90's Town

Pilot

Written by

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TEASER

INT. BUSY MALL - DAY

A series of shots as we move through a bustling mall from yesteryear. It is unmistakably the late 90's.

Garish colors and woodgrain. Big colors. Curly hair.

SHOTS GETTING CLOSER AS WE MOVE TO THE FOOD COURT

We see shoppers move about the concourse, unbothered.

A forgotten top 40 hit plays in the distance.

It is a vibe.

But beyond the hair and fashion, there is an unmistakable psychic energy at play here.

It's not just the lack of smartphones.

There is an optimism. A lightness. We are in a world before 9/11. Before Columbine and Covid. We are in -- for lack of a better word -- the good ol' days.

Welcome back.

INT. FOOD COURT - CONTINUOUS

Camera settles on a group of four teenage girls. Drinking Pepsi and eating fast food.

BLONDIE
Okay so you know how if you die in your living room, your cat will eventually eat you?

SCRUNCHIE
Mr. Binkers would never do that --

BANGS
What in the world does this have to do with formal?

BLONDIE
I'm just saying, all of your guy friends would eventually have sex with you if the right moment presented itself.

SCRUNCHIE
It's not like that with Josh.

BLONDIE
They're animals, Claire. It's in their nature.

Reverse on ELIZA, 17. The odd one out at the table. Less bubblegum than the rest. A flighty, nervous energy here.

SCRUNCHIE (O.S., DISTANT)
We'd be going as friends, with a group --

Eliza's attention is fugitive. Fingers tapping. Almost manic. She could not care less about this conversation.

ELIZA
Sorry. I'll -- be right back.

Eliza excuses herself. As soon as she leaves earshot, the other three girls look at each other. A beat.

SCRUNCHIE
Drugs?

BANGS
Definitely on drugs.

INT. MALL BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Eliza flies in. Locks herself in a stall. Hands shaking.

She reaches into her pants and pulls out -- not a baggy of coke -- **but the latest iPhone.**

She goes to her text messages. Nothing new. She taps down -- there's no service.

Goes to Instagram -- TikTok. Same thing. No service. No bars. Nothing works.

She keeps trying but is only met with that spinning pinwheel. A beat.

ELIZA
You have got to be kidding me.

INT. FOOD COURT - MOMENTS LATER

Eliza walks back out to the very 90's scene before her.

She surveys her food options: Pizza. Cinnabon. Taco Bell.

She turns to a mall employee handing out samples of toothpick teriyaki.

ELIZA
Is there anywhere here that has like -- a smoothie? Or a salad?

TERIYAKI GUY
No, we had an Orange Julius the other year but it was replaced by Sbarro --

And she's off.

BACK AT THE TABLE

Eliza rejoins the group. A new song plays on the mall's overhead speakers. The unmistakable hook of Britney Spears ...*Baby One More time.*

For some reason, that is the last straw.

ELIZA
(forced)
You guys heard this one? Britney Spears? Promising young artist, that one. Yeah. Hope she has a good 2007!

The other girls look at her. Long pause.

ELIZA (cont'd)
What else, what else.

More silence. Eliza continues to fully unravel, building towards a shout.

ELIZA (cont'd)
1998. We all saw Titanic right? So good. The iceberg was one thing. But the twink death of Leonardo DiCaprio is the real disaster. But what can you do? Time comes for us all. But I guess it doesn't! Not here. Not now. That's the sales pitch. Right?

People start to stare. Not bewildered -- or even confused. Just annoyed. Like she's a heckler.

A mallrat at a nearby table looks over.

MALLRAT
What's your problem?

BLONDIE
She's new --

ELIZA
Yep. My bad. My bad.

A moment as the people in the food court resume eating. The Britney song breaks into its pre-chorus. Life goes on.

Eliza, is once again, the odd one out. She heads towards towards the exit. Shakes her head.

ELIZA (cont'd)
(a beat)
Fuck this place.

Camera follows her out as the song comes to full volume.

She flies past an enormous fountain and bursts through a set of double doors.

BRITNEY (O.S.)
When I'm not with you I lose my mind.
Give me a sign --

EXT. MALL - CONTINUOUS

Eliza catches her breath and looks ahead.

Outside the mall, there is no break in reality. No end of a soundstage. No escape.

Only a shining city on a hill.

BRITNEY (O.S., DISTANT)
Hit me baby one more time.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. WELCOME OFFICE - DAY

Eliza sits with her father, JAKE, 50's. Both of them are wearing contemporary clothes (re: 2020's) and appear to be in some group orientation. A welcome video plays offscreen.

SUPER: 24 HOURS EARLIER.

Eliza brings her attention towards the welcome video. It cuts between several resident testimonials.

VIDEO
I was so disconnected -- / Unhappy / Unsettled.

Back on Eliza. Looking like a combination of all of those words at once. Vape pen on her lips. A riot in her mind.

She turns to her dad.

ELIZA
This is so unserious.

Jake puts his finger to his lips. *Come on now.*

VIDEO (O.S.)
I just wish... things could be how they used to be / Before things got so crazy / Like the good old days.

And we get a better look at Jake as he stares at the video. Handsome guy. Second generation cop. He watches, almost childlike, as the testimonial words land.

BRIAN (O.S.)
The good old days.

Back onscreen, a new voice chimes in. This is BRIAN BULLARD, 40s. Big founder energy. The title onscreen says as much. *Brian Bullard, CEO of Omnicorp.*

BRIAN
That idea -- of our best days being behind us. That's something I couldn't get out of my mind.

He approaches camera with a gladhand warmth.

BRIAN (cont'd)
And that's really at the heart of this community. At the heart of this experiment here.
(then)
It's a reminder of all that once was good and could be good again. As Faulkner says, "The past isn't dead. It isn't even past."
(big smile)
Welcome to 90's Town. Welcome home.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - MINUTES LATER

We see Jake, Eliza and about a half dozen other newbies walking in a group as they continue their orientation. A tour guide shepherds them forward.

The newcomers are in modern clothes but <u>everything</u> in the town is a time capsule. The cars. The shoes. The architecture all screams late 90's. No detail overlooked.

Someone in the group pipes up.

NEWBIE
What about the phones?

TOUR GUIDE
Beg your pardon?

NEWBIE
With the tech embargo, is it like, don't ask don't tell or --

TOUR GUIDE
Your phones will be confiscated at the end of orientation. This is all covered in the welcome packet.

Closer on the tour guide, now FELICITY, 30's. Unbroken. Midwestern. Smiling like a flight attendant.

FELICITY
But the tech policy is one of our core tenets. No technology, fashion, or art is allowed past the town's timeline. But to get to your real question --

She turns, glancing to the towns WATER TOWER high above.

FELICITY (cont'd)
There's a cell jammer in the water tower. So you couldn't cheat even if you tried.

The newbie nods. Despite Felicity's pep, there's a fire in her eyes. A firmness. She's a true believer in this place.

ELIZA
(low, to no one)
Amish for iPhones...

FELICITY
It's a lot at first, but as the video said, the quality of life here is among the highest in the developed world. We just beat Copenhagen for the second year in a row.

Wide on the town square as they take it in. We see a series of families -- kids, people moving about their day.

A teen on a bike throws a newspaper. The headlines all detail Bill Clinton's impeachment hearings. A beat.

FELICITY (O.S.)
You'll get used to the adjustment. And then you'll learn to love it.

And it becomes clear if it hasn't already:

This is a living-history style re-enactment of a former era, but instead of Revolutionary America or the Civil War, it is 1998.

It looks more like a studio lot than a functioning town. But it *is* a functioning town. There's a mailman, a grocery store, and a Blockbuster.

The colors are more saturated. The adults somehow look more 'adult-y' and everything just feels... nice.

It's kind of amazing. Jake smiles, charmed at it all.

JAKE
You guys think the Bulls will be able to nail their second three-peat?

FELICITY
What?

JAKE
Jordan's final season with the Bulls. It's 98, right?

A beat.

FELICITY
That's right.

Felicity gives him a tight smile. This is not a fucking joke. She turns back to the group.

FELICITY (cont'd)
Well. Your phone numbers will redirect to your landlines within a few days, but there's a phone booth on the corner here --
(then)
I'll take your smartphones and you'll have the opportunity to make a call to any family if you'd like.

MOMENTS LATER

Close on a bucket full of phones as the tour guide makes the rounds. A few of the new arrivals stand in line to use the payphone behind them.

Felicity makes her way to Jake and Eliza. Jake surrenders his phone.

FELICITY
Chief Zalutsky. We're glad to have you.

JAKE
Glad to be here.

A beat. Eliza 'drops' her phone in the bucket but quickly pockets it again before Felicity can notice.

FELICITY
And this must be Eliza.

Eliza looks at her, hating her instantly.

FELICITY (cont'd)
(by way of explanation)
I'm part of the admissions process. I screen the applicants.

JAKE
I was wondering who went through all that. That was more paperwork than a mortgage.

Felicity nods. A beat. One of the newbies is still on the payphone. She looks back to Jake. Tone shift.

FELICITY
I'm sorry about your loss.
(a beat, quickly)
It was in the file.

ELIZA
Thanks.

Long pause.

FELICITY
You're the first outside hire we've had in quite some time you know.

JAKE
I can see why. Looks like you guys have it all covered. Hopefully I won't be too busy.

FELICITY
Let's hope.

Felicity turns to Eliza and sticks out her palm with a *hand-it-over* type motion.

FELICITY (cont'd)
That too.

Did she see her phone? Nope -- she's talking about the vape.

FELICITY (cont'd)
You'll have to go analog.

Eliza reluctantly hands it over -- noticing that many of the townsfolk are smoking cigarettes with abandon. A beat.

ELIZA
Guess I will.

The other newcomer gets off the payphone. Felicity clears her throat and corrals the group.

FELICITY
Alright everyone -- if you move this way we can start showing you your housing assignments --

Felicity's speech carries on in the background. Wide on the group as we see all the newcomers shuffle back together.

A moment as we see that every other newcomer is a family of three or four. Jake and Eliza stick out -- the only pair.

What's more, every other newcomer looks like they have arrived at Disney World. A kid on Christmas morning.

But Jake, and especially Eliza -- are less sure.

Jake looks at his daughter. The group moves on.

INT. ZALUTSKY HOUSE - LATER THAT DAY

Jake and Eliza walk into their new home.

Like everything else we've seen, it is a pre-furnished time capsule. Wallpaper. Carpets. Wood paneling. It's all here.

JAKE
This is amazing.

A beat as both take it in.

ELIZA
It's... something.

Jake finds a thick welcome packet on the kitchen counter.

Music rising, something like EVERY MORNING by Sugar Ray as we see them quickly move in:

BEGIN SERIES:

- Jake opens the fridge door. It's fully stocked with period-appropriate food packaging. How about that.

- Eliza takes in the design downstairs. Plush furniture. Frosted glass cubes. The forgotten Suburbancore all striking her as deeply unsettling.

- Jake goes to the garage. A 1996 Ford Explorer is there waiting for him.

- Eliza walks into her room. Opens her dresser to find period-appropriate clothing.

- A neighbor stops by and gives Jake lasagna, like you'd see in a movie.

- Eliza opens another drawer, filled with accessories: a choker, scrunchies, butterfly clips...

- The neighbor keeps talking to Jake. She laughs too hard at a joke and grabs his arm. So friendly.

- Eliza fires up one of those candy-shelled iMac G3's in a media room downstairs.

- Jake tries the landline. Not working yet.

- Eliza opens Internet Explorer. Aha. There is indeed internet and email here, it's just dial-up.

- Jake changes into his new wardrobe. The look suits him.

- Eliza types in Instagram's URL on Internet Explorer. It loads... so slowly. Eliza eventually gives up.

Montage slows down. Here they are.

Moved in but not settled.

Connected but not really.

Enjoying a day in 1998.

Except that's not really true at all now, is it?

END MONTAGE.

INT. ZALUTSKY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Jake walks down the stairs to watch Eliza watching the enormous box TV in the living room.

She's watching MTV. For a moment, it looks perfectly normal.

Jake just stands there. Shifting his weight like he's going to say something.

ELIZA
What?

JAKE
So. What do you think?

ELIZA
I think this is fucking weird.

JAKE
Yeah. It's pretty weird.

Long pause. Jake glances at the TV.

JAKE (cont'd)
I just think a fresh --

ELIZA
Yup. Fresh start. I know.

He sits down on the couch with her. Tries again.

JAKE
They waived almost all of the fees because of the job. They're basically letting us stay here for free. And that includes tuition, and even if we had moved upstate like we talked about --

ELIZA
Dad.
(a beat)
I know.

JAKE
Right.

A moment as they both watch TV. A Mentos commercial.

JAKE (cont'd)
Really is a time capsule though.

The programming resumes with an episode of MTV's THE REAL WORLD. Seven twenty-somethings pile in a hot tub.

GUY (O.S.)
Amanda sit here, I need someone to wipe in this sunblock --

GIRL (O.S.)
Have Marcus do it, he's right there --

ANOTHER GUY (O.S.)
I think you'd be best at rubbing one out --

ANOTHER GIRL (O.S.)
You guys are roommates, you should get to know each other haha --

ANOTHER GUY (O.S.)
You can't have another guy put on your sunscreen, that's how rumors start -- ya know?

YET ANOTHER GUY (OS, DISTANT)
GAYYYYYY!

Someone makes an "Awoooo" sound -- then there's a harsh musical stinger. A beat.

JAKE
Guess some things have aged better than others.

Eliza changes the channel. CNN. More Clinton coverage.

ELIZA
What am I supposed to watch.

JAKE
I think you'd really like Twin Peaks.

ELIZA
That sounds like a porn.

JAKE
Yeah. It kind of does.

Jake gets up to leave. Still unsettled.

JAKE (cont'd)
Well. I really appreciate you giving this a shot. It's all kind of insane but everybody swears by it. And the crime rate is almost non-existent so I think you'll be seeing a lot of me.

ELIZA
Dad what do you want me to say? I'm so glad someone in 90s Town was murdered? So they had to recruit a real police chief and we could finally live somewhere with a community pool?

JAKE
Yeah. Something like that.

A beat.

JAKE (cont'd)
That was a joke.

More silence.

JAKE (cont'd)
I'm going to get some rest. Big day tomorrow.

ELIZA
Yeah. Big day.

Camera stays on Eliza as Jake leaves.

She sets her jaw. Hard to read.

INT. JAKE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jake takes a heavy breath. One room apart but a world away.

He turns to see a very different welcome kit on his dresser.

No butterfly clips.

Just a gun. A badge. And a very thick case file.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. ZALUTSKY HOUSE - KITCHEN - THE NEXT DAY

Eggs sizzle on a stovetop.

Wide to reveal: Jake making an enormous breakfast.

Eliza walks downstairs.

JAKE
Morning!

Eliza is now in her 'period-appropriate' outfit, which, because of the cyclical nature of fashion does not look that different than something she'd be wearing today.

Mid-rise jeans. Black baby tee. Shoulder bag.

JAKE (cont'd)
You look great.

ELIZA
Thanks.

Jake on the other hand, looks like he stepped out of a Sears catalogue. Everything is boxy and beige. He flashes her a big smile. "Everything's fine!" energy.

JAKE
Hungry?

ELIZA
...Sure.

Music up as several QUICK CUTS get us out the door.

Breakfast. Backpack. Briefcase. And we're out --

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - LATER

Following Eliza as she walks up to a large brick high school. She looks around, dubious.

Passing different CLIQUES as she makes her way to the building.

The usual groups are all present: skaters, athletes, hooligans and hotties.

Eliza's outfit is unassuming but everyone else really went for it --

Calvin Klein. Fitted ribbed tees. Puka shell necklaces. The precursors of Y2K, coming in hot.

Eliza takes it all in.

This is so much worse than she imagined.

ELIZA
Oh my God.

A BELL RINGS.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - LATER

And we now follow Jake as he approaches a large, utilitarian building.

GARY (O.S.)
Chief Zalutsky, it's great to finally meet you.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION - MOMENTS LATER

Jake shakes hands with GARY TORRICO, a barrel-chested man in his 60's. They walk and talk down a hallway.

GARY
I'm one of the Resident Services Directors. Appreciate your flexibility with us here...

Wider to see that they are in a cramped, bland-looking government-like building. Fluorescent lighting buzzes overhead. Basement level. Backrooms coded.

GARY (cont'd)
As you can see, there is no police department. We're still trying to figure out where to put you.

JAKE
It's all good. I don't need a corner office.

GARY
So we thought we could start here.

Gary stops. Motioning towards a storage closet with an impromptu desk shoved between banker's boxes.

JAKE
Cozy.

A beat.

GARY
This is temporary of course. Your family's enrollment and this whole role was fast tracked. So we're... improvising.

JAKE
I got you.

Jake takes a look around the new digs. Not exactly the welcome he was expecting.

Nevertheless, he rolls up his sleeves and sits on the desk. Showtime.

JAKE (cont'd)
You wanna tell me about this body?

INT. DEPARTMENT OF SANITATION - CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

A SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS are spread on a table. In them we see a man, 50s. Dead and distended in a upscale office.

GIDEON (O.S.)
Carl Bridgewater. Found deceased by his coworkers 10am last Tuesday morning.

Closer on the photos. Expensive necktie. Dead on a deadline. Trouble in paradise.

GIDEON (O.S.) (cont'd)
His coffee mug was knocked over, desk askew as if there was a struggle. But no trauma. Or I guess, no visible trauma.

The voice belongs to GIDEON, 40's. Head of security. But he looks much more mall cop than *cop* cop.

JAKE
Okay.

The three men study the photo spread.

GARY
He was pulling an all-nighter. And we think he musta died some time in the early morning. No one else was there. No witnesses. Nothing.

GIDEON
So we had one of our doctors X-ray him and that's when things got interesting.

Gideon drops three X-rays on the table.

JAKE
What am I looking at?

GARY
That is the million dollar question.

GIDEON
There are three objects lodged in his body -- lung, brain, and diaphragm. Made of metal by the looks of it but nobody can figure out what.

JAKE
And there's no entry wounds?

GIDEON
None.

JAKE
You're serious?

From his looks he can tell that they are.

JAKE (cont'd)
Can I see the body?

INT. MORGUE - BODY STORAGE - LATER

Jake puts on a sterile glove with a SNAP. A morgue attendant leads them forward.

JAKE
How is it that you guys have a full morgue but no police station?

GARY
We've got a lot of retirees here. Older folks. This isn't our first death by any means.

JAKE
Just your first murder.

GIDEON
We got security guards, a volunteer neighborhood watch. But detectives?

GARY
You're the first.

In one swift motion, the morgue attendant pulls out the body from the morgue cooler. We get a good look at him.

The deceased is a white man in his 50's. Pale as a ghost.

Jake looks him up and down. No trauma.

GIDEON
Remember, the incisions are from the autopsy.

JAKE
Right. And you have the objects?

Gideon takes out a sealed tray, handing it over.

The three metal objects look simple -- almost like kids toys -- a spinning top, a rod, and a jack. But not quite.

JAKE (cont'd)
Huh.

GARY
Does this make any sense to you?

JAKE
Not yet.

GARY
The fact that crime has been nearly non-existent has been a big selling point for the community here. So we'd like to get to the bottom of this as soon as possible.

JAKE
Of course.

GARY
Just tell us what you need.

Jake takes a moment. They look at him, expectantly.

JAKE
I need to talk to everyone. Coworkers, family. His Dentist. Dogwalker. All of it.

A moment as they nod and give some MMms. Like *right*, good idea.

Jake just stares at them. Long pause. And then he realizes.

There are no deputies. There is no police department.

He *is* the police department. A beat.

JAKE (cont'd)
Can you help me with that?

GARY
Me? Well, Gideon, how clear is your calendar.

GIDEON
I mean - I'm supposed to be at the Harvest festival in an hour -- I can check the cal --

JAKE
You asked what I need, I'm gonna need some support.

GARY
Full time?

JAKE
Ideally.

A beat.

GARY
Bringing someone else in is going to take a few weeks, pending approvals --

JAKE
They don't need to be another cop, I just need -- I don't know, someone that can tell me how all of this shit works. Who can... point me in the right direction.

GARY
You know. I have just the person.
(big smile)
Follow me.

INT. BATHROOM STALL - SCHOOL - SAME

Back at school, Eliza steals a moment alone in a stall.

She's breathing quick, staving off a panic attack.

Her fingers find her phone in her pocket. Just holding it tight. Like some kind of totem. A tether to the outside world. She grips it hard.

PRELAP: The sound of a BELL RINGING.

INT. CLASSROOM - HIGH SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

An english class full of students lazily find their desks.

Eliza sits in the back. Teacher's running late.

VOICE (O.S.)
Eliza?

She turns, revealing Blondie, from the first scene, now RACHEL. Preppy and popular.

RACHEL
Oh my God.

ELIZA
Whoah. Hey.

The girl with the scrunchie from the fist scene, now CLAIRE leans in too.

CLAIRE
You guys know each other?

RACHEL
Middle school. We were both on the crew team. Eliza was the coxswain, but then she quit.

ELIZA
How long have you been here?

RACHEL
Gosh, three years now? I heard they were bringing in somebody, that must be your dad.

ELIZA
Yeah.

RACHEL
What do you think? Of the town so far?

ELIZA
I mean, honestly? It's a lot.

RACHEL
You'll get used to it. I promise.

ELIZA
Yeah. You certainly... wear it well.
(a beat)
I saw you earlier and I thought -- no way --

RACHEL
I know. I know.

Right then the TEACHER walks in. Starts to quiet the hubbub.

TEACHER
Alright, alright --

RACHEL
Come hang with us after school and let's properly catch up. K?

ELIZA
(a beat)
Yeah. Okay.

Eliza nods. They are not remotely on the same wavelength -- not even close -- but what the hell, sure.

TEACHER (O.S.)
We have a new student. Eliza... would you like to stand up and introduce yourself?

Eliza looks up. She would not like to do that.

EXT. 90'S TOWN SQUARE - LATER

Gary and Jake walk through the town square.

We get another look at the community at large. Everything is glossy, vaguely patriotic, and oddly serene.

Kevin Spacey (the actor) walks by.

Jake does a double-take.

JAKE
Was that --

GARY
Yup.

JAKE
Wow.

GARY
We got a lot of folks that have been uh, what's the word...

JAKE
Cancelled?

GARY
That's right.

A beat as they keep walking.

JAKE
(gently)
Anything else you think I should know about this place? That wasn't mentioned on the tour?

GARY
I don't follow.

JAKE
I'm the sheriff. No sense in keeping secrets.

GARY
Sure. Well. It's an interesting mix of people. There's a lot of high net worth individuals. That's for sure. And we've got a few people from witness protection too. This is a safe, exclusive community --

JAKE
(aha)
And there's virtually no paper trail since everything is analog.

GARY
That's right. You know, one of the kids in your orientation group got his college admissions rescinded for something he said online.

JAKE
No shit.

GARY
Nothing is viral here, Jake. There's no content.
(MORE)

GARY (cont'd)
No weekly internet villain. People can just... live their life.

JAKE
What a concept.

GARY
I think that's what everyone really wants --

JAKE
To live their life?

GARY
To begin again. Don't you?

Long pause. Tone shift.

JAKE
Yeah. Sure.

A moment as they keep walking. Then Gary breaks the tension with --

GARY
And it's such a relief to avoid the news. If you so much as breathe a word about AI someone will take out a gun and shoot you.

JAKE
Ha. Good!

GARY
Right this way...

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - THAT AFTERNOON

School is out. Eliza pushes through a sea of people towards the parking lot.

A car honks. She turns. It's Rachel and the others.

RACHEL
Get in loser! We're going shopping.

Eliza pauses. This reminds her -- and you -- of something. But she can't place it.

RACHEL (cont'd)
You got somewhere to be?

ELIZA
No just -- Deja vu.

She gets in the car.

INT. CAR - LATER

The four girls drive on.

RACHEL
I know you said it feels like a lot but you're going to snap right to it. Humans are supposed to live at the mall, not the internet.

CLAIRE
Period.

RACHEL
And the babydoll tee is cool but I think we could do better. There's an Abercrombie that just opened, and one of my girls works at The Limited Too --

Eliza blinks. A realization dawning.

RACHEL (cont'd)
-- I know it's for kids but she could hook you up with a piercing.

ELIZA
(a beat)
We don't -- we don't need to do all that. I'm good.

RACHEL
I just think --

ELIZA
I'm good.

Rachel's expression cools upon learning that Eliza is no longer a project.

RACHEL
Alright. Suit yourself.

The car keeps moving in silence. Eventually:

CLAIRE
Anyway, so Josh was telling me that Clark has been acting super weird lately --

RACHEL
What kind of weird?

CLAIRE
I don't know - like, he keeps bringing up Shannon and finding reasons to hang out with her.

RACHEL
Can't imagine what's going on there. Call the FBI. Maybe we can put Eliza's dad on the case.

ELIZA
(a beat)
Mean Girls.

CLAIRE
What?

ELIZA
Get in loser, we're going shopping. That's from Mean Girls -- the movie. Right?

CLAIRE
I don't know.

ELIZA
No it is -- it was a meme.
(then)
I get it, is that like, what you do? Is that what everybody's doing? I don't think that counts as 90's though --

RACHEL
Eliza, we're just talking.

A beat.

CLAIRE
What in the world are you talking about.

Eliza looks at them. Feeling insane.

ELIZA
Nevermind.

Strike two. The car keeps driving.

GARY (O.S.)
Here we go --

INT. CULTURAL AFFAIRS BUILDING - LATER

Back with Jake, as he and Gary enter a building abuzz with cubicles. It almost looks like a newsroom.

GARY
So this is Cultural Affairs. They're in charge of all of the town's programming -- what's on TV, what the newspapers say, all of it.

A series as we pass different desks. Passing mountains of magazines, screens, and archives. People at work.

GARY (cont'd)
They take the timeline pretty seriously, I'm sure you've noticed, but everything from the nightly news to the basketball games is programmed to be calendar accurate. Whatever's happening on July tenth actually happened on that day.

JAKE
Yeah. So I missed the Bulls at the finals?

GARY
Correct. That was June. Hell of a run though. People went nuts. It was all anyone could talk about.

They keep walking.

JAKE
Ninety eight. What are you gonna do for two thousand? Start the loop over?

GARY
That's the plan. But --
(a beat, ugh)
Don't get me started. It's a whole thing.

FARTHER IN

Gary and Jake approach one of the cubicles in the back. A woman types away on a beige, boxy Compaq Presario.

GARY
You remember Felicity.

The woman turns, revealing FELICITY, the tour guide from earlier, in the middle of eating lunch.

She looks surprised, wiping mayo from her face. A beat.

FELICITY
Hello.

JAKE
You're under arrest.

FELICITY
What?

GARY
Jake needs someone to show him around. We'll work on getting him a proper deputy at some point but I thought you could -- you know -- show him the ropes. For a bit.

FELICITY
Of course, we can schedule another walk-through anytime this week --

GARY
We're going to need someone on this full time while he's getting settled.

The sentence lands like a stone.

JAKE
I want to talk to everyone within a stone's throw of this Bridgewater guy. Pull their files. Retrace their steps. All that stuff. Is that something you could help me with?

Felicity looks at Gary, then Jake.

GARY
Felicity is one of our finest assets at Cultural Affairs, I can't think of anyone else better suited to connect you with whoever might help in your investigation.

She smiles. Her painful sincerity and idealism is for a moment -- laughable. A hardened cop she is not.

But ever the good soldier, she just nods. Like always.

FELICITY
Absolutely.

Jake and Felicity lock eyes.

GARY
Look at you two. Partners! I love connecting people. This is going to be great.

That word lingers in the air. *Partners*.

INT. MALL - MEANWHILE

A boy in his late teens moves through an electronics store.

Dark clothes. Tousled brown hair. He moves his fingers over inventory like he's gonna snatch something.

He looks at the cashier up front, waiting to see if they're looking the other way when --

ELIZA (O.S.)
But what can you do? Time comes for us all. But I guess it doesn't!

He hears someone in the food court having a nervous breakdown.

ELIZA (O.S.) (cont'd)
Not here. Not now. That's the sales pitch. Right?

After a beat he steps out of the store and watches Eliza's freakout with great interest.

MALLRAT
What's your problem?

RACHEL
She's new.

ELIZA
My bad, my bad.

His eyes follow her as she storms out.

ELIZA (O.S., DISTANT)
Fuck this place --

EXT. MALL - CONTINUOUS

Eliza busts out of the double doors of the mall.

A moment as she catches her breath. She stares at the city square from a distance. A saturated mural reads:

THE PAST ISN'T DEAD. IT ISN'T EVEN PAST!

A beat. The double doors push open again and the teenage boy strolls out behind her.

This is CHRISTIAN. 17. Wearing all black, he looks a bit grunge, a bit skater, and more than a bit dangerous.

Ironically, fitting right in to the era without looking like he tried at all. He takes out a lighter and flicks it.

CHRISTIAN
(lighting a cigarette)
History repeats itself. First as tragedy, then as farce.

ELIZA
Is that on a billboard too?

CHRISTIAN
That's Karl Marx.

A moment. She studies him for a beat longer than necessary.

ELIZA
I take it you're not here for the Abercrombie.

CHRISTIAN
Cigarette?

She nods. He hands her one. Lights it.

ELIZA
They stole my vape.

CHRISTIAN
I liked your speech.

ELIZA
Thanks.

CHRISTIAN
I honestly fucking hate this place. Like truly despise it. Nice to hear someone else say so.

ELIZA
I knew it would be bad, but -- wow.

CHRISTIAN
Yup.

ELIZA
Cosplay is one thing, but this is some like, shared psychosis.

CHRISTIAN
One thousand percent.

ELIZA
Like at this point?
(she takes a drag)
If an animatronic OJ Simpson came running by, I'd be surprised, but not *surprised* surprised.

Christian smiles. He gets it.

ELIZA (cont'd)
I don't know how I'm going to keep doing this.

CHRISTIAN
You and me both.

He throws his cigarette on the ground. Then stomps on it with a heavy boot.

CHRISTIAN (cont'd)
I'm Christian by the way.

ELIZA
Eliza.

A moment as he studies her too. Then he pulls out a sharpie.

CHRISTIAN
May I?

Eliza nods, despite having no idea what the sharpie is or what she just agreed to.

He steps in close and starts writing something on her wrist. A beat. She lies the proximity. And his long hair.

CHRISTIAN (cont'd)
Have a couple folks hanging out later if you want to stop by.

She looks down. He's writing an address. Old school.

CHRISTIAN (cont'd)
Think it might be more your speed than the teen girl squad over there.
(a beat)
Eight o'Clock. Up to you.

ELIZA
Thanks. Maybe I will.

He caps the sharpie and turns to leave.

CHRISTIAN
Then maybe I'll see you around.

She gives him a nod. And then when his back is turned, breaks out into a smile.

It looks like she might have a partner too.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. 90'S TOWN SQUARE - LATER THAT DAY

Jake and Felicity cross town at pace. It's all quite walkable.

JAKE
So.

FELICITY
So.

JAKE
Anything else you think I should know? That wasn't on the tour?

FELICITY
Everything's in the welcome packet.

JAKE
Not everything.
(a beat)
The witness protection folks. Heard about that this morning.

FELICITY
Right.

JAKE
Carl Bridgewater wasn't one of those was he?

FELICITY
No.

JAKE
That would have made things simple.

FELICITY
He was Omnicorp.

JAKE
I mean isn't everyone? How exactly does that work?

FELICITY
Well this *is* a company town first and foremost. They own the place. Omnicorp moved their entire processing, customer service, and legal departments over here. Most of the residents work for the company.
(MORE)

FELICITY (cont'd)
Then they brought in others for everything else. Doctors, clerks -- the essential jobs. Once it became a lifestyle community.

JAKE
But you don't work for them?

FELICITY
Not really. There's a separation of church and state. So to speak.

JAKE
Yeah there's a separation alright. How in the world did this place get autonomous governance?

FELICITY
It's a charter city.

JAKE
That's not subject to anyone else's jurisdiction?

FELICITY
Don't be so upset. It's why we needed you.

JAKE
I'm not upset it's just --

Jake freezes as they turn a corner and several nightmarish figures stare at them. Dead eyes. Broad daylight.

For a moment he is speechless.

It is, however, just a McDonald's. And the figures are lifesize fiberglass character statues. Grimace, Ronald McDonald, and The Hamburglar.

JAKE (cont'd)
Christ.

A beat. Jake collects himself. They keep moving.

FELICITY
They still make the fries with beef tallow. You really have to go.

JAKE
Right. Last question. Why the 90's? And not just -- an unplugged resort? They have those, you know.

FELICITY
This was all in the welcome packet.

JAKE
I skimmed.

FELICITY
Brian Bullard wanted a lifestyle community where he could escape his life's work.

JAKE
Right. Phones bad.

FELICITY
It's a bit theatrical but they did a big study. The nineties were the last time we controlled tech without tech controlling us. Better for your brain, a lot more efficient, and it's fun --

JAKE
For every minute you save with email, you lose ten on social...

FELICITY
So you did read the packet? Exactly.

JAKE
And on the eighth day, God made Pleasantville for Generation x.

FELICITY
Omnicorp, not God.

Jake looks around, taking this in. Something else bothering him as they turn a corner and walk offscreen...

Camera holds -- not following them -- when Eliza walks into frame coming from the opposite direction.

Eliza looks at the address on her hand.

Takes out her iPhone -- on the low -- muscle memory. Opens Maps. But no service.

She looks around, lost. Finds a big-haired passerby.

ELIZA
Excuse me -- sorry, do you know where this is?

They don't. Begin series as --

ELIZA ASKS FOR DIRECTIONS

Asks someone else. Nope.

Crosses the town square, disoriented. Time passing.

ELIZA
Excuse me / Sorry / Can you help me here?

Nope, nope, nope.

Everything feeling increasingly surreal as she moves from person to person, oddly helpless in this place designed to remind you of other places.

But finally, she finds someone.

She shows them her wrist and they give her a point.

EXT. 90S TOWN - SUBURBAN STREET - LATER

Eliza keeps walking. Turns down a perfect suburban street.

She checks the sharpie address on her wrist:

2234

Looks up to see the same address on a house.

She walks up.

PRELAP: KNOCK KNOCK.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Eliza adjusts her hair as she waits for the door.

A placid woman in her 60's answers in a nightgown.

WOMAN
Can I help you?

ELIZA
Yeah, I'm looking for Christian.

WOMAN
There's no Christian here.

Eliza gazes over the woman's shoulder to see a grown man, sitting straight in his underwear, watching cartoons. Unnaturally still.

Another older man looks right at her, continuing to scrub the same spotless part of the counter again and again.

Eliza freezes. Immediately feels like she shouldn't be here.

WOMAN (cont'd)
What'd you say your name was?

ELIZA
I'm so sorry. Wrong house.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - CURB - MOMENTS LATER

Eliza walks back to the curb. Head down. Freaked out.

What was that? A prank? Something *else*?

She puts her head in her hands when --

She sees the sharpie address from a different angle.

Moves her hand. Looks at it again.

ELIZA
"A".

Aha. It's not 2234. It's 223**A**.

ELIZA (cont'd)
For fuck's sake.

And with that, she's off --

JAKE (O.S.)
Tell me everything you can about Carl Bridgewater.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LATER

Jake and Felicity sit in a cramped conference room. We cut between different people as they take statements --

HR LADY
Carl kept mostly to himself. Pretty quiet. Wasn't married. I think the office worked for the better part of an hour before anyone realized he was dead --

ACCOUNTING GUY
I don't really know what his deal was. Can't imagine a guy like that would have any enemies you know?

CUBICLE DRONE
I despised the man. Always smelled like shit. No manners.
(a beat then)
You're not going to arrest me, are you? I wouldn't -- I'm not --

JAKE (O.S.)
Nope.

YUPPIE EXEC
He was working an overnight which he tended to do. Real team player. But yeah, night like that, don't think anyone else would have been here save the desk attendant.

THE DESK ATTENDANT
I didn't see anyone else come in or out. It was crickets.

JAKE
Does the building have any other exits?

THE DESK ATTENDANT
Fire escape, through the stairs. But that late, I probably would have heard 'em.

Reverse on: Jake and Felicity at long last. Felicity doodles on a notepad. Unsure why she is needed here.

Jake tries to hide his disappointment.

THE DESK ATTENDANT (cont'd)
It's a shame too. Bank was closed that day because of the holiday.

JAKE
Bank? What bank?

THE DESK ATTENDANT
Across the street. Normal day might have had a few folks staying late but not on a holiday.

JAKE
Thank you. That's all.

THE DESK ATTENDANT
I can leave?

JAKE
Please.

The desk attendant shuffles out of the conference room. Jake looks at Felicity.

JAKE (cont'd)
There's a bank.

FELICITY
Uh-huh.

JAKE
Banks have security cameras. How come nobody told me there's a bank?

FELICITY
Because I have a degree in communications and am not a detective.

JAKE
Did anyone look through it?

FELICITY
Not that I know.

Jake shoots up - fire in his veins. Checks his watch.

JAKE
Come on. We can still make it before they close --

EXT. INDUSTRIAL SPACE - LATER

Eliza knocks at the door for 223A. A slouchy guy in flannel opens it up. A beat.

ELIZA
Christian told me to come by.

GUY
Hmm.

He inspects her. A beat.

GUY (cont'd)
He's back here.

INT. INDUSTRIAL SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Eliza walks in to see a low, smoke-filled loft with a dozen or so teens -- huddled around an iMac, drinking.

It feels like a party. But everyone immediately stiffens. Someone turns off the music playing from the computer.

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)
Don't worry, she's cool.

Eliza looks up. Christian comes in from the back, holding a fresh six pack. All smiles.

CHRISTIAN
Everybody meet Eliza. The new blood.

Eliza waves. They nod and get back to it. The music resumes.

CHRISTIAN (cont'd)
Beer?

She takes one. Looks at the computer which is connected to Spotify (again, via dial-up), playing something current.

ELIZA
(re: music)
This isn't 90's...

CHRISTIAN
My buddy Coop stole this mac from Cultural Affairs, this model isn't supposed to come out until next year.

A girl in Doc Martens pipes up. Dark eyeliner. This is LIV.

LIV
Which is technically a misdemeanor. So don't go telling your momma.

ELIZA
Ha, no worries there.

CHRISTIAN
If they didn't warn you, anything that breaks from the town's timeline is called an Anachronism. Which is about the dumbest thing I've ever heard.
(then)
Technically you can watch or listen or read to whatever you want in the privacy of your own home. But as soon as it involves hardware it's illegal.

Liv turns to Eliza, deadpan.

LIV
Those fascists confiscated my Magic Wand.

GUY
Wand. Like Hogwarts?

LIV
Yeah Donnie. Like fucking Hogwarts.

Eliza laughs. Someone hands her a homemade vape pen, and she visibly relaxes. She looks at Christian. He looks back.

This is much more her speed than the mall.

INT. BANK - BACK OFFICE - LATER

A stout old woman with a smoker's growl leads Jake and Felicity through the back.

WOMAN
Everything we got's in here.

Jake walks in, reverse on the room to reveal hundreds of VHS tapes on a shelf, next to a time lapse VCR and a CRT monitor. All old school. All disorganized. A beat.

JAKE
No digital storage huh.

WOMAN
Nope.

Jake and Felicity scan the shelf. Some of the the tapes have dates, others don't.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Make yourself at home.

The woman leaves.

FELICITY
Well. It's getting late so, I'll leave you to it...

JAKE
Like hell you will. This shit's going to take forever to comb through.

FELICITY
I'm not suited for this kind of thing.

JAKE
Looking through tapes?

FELICITY
Police work.

JAKE
I am still a tourist here. What if I actually see someone on the camera? Then what? How am I gonna ID them?

She looks at him, unsure.

JAKE (cont'd)
Just, would you help me find this tape? You don't have to stay all night - let's just see if we can --

FELICITY
It's right here. That's the date.

Felicity grabs one of the cassettes nearest to the computer.

Jake looks at it. She's right.

JAKE
Well how 'bout that.

FELICITY
Can I go home now?

JAKE
If you want, sure. But --
(a beat)
Don't you want to see what's on it?

She considers. Off her look --

INT. INDUSTRIAL SPACE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Empty bottles litter the floor. The party is now in full swing --

ELIZA
-- and they were quoting Mean Girls like some kind of cosplay, and when I called them out in it they just looked at me like I was crazy.

Wide on the group -- Eliza now holding court and looking fully integrated.

ELIZA (cont'd)
I don't know which is worse -- if they were doing it on purpose or if they weren't.

CHRISTIAN
(takes hit)
I'm saying this all the time, everyone is just playacting these moments they've seen in movies.

LIV
Like a bridesmaid speech when someone is performing friendship.

CHRISTIAN
That is exactly what I'm talking about! People live their whole lives like that.

ELIZA
How do you guys do it? I'm on like, what - day two? And yikes.

CHRISTIAN
Nights like this, mostly.

LIV
This is your second day? You gotta go to the water tower.

ELIZA
The water tower?

LIV
You didn't see it on the tour? Smack in the middle of the city. This place sucks but that view is elite.

ELIZA
They allow you to do that?

CHRISTIAN
Of course not. But it's fun.

A beat. Liv shifts her weight, getting up drunkenly.

LIV
Alright kids, about that time.

DONNIE
You working?

LIV
Early shift.
(then)
This was cool. Glad to meet you, girl. Welcome to the neighborhood.

ELIZA
Thanks.

Momentum shifts as the party starts to wind down and others get up. Christian and Eliza don't move.

CHRISTIAN
You wanna go?

ELIZA
Where?

CHRISTIAN
What do you mean where? To the water tower. I'll take you. She's not lying about that view.

ELIZA
Oh. Yeah. Let's do it.

She looks at him. Smiles big. This should be fun.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. BANK - BACK OFFICE - LATER

Jake and Felicity lean back and watch the VHS.

It has a jerky, low-rate playback. That and the distortion giving it all a ghostly, timelapse quality.

FELICITY
Can't you just fast forward to the middle of the night?

JAKE
We gotta see who goes in and out.

FELICITY
Right.

They watch in silence for quite some time.

JAKE
Okay. I'm going to ask this one more time. And please don't take offense.

A beat.

JAKE (cont'd)
Are you sure there isn't *anything* else I need to know here?
(then)
Is there any other reason a company town might want their whole workforce off the grid? With no paper trail and no police jurisdiction. For a lifestyle community? I mean, come on.

FELICITY
You already asked me: no.

Felicity says this with a forcefulness we haven't seen from her. Jake takes note.

FELICITY (cont'd)
It's not like that. And if you don't want to be here, please make room for someone who does.

JAKE
That's not what I'm saying.

FELICITY
Then what are you saying?

JAKE
How old are you?

FELICITY
Please.

JAKE
No I'm serious, you're what, a millennial?

FELICITY
Is that a problem?

JAKE
All I'm saying is this place is more like somebody's memory of the 90's than the actual 90's. It's like -- the international pavilion at Epcot.

FELICITY
Jake, what do you want me to say? They poached a dozen Imagineers. It's not actually 1998.

A beat. Tone shift.

FELICITY (cont'd)
Are you talking to them?

JAKE
Them? Who's them?

FELICITY
The documentary crew. The guy who did the Scientology thing is apparently trying to do his next project on our town. He's been offering big rewards for intel.

JAKE
I'm the sheriff.

FELICITY
Then I guess you'd be the first crooked cop.

JAKE
What is your problem?

FELICITY
You are asking a lot of questions --

JAKE
(almost a shout)
I am trying to solve a murder here. I am trying to figure out context and motive. That is my job. Are you going to help me or not?

An ugly pause.

FELICITY
Sorry. Long night.

JAKE
I get it. All good.

There is - an odd rift here. A mutual suspicion growing. It is not all good.

JAKE (cont'd)
Long night.

After a moment, both look back at the chunky TV. A beat. Then --

FELICITY
What was that?

EXT. TOWN - WATER TOWER - NIGHT

A SERIES as Eliza and Christian climb up the water tower's ladder. The metal squeaks as they make their way up.

They reach the summit and sit down on the balcony guardrail.

CHRISTIAN
Some view, huh?

ELIZA
Yeah, some view.

Some view indeed. From a distance, the town looks like a perfect little postcard. They take it in.

CHRISTIAN
Cigarette?

Eliza turns to him, takes a fistful of his jacket and kisses him, deep. He's into it but she takes the lead.

The first thing she's done all day that felt like her idea.

INT. BANK - BACK OFFICE - LATER

Close on the CRT screen as Jake rewinds the tape.

Dead of night at the scene of the crime. The static angle rewinds, as we see the time lapsed night in reverse.

FELICITY
What was it?

JAKE
Someone was there.

Then we see it -- too fast -- a ghostly blur leaving the office building's fire exit.

JAKE (cont'd)
Yep.

A moment as he pauses. Fast-forwards -- then finds it again. Presses play.

JAKE (cont'd)
There he is.

Both lean in to see a man staggering out of the fire exit. Wearing all black. Long hair. The frame blurs.

JAKE (cont'd)
Our man of mystery.

Then another frame, clear as day this time. It's CHRISTIAN. At the scene of the crime. Suspect number one.

JAKE (cont'd)
Who might you be?

EXT. TOWN - WATER TOWER - LATER

Eliza breaks away from Christian and adjusts her shirt. Done with whatever rumpus transpired.

Christian lights a cigarette. Gives one to Eliza as well.

Long silence. Eventually:

CHRISTIAN
So you never told me. What's your story?

A beat. He lights hers.

CHRISTIAN (cont'd)
I take it wasn't your idea to move here.

ELIZA
Yeah. That was all my dad.

She takes a drag of the cigarette. Simply:

ELIZA (cont'd)
My mom died a couple years back. She was sick for a really long time, so, no surprises there. But once she was gone, everything just -- lingered. Nothing changed. My dad wanted a fresh start. He got a job offer here and the rest is history.

A beat. He nods.

ELIZA (cont'd)
I didn't have a lot keeping me home. So despite my protests, we made the jump.
(then)
It's funny I think my dad moved here to get away from the memory of her. But they fell in love in the late 90s. They were kids together. And now he's back. So jokes on him.

CHRISTIAN
The past isn't past. Et cetera.

ELIZA
Yeah.

CHRISTIAN
What'd they bring him in for? What's he do?

ELIZA
He's the new police chief.

Christian nods. However this new information makes him feel, he hides it well.

Until he doesn't. He coughs.

CHRISTIAN
Well that puts a target on my back now doesn't it?

ELIZA
Maybe it does.

He looks at her. This just got a lot more interesting.

EXT. CITY SQUARE - NIGHT - SAME

Jake and Felicity walk in the night air.

JAKE
You don't recognize this kid? I thought this was a small town.

FELICITY
The teens all change so quickly.

JAKE
We'll pick this up tomorrow and pass this photo around. Somebody's gotta know him.

They approach an intersection. Felicity stops, shifts her weight. She's this a way.

FELICITY
Alright. I'll see you tomorrow.

And with that, she's off.

JAKE
Hey.
(she stops)
Great work today.

FELICITY
Thanks. You too.

They part ways. Leaving Jake alone.

After a moment he keeps walking. Shakes his head.

Despite it all, it is a perfect autumn evening.

The moon in the sky. The wind in the trees. And the town's lighting and landscaping is doing its job.

Something about this walk -- this town... feels good. Clean. Familiar. And for all of his doubts and questions, he enjoys that feeling of safety. For just a moment.

Up ahead he sees a woman sitting on a bench.

WOMAN
Howdy stranger.

JAKE
Hi.

WOMAN
I haven't seen you around here.

JAKE
I'm new.

We get a better look at her up close. Dark hair. 40's. Indian accent.

The one thing to remember is that she doesn't look like anyone else around here. Which will become important soon.

WOMAN
Nice to meet you.

ELIZA (O.S.)
Oh shit.

EXT. TOWN - WATER TOWER - LATER

Back with Eliza and Christian.

CHRISTIAN
What?

ELIZA
Help me up here.

Eliza starts climbing up the water tower basin.

CHRISTIAN
Whoah, easy --

ELIZA
They said there was a cell jammer up here, right --

CHRISTIAN
Wait --

She scales the top of the water tower.

EXT. CITY SQUARE - NIGHT - SAME

Back on Jake and the mystery woman.

JAKE
(re: the bench)
May I?

She nods. He sits. They look at the moon. Long pause.

Something about the night -- and this feeling of safety, makes him drop the armor. For just a second.

JAKE (cont'd)
Man. It's been an interesting couple days. That's for sure. Don't think my daughter's sold on this place yet. Though she has her points. But on a night like tonight? How can you miss YouTube? Ya know?

WOMAN
What's YouTube?

JAKE
Right. Exactly.

He looks at her, playing along with the bit.

But it's not a bit.

WOMAN
What do you mean?

JAKE
YouTube. Or Netflix. Or my Apple watch. Podcasts. Any of that stuff.

She looks at him like she has no idea what any of those words mean. It freaks her out. Which freaks him out.

JAKE (cont'd)
I'm just saying --

In the blink of an eye, the bench is empty.

The woman is <u>gone</u>. Like she was never there to begin with.

Jake startles. He looks around, almost panicked. Did anyone else see that? Did he imagine that? What the fuck?

ELIZA (O.S.)
Come onnn.

EXT. WATER TOWER BASIN - SAME

Eliza scales the top, takes out her iPhone, and lifts it skyward in search of a signal.

But there's no reception. No bars.

ELIZA
Come on!
(a beat)
If we're up here, can we turn it off?

CHRISTIAN
What?

ELIZA
The cell jammer. They said it's in the water tower.

CHRISTIAN
Eliza... there is no cell jammer.

ELIZA
What do you mean?

He kicks the water basin with his boot. There's a very loud, very **hollow** reverb.

CHRISTIAN
They say there's some signal jammer up here, but there isn't. That's just a story they tell the newbies.

ELIZA
No, but --

CHRISTIAN
Cell phones don't work here -- no wireless communication does. And nobody knows why.

She looks at him. A realization dawning.

CHRISTIAN (cont'd)
There's a lot of secrets in 90's Town.

Eliza looks out at the town. Camera pulls out wide, showing us something we haven't seen just yet:

That the whole town is surrounded by an enormous concrete barrier. Not a gated community barrier. Heavy duty. Fortified. Almost military.

CHRISTIAN (cont'd)
Welcome to the neighborhood.

On Eliza. A beat. Finally:

ELIZA
What is this place?

CUT TO BLACK

END PILOT