I don't need to. I have the right
tool.

Naomi doesn't respond. Zumbado steps toward her, and as he
does -- the leaves start to rustle. But there's no wind.

Naomi starts to freak out -- *what the hell is he doing?*

NAOMI
Stay back.

Zumbado doesn't. As he steps closer, the leaves move faster.
The branches start to shake too. It's escalating. Zumbado
takes another step forward -- and then Naomi runs.

She sprints through the trees -- but whatever force is
rustling the leaves doesn't stop. It follows her.

To Naomi, it seems like Zumbado is doing this. Naomi takes
cover behind a huge Redwood. She's scared out of her mind.

ZUMBADO (O.S.)
Is that all you've got? This is
going to be easier than I thought.

His voice echoes through the forest. It is terrifying. He's
searching for Naomi. Hunting her. Naomi pulls out her cell
phone. No service. Shit.

ZUMBADO (CONT'D)
You can't hide, Naomi. Not from me.
(then)
I'm sure your parents have told you
about me. About my past.

Zumbado sees a flash as Naomi darts out from behind the tree.
He creeps toward her. A tense game of cat and mouse.

(CONTINUED)

ZUMBADO (CONT'D)

It can be hard when you realize
you're not like everyone else. It
was for me. People start to look at
you differently.

BACK WITH NAOMI. She's taken cover again. She has her phone
and the disc out. She's trying to take a photo. But her hands
won't stop shaking. And the leaves and branches around her
hiding spot are moving. Zumbado sees it, heads toward her.

ZUMBADO (CONT'D)

The trick is learning to control
it. If you can't, well... that's
when you get yourself into trouble.
(then)

I used to be ashamed of who I was.
I thought there was something wrong
with me. But there's not. This
world is full of sheep. I was meant
for more. I finally realized...

Naomi bolts from her hiding spot. But the second she does --
Zumbado is standing right in front of her. *Holy shit.*

ZUMBADO (CONT'D)

Why be a sheep when you can be a
wolf?

Naomi is now fully convinced she's going to die in this
forest. She screams at him.

NAOMI

Stay. Back!

As she yells, a gigantic ENERGY BLAST knocks both of them off
their feet -- hurling them backwards, away from each other.

Naomi's phone and bookbag go flying. Naomi is lying on the
ground, stunned. She slowly recovers, scrambles up. Zumbado
is already on his feet. He picks up the disc.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

What was that? What did you do?

ZUMBADO

You think I did that?

He tucks the disc into his pocket.

ZUMBADO (CONT'D)

Don't believe everything you think,
Naomi. It's dangerous.

(CONTINUED)

NAOMI - #101 - "PILOT" - 2.21.21 - REVISED NETWORK DRAFT 48.
CONTINUED: (4)

With that, he turns and saunters away. Off Naomi, relieved, shaken, and wondering what the hell just happened...

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

EXT. ANNABELLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Naomi sits on Annabelle's porch on the townie side of their small town. The homes are less modern and polished than the military housing.

Naomi has just finished downloading Annabelle. It's a lot. Annabelle is pacing, trying to wrap her head around it.

ANNABELLE

Okay... okay.

(processing)

So after you had that attack at the base, you went to the woods. Alone, by the way, which we are definitely going to talk about later. Then in the woods, you had what sounds like a truly terrifying encounter with an ex-con, which included the trees coming alive in a real horror movie kind of way. Which makes you think Zumbado is the one behind the Superman stunt and all this weirdness. Not Dee. Even though Dee confessed. Did I miss anything?

NAOMI

No.

ANNABELLE

Okay.

NAOMI

Okay? You believe me?

ANNABELLE

Of course I believe you.

NAOMI

(relieved)

I know how crazy it all sounds. I thought maybe I was losing my mind or something.

ANNABELLE

You're not, babe. "When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."

(off Naomi's look)

I've been bingeing Sherlock. I don't get why Zumbado is involved in this. The guy sells crappy cars.

(CONTINUED)

NAOMI

I don't know. But he really wanted that disc. It must be valuable.

ANNABELLE

You said there was writing on it?

Naomi nods, takes out her phone. Shows Annabelle the photo.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

Whoa. This makes Dothraki look like first grade vocab.

NAOMI

(nods)

I speak nine languages and I've never seen anything like this. I think Zumbado has a way to read it.

ANNABELLE

Like what?

NAOMI

Maybe a computer program. Or some kind of a key.

ANNABELLE

Okay. So what do we do? It's not like we can just walk into Zumbado's shop and look for it.

Annabelle sees the look on Naomi's face.

ANNABELLE (CONT'D)

Oh no. That's your plan, isn't it?

NAOMI

We'll be in and out. He'll never know we were there.

ANNABELLE

Naomi. Breaking and entering? That's like, serious stuff.

NAOMI

Not breaking and entering. More like inviting ourselves in through the window via my dad's crowbar while Zumbado's not there... and entering. We won't break anything.

Annabelle just stares at her.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Annabelle. Please.

(CONTINUED)

ANNABELLE

Fine. But we're gonna need help.

EXT. MAIN STREET - ACROSS FROM ZUMBADO'S - NIGHT

Naomi and Annabelle have been joined by Jacob, Anthony, and Lourdes. They're staking out Zumbado's dealership. It's dark. All seems quiet. Zumbado is clearly not there.

LOURDES

I don't think I've ever met someone
who was willing to trespass for a
fan site. I'm into it.

Annabelle and Naomi exchange a look. It's clear Naomi hasn't shared her real reasons with the rest of her friends.

JACOB

I feel like we're in a movie. Can
we have code names? I call Elrond.
(off their looks)
From Lord of the Rings?

ANTHONY

I don't know about this, Naomi.

NAOMI

It's for a good reason. Trust me.

He does. A beat, then Anthony nods. Just then, Nathan rounds a corner and joins them. He carries a backpack.

NATHAN

Sorry I'm late.

ANTHONY

What's he doing here?

JACOB

(sotto)
Awkward.

Annabelle elbows him in the ribs -- *shut up*.

NAOMI

(to Nathan)
Did you bring them?

Nathan nods and opens the backpack. He pulls out SIX WALKIE TALKIES -- My Little Pony themed. He passes them around.

All the teenagers stare down at them -- *seriously?*

LOURDES

My Little Pony. Cute.

(CONTINUED)

NATHAN

They're my sister's. It's all I
could find.

NAOMI

Okay, here's the plan. Two people
will stay outside and be lookouts.
The rest of us will split up, jump
the fence, then sneak inside.

ANTHONY

What about the security cameras?

Lourdes holds up a SMALL DEVICE -- a JAMMER.

LOURDES

My cousin Miguel says this will jam
them for five minutes.

NAOMI

I'll go in through the front. I
need someone to come with me.

ANTHONY

I'll do it.

NATHAN

I'll do it.

NAOMI

Do either of you know how to pick a
lock?

Silence. Anthony and Nathan shake their heads.

LOURDES

We can figure it out. Let's go.

Naomi smiles at Lourdes. Jacob and Annabelle are dying. They
can't look at each other. Annabelle claps her hands together.

ANNABELLE

Alright. Sounds like it's time to
get this very fun and not at all
awkward show on the road.

Off our unlikely group of heroes...

EXT. ZUMBADO'S USED CARS - BACK - NIGHT

Annabelle is positioned at the back of the store. The teens
communicate via the walkie talkies.

ANNABELLE

Back is clear. I think? I've never
really done this before.

EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT - INTERCUT

Jacob is across the street, with a full view of Zumbado's.

JACOB
Elrond to Aragorn, you're good to
go for the precious.

EXT. ZUMBADO'S USED CARS - BACK FENCE - NIGHT - INTERCUT

Anthony and Nathan are in position at the back.

NATHAN
Dude. No one knows what that means.

JACOB
Philistines. The front is clear.

EXT. ZUMBADO'S USED CARS - FRONT FENCE - NIGHT - INTERCUT

Naomi and Lourdes are near the fence. Lourdes points the JAMMER at the camera. The light goes from green to red.

NAOMI
Okay, everyone. Go.

Naomi and Lourdes bolt for the fence, then vault over it. They run through the lot, using the cars and trucks as cover.

WITH ANTHONY and NATHAN -- doing the same in the back.

BACK WITH NAOMI and LOURDES, now at the front entrance. Lourdes quickly picks the lock and throws open the door.

INT. ZUMBADO'S USED CARS - NIGHT - INTERCUT

Naomi and Lourdes run inside. They turn on flashlights. Sweep the room with their beams. It's dark. Tense.

WITH ANNABELLE -- watching as headlights go past.

WITH JACOB -- nervously eyeing the dealership.

WITH NATHAN and ANTHONY at the back entrance. Waiting.

ANTHONY
I hope you didn't "accidentally"
lead us to the wrong place again.

NATHAN
It's not my fault you've lived in
this town your whole life and still
don't know it well enough to follow
simple directions.

(CONTINUED)

ANTHONY
I know this town better than you
ever will, Nathan.

Before Nathan can respond, the door finally opens. Naomi and Lourdes motion them inside. They enter.

NAOMI
Spread out.

Nods all around. STAY WITH NAOMI as she creeps into --

INT. ZUMBADO'S USED CARS - ZUMBADO'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Zumbado's office. An old computer. Piles of paper. Keys. A filing cabinet. Naomi starts searching through the clutter. Suddenly, a piece of paper catches her eye. Buried beneath a pile of others. It's AN OLD NEWSPAPER. Dated March 14, 2004.

Naomi's adoption day. The headline: "MYSTERIOUS FLYING OBJECT APPEARS OVER PORT OSWEGO." Naomi stares at the paper. Annabelle's words ringing in her ears. Naomi looks closer, at the photo of Main Street. There's a familiar face in the photo -- DEE. And he looks exactly the same as he does now.

NAOMI
What the hell...

ANTHONY (O.S.)
Naomi, I think we found something.

INT. ZUMBADO'S USED CARS - SIDE OFFICE - NIGHT

Naomi, Nathan, Lourdes, and Anthony stare at a HIGH TECH SAFE. It feels excessive for a used car dealership.

LOURDES
Maybe he keeps cash in there?

NAOMI
(if she knows anything)
What I need is inside of that safe.
We have to open it.

WITH ANNABELLE outside the dealership. Headlights approach.

ANNABELLE
Negative on that. Zumbado's coming.
You need to get out of there. Now.

Nathan, Anthony, and Lourdes click their flashlights off and hustle for the door. Naomi is still staring at the safe.

NATHAN
Naomi, come on. Naomi!

(CONTINUED)

Finally, Naomi snaps out of it. Follows her friends out.

EXT. MAIN STREET - ALLEY - NIGHT

The teenagers have regrouped at a safe distance. Naomi puts on a brave face. They return the walkies to Nathan.

NAOMI

Thanks again for this. Really.

LOURDES

Thank you. That was the most fun I've had in months.

NATHAN

VERY cool.

ANTHONY

(smiling in agreement)

See you guys tomorrow.

Waves and goodbyes all around as the teenagers split up. Annabelle hangs back with Naomi.

ANNABELLE

You know what I think you need? A double cheeseburger from Murray's. Might even share my shake with you.

NAOMI

Actually, I think I just want to go home. Is that okay?

ANNABELLE

Of course. Call me later?

Naomi nods. Annabelle hugs her, then hurries to catch up with Jacob. Naomi starts trudging toward home. That's when she spots a LIGHT ON at Dee's. An idea forming.

INT. ZUMBADO'S USED CARS - ZUMBADO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Zumbado sits down at his desk. On it -- the DISC, a notepad, and a WORN BOOK. Almost like an old journal. One that's been around for a very long time. The pages are filled with words in the same unfamiliar language. Zumbado is translating. He writes down the first word -- EARTH-29.

INT. DEE'S TATTOO PARLOR - NIGHT

Naomi enters. Dee's back is to her, but he knows she's there.

NAOMI

You told me I wasn't asking the right questions. What did you mean?

(CONTINUED)

DEE

I shouldn't have said that.

NAOMI

The Superman thing wasn't you, was it?

DEE

No.

NAOMI

Why did you lie?

DEE

You were upset. I'm not comfortable with confrontation.

NAOMI

Then how about a conversation?

(off his silence)

Please talk to me. I need answers.

Dee hesitates, then finally turns to face her. Almost sad.

DEE

I'm not the guy who has them. I'm nobody. But I'll try.

NAOMI

This happened here before. On the day I was adopted. You were there.

DEE

Yes. I was there.

NAOMI

Something... happened to me during the Superman thing. And then again at the military base. I heard this buzzing, then I went to the woods and found some kind of disc with all this weird writing on it --

DEE

Wait. Go back to the buzzing.

NAOMI

I've never heard or felt anything like it. It made me dizzy and weak. No one else seemed to be affected.

(off his silence)

Do you know what it was?

(CONTINUED)

DEE

No. But... it might have something
to do with people like us.

NAOMI

People like us? What are you
talking about?

Dee takes a deep breath. Wrestling with himself.

DEE

It wasn't supposed to happen like
this. It wasn't time yet... but I
guess things have changed.

NAOMI

Time for what?

DEE

The truth.

Dee finally stands. And as he does, SOMETHING INCREDIBLE
HAPPENS -- steel wings sprout out of his back. Huge,
intimidating. Unbelievable. Naomi stares. Stunned beyond
belief.

NAOMI

Who... who are you?

DEE

Still. The wrong question.

He steps toward her. Naomi instinctively steps back. As she
does, the lights start to flicker. Things in the shop start
to vibrate -- exactly like the energy surge that happened in
the woods. Naomi realizes it too. Starts to freak out.

NAOMI

Dee... what's happening?

Dee takes another step forward. The surge builds and builds,
until finally -- all the lights in the shop blow out. And on
Naomi, realizing that somehow, she's the one who caused that.

DEE

What's the question, Naomi?

NAOMI

The question is...
(then, tentatively)
... who am I?

END OF EPISODE