

THE MORGUE MUSEUM

by

Chris Bodily

INT. MORGUE MUSEUM - NIGHT

Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" plays in the background.

An outline in the shape of a person standing in profile superimposes onto a wall.

Then, a silhouette steps into view inside of said outline, ala Alfred Hitchcock Presents.

The silhouette belongs to M.T. GRAVES, pale skin, Romanian accent, dressed in a Hugh Hefner-style robe. He carries an empty pipe to accentuate his upper-class appearance.

GRAVES

Good evening. Allow me to introduce myself. I'm M.T. Graves. Ah-ah. This is The Morgue Museum, and I bid you welcome.

M.T. Graves strolls down a long corridor, adorned with several paintings of various styles.

GRAVES

Lots of elegant pictures with wonderfully horrific tales behind them. Especially, this one.

Mr. Graves stops at a Munch-style portrait of a masked man strangling a young woman with a telephone cord. The title? "Check On the Kids."

GRAVES

Even in this digital age, you don't always know who is on the telephone. And what you don't know will often kill you.

A school bell RINGS.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

AMY, 17, neck-length hair, plain white button shirt with red jacket and blue jeans, stands by her locker.

Alongside her is JOHNNY, also 17 with neck-length hair, wearing a red flannel shirt over a plain white tee and faded blue jeans.

JOHNNY

Listen, Amy. Are you doing anything Saturday?

Amy knows what he wants. She smirks.

AMY

I can't, Johnny. I'm babysitting.

JOHNNY

Again?

AMY

A girl's gotta make some money.

JOHNNY

How many have you sat on?

Johnny chuckles at his own joke. Amy doesn't.

JOHNNY

Oh well. I guess I'll have to ask
Tori, then.

AMY

Tori's going to a movie.

JOHNNY

That horror flick about the
babysitter?

Johnny ponders for a beat.

JOHNNY

You sure you wanna do this?

AMY

It's just a movie. People didn't
stop taking showers just because of
Psycho.

JOHNNY

Yeah. Vince Vaughan just wasn't
that scary.

Amy smirks at him, unsure of how to respond. She opens her
locker and takes her backpack out.

Johnny does the same.

JOHNNY

I guess I'll see you Monday.

Amy nods.

They leave with the rest of the students.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL / RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Amy, Johnny, and other students head home after a long school day. Everyone is visibly tired.

JOHNNY

These parents must really like you to keep inviting you back.

AMY

I've never babysat these kids before. Their regular babysitter moved. Remember Jennifer?

JOHNNY

Barely.

AMY

She used to babysit the O'Brien kids every Saturday.

JOHNNY

O'Brien... Don't think I know them.

AMY

If you think babysitting means sitting on babies, you never will.

JOHNNY

You nervous?

Amy hesitates before she answers.

AMY

A little. What if I forget their names? What if I'm late? What if I fall asleep? What if I lose my temper? What if I fart?

JOHNNY

Relax! You'll be fine.

Amy nods and smiles.

AMY

Thanks, Johnny.

EXT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - NIGHT

Amy walks up to the door.

She hesitates before she RINGS THE DOORBELL.

She takes a deep breath before the door opens.

MAGGIE O'BRIEN, 40, dressed in a fancy black shirt and dress pants, stands in front of Amy.

Maggie has a warm smile on her face.

Amy relaxes.

AMY
Missus O'Brien?

MAGGIE
You must be Amy.

Amy nods, extends her hand. She and Maggie shake.

MAGGIE
Doug and I have been looking
forward to this movie for the last
three months. Speaking of...

DOUG O'BRIEN, 38, dressed in his best duds, appears from behind her, all smiles.

MAGGIE
Amy, this is my husband, Doug.

AMY
Nice to meet you.

DOUG
Pleasure's all mine. Come inside.

INT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Amy looks around the room.

AMY
Where are they?

MAGGIE
Just upstairs doing homework.

AMY
Straight A students?

MAGGIE
Not quite. Then again, neither was
I.

Amy chuckles nervously.

AMY
I've had a few B's in my life.

MAGGIE

If you guys get hungry, there's five dollars on the kitchen table for pizza.

Maggie hands Amy a list of emergency numbers.

DOUG

If you need anything, you can reach us here.

MAGGIE

Plus, every emergency number you'll ever need.

AMY

I don't think I'll have too many problems.

Amy chuckles warmly.

MAGGIE

We've got every cable channel you can think of. So, I don't think you'll get too bored.

DOUG

The kids have a strict ten-thirty bedtime. We should be home about midnight.

Amy nods.

MAGGIE

Got all that?

AMY

This is a really popular movie. All my friends wanna see it. I probably will when the lines die down.

MAGGIE

I hope you won't be too scared to babysit.

The three of them share a laugh.

The O'Briens head toward the door.

AMY

Enjoy your dinner and a movie. Tell me all about it.

MAGGIE

We will!

INT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

COLIN, 10, and EVELYN, 8, lie on their stomachs on their beds while doing their homework.

Colin wears a green T-shirt and blue jeans.

Evelyn, hair pulled back in a ponytail, wears a red T-shirt with tan jeans.

COLIN

You think she's here yet?

EVELYN

Probably got lost. Just like last week's babysitter.

COLIN

Can you believe it took an hour for her to get here? Mom and Dad almost killed her!

Amy stands by the door, smiling.

AMY

Well, this week, you have a babysitter with a pulse.

The kids jolt.

They climb off their beds to meet their new babysitter.

AMY

Colin, Evelyn, I'm Amy.

EVELYN

Hi.

COLIN

Are you the same Amy who babysits Freddy Elam?

AMY

One and the same.

COLIN

Freddy says the nicest things about you. He thinks you're really pretty.

Amy giggles.

AMY

You're making me blush.

The kids return to their homework.

AMY
What kind of homework are you
doing?

EVELYN
Math.

AMY
Math is relatively easy.

COLIN
Science for me.

Amy explores the room. Colin's side has posters of Britney Spears, Power Rangers and Batman...

...while Evelyn's side has posters of Shawn Mendes and BTS.

AMY
I was terrible in science when I
was your age. It didn't click with
me until ninth grade.

COLIN
How old are you anyway?

Amy mockingly scoffs, clearly tongue-in-cheek.

AMY
Colin O'Brien! You should never ask
a woman her age!

All three share a laugh.

AMY
No. no. I'm seventeen.

INT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Amy, seated on the couch, talks on the phone.

AMY
That's correct. Oh, and did I order
breadsticks? I did? Good. Thank
you.

Amy hangs up.

AMY
I'm surprised you guys still use a
landline.

EVELYN

We used to have a cordless, but it broke.

Amy turns on the TV, just in time to catch the beginning of Nosferatu on Turner Classic Movies.

Amy's face lights up.

AMY

Have you guys ever seen Nosferatu?

Colin quickly turns toward Amy, bewildered.

COLIN

Nose for what?

AMY

It's a German silent film about a vampire. Max Schreck.

Colin gets excited.

COLIN

Vampires? Shrek?

Amy giggles.

AMY

Different Schreck.

Colin again faces the TV, disappointed, like a balloon quickly deflating.

COLIN

Oh. Boring!

AMY

Just watch it, you'll love it. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to use the ladies' room.

Amy gets up off the couch.

INT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Amy flushes the toilet and moves toward the counter.

She turns on the faucet to wash her hands. Her CELL PHONE RINGS with Beethoven's "Symphony No. 5."

She turns off the faucet and checks the ID. "Unknown."

She reluctantly answers.

AMY

Hello?

VOICE (V.O.)

(on phone)

Check on the kids.

AMY

They're fine. They're just watching
a movie. Wait, who is this?

Wait a minute. She doesn't recognize the voice. She grimaces
for a long beat.

VOICE (V.O.)

Check on the kids.

Amy still doesn't recognize the voice. She tenses up.

AMY

Mister O... Johnny, is that you?

She relaxes.

AMY

What the hell are you doing? You
scared me half to death!

VOICE (V.O.)

Only half?

She tenses up again. She realizes this isn't Johnny. Amy
begins to tremble.

AMY

Who is this?

DISTURBING, HEAVY BREATHING.

AMY

Hello? Hello?

A dark CHUCKLE.

He hangs up. DIAL TONE. Amy hangs up her end.

She sets her phone down and washes her hands.

INT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Amy races back to check on the kids.

They're fine. They seem quite invested in Nosferatu.

She sighs.

AMY
(whispers)
Shit.

COLIN
I heard that.

Amy composes herself.

AMY
How's the movie?

COLIN
Good.

EVELYN
Spooky.

Amy catches up with the kids, sits back down.

The DOORBELL RINGS, causing Amy to jump.

AMY
Sh--

She catches herself before she can curse.

AMY
Shoot.

COLIN
Nice save.

DING-DONG!

Amy crawls off the couch and reluctantly moves toward the door. DING-DONG!

She looks through the peephole.

EXT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - NIGHT (PEEPHOLE)

It's the PIZZA GUY, college age, not too gawky.

PIZZA GUY
Pizza Hut!

INT/EXT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - NIGHT

Amy sighs in relief and opens the door.

AMY

Why didn't you say so?

The pizza guy smiles.

PIZZA GUY

Are you alright? You look like
you've seen a ghost.

Amy smiles back.

AMY

Not a ghost. Just a vampire.
Nosferatu.

PIZZA GUY

Classic.

Colin and Evelyn appear from behind Amy to take the food:
Two large pizzas, a box of breadsticks, and four cups of
tomato dipping sauce.

Evelyn carries the sauce. Colin handles the rest.

AMY

(to the kids)

And while you're there, could you
grab--

The kids nod.

INT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

Max Schreck appears on the TV as Count Orlok.

Amy and the children are equally frightened and fascinated
by this nearly-100-year-old movie.

Amy holds her pepperoni pizza in one hand, taking one bite
at a time.

Colin dunks a breadstick into the tomato dip and takes a
huge bite. Scrumptious.

Evelyn savors her bite of pizza, then takes a drink of her
glass of root beer.

EVELYN

Magnifique.

AMY

Have you taken any French classes
yet?

Amy takes a drink of her Pepsi.

Evelyn shakes her head.

AMY

Maybe when you're eleven.

Amy sets her drink down.

Her CELL PHONE RINGS. Again, Beethoven's most famous riff.

Amy jumps and yelps.

COLIN

What's wrong?

AMY

Oh, nothing. Just my phone. Excuse me.

Amy answers the phone and runs to the

KITCHEN

She doesn't check the ID.

AMY

Hello?

DISTURBING, HEAVY BREATHING on the other end.

AMY

Hello? Who is this?

A man CHUCKLES DARKLY.

AMY

Hello? Look, if this is who I think it is, I'll call the police!

A long silence.

AMY

Do you understand?

CLICK. DIAL TONE.

Amy disconnects and calls the police.

The other line RINGS.

Twice.

An OFFICER answers.

OFFICER (V.O.)
Ogden Police Department.

AMY
Yes. I have received two disturbing
calls on my cell phone. Doesn't
show up on the caller ID.

OFFICER (V.O.)
Did they say anything?

AMY
"Check on the kids."

OFFICER (V.O.)
"Check on the kids"?

AMY
Yes. I'm babysitting.

OFFICER (V.O.)
I need your cell phone number and
the family's landline.

AMY
My number is...

INT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Colin and Evelyn continue to watch Nosferatu and eat their
food. They turn their heads toward the kitchen periodically.

EVELYN
Who do you think Amy's talking to?

COLIN
Probably her boyfriend.

EVELYN
Does she have one?

COLIN
All the pretty girls are taken.

Evelyn smirks and teases Colin in a singsong voice.

EVELYN
Colin's got a girlfriend! Colin's
got a girlfriend!

INT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Amy continues to talk to the officer.

AMY

My name is Amy Smith and I'm
babysitting for Maggie and Doug
O'Brien.

OFFICER (V.O.)

Gotcha. If you receive another call
on either phone, we'll trace it and
keep you updated.

AMY

Thank you.

OFFICER (V.O.)

Please, whatever you do, try to
stay on the line for at least sixty
seconds. Just long enough for us to
trace the call.

Amy nods.

AMY

Got it. Thanks, again.

INT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The end. F.W. Murnau's 1922 classic is over.

The kids are equally spooked and entertained.

Amy returns, and lets out a long yawn.

AMY

Alright, kiddos. Time for bed.

The kids groan.

COLIN

But we're not tired.

AMY

Well, I'm getting a little sleepy,
and I want to be able to act on it
without getting fired. Now, get
your butts to bed.

EVELYN

It's not even ten thirty.

AMY

Please!

The kids stand straight up. Amy means business.

COLIN

Okay!

INT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Amy tucks Colin in. Evelyn is already taken care of.

AMY

If you need anything, there's two walkie-talkies over there.

Amy points to a pair of walkie-talkies on the dresser.

AMY

I'll take one and you can reach me with the other.

COLIN

Could you read us a bedtime story?

AMY

Sorry, too tired.

Amy yawns.

COLIN

Please?

AMY

Okay, a short one. "Once upon a time, there were three pigs..."

INT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Amy, walkie-talkie in her rear pants pocket, unfolds a blanket, and turns the couch into a makeshift bed.

She removes her shoes and socks, as well as her cell phone and walkie-talkie.

Amy breaks wind. Mid-fart, Colin comes on the walkie-walkie.

COLIN

Hey, Amy.

Amy finishes her flatulence and answers, quite embarrassed.

AMY

Colin! Hey. What do you need?

COLIN (V.O.)

Just testing.

AMY

That's nice. Now, go to bed.

COLIN (V.O.)

Amy, did you just fart?

AMY

Don't be silly. Girls don't fart.
Now, back to bed.

Short STATIC on the walkie-talkie.

Amy yawns.

AMY

Two out of five ain't bad.

Amy lies on the side closest to the home phone.

LATER

Amy is still asleep.

The HOME PHONE RINGS.

Amy slowly wakes up and answers.

AMY

Hello?

She yawns.

MAGGIE (V.O.)

Amy?

AMY

Oh, Missus O'Brien! Hi.

MAGGIE (V.O.)

How is everything?

AMY

Pretty good for the most part.

MAGGIE (V.O.)

Did they give you any trouble?

AMY

Not really, no. You should consider
yourself lucky to have such
wonderful kids.

MAGGIE (V.O.)

Thanks.

AMY
How was the movie?

MAGGIE (V.O.)
Edge-of-your-seat. You'll love it.
Listen, we'll be home in a
half-hour. I'm sure a girl like you
needs her beauty sleep.

Amy giggles, uneasy.

AMY
Yeah. See you then.

Amy nods and hangs up.

Immediately, the phone RINGS again.

Amy quickly picks it up.

AMY
Missus O'Brien?

HEAVY, DISTURBING breathing.

AMY
Missus O'Brien?

VOICE (V.O.)
Check on the kids.

AMY
You! The kids are in bed. They're
fine.

VOICE (V.O.)
Are you sure?

Amy hesitates before she answers.

AMY
Um, yeah, I'm pretty sure.

VOICE (V.O.)
Check on them again.

Amy uses her free hand to fold the blanket back up to the
best of her ability.

AMY
Look, I tucked them in and read
them a bedtime story. They're fine.

VOICE (V.O.)
How fine are they?

AMY
Fine enough, thank you.

VOICE (V.O.)
I doubt it.

Amy's eyes widen in horror.

AMY
What do you mean you doubt it?
Nosferatu isn't gonna scar them for
life.

VOICE (V.O.)
Nose for what?

Amy shudders. She tries to compose herself and hide the disturbance in her voice.

AMY
It's a movie. It's a classic.

Amy mouths "sixty seconds" repeatedly.

VOICE (V.O.)
You still there?

AMY
Yes, yes I'm here.

VOICE (V.O.)
Are you gonna check on the kids?

Amy huffs in defeat.

AMY
For you, anything. Hold on, this
phone has a cord. Don't hang up.

Amy ascends the

STAIRS

Amy carries the blanket with both hands. It's quite heavy.
Amy grunts as she walks.

HALLWAY

Amy puts the blanket back in the closet on the floor.

She turns toward the kids' bedroom door and decides to check on them.

INT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The door is ajar. The only light comes from the nightlight.

Amy opens the door all the way to reveal...

Colin and Evelyn hanging upside down above their respective beds, their stomachs covered in blood.

Amy trembles and takes a step back.

Her eyes widen as she stares at the kids' lifeless bodies.

Amy shrieks and races downstairs.

INT. O'BRIEN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

She picks up the phone, her hand shaking uncontrollably.

AMY

You motherfucker!

Disturbing HEAVY BREATHING.

AMY

Hello?

VOICE (V.O.)

Are the kids still "fine?"

The caller CHUCKLES DARKLY.

Amy checks the time: 11:32.

She hangs up. She sighs in relief that the call is over.

Amy sobs in horror.

AMY

Who are you?!

She drops to her knees, sobbing in her hands.

The home phone RINGS yet again.

Amy jumps up to answer it.

AMY

Hello?

It's the officer again.

OFFICER (V.O.)

O'Brien residence?

Amy sighs in relief.

AMY

Yes?

OFFICER (V.O.)

Amy Smith?

AMY

This is she.

OFFICER (V.O.)

Police. We just traced the last call.

The KILLER emerges from the kitchen. He wears a translucent white plastic mask obscuring his features.

OFFICER (V.O.)

It's coming from inside the house.

Amy's eyes widen.

AMY

Excuse me?

OFFICER (V.O.)

The calls are coming from inside the house! You must get out now!

The killer sneaks up behind Amy and strangles her with the phone cord. She gags and chokes.

The killer breathes heavily.

Amy tries to cry for help.

OFFICER (V.O.)

Amy, are you alright?

Amy grabs the phone from the killer and holds it to her ear. He continues to strangle her.

She STOMPS on his foot. He doesn't budge.

OFFICER (V.O.)

Amy, the police are on their way!

Amy tries to cry out. She elbows the killer in the chest.

He drops the phone. Amy picks it up.

Her voice shakes as she speaks to the officer.

AMY

Thank you!

Take two. The killer strangles her again.

Amy manages to choke out the words:

AMY

Fuck you.

The killer chuckles.

The doorknob rattles.

The killer tightens his grip.

Amy tries to break free.

The key turns.

Amy chokes out the words:

AMY

Please. Hurry.

The doorknob turns.

The killer breathes heavily.

The front door opens slowly. The O'Briens are horrified at the scene playing out in front of them.

MAGGIE

Amy!

The killer stares at Maggie for a long beat, breathing heavily, chuckling darkly.

KILLER

Check on the kids.

The O'Briens stand frozen in fear.

The whole scene freezes in time, as it would appear if it were a museum exhibit.

Nobody moves an inch.

INT. MORGUE MUSEUM - NIGHT

M.T. Graves gazes in horror at the painting.

GRAVES

The police arrived twenty minutes later. Luckily, just in time to save Amy Smith. She was admitted to the hospital for twenty-four hours before she was allowed home.

Mr. Graves turns away from the artwork.

GRAVES

Needless to say, she has vowed never to babysit again. She and the O'Briens remain good friends to this day. Moving on...

Mr. Graves continues down the corridor, past several good paintings. Masterpieces, even.

GRAVES

I'll find another good one for you momentarily.

Graves muses.

GRAVES

The O'Briens paid Amy ten times her original salary, enough to cover her medical expenses.

Mr. Graves's face lights up.

GRAVES

Ah! There's the one.

A John D. Graham-style abstract painting of an ear. The title? "Lend Me Your Ears."

GRAVES

Neil Randall once had an ear for music. But when his hearing declined, he decided he wanted another ear. And another. And another...

INT. NEIL'S BEDROOM - DAY

NEIL RANDALL, 50, holds a classic LP in his hands, perhaps Sticky Fingers. Not the cover, the record itself.

He places it on his turntable, already on, and pushes the start button.

Neil takes an anti-static brush and cleans the record.

He goes one further by using vinyl record cleaning fluid and one side of a deep-cleaning brush.

Then, he uses the dry side of the brush to finish the job.

Neil pushes the stop button.

Next, he cleans the stylus. Always back to front, never front to back.

He waits for it to dry before hitting the start button to play the album.

Neil moves his tone arm to the beginning of the record.

A nice warm POP indicates that the stylus is in the groove.

After a few seconds, the sweet sounds of "Brown Sugar" emanate from Neil's Klipsch speakers. Pure stereo bliss. Pure analog bliss.

Neil, slightly heavy, wearing a Pink Floyd Dark Side of the Moon T-shirt and blue jeans, smiles with his eyes closed, as if he's in Heaven.

Neil air-guitars to Keith Richards...

...and lip syncs to Mick Jagger.

Neil's collection is big enough to resemble a record store. Everything is perfectly stacked upright.

EXT. NEEDLE DROP RECORDS - DAY

A popular hangout for audiophiles and hipsters.

Today is good for business -- five people stand outside, holding their new records.

INT. NEEDLE DROP RECORDS - DAY

KIMBERLY, 12, dressed in a red T-shirt and tan pants, stands in front of the clerk...

...ROY, 35, Motorhead T-shirt and blue jeans, Gibson Les Paul tattoo on his left arm.

Kimberly asks Roy about a record in her hand. A modern pop album by a boy band.

KIMBERLY

Excuse me, sir. Could you tell me
if this record is any good?

Roy opens his mouth. But before he can answer...

Neil takes it upon himself to do the honors.

He takes the LP, examines the front and back, and quickly reaches a verdict.

NEIL

It's digitally-recorded crap.
Probably brickwalled to death.
Overproduced in order to appeal to
the Nickelodeon crowd. I bet it has
the dynamic range of a chainsaw!

He hands it back to her with force.

KIMBERLY

Uh, thanks?

Neil heads to the record bins to browse.

NEIL

If I were you, I'd pick something
with a little more substance.

Neil points at himself his both hands, at his T-shirt.

NEIL

Pink Floyd. Dark Side of the Moon.
Original Harvest Records pressing.
It's what stereo was made for.

ROY

Don't mind him. He's our resident
asshole.

NEIL

David Gilmour blows away those
amateurs with one chord! Try to
find the quadraphonic mix.

KIMBERLY

What's quadraphonic?

She asks this question more to Roy than Neil.

ROY

Ask your parents.

Roy rings up the pop record.

ROY

Twenty-three ninety-nine.

Neil continues browsing.

NEIL

That's a ripoff, kid. You may as well stick with the CD. Or an MP3.

Neil comes across Pink Floyd's Meddle, its ear album cover displayed prominently and impossible to miss.

Neil returns to the counter to pay for the record.

NEIL

Hey, Roy, is this Meddle an original pressing? I can't tell.

ROY

I believe so.

NEIL

Only one way to find out.

Roy rings it up.

ROY

Eight dollars.

NEIL

It is an original!

He turns toward Kimberly as she exits the shop.

NEIL

Watch and learn.

INT. NEIL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Neil holds the Meddle LP in his hands.

He goes through the same cleaning procedure as before.

Finally, he places the record on the turntable and cues it with the tone arm. No pop.

In fact, no sound period. Not even room tone or background noise. The record is completely silent.

NEIL

(MOS, subtitled)

What the fuck?

He quickly covers his mouth when he discovers he can't hear himself. He gives a quizzical look.

Neil snaps his fingers to each ear. All across the stereo soundfield. Completely silent.

Panicking, he sings at various volumes. He cups each ear with his hands. No sound.

Trembling with fear, he stares at the Meddle album cover, very much aware of the cruel irony.

Neil gets down on his knees and lets out what should be a blood-curdling scream. He sobs.

He once again stares at the auditory organ on the Pink Floyd album cover.

The horror and sadness disappear from his face, replaced by a plan. A wicked, evil plan.

He laughs madly.

INT. NEIL'S CAR (TRAVELING) - DAY

Neil bops his head to the "music" on the radio. What he doesn't realize is that the "music" is SPANISH TALK RADIO.

Neil takes in the "music" gleefully, in denial about his hearing loss.

INT. SERLING GENERAL HOSPITAL - SECURITY CHECK - DAY

Neil removes his wallet from his pants pocket.

He makes sure the pocket the completely empty. It is.

He sighs in relief. He puts his wallet and other valuables in a tray before going through a metal detector.

He's all clear.

A SECURITY GUARD sits behind a desk with the tray of valuables sitting on it. She's all smiles.

SECURITY GUARD
Enjoy your visit!

Neil retrieves his wallet and walks away.

He feels every corner and edge of the wallet before putting it back in his pocket.

Neil smiles wickedly.

INT. SERLING GENERAL HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

Three walls and a curtain.

Neil sits on the examination table, literally in complete silence, waiting for a doctor to show up.

Neil again snaps his fingers across a stereo soundfield to test his hearing. Nope. He grumbles.

DR. MATHESON, 62, scraggly long hair, beard, enters the room with a clipboard.

MATHESON

What seems to be the trouble?

Neil stares at Dr. Matheson, puzzled. He points to his ears and mouths "I think I'm deaf."

Matheson finds a scratch pad on the table. He jots something down and shows it to Neil:

"I don't know American Sign Language. Have to use pen & paper."

Neil nods in understanding, He takes the pen and paper, and writes down his story and symptoms.

Matheson nods.

The doctor checks Neil's right ear with an otoscope.

Massive wax buildup.

He checks the other ear.

Same.

Matheson jots down on the scratchpad: "Just earwax. Nothing a syringe won't fix."

Neil sighs in relief. He nods.

The doctor holds up one finger to excuse himself.

Neil sits there, confident this will all be over soon.

CLOCK

The time elapses from 4:30 to 4:50.

BACK TO SCENE

Dr. Matheson arrives with male NURSE HARLAN, 28.

Harlan waves. Neil waves back.

The nurse pushes a table containing...
...a large syringe without a needle...
...a large tub of hydrogen peroxide...
...and a bedpan.

Around his arm, he holds a large pet-potty-training pad. He has a whole bag on the second shelf of the table.

Matheson mouths the words, "This won't hurt a bit."

Neil tenses up.

Harlan covers Neil with the pee pad, as if it were a bib.

Next, he fills up the syringe.

Neil gulps.

Harlan grabs the bedpan and places it underneath Neil's left ear. Neil tries to relax.

LOW-FREQUENCY SLUSHING in Neil's left ear. His eyes fixate on the empty hallway.

The hospital doesn't seem too busy today.

The syringe empties. Nurse Harlan refills it.

Repeat.

The syringe empties once more.

Harlan exits with the bedpan, now full of hydrogen peroxide, but no wax.

Dr. Matheson steps out, as well.

Neil sits patiently, confident.

Nurse Harlan returns with an empty bedpan and resumes his auricular duties.

The SLUSHING returns to Neil's left ear. No change in frequency. Nothing above 100 Hertz.

One patient walks by in the hallway.

The syringe empties.

Refill.

More SLUSHING. No improvement.

Again.

Again.

Once more.

No improvement. Neil's hearing is stuck at 100 Hertz.

Harlan checks the bedpan.

Absolutely no earwax is coming out.

Neil starts to panic.

HARLAN
(MOS, subtitled)
Relax.

Harlan refills the syringe and tries once more.

SLUSH. SWISH. WHOOSH.

Still no improvement in Neil's HEARING.

The syringe empties.

Still no wax in the bedpan.

NEIL
(MOS, subtitled)
Fuck.

Another refill, another attempt.

The exact same SLUSHING. The earwax won't budge.

Nothing but water in the pan.

Harlan takes a deep, silent breath. He hesitates for a beat.

He removes the drenched pad, tossing it into the trash can.

He steps out to refill the hydrogen peroxide.

Neil sobs and tosses around on the examination table.

Two PASSERSBY in the hall can hear his wailing, but he can't. They stop and stare at him before resuming walking.

CLOCK

The time elapses from 6:00 to 6:20.

BACK TO SCENE

Nurse Harlan returns with a fresh tub of hydrogen peroxide to finish his job.

Neil takes a deep breath as the nurse applies a new pad, this time on the right side.

Harlan fills up the syringe.

LOW-FREQUENCY SLUSHING in Neil's right ear, 100 Hertz.

The syringe empties.

Repeat.

No improvement in the SLUSHING.

Once more.

Same result.

Yet again.

No change.

Harlan fills up the syringe once again.

Neil stares at the tool.

The solution SWISHES around in Neil's right ear. There is absolutely no improvement in Neil's ear.

The syringe empties.

There isn't a speck or earwax to be found in the bedpan.

Harlan goes to refill the syringe.

Neil grabs Harlan's wrist.

Neil panics.

NEIL

(MOS, subtitled)

I want to hear again!

Harlan massages Neil's left shoulder.

HARLAN

(MOS, subtitled)

Relax!

Matheson returns, completely unaware of the drama.

MATHESON
(MOS, subtitled)
How are we coming?

Harlan shakes his head, somber.

Matheson turns toward Neil and slumps.

Neil knows. He gulps.

Matheson grabs the pen and notepad and writes, "Beethoven cut off the legs on his piano."

Neil just sits there for a long beat before responding with, "How's your hearing, Doc?"

Matheson is visibly taken aback. He takes the pad and replies, "My hearing peaked with In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida."

Neil stares at Harlan.

He writes down, "How about you, Mr. Harlan?"

Harlan shrugs his shoulders.

Neil reaches into his pocket.

Matheson writes, "What are you doing?"

Neil pulls out his wallet.

Matheson points to "What are you doing?" on the notepad.

From the wallet, Neil pulls out a switchblade.

Matheson and Harlan both take a step back, hands raised. The doctor still clasps the pen and notepad.

Reluctantly, Matheson lowers his hands and writes, "You can't always get what you want."

Neil grins, pointing the knife at them.

He climbs off the operational table and swipes the notepad and pen. He jots down, "Let it bleed."

He throws the pen and notepad on the floor.

SLIT. SQUISH. SPLUSH. Neil slices Matheson's right ear off. Matheson screams and cries in pain.

Neil drops the bloody ear into a Ziplock bag. ZIP.

SLIT. SPLISH. Off goes Matheson's left ear. He cowers and sobs, sliding to his knees.

HARLAN
Security! Security!

Harlan races out of the room, trembling in fear.

ZIP. Neil slips the other ear into the bag opposite the other ear. Both ears are oriented as they would appear on Neil's head, facing Matheson.

Each ear is in the correct position: Right ear is on the right, the left on the left.

ZIP.

Neil grabs the notepad and pen off the floor and writes.

Matheson sits in fear, his eyes wide.

Neil reveals what he wrote: "Will you do the honors?"

Harlan returns with the same security guard from earlier.

SECURITY GUARD
Hands up!

But it's too late. He's gone. Without a trace.

MATHESON
Where the hell did he--

Neil sneaks up from behind the security guard and slits her throat. She drops to the ground, dead, the blood draining out of her.

Matheson clutches his heart, suffering a heart attack.

HARLAN
Doctor Matheson!

Neil holds up the notepad again. "Will you do the honors?"

HARLAN
(MOS, subtitled)
What honors?

Neil draws two ears with X stitches.

Harlan shakes his head.

Neil PLUNGES the switchblade into Harlan's stomach. Harlan drops to his knees, oozing blood. Harlan clutches the sides of his stomach.

He SPITS out blood.

Neil sits on the operational table.

He aims the switchblade at his right ear.

CUT TO:

BLACK

A CHORUS OF LOUD POPS on the right, followed by a CHORUS OF POPS on the left.

ROOM TONE. MACHINES BEEP. People CHATTER indistinctly.

FADE IN:

INT. NEIL'S CAR (TRAVELING) - DAY

Neil notices that he's listening to SPANISH TALK RADIO. He changes the station.

"Here" by Alessia Cara.

NEIL

Seriously?

STATIC.

"I Can't Hear You" by The Dead Weather.

NEIL

Come on!

STATIC.

"Can't You Hear Me Knocking" by The Stones.

Neil is equally frustrated, amused, and excited.

NEIL

Now, you're just trolling me!

Neil sighs in mock defeat.

NEIL

But it is The Stones.

He jams along to Mick and Keith.

NEIL

Woo hoo!

INT. NEIL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Neil continues his Rolling Stones high by playing "Wild Horses" off his Sticky Fingers LP.

Mick Jagger sings the opening lyric, "Childhood living is easy to do."

Neil nods his head to Keith's guitar. He hums along.

Something's off. It sounds like an MP3.

He listens more intently.

"You know I can't let you slide through my hands."

The chorus kicks in, but it lacks punch and dynamic range. You can't hear Charlie Watts or Bill Wyman.

NEIL

That hippie bastard was right! He did peak with "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida."

He kneels in front of his turntable and weeps.

NEIL

I've failed you, Mick. Keith. Bill. Charlie. Taylor. I've failed you, Paul Klipsch.

Neil stares intently at the Pink Floyd Meddle album cover.

EXT. NEEDLE DROP RECORDS - DAY

Neil hides behind a large tree...

...quietly stalking ZACK, 25, shaggy hair, grungy clothes.

Neil grins evilly.

Zack enters the building. Neil focuses his attention on TWO OTHER PATRONS, both considerably older than Zack.

His eyes shift to a FEMALE PATRON, 26, then to little Kimberly from earlier.

Neil tries to shake off the thought. "I'm not that evil."

His eyes go back to the female patron.

Neil stares at her intently.

After a beat, he steps away from the tree.

He walks toward the store and enters.

INT. NEEDLE DROP RECORDS - DAY

The bell DINGS.

Roy's eyes widen. He grins.

ROY
Neil! I didn't see you parked.

NEIL
I thought I'd cut down on global
warming today.

ROY
Anything I can help you with?

Neil hesitates before answering.

NEIL
Oh! No. Not really. Just browsing.

Neil chuckles nervously before he browses records.

His eyes dart toward Zack, who inspects an LP record by
horror legend John Carpenter, looking at the back cover.

Neil's eyes follow him as he moves further down the rock and
pop section. Zack is completely unaware of any stalking.
Zack makes eye contact with Neil.

Neil looks down toward a John Coltrane album and looks at
the back cover.

ZACK
Good album.

NEIL
Pardon?

ZACK
You've got good ears, man.

Neil grimaces at the mention of ears. He laughs it off.

NEIL
Used to. Speaking of which...

Neil hesitates for a long beat.

ZACK
Yes?

NEIL
How's your hearing?

Zack, taken aback, is unsure how to answer.

ZACK
Oh, uh, fine, I guess. Good enough
to tell vinyl from a shitty MP3.

Neil perks up when he hears this. He grins.

NEIL
Just an estimate, a guesstimate,
what do you think is the highest
and lowest frequencies you can
hear?

ZACK
Maybe eight Hertz to twenty-two
kilohertz. I'm not well-versed in
that shit.

NEIL
When's the last time you had a
hearing test?

ZACK
Haven't had one in years. Why are
you asking me all these questions?
Who are you, dude?

Neil opens up his mouth to answer.

Roy, grinning, takes the words right out of his mouth.

ROY
That's Neil. A good friend of mine.
One of my best customers.

Neil nods nervously.

NEIL
(to Zack)
What he said.

ZACK
Neil, Zack.

Zack reluctantly extends his hand.

Neil hesitates before returning the gesture.

NEIL
Don't mind me, I'm just, uh, doing
a little survey.

Roy is confused.

ROY
I thought you hated surveys?

Neil quickly thinks up a fib.

NEIL
Oh, I mean, just the political ones. Family Feud-type surveys, I'm fine with.

ROY
Survey says!

Roy and Neil share a laugh. Neil's is more nervous.

Neil turns back toward Zack.

NEIL
Listen, Zack, is it? Why don't we finish this survey in private?

ZACK
Okay...?

INT. NEEDLE DROP RECORDS - MEN'S RESTROOM - DAY

Neil and Zack are the only two people in the room.

Neil checks to make sure the coast is clear.

NEIL
Beautiful.

Neil locks the restroom door. CLICK.

ZACK
What are you doing?

Neil pulls out his trusty switchblade.

Zack, eyes wide, takes a step back.

Neil grins evilly.

NEIL
Survey says...!

Neil and Zack's shadows appear on the wall. Neil's attacks Zack's repeatedly. PUNCHING. KICKING.

SLASH. SLASH.

Zack CRIES OUT in pain. He lets out a BLOOD-CURDLING SCREAM.
His blood, half a gallon of it, pours into a urinal.
Neil grabs the handle with all of his might.

FLUSH.

He goes to the sink to wash his blade...
...and his hands.

The door rattles. KNOCK. KNOCK.

Oh shit. Neil panics and tries to think.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

He climbs through the bathroom window, struggling and
grunting. BANG, BANG.

NEIL

Just a minute!

He manages to make it through the window.

EXT. NEEDLE DROP RECORDS - DAY

Huffing and catching his breath, Neil walks back to the
front of the building and enters.

DING.

INT. NEEDLE DROP RECORDS - DAY

Neil tries to hide his presence from--

ROY

So, how did the survey go.

Neil jolts, yelps.

NEIL

Oh, uh, just fine. Just fine.

ROY

Good to hear.

Neil picks up his pace toward the restroom.

NEIL

(under his breath)

Not yet, it isn't.

Neil spots WALT, 60, standing in front of the men's room.

Neil pulls out a screwdriver with a small head.

NEIL

I always carry these in case of a
bathroom emergency.

He inserts the head into the small hole on the doorknob. He
twists it clockwise until the door unlocks.

NEIL

It's all yours.

WALT

Thanks. I think.

Walt enters the bathroom.

WALT

What about you?

The door closes behind him.

NEIL

I've got a strong bladder. Besides,
I already went.

INT. NEEDLE DROP RECORDS - MEN'S RESTROOM - DAY

The stall on the far left, beside the window, is occupied.
The rest are vacant.

Not thinking anything of it, Walt takes the stall on the
opposite end.

INT. NEIL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Take two. Neil plays "Wild Horses" on his turntable.

He listens intently.

The sound quality has improved, but it's still not quite
right. More like a CD than an analog recording.

You can see the disappointment on Neil's face.

He takes a deep sigh and uses the cueing lever to lift the
tone arm off the record. He stops the turntable and turns
it off.

Neil bows his head somberly.

INT. NEIL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Neil lies awake in bed, pondering.

NEIL

What am I doing wrong?

INT. NEEDLE DROP RECORDS - DAY

Neil and Roy chat by the counter.

ROY

I don't know what to tell you,
Neil. Are you sure it's not the
stylus or cartridge?

NEIL

Positive. I just got the damn thing
last week. Worked like a charm.

ROY

You cleaned the record?

NEIL

I cleaned everything.

ROY

Does it have the original zipper
album cover?

NEIL

Yes, but that's not the problem.
The problem is an LP suddenly
sounds like a fucking MP3. And then
a CD. Explain that, Roy!

ROY

You probably just got a lemon copy.
I've got an original pressing in
the back.

INT. NEEDLE DROP RECORDS - BACK ROOM - DAY

Roy's copy of Sticky Fingers sits on the platter of a
turntable. Roy lifts the tone arm over the LP.

ROY

Where do you want me to cue it?

NEIL

"Wild Horses."

Roy drops the needle on the third song. POP.

Neil and Roy listen critically.

Keith Richards's guitar sounds muffled and lifeless compared to the warm, rich sound of vinyl. But not as atrocious as an MP3 would be.

The disappointment reads on Neil's face.

Roy doesn't notice anything off.

Mick Jagger sings, "Childhood living is easy to do."

ROY

Sounds fine to me. Have you had any hearing problems lately?

Neil hesitates before answering.

NEIL

I somehow went deaf when I tried to play Meddle.

ROY

The irony.

NEIL

Don't rub it in. Anyway, I went in for a quick ear surgery... of sorts.

Roy notices the obvious stitches on Neil's slightly discolored ears. It's like something out of Frankenstein.

Roy shudders at the sight.

ROY

Sorry, Neil. That shit makes me squeamish. Maybe the donor had bad ears.

NEIL

How are yours?

Roy is taken aback.

ROY

Pardon?

NEIL

Your ears?

ROY

I take care of my aures. They've never let me down once.

NEIL

No tinnitus or anything?

Roy shakes his head.

ROY

No, never.

Neil paces around the room.

NEIL

I used to have golden ears. The highest frequency I could hear that anyone could verify was twenty-four kilohertz. But I know I could hear fifty, maybe sixty.

ROY

No human being can hear that high. Maybe twenty-four, but sixty?

NEIL

I must have had superhuman ears. I could pick IMAX details out of Beatles records. I could tell you every frequency Keith Richards was playing just from one G note.

Neil stops and stares at Roy for a long, tense beat, expressionless. Something is definitely off.

Roy takes a step back.

NEIL

Roy, have you ever thought about becoming an organ donor?

ROY

What do you mean?

Neil just stands there for a beat.

ROY

Neil?

Neil pulls out his switchblade.

Neil raises his arm.

Roy makes a run for it.

He charges out of the back room.

INT. NEEDLE DROP RECORDS - DAY

He races toward the main entrance. Neil suddenly shows up and blocks it off.

Neil raises his arm once more.

Roy screams and dashes toward the men's bathroom.

Neil slowly catches up.

Panicking, Roy rattles the knob.

He manages to open the door.

Neil takes another step forward.

INT. NEEDLE DROP RECORDS - MEN'S RESTROOM - DAY

Roy runs toward the window, but stops when he notices...

...that the man in the stall closest to said window is still there, sitting on the toilet, pants down.

Suspecting something, Roy inches toward the stall.

BAM! Neil charges into the room.

Roy reaches his arm under the stall door to unlock it.

Neil takes four steps forward, an evil grin on his face.

Roy struggles.

One more footstep.

CHINK. Roy manages to unlock the stall.

The door opens to reveal...

Zack, lifeless on the toilet, ears slashes off, blood dried. He still has a horrified look frozen on his face. His eyes and mouth are wide open.

Roy screams bloody murder.

He closes Zack's eyes, then turns around.

Neil is right behind him.

ROY
Please! No! No!

Neil stares at Roy for a long beat.

HACK. HACK. HACK.

Roy screams.

Neil pulls out from his pants pocket the same ziplock bag from the hospital. He inserts both of Roy's ears into it and zips it closed. The auditory organs are still bleeding.

Neil cackles maniacally.

INT. NEIL'S BEDROOM - DAY

Take three.

Yes, this is it. The Rolling Stones classic, "Wild Horses," in all its analog glory, absolutely high fidelity.

Neil listens intently. Welling up, he sings along to Mick Jagger as the first verse kicks in.

NEIL

Childhood living... is easy to do

Neil bops his head to the beat as he and Jagger continue singing. Neil can't control his emotions.

NEIL

The things you wanted, I bought
them for you
Graceless lady, you know who I am
You know I can't let you slide
through my hands

Neil's singing gradually morphs into a full-blown orgasm once the chorus begins.

The second verse begins. "I watched you suffer a dull, aching pain..."

LATER

Neil puts side B of Meddle on his turntable.

He lowers his tonearm at the beginning.

"Echoes" plays in full fidelity. Every plink of Richard Wright's keyboard. Every bend of David Gilmour's guitar. Every thump of Roger Waters's bass. Every crash of Nick Mason's drums.

Neil, eyes closed, wide grin, arms spread out as if meditating, is in absolute bliss. He bops his head lightly to the beat.

His new ears, clearly stitched on, lack the grotesque green tone of his previous pair.

NEIL

Oh, how I missed thee. Pure analog bliss.

INT. MORGUE MUSEUM - NIGHT

Bach's "Tocata and Fugue in D Minor" plays.

GRAVES

So, did Neil Randall really have superhuman ears, or was it just the Nyquist Theory combined with delusions of grandeur? "Ear's one" to ponder for a lifetime. Ah-ah.

M.T. Graves continues along the corridor.

GRAVES

Speaking of pondering, you'll most certainly enjoy my next offering.

He stops at an empty space on the wall.

GRAVES

Damn, I could have sworn it was right here.

Graves sighs in frustration.

GRAVES

Do you ever think or believe something to be true, only for it not to be?

Graves resumes walking.

GRAVES

Roughly thousands of people share the false memory that Nelson Mandela died in prison in the nineteen eighties.

Graves looks at the paintings as he passes by.

GRAVES

Where the hell is it? I'll find that cursed thing eventually. But until I do, let us finish my story.

More paintings, none of them the one.

GRAVES

I'm sure you remember a genie movie starring Shaquille O'Neal entitled Kazaam. But do you remember a genie movie starring the comedian Sinbad entitled Shazaam? An entire generation seems to think so.

Graves counts the paintings with his finger.

GRAVES

But there is no record of its existence. Therefore, it does not exist.

Graves pauses.

GRAVES

Or does it?

Graves stands in front of the correct painting, a Warhol-style portrait of 1990s comedian Sinbad as a genie. The artwork is entitled, "The Search for Shazaam."

INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

The walls are painted black.

A MILLENNIAL, 35, dressed in a Mighty Morphin Power Rangers T-shirt and blue jeans, runs away from someone or something, fear on his face. He carries a VHS tape in his hands.

Following him is a MAN IN A BLACK FEDORA AND TRENCHCOAT. His face is obscured.

The Millennial gazes at the VHS.

FOOTSTEPS approach. The Millennial resumes running.

Mr. Trenchcoat is covered head to toe in shadows.

The Millennial turns a corner, then stops to catch his breath. He holds the tape to his chest.

He turns to his left. Trenchcoat hasn't caught up yet.

Thinking fast, the Millennial replaces a VHS tape of Halloween 4 with his tape, then makes a run for it.

He huffs heavily as he tries to escape Trenchcoat.

Too late. Trenchcoat is standing right in front of him.

MILLENNIAL

How did you--

TRENCHCOAT

You know too much...

EXT. MOVIE NERDS VIDEO - DAY

A well-kempt business decorated in fake spider webs, white-sheet ghosts, and witches in purple outfits.

A sign in the window advertises VHS, DVD, and Blu-ray.

INT. MOVIE NERDS VIDEO - DAY

Several Halloween decoration adorn the walls -- Ghosts, witches, Frankenstein, vampires, mummies, and zombies. Horror icons such as Michael Myers, Jason, Freddy, Pinhead, Nosferatu, Igor, and Lugosi's Dracula.

IGGY, 35, browses through the VHS section. Dressed in a 1990s Nickelodeon T-shirt and blue jeans. He doesn't fit the Millennial stereotype. His face isn't buried in his phone. No tattoos or piercings.

He calls over to FRANK, 43, sitting at the counter. Frank is your typical hipster -- thick glasses, beard, purple fedora, white T-shirt with a vinyl record on it, and bell bottoms.

IGGY

I didn't know VHS was coming back.

Frank reads an issue of Fangoria magazine, not making eye contact with Iggy.

FRANK

You'd be surprised. Ever since vinyl, everything analog is cool again. That, and I just had a death in the family.

Iggy nods somberly.

IGGY

Oh. My condolences.

Frank nods in thanks.

FRANK

Wish Beta would come back.

IGGY

I'm trying to find this movie.
Shazaam with Sinbad.

Frank looks up from his horror film periodical.

FRANK

Are you sure you're not thinking of
Kazaam with Shaq?

IGGY

I'm positive. I remember the ads
when it came out. Sinbad dressed as
a genie in a purple outfit.
Shazaam. I haven't seen it since I
was a kid.

FRANK

There's no such movie. Never was.
The closest thing I can think of is
a TV movie he did called Aliens for
Breakfast. Based on some kids book.

Frank, visibly annoyed, resumes his magazine.

IGGY

I remember that book. I think I
remember the movie. But that can't
be it. Can it?

Frank puts down his Fangoria issue, taking a deep, low,
husky breath.

FRANK

You're certainly not the first
person to ask about Shazaam. Do you
realize how many people, how many
times, ask me about that movie?

IGGY

I've searched the ends of the earth
for it. Not literally, of course.

Iggy chuckles. Frank doesn't.

FRANK

That's because it doesn't exist.
Look, the mind plays tricks on
people. Like The Berenstain Bears.

Frank pauses for a beat.

FRANK

You know the song "California Dreamin'" by The Mamas and the Papas?

Iggy nods.

FRANK

The second verse, "I get down on my knees and I pretend to pray." Some people think it's "begin to pray."

IGGY

So? I get song lyrics wrong all the time. "There's a bathroom on the right." "'Scuse me while I kiss this guy."

FRANK

Some people even think Nelson Mandela died in prison in the eighties.

IGGY

But he was President of South Africa in the nineties.

FRANK

Exactly. It's called the Mandela effect.

IGGY

What did you say about the Berenstain Bears?

FRANK

Some people think it's spelled E-I-N.

Iggy sees and grabs Halloween 4.

IGGY

But it's always been A-I-N. I remember from my childhood.

Iggy heads to the counter to ring up his rental.

IGGY

But that Shazaam movie. It seems so real. What's up with that?

FRANK

A dollar ninety-nine.

Iggy pulls his wallet out of his jean pocket. He hands Frank two dollars and takes the VHS.

FRANK

That Aliens for Breakfast, though.
It's never been released on home
video and only aired once on
January 28, 1995. You could always
try YouTube.

Iggy nods as he exits the video store.

INT. IGGY'S CAR (TRAVELING) - DAY

Right hand on the radio, Iggy searches for a station.

Uptempo Latin pop, perhaps "Livin' La Vida Loca" by Ricky Martin. He doesn't feel it. Change.

Just a commercial. Change.

Strauss's "The Blue Danube" with a slight, fuzzy static. Iggy hums along for a minute, over the most recognizable part of the song. When it segues into the next section, he changes the station.

CONSERVATIVE RADIO HOST (V.O.)

(angrily)

...Democrats have done it again...

Iggy is visibly disgusted. He turns it in a fraction of a beat. He sighs in relief.

IGGY

Fuck those monsters.

The Mamas the the Papas' "California Dreamin'" seeps out of the speakers and into Iggy's ears. He instantly recognizes John Phillips's guitar intro.

"All the leaves are brown..."

Iggy bops his head side to side to each beat. He drums lightly on the steering wheel with his right hand.

"I've been for a walk (I've been for a walk) on a winter's day (on a winter's day)..."

Iggy realizes something.

IGGY

Aha!

He pays attention to the lyrics. He stops at a red light.

Denny Doherty sings the second verse.

"Well, I got down on my knees (got down on my knees) and I pretend to pray (I pretend to pray)..."

"You know the preacher likes the cold (preacher likes the cold), he knows I'm going to stay..."

IGGY

Ah, it makes sense. He only went to the church to keep warm. John Phillips, you clever son of a bitch.

Iggy has a wide grin on his face.

INT. IGGY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

A medium-size studio apartment. A few modest Halloween decorations scattered about on the walls.

Iggy turns on the TV. Looney Tunes is on.

Iggy takes note of the spelling.

IGGY

Okay, so it's Looney "Tunes." But what about Merrie Melodies?

Iggy shrugs it off as he heads to the

KITCHEN

and checks the pantry.

He pulls out a box of Froot Loops.

Iggy nods his head.

IGGY

"Froot" Loops. Got it.

He puts the cereal back and closes the pantry.

He ponders for a beat. He pulls his phone out of his pant pocket and speaks into it.

IGGY

Mandela effect.

CHIME.

Google pulls up several pages related to the false memory phenomenon, including Nelson Mandela, The Berenstain Bears, Froot Loops, Shazaam, and even Forrest Gump's "Life is/was like a box of chocolates."

Iggy stands frozen, surprise and fear on his face. The room spins around him.

INT. IGGY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Premium headphones on, Iggy plays on his desktop two clips from Forrest Gump, two instances of the famous "box of chocolates" line.

The first is Mrs. Gump (Sally Field) on her deathbed telling Forrest (Tom Hanks), "Life is a box of chocolates, Forrest."

The next clip is the more familiar one, with Forrest on the park bench, telling a woman, "My mama always said life was like a box of chocolates."

"Was," not "is."

He replays the clip at that exact spot.

"Life was like..."

Again.

"Life was like..."

Iggy is bewildered.

IGGY

What the fuck? How-- How is this possible? It's always been "Life is like..."

Iggy goes back to Google and ponders for a beat.

He types in, one letter at a time, "Shazaam Sinbad". Enter.

"Did you mean: Shazam Sinbad".

Three videos are the top hits, including one where Sinbad purportedly admits the film is real, Sinbad's "deadly confession," and a College Humor parody clip of the film.

Iggy clicks on the College Humor video. It's designed to look like a 1990s children's film on VHS.

Several Easter eggs appear in the clip, such as a Nelson Mandela obituary, a "Fruit" Loops ad, Monopoly, and the Curious George book where the titular monkey has a tail.

IGGY

This isn't the Shazaam I remember.

Iggy shakes his head.

IGGY

No. But it was pretty funny.

He types into the YouTube search bar "Aliens for Breakfast" and hits enter.

Of the first four hits, only one of them is related to the Sinbad film, and that's an upload of the film itself. The running time is 55:32. The thumbnail is of Sinbad in pink alien makeup and white horns.

The description claims the film is from 1994.

Iggy clicks on the video.

Taken from a VHS-recorded broadcast, the title "Aliens for Breakfast" appears in front of a cheap, generic outer space background. The typeface is the kind you'd expect from children's programming, with bright colors, albeit dulled by the VHS source and the NTSC color standard.

IGGY

Could it be...?

He knows it isn't, or at least he thinks he does.

The title zooms out. The credits superimpose onto the screen. The space background looks like something you'd see on Reading Rainbow.

"Starring Sinbad". "Ben Savage". "Teri Garr".

The picture freezes on two actors' credits for about 12 seconds before resuming.

Ben Savage's character, Richard, appears in front of the space background. He then converses with a toy robot.

IGGY

I think I've seen this before.

LATER

In the Aliens for Breakfast film, Richard's Mom (Teri Garr), dressed in a gray pantsuit, pulls out a box of Alien Crisp cereal from the pantry, to Richard's delight.

Iggy stares intently at his computer screen, as if he's seen this film before.

As his mom exits the scene, Richard opens the box of cereal and pours it into a blue bowl. Sitting on top of the multicolored balls of sugar is an alien toy with a pink face and green body.

Richard, curious, picks up the toy.

IGGY
Was Shazaam purple... or pink? Is
the alien's name Shazaam?

Richard sets the toy back down in the cereal and pours his milk over it.

The alien toy hides in the milk.

The cereal starts to move, prompting Richard to tell his mother about it.

Iggy analyzes the scene.

Richard's mom re-enters the scene with a manila folder.

She tells him that the cereal is not alive, and then leaves for work.

Richard stares curiously at his cereal.

It resumes moving before eventually stopping.

Iggy chuckles at the cuteness of the scene.

Richard shrugs his shoulders and picks up his spoon.

IGGY
I might be thinking of Honey, I
Shrunk the Kids.

The alien takes control of the spoon. Richard and the extra-terrestrial have a tug of war over the silverware.

Richard, defeated, loosens his grip, causing the spoon to flip over behind him, all the way behind the counter.

Sinbad, in pink alien makeup, emerges from the sugary mess of no nutritional value.

Iggy stares at the screen, unsure.

IGGY
Shazaam?

Ben Savage and Sinbad scream at each other. Sinbad falls over back into the cereal.

Richard (Ben Savage), still weirded out, watches as Sinbad climbs to the edge of the bowl.

Iggy guffaws at the hilarity before him. Or maybe he's laughing at the low-budget makeup.

Sinbad speaks for the first time and introduces himself as "Aric" before fading out before a McDonald's commercial. He pronounces it "Aric," not "Eric."

Iggy pauses the video.

IGGY
Aric? Then where the hell did
Shazaam come from? It wasn't Shaq.

INT. IGGY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Iggy sits on the couch, the room spinning around him.

IGGY
This Mandela stuff is too spooky.

Iggy inserts the Halloween 4 VHS into his VCR.

IGGY
And now for something completely
different.

However, his John Cleese sounds more like David Tomlinson.

Instead of an establishing shot of Haddonfield, Illinois, Iggy is treated to what appears to be a 1990s comedy. It opens with an establishing shot of sunny downtown L.A.

An upbeat pop song, perhaps "Superstition," plays over the film's soundtrack.

The credits begin with "Walt Disney Pictures Presents" written in a cartoony font.

"Sinbad in"...

"Shazaam".

Iggy stares at the screen, perplexed and experiencing vertigo. He pauses the film and runs to the nearest bathroom, gagging.

RETCHING, VOMITING, and COUGHING.

INT. IGGY'S BATHROOM - DAY

Iggy washes his mouth out and spits. He exhales deeply and washes his hands.

IGGY

I need Ashton Kutcher, Rod Serling,
somebody. This is some Twilight
Zone shit right here.

Another deep breath.

IGGY

Who's Punking me?

Iggy washes his hands and pauses for a beat, a slight grin forming on his face.

IGGY

Wait a minute...

INT. IGGY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

He returns to the couch. He reviews the rental case to make sure he didn't grab the wrong movie.

The spine reads:

"HALLOWEEN 4

CATEGORY: HORROR, SLASHER

1988 R 88 MIN. COLOR".

IGGY

How did Shazaam wind up behind
Halloween 4?

Iggy stops and ejects the tape.

He inspects it, checks the labels. Nothing. Completely blank. Not even a "Be Kind Rewind" label.

Iggy shrugs his shoulders and inserts the tape once again. He presses play and picks up where he left off.

The pop song resumes.

INT. IGGY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Iggy sets the Shazaam tape on his computer desk. He grabs a pen and post-it pad, and writes "Shazaam" on it.

He places the note on the VHS cover and heads to bed.

Iggy turns his nightstand lamp off.

EXT. IGGY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Trenchcoat, the shadowy man from earlier, peers into Iggy's bedroom window, paying particular attention to the tape.

INT. IGGY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Seven o'clock.

Iggy's alarm awakens him with "California Dreamin'."

Iggy jolts up in his bed. He yelps, then laughs.

IGGY

Nah. It's just a coincidence. It's gotta be.

Alarm on his face, Iggy races to his computer desk, but...

...the tape is nowhere to be found, not even the note.

IGGY

It was just a dream... Wasn't it?

Iggy ponders for a beat.

IGGY

Shit.

But wait. A letter-sized piece of paper suddenly appears on the desk. Iggy in confused.

IGGY

What the...? How did...? Where did...?

Iggy picks up the paper. It reads in large letters, written in black marker:

"Disavow all knowledge of the film. It does not exist."

Nobody signed it.

IGGY

I've seen this handwriting before.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Iggy is now dressed in an office shirt, pants and a necktie.

OFFICER MUSTARD, 60, reviews his case.

MUSTARD

Unfortunately, there isn't much I
can do. No name, no face, no case.

Iggy sighs.

IGGY

Damn.

Mustard shrugs his shoulders and sighs.

MUSTARD

However, what we could do is ask
around, see if anyone's seen the
tape or the perp. One might have
more chance of winning the lottery,
though. Remember, you can't charge
somebody with murder without a
body.

Iggy lowers his head.

IGGY

Thanks anyway.

INT. IGGY'S CAR (TRAVELING) - DAY

The note sits on the dashboard.

Iggy glances at it momentarily, remembering to pay attention
to the road.

"California Dreamin'" plays on the radio. Iggy changes the
station quickly. "I don't have time for this shit."

Iggy realizes the song is on both stations.

Iggy, laughing at the coincidence, switches to another
station. "California Dreamin'" again.

And again.

And again.

And again.

The world spins and tilts around Iggy. He screams and slams
on the SCREECHING BRAKES.

The force pulls him toward the steering wheel.

He catches his breath, grabs the note and analyzes it.

He inspects each individual letter.

Iggy, visibly confused, seems to recognize the handwriting for some reason.

IGGY

Where have I seen this before?

Iggy looks in the rear-view mirror and notices Trenchcoat sitting on the middle of the road, watching him.

Following him.

Iggy panics. He slowly opens the door and gets out.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

But by the time Iggy turns around, Trenchcoat is nowhere to be found. Iggy's the only one on the road.

IGGY

Where are you!

His voice echoes.

IGGY

I don't know who you are, but I'll find you. If it's the last thing I do. And Shazaam, too.

Iggy runs his fingers through his hair.

He suddenly realizes something.

IGGY

Shit. What am I gonna tell the video store?

INT. MOVIE NERDS VIDEO - DAY

Frank, gripping his Fangoria magazine, stares at Iggy in utter disbelief.

FRANK

What?!

He begins to grin.

FRANK

Come on! I've heard every excuse for a late video, but I've never heard a whopper like yours.

Iggy trembles, horror on his face.

IGGY

No really, that Halloween 4 tape was Shazaam. With Sinbad. As a genie. And the fat kid from The Sandlot.

Trenchcoat, browsing the thriller and suspense Blu-ray section, overhears their conversation.

His features still can't be made out. He appears to be wearing a transparent plastic mask.

IGGY

Look at this note.

Frank takes it, setting his Fangoria on the counter.

FRANK

Sir, this is your handwriting.

IGGY

That's impossible.

FRANK

If it's not yours, it's a damn good forgery.

Frank hands it back to Iggy, then shows Iggy his own signature on a photocopy of his membership card.

FRANK

Read it and weep.

Iggy reviews the note and his signature. The handwriting is a perfect match, 100 percent.

Frank goes back to his Fangoria.

IGGY

But, but, how? I didn't write this note. And the movie was Shazaam.

FRANK

How did you, a Millennial from suburbia, get your hands on a film with no record of having ever existed... apart from a conspiracy theory-turned-meme?

IGGY

And how did it wind up in your store?

FRANK

And how do two different people have the exact same handwriting?

Trenchcoat stares at the two men, breathing heavily.

Frank sets his Fangoria down on the counter.

FRANK

Look, I'll make a deal with you. If you can prove within forty-eight hours that this Shazaam is real, it's free. No late fee.

EXT. MOVIE NERDS VIDEO - DAY

Iggy hops in his red Chevy Impala and drives off.

Trenchcoat does the same, in his own red Impala. The cars have the exact same license plate, Colorado DA8-N15.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Trenchcoat's car follows Iggy's.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Officer Mustard jots down notes.

IGGY

And he had this black trenchcoat, and a fedora. Black gloves. Black everything. I didn't get a good look at his face. He just disappeared. Into thin air.

Iggy clears his throat.

IGGY

Or at least he appeared to.

Mustard takes a bite of a Kit Kat bar. There is no hyphen on the label - It's just the arm from the letter "t" in "Kit."

MUSTARD

Congratulations, son. You've officially got yourself a case.

The two men shake hands.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Trenchcoat's car continues to track Iggy's.

INT. IGGY'S CAR (TRAVELING) - DAY

Iggy looks into the rear view mirror. Trenchcoat and his dashboard are in plain sight.

Iggy accelerates. Trenchcoat does the same. Both engines REVV and ROAR TO LIFE.

"California Dreamin'" plays on the radio.

IGGY
Stop it! Stop it!

Red and blue lights flash. POLICE SIRENS blare.

Iggy's car SCREECHES to a halt.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Trenchcoat and his car are nowhere to be found.

OFFICER BENNETT, 46, marches up to Iggy's car.

Iggy rolls down his window.

IGGY
Problem, Ponch?

BENNETT
Cut the wisecracks, sir. Do you realize how fast you were going?

IGGY
Moderately?

BENNETT
Sir, you were going eighty in a forty zone!

IGGY
I'm sorry, Officer. Someone was following me.

BENNETT
There was nobody behind you, sir. License and registration.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Iggy parks his car, steps out.

As Iggy closes the door and walks toward his workplace, Trenchcoat grabs him from behind a pillar.

Trenchcoat takes his hand off Iggy's mouth.

IGGY

What the hell's going on? Who are you?

TRENCHCOAT

We need to talk about Shazaam. But we need to do so in private. You know too much.

IGGY

What do you know about Shazaam?

A flash of blinding white.

INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT

Iggy and Trenchcoat suddenly appear in a different location than before.

IGGY

Where are we? Who are you?

Trenchcoat takes off his mask and finally reveals his face. Something eerily familiar about it.

Iggy realizes in horror.

TRENCHCOAT

I'm you.

Iggy gasps.

TRENCHCOAT

From a parallel universe.

Indeed, he's IGGY (50).

IGGY

What do you want? And what does Shazaam have to do with it.

TRENCHCOAT

Did you ever wonder why the film was erased from existence?

Iggy is too scared and weirded out to speak.

TRENCHCOAT

Remember the scene where the kids
wish for Shazaam to bring their
father back?

Iggy nods.

TRENCHCOAT

That wasn't just fiction.

IGGY

You mean Sinbad is a real genie?

TRENCHCOAT

No.

Trenchcoat pulls out the tape from his coat.

TRENCHCOAT

Do I need to play the scene for
you?

Iggy doesn't answer.

Trenchcoat motions for Iggy to sit down in front of an old
CRT TV.

Trenchcoat inserts the tape into the VCR and presses play.

It immediately plays a scene in which SHAZAAM and TWO KIDS
stand around in an attic.

Shazaam is dressed in purple with a yellow vest, exactly as
Iggy remembers.

A Danny Elfman-style score plays on the soundtrack.

SHAZAAM

Children! What is your third and
final wish?

Shazaam's voice ECHOES.

The BOY, 10, whispers to the GIRL, 8, before answering the
genie standing before them.

The boy, somewhat chubby, has orange hair and wears a plaid
flannel shirt and ripped jeans.

The girl wears a light blue shirt and tan pants. She has
blonde pigtails.

BOY

Shazaam, we wish that you would
bring our father back.

Shazaam, arms folded, closes his eyes and shakes his head.

SHAZAAM

I cannot grant that wish. Not
directly. However, I can teach you
how to alter the fabric of time.

Trenchcoat pauses the film.

TRENCHCOAT

The method used to disrupt the
space-time continuum is not science
fiction. It's science fact.

Iggy stares at him in shock.

TRENCHCOAT

We Parallels knew our gift could
have dire consequences if it fell
into the wrong hands. It's already
happened. Atlantis.

INSERT: ATLANTIS

Video footage of the fabled lost city crumbling into the
Atlantic Ocean.

BACK TO SCENE

Trenchcoat continues with his lecture.

TRENCHCOAT

JFK.

INSERT: JOHN F. KENNEDY

Archival film footage of the 35th President's assassination
at a motorcade in Dallas on November 22, 1963.

BACK TO SCENE

Trenchcoat stares at Iggy intently.

Iggy flinches.

TRENCHCOAT

The twenty-sixteen election.

INSERT: 2016 ELECTION

Assorted clips of Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders from the primaries and debates.

Donald Trump wins the most contentious election since Bush vs. Gore in 2000.

BACK TO SCENE

Trenchcoat bows his head.

TRENCHCOAT
Shazaam had to be destroyed.

Iggy sits frozen in his chair, horror on his face.

IGGY
But where did this tape come from?

TRENCHCOAT
Another one of us owned it and
planted it here for you to find.

INT. DARK ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The Millennial from earlier replaces the Halloween 4 VHS with Shazaam.

His face reveals that he is IGGY #3, who looks like, and is the same age as, Iggy #1.

BACK TO SCENE

Iggy trembles.

IGGY
Another one of us?

Trenchcoat nods.

TRENCHCOAT
He knew too much.

Trenchcoat pulls out a switchblade, still bloody.

TRENCHCOAT
And so do you.

IGGY
What are you doing?

Trenchcoat takes one step forward, grinning evilly.

IGGY

Tell me.

Another step.

IGGY

Tell me!

And another.

Iggy jumps out of his seat and searches for an exit.

Trenchcoat takes four more steps forward.

Iggy sprints past several shelves of VHS, DVD and Blu-ray titles in storage. He pants and huffs.

He stumbles and trips over. He turns his head back.

Trenchcoat turns a corner, hot on Iggy's trail.

Iggy limps as he picks himself up and dusts himself off.

Trenchcoat gains on him.

Iggy makes a run for it, stopping by the horror VHS section of the storage room.

To his right is another copy of Halloween 4. He stops to look at it.

He grabs the rental case and opens it. It is indeed Halloween 4. He puts it back on the shelf behind the paper cover, Michael Myers's mask in plain sight.

Trenchcoat, right behind, grabs Iggy's shoulder.

Iggy gasps and turns around.

Trenchcoat prepares to stab him. He loosens his grip and lowers his trembling hand.

TRENCHCOAT

I want to, but I can't.

IGGY

Why not?

TRENCHCOAT

Are you familiar with the
Grandfather Paradox?

Iggy hesitates before he answers.

IGGY

Yeah, but... What do you mean by that?

TRENCHCOAT

If you kill yourself in the past or prevent your birth, how could you possibly have traveled back in time to begin with?

Iggy is speechless.

TRENCHCOAT

Therefore, I cannot do that. But I can do this.

IGGY

What?

Trenchcoat bows his head.

TRENCHCOAT

You must promise me you will never again speak of the existence of Shazaam, except in the context of the Mandela effect.

Iggy nods.

TRENCHCOAT

No one, and I mean no one, can know that Shazaam exists. If its existence is proven by you or another, simply dismiss it as a conspiracy theory, or better yet, a false memory.

Iggy nods once more.

TRENCHCOAT

Shazaam doesn't exist. I don't exist. The third Iggy doesn't exist. The Mandela effect is not real. Tell yourself this and let it be true.

IGGY

What do I tell Frank?

Trenchcoat pulls out a rental tape from his coat.

He hands it to Iggy.

IGGY

What's this?

Iggy looks at the label.

"KAZAAM

CATEGORY: FAMILY, FANTASY

1996 PG 94 MINS. COLOR".

He nods.

IGGY

Thanks. But it came in a Halloween
4 ca--

Iggy looks up to find...

...Trenchcoat is nowhere to be found.

Iggy nods again.

IGGY

Right. Gotcha.

A flash of blinding white light.

INT. IGGY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Iggy awakens to The Mamas and the Papas, only this time,
it's "Monday, Monday."

Iggy wakes up horrified and screaming. He recognizes the
song and laughs nervously at the coincidence.

He stretches and yawns, long and loud, then finally turns
off the alarm.

He notices a VHS rental on his computer desk.

He crawls out of bed and investigates. It's the same Kazaam
tape from earlier.

IGGY

What the...?

INT. IGGY'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Iggy, now dressed in his office attire, hair still damp from
showering, turns on the TV. Looney "Toons" plays.

Iggy doesn't pay the spelling any mind. He heads into the

KITCHEN

for some breakfast. Iggy pulls out a box of "Fruit" Loops out of the pantry.

He grabs a bowl from the cupboard and makes his cereal, oblivious to anything unusual.

EXT. MOVIE NERDS VIDEO - DAY

Iggy parks his car and enters the building.

INT. MOVIE NERDS VIDEO - DAY

The BELL DINGS.

Iggy looks at Kazaam and nervously returns the tape.

Frank takes the movie.

An awkward beat.

FRANK

Did you enjoy the movie?

Taken aback, Iggy hesitates before answering. He stammers.

IGGY

Oh, uh, yeah. Yeah. Hadn't seen it since I was a kid. Brought back a lot of memories.

FRANK

A lot of people think it's Shazaam with Sinbad. That movie doesn't even exist!

Iggy laughs nervously.

IGGY

Yeah. Where'd they get that idea from?

FRANK

Right?

IGGY

I never thought VHS would come back, what with Blu-ray, and now 4K. You think you've got Halloween 4 somewhere?

FRANK

I might. It's a popular rental
around here.

Frank picks up an open book on the counter, The "Berenstein"
Bears Trick or Treat.

Iggy heads to the horror VHS section.

He checks behind Halloween 4 and opens the rental case, just
to be sure.

It is indeed Halloween 4 in all its glory.

Iggy smiles.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Iggy arrives at work.

INT. NEWMAN YOUNG TECH, INC. - DAY

A typical white-collar office, except decorated for
Halloween. Iggy works on the computer at his cubicle.

ANDRE, 40, walks by, a friendly smile on his face.

ANDRE

Hey, Iggy. Want a Kit Kat?

IGGY

Sure.

Andre tosses him a pack of Kit Kat candy bars. There's a
hyphen inbetween "Kit" and "Kat."

ANDRE

Listen, me and the guys are playing
a quick game of Monopoly during
lunch. You game?

Iggy pictures Rich Uncle Moneybags with and without a
monocle. He waits a beat before answering.

IGGY

You bet, Andre.

ANDRE

And one more thing...

Andre pulls out two tickets from his pants pocket.

ANDRE

I've got two tickets to see Sinbad this Saturday. Michelle has a family emergency and can't go.

IGGY

Sorry to hear that.

ANDRE

Would you by any chance be...?

Iggy tries to open his candy. He pauses for a beat.

IGGY

Sinbad? The guy from Sha--

ANDRE

Jingle All The Way. And Houseguest. Good Burger. Remember him?

IGGY

Do you remember Aliens for Breakfast?

Andre pauses for a beat. He grins.

ANDRE

Never in my life did I ever think I'd find another person who had heard of that movie.

Andre chuckles heartily.

ANDRE

So, you in, bro?

Iggy nods.

IGGY

In like Flynn.

Iggy opens his Kit Kat wrapper.

ANDRE

Cool. One of my favorite Sinbad movies, though, is Shazaam. Remember that one?

Iggy's expression changes to horror. The room spins and tilts around him.

IGGY

You sure it's not Kazaam?

ANDRE

No, this is way better than Shaq's movie.

IGGY

Hmm... I don't believe I know that one.

ANDRE

Maybe we can watch it at my place before the show Saturday.

Iggy sits in his chair, visibly befuddled.

ANDRE

Iggy? Iggy? Yo, Iggy? Iggy.

Iggy lets out a confused moan.

INT. PARKING GARAGE - DAY

Iggy walks toward his car.

He notices a note on his windshield.

After a beat, he grabs it and reads.

"YOU ALMOST BROKE YOUR PROMISE.

NEXT TIME, YOU WON'T BE SO LUCKY.

- YOU KNOW WHO".

INT. ANDRE'S HOUSE - DAY

Iggy, visibly nervous, petrified even, sits on the couch as Andre puts the tape in the VCR.

ANDRE

You excited?

Iggy trembles and stammers.

IGGY

Oh, yeah, yeah. You bet.

ANDRE

Nostalgia jitters?

Iggy lets out an awkward laugh.

A full minute of a black screen plays on the video.

Andre gives a quizzical face.

 ANDRE
 Hmm. That's odd.

Andre fast forwards the tape. Nothing but black.

He doubles the speed. Black.

Four times. Black.

Eight times. Black.

 IGGY
 Did you record over it?

 ANDRE
 No, man.

A message in white appears over a black background.

"THIS FILM DOES NOT EXIST."

The TV plays the earlier scene with the Millennial (Andre #3) and Trenchcoat.

 MILLENNIAL
 How did you--

 TRENCHCOAT
 You know too much.

The picture fades to white.

"THIS FILMS DOES NOT EXIST" appears in black letters over the white background.

The tape ends.

Iggy sits frozen in fear.

 IGGY
 Did you see that?

 ANDRE
 See what?

INT. THE LAUGHING STOCK - DAY

A smoky comedy club with a brick wall behind the stage.

Iggy and Andre are already in their seats.

Trenchcoat and a PARALLEL ANDRE (60), dressed in all black and sunglasses, sit down beside their younger counterparts. Trenchcoat glares at the older Andre.

TRENCHCOAT
This is all your fault.

PARALLEL ANDRE
Don't blame me--

TRENCHCOAT
Not you, the other you.

SINBAD, 62, star of several 1990s kid-friendly comedy films, appears on stage, dressed in a colorful outfit, his trademark wide grin on his face.

Trenchcoat and Parallel Andre tense up.

Iggy turns around and notices his time-traveling doppelgänger sitting behind him.

IGGY
(whispering)
What are you doing here?

TRENCHCOAT
Protecting the fabric of time.

ANDRE
(whispering)
Hey, Ig, who are you talking to?

IGGY
(whispering)
I thought I saw somebody.

SINBAD
...Now before I get to the jokes and all that fun stuff... There have been a lot of crazy stories about me over the years. Rumors and urban legends.

Sinbad paces around the room, totally comfortable on stage.

SINBAD
A lot of people think I'm dead. It's taken on a life of its own, like Paul Is Dead. If you play Good Burger backwards, you can hear Kenan saying "I murdered Sinbad."

The audience laughs.

The Parallels place their hands over their coat pockets.

SINBAD

But there are two films I did that have basically disappeared off the face of the earth. One is a TV movie I did called Aliens for Breakfast. Nobody remembers it--

Andre raises his hand.

ANDRE

I remember it!

IGGY

I watched it on Youtube!

SINBAD

Congratulations, you're the only two people who remember it! Hell, even Ben Savage doesn't remember that movie. Yet, everyone remembers Good Burger.

The audience applauds.

SINBAD

The other one that a lot of people remember, but has disappeared without a trace is one I did in 1994, twenty-five years ago, called Shazaam.

Trenchcoat and Parallel Andre make eye contact, a signal, and then pull out their switchblades.

SINBAD

I love Shazaam, man. But there's a conspiracy, some crazy Illuminati stuff going on with it. So now, it doesn't exist anymore.

Andre raises his hand.

ANDRE

I have--

Iggy quickly covers Andre's mouth before he can blurt it out that he owns the movie.

IGGY

It never did exist!

Iggy turns around. Trenchcoat nods in approval.

SINBAD

Oh, yes, it did. It doesn't exist anymore... until now.

Sinbad reaches into his pants pocket and pulls out a VHS tape labeled "Shazaam."

SINBAD

In my hand is the only copy of Shazaam left in the universe. And if you don't mind, I thought I'd show it to y'all.

IGGY

Nooo!

TRENCHCOAT

(simultaneous)

Nooo!

PARALLEL ANDRE

(simultaneous)

Nooo!

The three men simultaneous jump out of their seats and rush to the stage.

The audience gasps.

Trenchcoat turns toward Sinbad.

TRENCHCOAT

Surrender the tape.

SINBAD

You one of those Illuminati dudes?

IGGY

He's me from the future.

Parallel Andre turns toward his counterpart and points at him. The audience gasps.

PARALLEL ANDRE

And I'm you from the future.

TRENCHCOAT

Parallel universe, actually.

Sinbad, baffled, laughs heartily, yet nervously.

SINBAD

What the hell is going on here?
Security!

TRENCHCOAT

We Parallels learned time travel from your film. It had disastrous consequences on world events. Therefore, the president decreed eight years ago that the tape be destroyed.

SINBAD

Who's the President?

Trenchcoat bows his head, ashamed.

TRENCHCOAT

President Kanye West took office January 20, 2040. His predecessor, Malia Obama, ordered the erasure in order to protect and preserve the space-time continuum.

SINBAD

You have better jokes than I do. I quit.

The audience nervously laughs before being cut off.

TRENCHCOAT

I wish I were joking. President West, a lifelong fan of the film, recently overturned Miss Obama's decree.

The audience gasps.

PARALLEL ANDRE

All this meddling has caused a disturbance in the fabric of time, the Mandela effect.

TRENCHCOAT

A large assortment of people now believe that Nelson Mandela died in prison in the eighties.

PARALLEL ANDRE

There's a lot of freaky shit caused by the Mandela effect. We shouldn't even be telling you this.

Parallel Andre puts out his hand.

PARALLEL ANDRE

The tape, please.

Sinbad reluctantly gives up the tape.

IGGY
It has to be done.

Iggy, Trenchcoat, and Parallel Andre nod.

The younger Andre weeps in his seat. He and the rest of the audience are blinded by a flash of white light.

The crowd murmurs.

ANDRE
What happened?

The only two people on stage are Sinbad and Iggy.

SINBAD
Where am I? Who are you? Secur--

IGGY
How'd I get here?

Iggy returns to his seat.

SINBAD
How you doing, folks? Ready to
laugh your butts off?

The audience cheers.

SINBAD
One night, I was at a bar with a
rabbi, and priest, and a monk...

INT. MORGUE MUSEUM - NIGHT

M.T. Graves stares at a blank wall where the painting previously was.

A piano muzak version of Foreigner's "Head Games" plays softly in the background.

GRAVES
Is it just our minds playing tricks
on us? Or is the Mandela effect
real? Is reality real? If fact is
fiction, then what is fiction? And
what is fact?

Graves pauses for a beat.

He then recedes toward the entrance.

GRAVES

And with that, the Morgue Museum is closing now and I must ask you to depart for the evening. Join us again soon. Ah-ah.

Graves waves his hand lightly, bidding farewell.

FADE OUT.

THE END