

# RUBY STRANGELOVE

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FADE IN:

1 EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT 1

The towers of the Hospital stand dramatically silhouetted against a luminous full moon. A near-hurricane force wind blows. The headlights of an old car wind their way along the road towards the hospital past a weatherbeaten sign:

'WICKER MEMORIAL HOSPITAL. EST - 1905'

The car pulls to a halt -- a man in his late twenties is out and running inside.

2 INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT 2

The man -- TED STRANGELOVE, decent, devoted -- bursts through the doors -- the wind howls outside as he approaches a NURSE.

TED

My wife... she's having a baby.

NURSE

Name?

TED

Sara... Sara Strangelove.

3 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT 3

The lights are dimmed and a large framed mirror occupies one wall of the room. Ted strokes his wife's head. SARA STRANGELOVE is early 20's -- darkly beautiful.

Beside them sleeps a BABY GIRL in a cot. Ted smiles down at her.

SARA

The compact....

Ted's reaching into his jacket, handing Sara a Mother of Pearl compact. She places it beside the baby.

SARA (CONT'D)

This is for you baby girl. Your Grandmother gave it to me, and now it's yours.

A knock at the door -- the NURSE looks in.

NURSE

Mr. Strangelove? Sorry to disturb.  
There's a call for you. Down the  
hall.

TED

Thank you.  
(to Sara)  
You sleep now.

As Ted passes, the Nurse moves into the room, her kindly expression vanishing. Looking to the window and the full moon, a flash of lightning illuminates her neck and the tattoo of a rainbow-colored spider upon it. There is malevolence in her eyes.

4 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

4

Ted heads for the phone.

TED

(into phone)  
Ted Strangelove?

But there is no one there. Ted's heading back when the phone rings again. He turns and walks back towards it.

5 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

5

The Nurse looks to the window: the full moon -- huge in the night sky.

With her back to the sleeping Sara she shakes seven stones from a pouch into her palm and begins to lay them in a circle on the floor.

She turns to the mirror. Spreading her arms as Sara opens her eyes and sees her -- and the stone circle.

SARA

(waking)  
Oh my God, Te--

... as she tries to cry out, a hand covers her mouth as mists swirl in the glass of the mirror.

6 INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

6

Ted drops the phone as a sound like a thousand tornados cuts the night. Ted's eyes flash back along the corridor, and he's running for Sara's room.

7 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT 7

Ted's into the room... Sara and the Nurse are gone -- a huge jagged crack in the glass all that remains.

Ted stares in horror at the mirror, before moving to the cot in the corner, and picking up the crying Baby.

TED  
Oh Ruby... Oh, Ruby. It's okay,  
it's okay...

FADE TO:

8 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - DAY 8

SUPER: 'EIGHT YEARS LATER'

Move along a corridor, towards an open door. Beautiful, lyrical piano and singing (SONG: 'SOMETIMES') drifts along the passage. \*

TED (O.S.)  
Ruby! Ruby!

Into the room -- RUBY STRANGELOVE, eight years old, sits at a beautiful old piano, idling across the keys. She writes down chord changes and snatches of lyrics as she goes.

On the piano lid is a framed picture of Sara, sat at the same instrument.

TED (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
(louder)  
Ruby Strangelove get down these  
stairs! We're late for school!

RUBY  
(yells)  
Coming Dad!

She tears herself away from the piano and grabs her satchel. She scoops up the mother of pearl compact from her nightstand and kisses Sara's picture -- she's out of there.

9 HALLWAY 9

Ruby's down the stairs and past an exasperated-looking Ted.

TED  
Sweetheart we need to talk about  
tardiness. It's past eight-thirty--

RUBY  
C'mon Dad, I'm a girl remember?  
We take longer to get ready than  
boys -- something you're just gonna  
have to deal with. Cool tie, very  
GQ.

\*  
\*

She kisses him, heads for the car, turns.

RUBY (CONT'D)  
Hello? You don't wanna be late do  
you?

Ted grins and follows.

10 INT/EXT. CAR - DAY 10

Follow Ted's car as it makes the school run through the town of Wicker, Pennsylvania. The town is apple pie All-American.

PEOPLE smile and nod good morning to one another; a WAITER at the town diner waves as they pass; the town BANK MANAGER gives them a broad grin; the SCHOOL CROSSING GUARD winks as they stop to allow the kids to cross.

TED  
(checks his watch)  
Ten minutes... Darn it!

A road winds up toward the school -- jammed with cars.

RUBY  
Relax, Dad...

TED  
Okay... Plan B...

Ted throws a U Turn and they speed away.

11 EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY 11

Ted's car moves along a clear road that runs alongside a forest. The school up ahead.

12 EXT. WICKER ELEMENTARY - DAY 12

Ted pulls up in front, checks his wristwatch.

TED  
Two minutes late, darn it!

RUBY

Dad, I love you -- you're the best.  
But you gotta learn to chill.  
You're still in those dangerous  
'don't sweat the small stuff'  
years.

She kisses him and is out of the car. He smiles as he watches her race up the steps.

TED

Love you too.

He's still smiling as he pulls away, and Ruby passes PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE -- 50's, stone cold serious, handing out cards to latecomers -- at the school door.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Tardy card for you, Miss  
Strangelove. 2nd this week.

RUBY

I'm sorry Principal Maguire.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Now you've been moved up a Grade, \*  
young lady -- you need to \*  
understand that with the 4th Grade \*  
comes responsibilities. Let's make \*  
a change shall we, Ruby?

RUBY

Yes sir.

Maguire watches her go. A sycophantic smile appears as ALEX \*  
WILCOX -- 9 years old, ice-princess, coolly dressed and \*  
diamond-hard -- passes him. \*

Her ever-present gofer and echo -- 'EINSTEIN', also nine (the \*  
nickname is heavily ironic) trots adoringly after her. \*

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Miss Wilcox... good to see you. And \*  
how is your father keeping?

Alex rolls her eyes as Maguire waves to SHERIFF WILCOX -- \*  
40's and mean as they come, Aviator shades sit above a thick \*  
black mustache -- sitting in his squad car at the kerb. The \*  
Sheriff nods back, unsmiling, before pulling away.

13 INT. ZEBUBB AND BREWSTER ARCHITECTS - DAY 13

Ted arrives in the office. His boss, BRYAN ZEBUBB -- 50's, cheerful, at least on the surface -- moves towards him smiling, a box of donuts in his hand. \*

ZEBUBB

Hey, hey. How's my favorite employee?

TED

Hey Bryan.

ZEBUBB

Donut? Lovin' those drafts for the Library Project, Ted. You're really putting everything into that, aren't you, Buddy? Keep up the good work.

Ted smiles as Zebubb moves away.

14 INT. HALLWAY - DAY 14

Everywhere, KIDS are opening and closing their lockers. Ruby skips happily to hers and places her bag inside.

Across the hall a QUEUE OF KIDS bearing devices -- i-pads, phones, laptops, line up for the attentions of 'SCOOTER' MADISON -- eight years old, Ruby's best friend and a dead ringer for Scooter from the Muppets. \*

KID

(handing over a phone)  
It won't scroll.

SCOOTER

(checking the phone)  
This is the 380, right? Common problem, see it all the time. I can have this back to you Tuesday?

KID

Cool.

Scooter spots Ruby walking along the corridor -- a smile fills his face, we can almost see his heart skip a beat.

SCOOTER

Hey Ruby!  
(to the line)  
Gotta go. The garden at lunch?

The Kids all groan as Scooter joins Ruby.

RUBY

Hey Scooter.

SCOOTER

Wanna walk to class?

RUBY

Sure, exercise gets my creative juices flowing.

They walk.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Band practise is at six at my house, okay?

SCOOTER

Sure, I guess...

RUBY

You guess? What's up?

SCOOTER

I really like the band, Ruby. But I'm not sure I'm good enough. I can only play that one song, and it doesn't feel like I'm getting any better.

RUBY

What are you talking about? If you can play one song you can play two, three, four... you see where I'm going with this? Point is, the more you play the better you'll get.

Scooter smiles at Ruby's encouragement.

SCOOTER

Really?

RUBY

Really. You're going to be a great drummer Scooter. You've always marched to a different beat. Just believe in yourself--

ALEX (O.S.)

You hear that boys?

\*

Alex, Einstein and THREE of Alex's GANG OF BULLIES sneer behind them.

\*



ALEX (CONT'D)

It'll be alright -- Madison just gotta believe in himself.

\*

EINSTEIN

Believe in himself.

ALEX

Who believes in you, Strangebug?  
Your Mommy?

\*

EINSTEIN

Yeah. Your Mommy?

RUBY

Don't go there, Alex.  
(to Scooter)  
Ignore her, Scooter.

\*

\*

SCOOTER

Yeah, she's a loser.

\*

ALEX

Loser? At least my mom stuck around.

\*

EINSTEIN

Haha... Stuck around.

Ruby takes a step towards Alex.

\*

RUBY

Don't you understand? My mother is none of your business. And besides, one day my mom will be back--

\*

\*

ALEX

Oh yeah? Is that what your Dad told you? Well my dad says that's baloney, and that there's still a missing persons report out on your mom.

\*

Ruby's eyes narrow. She's in Alex's face.

\*

RUBY

Oh yeah? Who'd he get to read it for him?

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Miss Strangelove! Mr Madison! Why aren't you in class?

\*

\*

ALEX  
 We'll finish this later.  
 (to the Gang)  
 Shall we boys?

\*  
 \*  
 \*  
 \*

Alex, Einstein and the Gang saunter away. There are tears in Ruby's eyes as Principal Maguire taps his wristwatch.

\*

SCOOTER  
 C'mon Ruby. She's not worth getting  
 upset about.

\*

Ruby turns and walks quickly away, past a poster advertising the school 'Battle of the Bands' contest. Scooter watches her go, feeling her pain.

15 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

15

Ruby sits a desk ahead of Scooter in class. Alex, Einstein and the Gang occupy seats at the back. The rest of the CLASS fill the desks. MISS HOWIE -- late 20's, prim and a little geeky, stands before her class, reading from Through the Looking Glass (and what Alice found there).

\*

MISS HOWIE  
 (reading)  
 '...Oh, if only we could get  
 through into Looking-glass House!' said Alice. And as she did, the glass began to turn soft like gauze...'

The class -- particularly Ruby -- listen in rapt attention, Scooter -- behind Ruby -- staring longingly at the back of her head. Alex and her Gang whisper and giggle to each other. Miss Howie takes note and continues.

\*

MISS HOWIE (CONT'D)  
 (reading)  
 ...and to melt away like a bright silvery mist. In another moment Alice was through the glass, and had jumped lightly down into the Looking-glass room. The very first thing she did was to--'

A screwed up ball of paper flies from the hand of one of Alex's Gang -- hitting Ruby on the back of the head. The gang dissolve into laughter as Alex high fives the thrower. Ruby spins to face them, fire in her eyes.

\*  
 \*  
 \*

MISS HOWIE (CONT'D)  
 Alex Wilcox! See me after class.

\*

Alex pouts -- *Who me?* -- as the bell rings for the end of class. The kids are up and heading for the door. \*

MISS HOWIE (CONT'D)

Before you go, an announcement. The Wicker Elementary Battle of the Bands is taking place in two weeks time. The first round of try outs is next Friday. I'm sure many of you...

(she fixes her eyes on Ruby)

...will be keen to enter. Now remember, this contest is for original songs only. No Hannah Montana, no Bieber, no One Direction. There are flyers on my desk and a list on the school noticeboard to which you can add your names. Thank you for your attention. Miss Wilcox? With me, please... \*

As Alex strides confidently towards Miss Howie, she passes Ruby. \*

ALEX

(under her breath) Smell you later, Strangebug. \*

Ruby walks past Miss Howie's desk, slipping a flyer into her bag. Miss Howie smiles.

16 EXT. SCHOOL - DAY 16

Ted is parked waiting for Ruby. She moves towards the car, head down and gets in the back.

TED

Hey Sweetie. Where's that beautiful smile? What's wrong?

RUBY

Nothing. It's just -- nothing.

Ted pulls away, concerned.

17 INT. CAR - DAY 17

Ted drives, flicking looks back to Ruby.

TED

You know if you don't talk to me, I  
can't fix it.

RUBY

You can't fix this, Dad.

TED

Who says?

RUBY

Can you make Alex Wilcox not be  
such a loser?

\*  
\*

TED

Ah... Alex Wilcox. Kids can be  
cruel, baby.

\*

RUBY

I get that, but what I'd really  
like to know is why?

A police siren behind them -- red and blue in the mirror. Ted  
looks.

TED

Personally? I blame the parents.

Ted pulls over as Sheriff Wilcox pulls in behind and saunters  
to the window.

WILCOX

License and registration?

TED

Third time this month, Sheriff. You  
know who I am.

Wilcox spits on the street.

WILCOX

License and registration.

Ted hands the documents over.

WILCOX (CONT'D)

You know you gotta light out in the  
back?

TED

Are you sure? I don't think I do.

Wilcox strolls to the back of the car and kicks Ted's rear  
light -- glass tinkles onto the street. He strolls back.

WILCOX

Do now. That's a citation.

Wilcox writes the ticket as Ted fumes silently.

WILCOX (CONT'D)

Pay at the station house.

Wilcox heads back to his car.

TED

Sheriff? Why? Why us?

WILCOX

(turning)

'Cause I don't like you,  
Strangelove. And I don't trust you.  
Any news on that wife of yours?  
Thought not.

Wilcox gets back in his car -- laughing as he goes.

18 INT. TED'S GARAGE - NIGHT

18

The band rehearse (SONG: 'LIKE A ROCKSTAR'). Ruby is the pearl among swine. Scooter attempts to keep time but fails, on bass and guitar are ERIC and ERICA ERICKSON -- eight year old twins in spectacles and retainers -- they too are rudimentary musicians. \*

As the noise gets worse and Ruby tries to sing, she calls a halt.

RUBY

Okay, okay... time out. You're doing... fine, but I don't think we're all playing the same song. Let's take the changes a little slower till we nail them and then get back up to tempo.

SCOOTER

It's no good Ruby. I'm trying.

RUBY

I know you are, and you're doing great. Don't think so much. Be the beat. And 1, 2, 3, 4...

They play again. If possible, it's worse.

19 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, HALLWAY - NIGHT 19

Ruby waves at the front door as the kids head home with their PARENTS. Ruby shuts the door, lets out a sigh.

20 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, TED'S STUDY - NIGHT 20

Ted has a star chart spread before him, occasionally breaking off to squint through his telescope at the night sky. Ruby appears in the doorway -- her face says it all.

TED

Not great?

RUBY

They're trying, Dad. They're really trying.

TED

That's all any of us can do, Sweetie. What about you? Got anything new for me before bed?

Ruby grins.

21 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, RUBY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 21

Ruby and Ted sit side by side at the piano. Ruby sings to her father (SONG: 'SOMETIMES') -- the one she has been working on. As Ruby plays, Ted listens, smiling. This is their night time ritual. \*

Finishing up, Ruby looks to the photograph of Sara atop the piano. \*

RUBY

Sometimes I wish so hard that Mom would come back it hurts inside, like somebody kicked me in the stomach. If I knew she was really coming back I could deal with it because I'd know it was only temporary... So is she, Dad? Is she really coming back some day? \*

Ted puts his arm around Ruby -- he looks out to the stars.

TED

Of course she is. Some day.

22 EXT/INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - DAY 22

Bright, morning sunlight bathes the house and laughter is heard from the back yard -- Ruby and Scooter are chasing each other around, enjoying their weekend.

Into the house and the pair race up the stairs -- Ruby has a ball with which she is trying to hit Scooter, and she flings it just as Ted exits his bedroom. The ball flies past him, narrowly missing an ornate dressing table and mirror.

A flash of panic in Ruby as she sees her dad's face.

TED

Alright you two, that's enough! Get out of here and take yourselves down to the lake... somewhere you can't break anything!

23 EXT. FOREST - DAY 23

Ruby and Scooter run through the forest towards the picturesque lake beyond. They run, climb trees and laugh; loud, childhood laughter -- the kind you always remember.

Exhausted, they flop down on a fallen tree that overlooks the lake.

SCOOTER

I never saw your dad yell. Is he mad at us?

RUBY

No. It was the dressing table. He loves that table. It was my Mom's.

SCOOTER

Will you be in trouble?

RUBY

Dad doesn't really do trouble. We're a team.

A beat. Footsteps behind them. Alex Wilcox and her Gang are approaching. \*

SCOOTER

Oh no, Ruby...

RUBY

It's all right, Scooter. We can handle this.

(MORE)

RUBY (CONT'D)  
(noticing Scooters scared  
expression)  
I can handle this.

ALEX \*  
Nice sweater -- you know you're \*  
supposed to give to the homeless, \*  
right? \*

RUBY \*  
You want something, Alex? \*

ALEX \*  
You lookin' for your Mom, \*  
Strangebug? Maybe your dad put her \*  
in the lake?

EINSTEIN  
Haha... in the lake.

RUBY  
You're soooo funny...

Alex advances. \*

ALEX \*  
Oh yeah Strangebug? You wanna see \*  
how funny I can be? Boys... \*

The Gang surround them, pushing and shoving. One of the Gang  
grabs Scooter's asthma inhaler and the begin a game of catch.  
Scooter is getting more and more agitated as he tries to get  
it back -- his breathing is getting worse.

RUBY \*  
That's enough, Alex! Tell them to \*  
give him his inhaler. Give it to \*  
him! Somebody?

Alex is in Ruby's face -- mocking. \*

ALEX \*  
Somebody? Who? I don't think Dad \*  
can hear you, and I'm darn sure \*  
Mommy can't...

A Gang member barges into Ruby and she falls to the ground -- \*  
there is fury in Ruby's eyes as the Gang continue to bait \*  
poor Scooter.

ALEX (CONT'D) \*  
Aw... What you doing down there, \*  
Strangebug? \*



Alex catches the inhaler -- turning and pitching it toward the water...

\*  
\*

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Hey Scooter! Catch!

\*  
\*

... But Ruby is back up and drawing in her breath...

\*

RUBY  
STOP!

The power of her voice shakes birds from the treetops and sends ripples across the water... and Alex and the Gang do stop. Scooter too. They stop dead. Frozen like statues. Rooted to the spot. The inhaler suspended in mid air.

\*

Ruby turns and extends her hand -- sucking the inhaler out of the air... and suddenly stops dead.

She's looking at the inhaler in her hand, and then at the frozen figures around her. Fear in her eyes.

RUBY (CONT'D)  
(to herself)  
What's happening to me?

Stuffing the inhaler into Scooter's frozen hand, she runs as fast as her legs will carry her, back towards the forest.

Close on Scooter as his eyes blink, slowly he is able to move his head, then his arms, torso and legs. He looks around him, and down to the inhaler in his hand.

SCOOTER  
Ruby? Ruby?

... and he's running through the frozen gang towards the forest.

Behind him, one by one, the Gang come back to life. Looking at each other quizzically.

EINSTEIN  
Alex, do you..? I mean how did we..?

\*

ALEX  
Shut up Einstein... I don't know what happened, but I'm tellin' you -  
- there's somethin' not right about that Strangelove freak.

\*  
\*

24 EXT. FOREST - DAY

24

Ruby runs, exhausted through the forest. Too tired to go any farther, she collapses down on the ground. Rolling onto her back, move into her eyes as they close... and mist swirls around her.

VOICE (V.O.)

Ruby? Ruby? Open your eyes...

Ruby's eyes open. Wide and terrified as she looks around her.

VOICE (V.O.)

Don't be scared, Ruby.

Ruby moves in search of the VOICE...

RUBY

Who are you?

VOICE (V.O.)

I am your mother. I am Sara.

Ruby moves on...

RUBY

Mommy?

SARA (V.O.)

I have much to tell you, but not here... go home, Ruby. Tell your father what you have learned.

RUBY

What have I learned? Tell me, Mom?

SARA (V.O.)

That you are a witch, Ruby. Descended from a long line of witches... Go now. There is no more time...

The mists begin to clear. Ruby looks around her.

RUBY

No more time? For what Mom? Mom!

Ruby collapses down on the forest floor -- exhausted. As Scooter bursts through the undergrowth -- seeing Ruby.

SCOOTER

Ruby? What the heck happened? Ruby?  
Are you okay?

But Ruby is unconscious.

SCOOTER (CONT'D)  
C'mon, let's get you home.

Using strength he didn't know he had, Scooter picks Ruby up and carries her through the forest.

25 EXT. STRANGELOVE BACKYARD - DAY 25

Scooter carries Ruby across the lawn, collapsing halfway. Ted runs from the house to help, and together they carry Ruby inside.

26 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - DAY 26

Ruby lies sleeping under a blanket on the couch. Watching her from the kitchen are Ted and Scooter. Ted hangs up the phone.

TED  
Okay, Scooter. Your mom will be here in a second. Drink your hot chocolate.

SCOOTER  
Thanks. Mr. Strangelove? Ruby... She'll be okay, won't she?

TED  
She'll be fine, Champ. But you gotta promise me something, okay?. You can't tell anyone about this, okay? Not even your mom.

SCOOTER  
No sir. No sir. My lips are sealed.

TED  
Good man, Scooter.

27 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - DAY 27

Ruby still sleeps, as Ted sits in the rocking chair beside her, strokes her hair.

TED  
I knew this day would come. Doesn't make it any easier.

28 EXT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - NIGHT 28  
Darkness has fallen.

29 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - NIGHT 29  
Ruby gently wakes. In the kitchen, Ted prepares a meal.

TED  
Hey sleepy head.

RUBY  
Is Scooter here? What time is it?

TED  
Scooter's long gone, sweetie. It's  
Saturday night. You slept nearly  
twelve hours straight..

RUBY  
What?

Ted carries a tray into the living room.

TED  
Don't be worried. Rest is just what  
you needed. And now you need to  
eat.

Ruby eats -- she is ravenous.

TED (CONT'D)  
How do you feel?

RUBY  
Confused. I heard Mom's voice --  
she spoke to me--

\*  
\*

TED  
I know, honey.  
(beat)  
Did you see her?

RUBY  
No, Dad... but I heard her.

TED  
Eat up... it's time you knew who  
you are.

30 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, TED'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

30

Ted leads Ruby into the room, sitting her down on the end of the bed facing the ornate dressing table mirror.

TED  
Don't be scared, sweetie. I'm right here.

Ted stands aside, as the room around them begins to darken.

RUBY  
Dad, what's happening?

TED  
I'm right here.

Mists swirl in the depths of the mirror. The dressing table shakes and strange noises come from within. As the mists replace the reflection of Ruby with the image of a long tunnel, racing through it towards a light -- growing all the time, blinding bright...

RUBY  
What's going on? I'm scared...

TED  
Trust yourself Ruby, trust yourself, trust yourself...

SARA (O.S.)  
...trust yourself, trust yourself, believe, believe...

Reaching the light, the reflection of large, lavishly furnished room. Instead of Ruby sitting on the bed, there is another, older woman -- Sara.

RUBY  
Mom?

Sara raises her eyes and smiles.

SARA  
It's me. It's me, my darling. But time is short, and you have to listen to me.

RUBY  
But there's so much I want to ask you--

SARA

What I told you was true. You are a witch -- like me and those before me. I was born into a dimension, parallel to yours, the mirror image of Earth. But this is a dark world. Filled with those who would claim the power we hold.

RUBY

'Those'..? Claim what power?

SARA

Listen to me. A bad man named Danforth took me the night you were born. He desires my power. Should this happen I can never return.

RUBY

But you have to... you have to return to Dad and me--

SARA

You and only you can stop him. On the night that our worlds align a door between them will open -- through that door you can expel the bad forces at work in your dimension back into their own. Only then I will be free to return.

Sara is fading -- the mists swirl.

RUBY

I'll do anything! Just tell me what you need me to do!

SARA

You will know what to do, Ruby. This is what you were born to do. Now I must go.

RUBY

Don't go yet... if you only knew how long I've waited just to see you. Please...

\*  
\*  
\*

SARA

We will use too much energy -- energy we will need. Goodbye my darling. I will see you soon... Hold these words in your heart and your mind: 'Facing mirrors must do battle.

(MORE)

SARA (CONT'D)

One for good and one for ill. Out  
of darkness, light will triumph. If  
the bearer shows true will.'

RUBY

I'll hold them in my heart, I  
promise. But what does it mean?

\*  
\*

Banging can be heard from Sara's world -- loud, insistent.

SARA

When the time comes, you will know.  
Believe, Ruby, believe

Sara fades as the Portal closes.

31 INT. PARALLEL WICKER, DANFORTH'S MANSION - NIGHT

31

Sara rushes to conceal the small hand mirror with which she  
opened the Portal. Removing a section of the baseboard and  
hiding the mirror inside.

The door crashes in and the room is filled with UNIFORMED  
CLOWN POLICE, their gaudy make up lends a sinister air.  
Standing to one side -- less sinister, is Sara's CLOWN  
JAILER. He keeps his eyes low, not looking at her.

Between them walks THOMAS DANFORTH, Duke of Pennsylvania --  
50's, hard faced and expensively dressed.

DANFORTH

You jammed the door. Again.

SARA

I just wanted some privacy.

DANFORTH

My men heard voices.

SARA

I was singing.

DANFORTH

Of course you were my darling.

Sara looks to the floor.

DANFORTH (CONT'D)

No matter, two weeks, come The  
Night of the Alignment, as custom  
dictates, you will be my wife, and  
you will impart to me all the gifts  
and power that you possess.

SARA

As you wish.

DANFORTH

As I know... We will be conjoined,  
and then United Kingdom of America  
will be mine. Sooner than you  
think.

He turns and walks back to the door.

DANFORTH (CONT'D)

You do know that you will never see  
them again, don't you? Either of  
them.

(beat)

You forget where you are my dear...  
smile.

(to the Clown Police)

Keep the door open tonight -- I  
want her watched.

Sara sits on her bed -- her Clown Jailer -- eyes still  
averted -- visible through the door.

SARA

(for herself)

You can force me to smile, but you  
can never make me happy.

The Jailer's eyes flicker towards her, and away again.

32 OMITTED 32

33 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - NIGHT 33

Ruby sits in the kitchen, still reeling as Ted dishes up ice  
cream.

TED

Strawberry sauce?

RUBY

Strawberry sauce? You knew all  
these years and all you can say is  
'Strawberry sauce'?

TED

Don't be angry with me Ruby. You  
needed to be ready. Only your mom  
could make that decision.



RUBY

I'm not angry, I'm scared. I'm eight years old, Dad. All I want out of life is a Mom and a Dad and my friends. Not this... Not, 'by the way sweetie, you're a witch'. I thought we we're a team?

TED

I hear you.

RUBY

What if I can't do it? What if I let Mom down and she's stuck there forever? I don't know what I'm looking for.

TED

I have something you need to see.

34 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, TED'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

34

Close on the Closet as Ted opens it and takes down the Ancient Wooden Box. He places it before Ruby.

TED

Open it. It's yours.

RUBY

Mine? Wow...

Ruby opens the box gingerly. She removes a velvet pouch, from it she shakes seven smooth stones into her palm.

RUBY (CONT'D)

What is all this stuff Dad? These things are ancient.

TED

This was your mom's. Everything she knows, she learned from this box.

Delving farther into the box, she pulls out one leather-bound, dust covered book after another. Ted holds up a thick volume, titled:

'PROUDFOOT'S ALMANAC OF WITCHERY'

TED (CONT'D)

Now this, this is the real deal.

RUBY

How old do you think it is, Dad?

TED

Old. It was in your Mom's family  
for hundreds of years.

Ruby opens a page: on it is a hand drawn picture of a Portal,  
opened in a grand mirror. It is captioned in elegant script:

'THE POWER OF THE PORTAL'

Ruby pours over the page.

TED (CONT'D)

The Portal needs to be opened using  
a mirror.

RUBY

Like tonight?

TED

No. This is much more powerful, and  
can only happen on the night when  
our two worlds align.

RUBY

Oh, is that all? Piece of cake.

(beat)

Get real, Dad. We do this stuff in  
school. Planets aligning and stuff?  
But... How are we supposed to know  
when a dark world that's hiding  
behind a mirror, aligns with ours?

\*

TED

Wait here.

Ted leaves the room.

35 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, TED'S STUDY - NIGHT

35

Ted grabs an armful of rolled up charts from his desk --  
pauses to look out of the window. On the street below sits  
the patrol car of Sheriff Wilcox, watching the house. A  
moment, and then the patrol car moves away up the street.

36 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, TED'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

36

Ted returns with the charts.

RUBY

Your star charts? I thought that  
was just a hobby?

TED

Everyone needs a hobby, Sweetie.  
Now look.

(he unrolls the charts)

This is eight years ago, the day  
you were born, May 8th. See how the  
stars and planets are lined up?

RUBY

Sure, but--

Ted pulls a sheet of tracing paper, annotated with star and  
planetary positions.

TED

Now this is two weeks from now --  
December 16th. Do you see?

He lines up the charts, they are identical.

RUBY

We only have two weeks? How can I  
learn everything I need to know in  
just two weeks?

TED

I know. It's a big ask.

RUBY

How do you know all of this, Dad?  
Did Mom tell you before she was  
taken?

TED

Your mom told me a little. I knew  
she might be in danger, that was  
all. The rest I had to figure out  
for myself.

RUBY

That's a lot to figure out by  
yourself. Sorry I wasn't much help.  
You must have been scared?

TED

At first, sure. You were a big  
responsibility. Then I realized how  
much I trusted your Mom. That  
wherever she was, she'd know what  
she was doing. Turns out I was  
right, huh?

A moment between them.

RUBY

Mom talked about the Bad in our world? I mean, I know there's bad -- like bullies or sickness or hunger... but this is another kind of bad, right?

TED

There are people here who mean us harm. We must expel them through the portal before Mom can return. The portal won't allow the Good through while the bad remains.

RUBY

So we need to get them all in one place at the same time?

TED

Right... any ideas?

Ruby thinks, then a smile creeps across her face.

RUBY

Maybe someone has already done it for us.

Ted looks confused, as Ruby jumps from the bed and rummages in her satchel. She slaps down the 'Battle of the Bands' flyer, pointing to the date: Friday, December 16th, PM.

TED

We need you in that contest.

RUBY

Leave it to me dad. I'm all over it.

37 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, RUBY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

37

Ruby is alone, the Almanac before her. She studies it intently. A knock on the door -- Ted looks in.

TED

Ruby, sweetie -- you need to get some sleep now. You've had a heck of a day.

RUBY

(smiles)

I think it's only the beginning.  
But you know what, Dad? I'm ready.

\*

TED

Goodnight.

Ted is gone and Ruby looks back to the Almanac.

38 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, TED'S STUDY - NIGHT

38 \*

Ted moves into the room. He sits heavily -- looking to PICTURES on his desk -- he and Sara laughing, happy. His arms around her, taken when she was pregnant with Ruby.

Ted smiles to himself.

INTERCUT: TED and RUBY:

Ruby reads. Close on a page: The book is written in elegant script that Ruby struggles to read. Diagrams show a circle made up of seven stones with a figure sitting in the centre -- arms outstretched. Rooting in the box, Ruby pulls out her bag of stones.

RUBY

Here goes nothing.

She arranges the stones in a circle around her, and turns a page.

'TRANSMOGRIFICATION'

RUBY (CONT'D)

Trans - mog... transmog - rif -  
i... Whatever. Start at the  
beginning and work through to the  
end...

She spreads her arms as in the diagram.

RUBY (CONT'D)

(recites)  
'Enchantment surround me I  
entreat,'

A brief rumbling fills the room, a picture frame falls from the mantelpiece.

Ted hears the rumble -- looks up from the pictures. Nothing. He goes back to his photographs.

Downstairs, Ruby reads on

RUBY (CONT'D)  
Did I do that? Cool. '... I  
entreat...', right... 'Transform  
this room to a... to a...'

More rumbling, longer this time. Ruby looks to a candy wrapper, discarded on the floor beside her. \*  
\*

RUBY (CONT'D)  
'... to a House of Sweets!'

Upstairs, Ted removes his glasses as the rumbling continues.

TED  
Ruby?

Close on Ruby's eyes -- wide and awed.

Ted is out of his study and advancing along the landing.

TED (CONT'D)  
Ruby? You okay, sweetie?

On the landing, Ted hears a thump and is running -- towards Ruby's bedroom.

TED (CONT'D)  
Ruby? Ruby?

Ted runs into the room, to be met by the sight of...

... A GINGERBREAD HOUSE. Ruby sits in the centre of it all, candy and sugar dripping from her fingers as she stuffs sweets into her mouth.

TED (CONT'D)  
Ruby? What in the world..?

RUBY  
What? I needed a snack.

Laughing as she licks her fingers.

TED  
(serious)  
A word, young lady.

Ruby's face falls as she sees his stern expression.

LATER

Ted and Ruby sit on the floor, hot chocolate in their hands. The Gingerbread House has gone.

TED (CONT'D)

The magic is real, Ruby. This isn't a game.

RUBY

I just wanted to play a little, Dad.

TED

And I understand that. But from now on in, we need to focus.

Ruby understands what Ted is saying.

RUBY

You're the boss, Dad.

TED

I used to think that... now I'm not so sure...

39 EXT. ES. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - EARLY MORNING 39

The sun rises over the house.

40 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, RUBY'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING 40

The alarm sparks into life. The Almanac still on the bed -- Ruby is up and at 'em like a shot.

41 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - DAY 41

Ruby makes breakfast. Ted enters in sleepy-eyed surprise.

TED

That's not my daughter. What have you done with Ruby?

RUBY

(kissing him)  
You're looking at the new and improved Ruby, Dad. Focus. Places to go, people to see. French toast anyone?

TED

Sure.

RUBY

One second.

She picks up the telephone. Dials.

RUBY (CONT'D)  
 (into phone)  
 Hi Mrs. Madison, is Scooter there  
 please?  
 (pause)  
 Scooter? It's me. I'm good...  
 listen what are you doing today?  
 Ready to have your mind blown?

Ted smiles at Ruby's new purpose.

42 INT. PARALLEL WICKER, DANFORTH'S MANSION - DAY 42

Close on Sara's eyes. Reveal her standing before a mirror in a Wedding Dress as DRESSMAKERS scurry around her. Her Clown Jailer guards the door, as Danforth watches from a chair.

Two more Clown Police honk rubber horns and throw confetti over Sara. She doesn't acknowledge them, but her eyes meet those of her Jailer, who looks to the floor. Danforth laughs.

DANFORTH  
 You look exquisite.

He moves to her, kissing her cheek -- the crawling of her skin is almost audible.

DANFORTH (CONT'D)  
 What a bride you'll make.

43 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE. RUBY'S BEDROOM - DAY 43

Ruby and Scooter sit on the floor. The contents of Sara's box are spread around them.

SCOOTER  
 No... way.

RUBY  
 Way! Why would I make it up? You know I don't exaggerate or imagine things.  
 (pause - smiles)  
 Okay... sometimes I do. But that's what makes me me. I swear, everything I just told is you is true. For real.

SCOOTER  
 No... way.



RUBY

Close your mouth, Scooter. It's weird.

SCOOTER

That's weird? Seriously? After what you just told me?

RUBY

You do believe me, right?

SCOOTER

I guess... sure. I mean... do you believe it?

RUBY

My Mom would never lie to me. Neither would my Dad. So yes, I just have to believe it.

SCOOTER

Sure, I understand. So what are you gonna do?

RUBY

Not me, Scooter. We.

SCOOTER

We?

RUBY

We, as in, you and me. I need you Scoots.

Scooter beams at the notion.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Now we've got our work cut out for us and I need you to back me up. The twins will be here at five.

SCOOTER

Whatever you need, Ruby. I'm there.

44 INT. TED'S GARAGE - DAY

44

Scooter, Eric and Erica sit on a battered couch Ruby faces them. She breathes deep.

RUBY

Okay... I know it's been tough, and progress has been... slow.

(MORE)

\*

RUBY (CONT'D)

But I have an idea that I think  
could get us in gear.

She unfurls the 'Battle of the Bands' flyer. All three roll  
their eyes.

RUBY (CONT'D)

(enthused)

Yeah? How awesome is this? Who's  
with me?

Ruby holds her hand up for a high five. She waits... and  
waits.

ERIC

They'll kill us. It'll be carnage.

ERICA

It'll be embarrassing.

SCOOTER

It'll be a disaster.

RUBY

Way to back me up, Scooter.

SCOOTER

Sorry.

(half-hearted)

Yay.

RUBY

Come on you guys. Listen, the first  
round is Friday. That gives us four  
days. We can do this.

SCOOTER

We can?

RUBY

Scooter!

SCOOTER

We can.

ERICA

Ruby... we all think your song is  
great. But... let's get real. We're  
not a band. Eric has no rhythm, I  
need ten minutes to change chords  
and Scooter is a horrible, horrible  
drummer. I'm sorry Scooter.

SCOOTER

Not a problem.

ERICA

And even if that wasn't all true,  
which it is. The Battle has the try  
outs and two rounds. That's three  
songs. And we have one.

RUBY

Songs? Songs I can do.

Ruby holds up a thick file. She throws it down before them.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Twenty six of them.

THE OTHERS

Twenty six?

RUBY

Look, I'll make you a deal. I'll  
play you the songs... all of 'em if  
you want. When I'm done, you make  
the choice. You wanna be part of  
it? Cool. You don't? That's okay  
too. I still need you to be my  
friends. I love you guys. What  
d'you say?

MONTAGE

Ruby plays for her friends. The song is a happy, uplifting  
number called: 'SMILE'... The Kids love it -- dancing,  
singing along -- but something else is happening...

At school, Miss Howie works late on her laptop -- the sound  
breaks and resets, and suddenly, 'Smile' is coming through  
the computer -- Miss Howie is tapping her feet, moving a  
little...

Elsewhere in the town, the music is touching others...  
Einstein on his i-phone; the CUSTOMERS at the Main Street  
Diner, dancing as they are served coffee... \*

... TWO KIDS, humming along as they do their homework -- the  
song spilling from the radio...

Bryan Zebubb, tapping his feet as he works late... moving on  
from him, the music spreads around the office: to the  
Receptionist, OTHER WORKERS, the even the MAIL BOY...

... even Sheriff Wilcox -- in his squad car at the lights, as the Police Band Radio re-tunes itself to Ruby's song and he's tapping his fingers on the wheel...

Finally, back with the kids -- we see the mood in the garage has turned -- 'No We Can't' has become 'Yes We Can'.

The kids throw their arms around each other and shout encouragement. They are in.

END MONTAGE

45 EXT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - NIGHT 45

Ted takes out the trash. He hears laughter and whooping coming from the garage. He smiles to himself.

46 INT. PARALLEL WICKER - NIGHT 46

Sara is driven in a brightly colored vintage car past an enormous Big Top in the centre of the town -- Members of Danforth's Clown Police stream in and out of their HQ.

Drive on, through the town. She looks through the window -- everywhere are preparations for the wedding: they are driving through slums -- extreme poverty and deprivation -- but even though the surroundings are dour... still everyone has the same smiles.

Everywhere are preparations for the wedding: huge PHOTOGRAPHS of her and Danforth, streamers, bunting and balloons hang from every street light.

Her eyes are like glass as she sees this.

47 INT./EXT. CAR - DAY 47

Ted's car eases through the school run. The town around them is palpably different: Faces have changed -- the Waitress at the local diner stares at Ruby as they pass; the Bank Manager peers out at them through the blinds; the Crossing Guard looks deep into Ruby's eyes as they stop...

RUBY

Dad..?

TED

You feel it too?

They drive on. A HOMELESS MAN sits propped by the roadside, holding a sign:

'WILL WORK FOR FOOD'

As they pass he fixes eyes with Ruby, and flips the sign:

'BELIEVE, RUBY'

RUBY

Dad? Did you... did you see that?

TED

See what sweetie?

The sign is back to normal. The moment has passed.

48 EXT. WICKER ELEMENTARY - DAY

48

Ted drops Ruby and she runs up the steps to school. As she goes she locks eyes with Sheriff Wilcox -- dropping Alex -- across the wheel of his squad car. \*

Principal Maguire stands at the door with MRS. PEACH -- the school secretary, 50's, with hard eyes. Ruby passes.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Good morning... Sara.

Ruby turns.

RUBY

I'm sorry sir, what did you say?

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

I said good morning, Ruby. Nice to see you here early.

RUBY

Nice to see you too, Sir.

Principal Maguire and Mrs. Peach smile broadly, unnaturally. Ruby moves on, thoughtful.

49 INT. HALLWAY - DAY

49

At the end of the hallway, Ruby turns to look back. The Principal and Mrs. Peach are watching her, whispering. She moves on.

50 INT. WICKER ELEMENTARY, HALLWAY - DAY

50

Scooter, Eric and Erica wait by their lockers as Ruby approaches.

RUBY

Okay guys. You ready? This is it,  
no turning back.

SCOOTER

Let's do this.

They stride purposefully along the hallway like Reservoir Dogs. They are determined, heading for the school notice board. As they go they pass a group of KIDS -- each hums the tune to 'SMILE'. Erica double takes and looks to Ruby, who shrugs and shakes her head: *No idea...*

They pass Alex -- holding in her hand a rolled up poster -- and her Gang, heading the same way. Einstein trots behind Alex, trying to impress her by throwing peanuts into the air and catching them in his mouth. \*

Ruby turns to the rest of the Band. \*

They stride to the board, Ruby begins to add her name. Miss Howie, standing by the board, smiles. \*

MISS HOWIE

Are you and your friends entering,  
Ruby?

RUBY

That's right, Miss Howie. \*

MISS HOWIE

Good. This is an opportunity for  
you all -- especially you Ruby.  
(beat)  
You'll be amazed at the doors it  
could open. \*

A moment, Ruby looks at Miss Howie, who smiles mysteriously and is gone. \*

As they walk, Alex nudges Einstein who nearly chokes on a peanut. \*

ALEX

Are you kidding me? Is Strangebug  
adding her name to the Band list? \*

She heads toward Ruby. \*

EINSTEIN

Alex! Shouldn't we... We still  
don't know what happened at the  
lake-- \*

Alex turns to face Einstein -- eyes on. \*

ALEX \*  
(to another Gang member) \*  
Get me a soda, sweetie? \*  
(to Einstein) \*  
And you... You don't want the nerd \*  
to think you're chicken do you? \*

Einstein pulls himself to his full height. \*

EINSTEIN \*  
(keen to impress) \*  
Chicken? Me? Ha. Let's do this... \*  
thing. \*

Alex strides across -- Einstein jogging to keep pace. \*

ALEX \*  
(looking Ruby up and down) \*  
Say it ain't so... did I miss a \*  
memo? Shabby Chic Week so soon? \*

Ruby turns away. \*

ALEX (CONT'D) \*  
(making a big deal of \*  
looking at the board) \*  
Wait a second -- you gotta band, \*  
Strangebug? \*

EINSTEIN \*  
Yeah, you gotta band Strangebug? \*

RUBY \*  
Maybe. What's it to you, Alex? \*

ALEX \*  
Oh, nothin'... So this band... \*  
Gotta name, does it? \*

EINSTEIN \*  
Gotta a name, does it? \*

RUBY \*  
Of course. \*

ALEX \*  
So what is it? Let's see... \*  
'Where's Mommy'?

EINSTEIN \*  
Haha... Where's Mommy?

RUBY

Cute. Is there an echo in here?

ALEX

I'm waitin'...

\*  
\*

EINSTEIN

Waitin'...

RUBY

Ruby Strangelove and... Ruby  
Strangelove and...

She looks to the peanuts Einstein is eating .

\*

RUBY (CONT'D)

Ruby Strangelove and The Peanuts.

\*

SCOOTER

The what?

RUBY

Work with me here Scoots...

ALEX

The Peanuts? The Peanuts?

\*  
\*

EINSTEIN

The Peanuts?

\*

Laughter echoes around the Hall from Alex, her gang and  
onlookers. Ruby is defiant.

\*

RUBY

Yeah. Ruby and the Peanuts.  
Remember the name.

\*

SCOOTER

(under his breath -- to  
Ruby)

I don't want to be a Peanut.

\*

RUBY

(under her breath)  
You're a Peanut. Deal with it.

\*

Alex is laughing hard as she walks to the noticeboard  
unrolling her poster and pinning it up.

\*  
\*

ALEX

Okay, Peanuts... but know this,  
you'll be throwing down with...  
Habeus Corpus. Oh yeah. Remember  
that.

\*  
\*



EINSTEIN

Remember that.

The Gang Member returns with Alex's soda. She raises the drink to Ruby. \*

ALEX \*

Catch you Friday, Freakshow...

EINSTEIN

Haha... Friday Freakshow.

He skips to catch up with Alex. \*

EINSTEIN (CONT'D)

So Alex... you need a drummer? \*

ALEX \*

I already have a drummer. Besides, drummers need to know left from right, genius.

Alex and the gang walk away, laughing. Einstein waits a second, crestfallen at her rejection -- before running after them. Ruby and the kids move to the poster. \*

SCOOTER

Habeus Corpus? Cool name.

ERICA

Really cool.

ERIC

Really, really cool.

RUBY

Rehearsal, tonight. We are not going to let Alex Wilcox get the better of us. Right? \*

The Kids shuffle and look at each other.

RUBY (CONT'D)

I can't hear you. Right?

KIDS

(unsure)

Right.

RUBY

And maybe we should think of a new name...

Principal Maguire and Mrs. Peach watch from a distance. The glowering figure of Sheriff Wilcox approaches.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE  
Sheriff Wilcox, how nice to see you. You're looking well--

WILCOX  
Can it Maguire, I'm not here for your smile.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE  
Of course not sir.

WILCOX  
The Strangelove kid. Last night... You felt it?

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE  
I did, sir.

WILCOX  
I'm calling a Council. The Main Street Diner, tonight at eight. Don't be late.

\*  
\*

Wilcox is gone, and Maguire turns to watch Ruby -- his eyes narrow.

55a EXT. MAIN STREET DINER - NIGHT

55a \*

Two CUSTOMERS approach the diner, they are met at the door by a heavy set WAITRESS. The Waitress is familiar -- a tattoo of a colorful spider on her neck: the Nurse from the night of Ruby's birth, in a new disguise.

WAITRESS  
We're closed.

The Waitress slams the door -- flipping the sign to 'Closed'.

56a INT. MAIN STREET DINER - NIGHT

56a \*

As well as the Waitress, present in the diner are the BAD ELEMENTS of the town: Principal Maguire, Mrs. Peach, Bryan Zebubb, Neil Reagan (Bank Manager), the Crossing Guard and OTHERS.

\*

Sheriff Wilcox addresses from a stool at the counter.

WILCOX

Now we all know what's happening.  
My girl saw it first hand down at  
the lake. She can't remember the  
details, but it was the Strangelove  
kid. Her time has come.

\*  
\*

ZEBUBB

Already? She's so young?

WILCOX

Her mom was twelve. She's eight.  
That's not good, shows the power  
couldn't wait. She's a powerful one  
all right, and we gotta stop her.

REAGAN

How do we do that?

\*

WILCOX

We're workin' blind here. We got no  
way of communicating with home. So  
we use what we have -- Maguire?

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Yes sir.

WILCOX

You see Strangelove every day.  
Let's make sure she don't get an  
easy ride, huh?

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Absolutely, Sheriff.

WILCOX

And Zebubb, Reagan... same goes for  
her old man. I wanna make him think  
twice about messin' with us.

\*

The Bad Elements nod in agreement.

51

INT. ZEBUBB AND BREWSTER ARCHITECTS - DAY

51

Ted works at a Draughtmans' table. Across the office, the  
boss -- BRYAN ZEBUBB -- watches him from his office. A large  
Krispy Kreme box sits open on the desk behind him.

A SECRETARY crosses to Ted and whispers in his ear, nodding  
towards the office, as she moves away she is whistling  
'SMILE' to herself. Ted looks at her quizzically. Before  
making his way across the floor and knocking.

ZEBUBB

Come in.

TED

You wanted to see me, Bryan?

ZEBUBB

Mister Zebubb. Shut the door,  
Strangelove.

Ted looks confused as he sits.

TED

Mister Zebubb? Say, you mind if I  
grab a donut--

Zebubb slams shut the box.

ZEBUBB

Do I mind? Yes I do. That's right,  
Strangelove. Things are changing  
around here. Starting with this..

He pushes a blueprint across the desk.

TED

My Library Design? But... I put  
everything into that. Everything...

ZEBUBB

How nice for you. But this is a  
reality check. Here are my notes.

\*

He throws a thick file across to Ted.

TED

But you said so yourself. You said--

ZEBUBB

Forget what I said, Strangelove.  
I've changed my mind. Now you'd  
better shape up. I've got my eye on  
you.

TED

I don't understand, we talked about  
this--

ZEBUBB

That's all for now. I got my eye on  
you, see? No room for passengers on  
my ship, you understand? You got  
two days to fix this. Now get back  
to work.

Ted heads back to his desk -- confused and hurt. Zebubb watching him through his office blind.

52 INT. WICKER ELEMENTARY, CLASSROOM - DAY

52

Miss Howie sets mental arithmetic problems for the class on the white board.

Ruby stares hard at Einstein, she is a picture of concentration.

MISS HOWIE

Now, lets assume that I have thirty six hundred and forty eight apples, and I need to divide them between twelve grocers--

SCOOTER

Three hundred and four.

MISS HOWIE

Very good Scooter, everyone gets three hundred and four apples. What if I say that it takes six hours to fly from the capital of Peru--

\*

Einstein's hand reaches out and balls up a piece of paper. He looks at his hand -- he is not doing this.

SCOOTER

Lima.

MISS HOWIE

Okay... to the capital of Uruguay--

SCOOTER

Montevideo.

MISS HOWIE

Right. And then I want to fly on to Cuba -- someone else, Scooter!

\*

Einstein is fighting his hand as it reaches back behind his head.

\*

MISS HOWIE (CONT'D)

Anyone else? Alex Wilcox?

\*

ALEX

Erm... Baltimore?

\*

\*

Einstein lets out a guttural grunt as he pitches the paper ball straight at Alex, who turns angrily.

\*

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Hey! What is your malfunction,  
Doofus?

\*  
\*  
\*

MISS HOWIE  
(not turning from the  
board)  
Ruby Strangelove!

Ruby looks at Miss Howie in shock: *How did she know?*

Miss Howie turns and give Ruby a look before turning back to the board.

53 EXT. WICKER ELEMENTARY - DAY

53

Ted waits to collect Ruby from school, deep in thought. Ruby jumps in the back seat.

RUBY  
Hey Dad.

TED  
Hey, Sweetie. How was your day?

RUBY  
Good -- I think. Yours?

TED  
Ah... What d'you say we get a  
hamburger?

RUBY  
But it's not even a Thursday.

TED  
Let's live a little.

He pulls away.

54 INT. CAR - DAY

54

Ted drives along Main Street. Ruby sees the Homeless Man again, sat in a doorway with his 'Will Work for Food' sign. Again, the sign changes:

'REACH OUT TO YOUR ENEMIES, RUBY'

55b OMITTED

55b \*

56b INT. MAIN STREET DINER - DAY

56b \*

Ted and Ruby have hamburgers in front of them. The Waitress -- heavy set, 30 something, trailer park type -- chewing gum as she eyeballs them across the restaurant.

TED

Something happened at work today.

RUBY

Oh yeah?

TED

Bryan -- my boss -- he was different. Strange.

RUBY

That's strange. In school yesterday, I could swear Principal Maguire called me Sara. And him and Mrs. Peach were looking at me real strange.

TED

Your Mom said we would have people from both sides here in Wicker.

RUBY

(whispers)

I think Miss Howie is one of us.

TED

I always liked her.

RUBY

That waitress has been staring at us. You think...?

Ted turns and the Waitress drops her eyes and turns away.

TED

I don't know. Maybe. She looks familiar... We should be careful.

RUBY

Maybe, maybe not.

TED

What do you mean?

But Ruby has already started walking towards the Waitress.

TED (CONT'D)

Ruby? Ruby!

RUBY  
 (to the Waitress)  
 Hey. You look like someone who  
 appreciates good music. You like  
 music, right?

WAITRESS  
 Sure. Some.

Ruby pulls a Battle of the Bands flyer from her satchel.

RUBY  
 Battle of the Bands, Friday next.  
 (beat)  
 Free barbecue.

WAITRESS  
 Oh yeah?

RUBY  
 Sure. Bring a friend.  
 (walking back -- under her  
 breath)  
 If you have one.

She sits back down.

TED  
 What was that?

RUBY  
 Reach out to your enemies.

TED  
 Free barbecue?

RUBY  
 We have to give them a reason to  
 come to the Battle, right?

TED  
 Right. Smart girl. We'd better keep  
 our eyes open.

RUBY  
 Wide open.

TED  
 I'm sure I know that waitress from  
 somewhere...



57 EXT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - NIGHT 57

Ted takes out the trash. There is an unholy racket coming from the garage -- the band is rehearsing. Ted winces.

58 INT. TED'S GARAGE - NIGHT 58

The Band are attempting their upbeat, poppy number (SONG: 'EXPLODE'): Scooter is slamming the drums, way out of time; Eric is ruining the bass; Erica is fluffing chords. Ruby at the keyboards tries to push through the cacophony, but it's a mess. \*

A drumstick flies unintentionally from Scooter's hand, hitting Ruby in the side of the head. \*

RUBY

Alright! Time out! Time out! Let's think...

She looks towards her friends -- disconsolate. Now a change is coming over Scooter... he's listening: distant, getting closer, as in his head he hears a gentle rhythm tapped out on a hi-hat, and slowly he's beginning to play...

... close on Erica as she hears a simple strummed chord, she's picking up the guitar and echoing the sound...

... and Eric too, hearing and copying a simple bassline...

The three instruments move together to converge into a simple arrangement. The Kids are looking from one to another. *They've got it.*

Ruby smiles -- her eyes moving over her friends as each of them feels the magic. She moves to the keyboard, augmenting the sound with a rhythm track... a moment before she plays... and then the song comes alive.

59 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, TED'S STUDY - NIGHT 59

The music reaches Ted as he works, he pauses to listen -- smiles.

60 INT. PARALLEL WICKER, DANFORTH'S MANSION - NIGHT 60

Sara, alone in her room. A rattle of keys in the door, and her Clown Jailer enters with a tray of food. He keeps his head low -- eyes averted from her.

JAILER  
The table?

Sara nods.

SARA  
Thank you.

JAILER  
You're welcome.

He moves to the door.

SARA  
You're new aren't you? You're not  
like the others.

The Jailer pauses at the door.

JAILER  
(not turning)  
I hope not.

SARA  
(frowning)  
Do I know you?

JAILER  
No, ma'am.

He exits.

61 INT. WICKER ELEMENTARY, HALLWAY - DAY

61

Ruby and the Band make their way toward the Theater, they round a corner to see the corridor full of other HOPEFULS, instruments scattered everywhere.

RUBY  
OMG... Is the whole school  
entering?

SCOOTER  
I think I'm gonna throw up.

He rushes away.

ERICA  
Great... Do we have a new name yet?

RUBY  
Of course we do. And it's a great  
one.

ERICA

So?

RUBY

I'd better sign in...

She turns quickly away. Thinking as she walks.

Ruby makes her way along the corridor -- to where the Judges -  
- Principle Maguire, Mrs. Peach and COACH BALLARD -- 50's,  
chewing gum in a baseball cap -- stand waiting.

PRINCIPLE MAGUIRE

... but anyway, we're just glad you  
could step in at such short notice.

COACH

Well, don't know how much help I'll  
be -- I'm the first to admit I  
don't know a damn thing about  
music.

PRINCIPLE MAGUIRE

I'm sure you'll be fine. Now, of  
course -- each judge has one wild  
card vote, but I'm sure that won't  
be necessary... just follow our  
lead and we'll be fine.

COACH

Doesn't bother me none. It was  
either this or cleanin' my cleats.

Principle Maguire sees Ruby -- his face instantly hardening.

RUBY

Do I have to sign in?

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Of course. Did you write your name  
on the board?

RUBY

Yes sir.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

(looking down a clipboard)  
Ruby Strangelove and the Numbnuts? \*

RUBY

Peanuts, it says Peanuts. But that  
was a working title. We've changed.  
The name. \*

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

To?

RUBY

Ah. To... to...

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Well?

She looks to the band: the two geeky twins, Scooter returning from the bathroom, wiping his mouth on his sleeve...

RUBY

We're the Misfits. Ruby and the Misfits.

Einstein -- overhearing.

EINSTEIN

Ruby and the Misfits? That's pretty cool.

Ruby raises an eyebrow to Einstein.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Misfits? Oh dear me. You'll be called.

LATER

Ruby and the band sit in the corridor -- waiting. Principle Maguire opens the doors to the audition room.

PRINCIPLE MAGUIRE

(consulting his clipboard)  
Habeus Corpus?

RUBY

That's Alex. \*

Principal Maguire smiles broadly as Alex and her Gang make their way to the doors in torn T shirts, ripped jeans and black eyeliner. Alex leads the line -- like Debbie Harry back in the day, she looks awesome. \*

RUBY (CONT'D)

Oh, please... \*

LATER

Habeus Corpus are finishing: Alex on lead guitar and vocals, with TWO of her gang on drums and bass -- it is rough, punk-type music befitting their name; \*

the song grinds to it's clattering, feedback-filled climax. A moment later and the doors open -- Principle Maguire still clapping

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE  
Wonderful, wonderful! See you  
Friday. Who's next? \*

RUBY  
That would be us.

Ruby and the Band head for the doors. As she goes, Ruby passes Einstein, headphones on, drumming away on his school bag -- he is good, very good.

62 INT. SCHOOL THEATER - DAY 62

Ruby and the Band make their way onstage.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE  
Introduce yourselves.

RUBY  
We're... we're Ruby and the  
Misfits.

PRINCIPLE MAGUIRE  
Well, you'd better get on with it.

RUBY  
(to Band)  
Okay guys, this is it. Just... just  
believe, okay? 1, 2, 3, 4...

They play (SONG: 'WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE'). Ruby carrying the load as the rest of the Band keep to the new arrangement. Ruby shines with real star quality. \*

63 INT. WICKER ELEMENTARY, HALLWAY - DAY 63

Hearing the Band, a FEW KIDS begin to drift towards the doors, nodding their heads to the music.

64 INT. SCHOOL THEATER - DAY 64

Close on the Coach's tapping foot -- a broad smile on his face as Principle Maguire looks at him in disgust.

PRINCIPLE MAGUIRE  
Really Coach?

COACH

Hell yeah... now this... this I like.

Principle Maguire throws a look to Mrs. Peach.

65 INT. WICKER ELEMENTARY, HALLWAY - DAY 65

Outside, more and more KIDS are gathering around the door: dancing and singing along to the Band. Even Einstein joins in and is stopped with a killer look from Alex. \*

As the song finishes, the hallway is filled with spontaneous applause.

66 INT. SCHOOL THEATER - DAY 66

Maguire and Peach exchange looks.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Well... thank you. But I'm not really sure that's exactly what we're looking for--

MRS. PEACH

Not at all...

COACH

Whoa, whoa... I gotta take issue with you there, Ma'am...

PRINCIPLE MAGUIRE

Well, you're entitled to your--

COACH

Yes I am.

PRINCIPLE MAGUIRE

But I rather think that it's two against one. Wouldn't you say?

Move in as the Principle's eyes bore into the Coach, a long pause as the Principle uses mind control to get his way.

COACH

Nope. Don't think so. I think it's two against a Wild Card.

(to the Band)

Misfits? I think we'll see you on Friday for the Final.

(to Principle)

Am I right?

PRINCIPLE MAGUIRE

(beat)

Of course. Of course you're right.

(under his breath)

You're fired, but you're right.

Ruby and the Band hug each other -- hold on Principle Maguire's furious face.

67

INT. WICKER ELEMENTARY, HALLWAY - DAY

67

Ruby and the band move along the hall, exchanging high fives and congratulations from other CHILDREN -- they are experiencing popularity for the first time.

Behind them, Alex and her Gang slope along the corridor... straight into Sheriff Wilcox -- his face like thunder. \*

WILCOX

What are you doin' tonight?

ALEX \*

I dunno, I thought--

WILCOX

Oh, you thought? You thought? Let me clear somethin' up for you, young lady -- you're gonna practise. And then you're gonna practise. And then you're gonna practise some more. \*

(jabbing a finger towards Ruby)

That Strangelove kid is not gettin' the better of a Wilcox. Are we clear?

ALEX \*

Yes.

WILCOX

Yes what?

ALEX \*

Yes Dad? \*

WILCOX

Yes sir. Now get outta here. \*

Alex -- head down -- moves away. \*

68 EXT. ZEBUBB AND BREWSTER ARCHITECTS - DAY 68

A crestfallen Ted emerges from the company. He carries a cardboard box and his pot plant. His blueprints are under his arm. He walks to a trash can and pitches the blueprints into it.

From the window, Zebubb watches him through the slats of the window blind, smirking. The blind snaps shut.

69 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - DAY 69

Ruby enters through the back door. Ted is at the table -- his box and plant sit before him.

RUBY  
Dad? What is it? What's wrong?

TED  
Sit down honey, I got some bad news. I lost my job today.

RUBY  
What? That's insane. You're like Frank Lloyd Wright!

TED  
They didn't like one of my designs.

RUBY  
Tell me it wasn't...

TED  
(nodding)  
Yep, the Library. Told me I was going stale. That I'd lost my way.

RUBY  
The Library? But you worked so hard-

Ted shakes his head.

TED  
They're closing in, sweetie. We knew we'd have challenges. This is one of them. They're trying to scare us.

Long beat.

RUBY  
Well, they don't scare me.



TED

Honey--

RUBY

Team Strangelove, right?

TED

(smiling weakly)

Right. Team Strangelove.

Move in on Ruby as she thinks.

70

EXT. ZEBUBB AND BREWSTER ARCHITECTS - DAY

70

Across the street from Zebubb and Brewster, Ruby emerges from an alleyway, hoodie up -- looking towards the offices. Zebubb emerges right on cue and heads off up the street.

Ruby's eyes narrow.

RUBY

(for herself)

Hey there, Mr. Zebubb. You wanna mess with the Strangeloves? Good luck with that...

Ruby watches as Zebubb moves along the street.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Manhole...

A manhole cover in the sidewalk vanishes... Zebubb is heading straight for the hole...

RUBY (CONT'D)

Phone...

... Zebubb's cellphone rings in his pocket. He answers -- immersed in his call, he's not noticing the hole in the sidewalk... and he's down, plummeting into the manhole.

A beat -- and then Zebubb -- shaken -- clammers from the manhole, furious and covered in detritus. He looks to the manhole: the cover is back in place -- all is as it was. He walks on, confused.

Ruby smiles to herself, her smile fading as she meets the eyes of the Homeless Man, standing across the street, watching her -- as from nowhere the Homeless Man produces a sign:

'OUR POWER IS PRECIOUS... MISUSE IS NEVER THE RIGHT PATH'

The Homeless Man -- his sign unseen by the PASSERS-BY -- nods gravely and is gone.

Hold on Ruby -- understanding her mistake.

71 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - NIGHT 71

MONTAGE -- MUSIC OVER

Ruby moves along the passageway, past Ted's study: Inside, Ted is looking over his library design -- is back is to Ruby, his face regretful, as Ruby pauses at the door.

She thinks, closing her eyes and...

... a thought 'occurs' to Ted and he moves to his telescope:

Ted's POV through telescope as the stars in the night sky begin to move -- darting this way and that before forming themselves into...

...a Heart. Ted smiles, looking to the doorway. Ruby is gone.

In the living room, Ruby reads from the Almanac to Ted.

Merge to: Ted has frozen, mannequin-like. Ruby taps him on the forehead -- no response.

In the living room, Ruby draws glasses and a mustache on the frozen Ted.

Ted open the door to the pizza boy -- unaware of the glasses and mustache still drawn on his face. Paying for the pizza and turning -- he catches sight of himself in the hall mirror. Running back into the living room and pinning Ruby as he tickles her in retribution.

The two of them laughing in delight.

END MONTAGE

72 OMITTED 72

73 INT. PARALLEL WICKER, DANFORTH'S MANSION - NIGHT 73

Sara sits on her bed, a smile on her face.

INTERCUT: SARA and RUBY

A sudden stab of emotion in Ruby, tears fill her eyes.

TED  
Sweetie? You okay?

RUBY  
(smiling)  
Yeah... it's hard to explain. But  
suddenly I felt, suddenly felt...  
so safe.

Ted smiles.

In her world, Sara also smiles.

74 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, RUBY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 74

Ruby sits with her head resting on her piano, looking at the picture of Sara.

75 INT. PARALLEL WICKER, DANFORTH'S MANSION - NIGHT 75

In Sara's world, Sara sits at a bright red grand piano. She begins to pick out notes, gently at first and then rolling together.

INTERCUT: SARA and RUBY.

At Ruby's piano, she is picking out a harmony on her own keyboard. Slowly the music comes together. Mother and daughter playing a duet across dimensions. Singing together (SONG: 'I WILL ALWAYS BE THERE'). \*

Hold on the two of them as the music finishes. United in their purpose.

In Sara's world -- a rattle of keys. She quickly closes the piano as the door is opened by her Clown Jailer.

JAILER  
Don't stop. You play beautifully.

SARA  
Thank you.  
(beat)  
You look familiar to me.

The Jailer drops his head.

SARA (CONT'D) \*  
How long have you worked here?

JAILER

I've been here since your Mother  
owned the Mansion. When you were a  
little girl, I worked in the  
kitchen. I used to--

\*  
\*

SARA

You used to bring me the water for  
my bath. I remember you. Jacob?

Jacob nods.

JACOB

I am sorry for what happened to  
you.

(beat)

You're not happy. I wish I could  
help you.

SARA

Perhaps you can.

76

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

76

The class works. Miss Howie moves between the desks observing  
the Kids. Ruby works at her math, with difficulty -- her mind  
is elsewhere.

MISS HOWIE (O.S.)

You have fire in you, Ruby.

RUBY

(looking up)

Sorry Miss Howie?

Miss Howie looks up.

MISS HOWIE

Yes Ruby?

RUBY

Did you say something?

MISS HOWIE

No, I don't think so.

MISS HOWIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Wisdom is more than knowledge,  
Ruby. Trust yourself, trust your  
mother, trust me. You have in you  
all that you need. Know that we are  
with you.

(MORE)

## MISS HOWIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Ruby looks at Miss Howie, who sits back down to her work as if nothing had happened. Ruby understands what has just happened.

77 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, RUBY'S BEDROOM

77

Ruby and Scooter sit on the floor. Around them are spread Ted's star charts.

RUBY

You're smart, look at this. This is the Alignment. When the moon is at it's highest.

SCOOTER

This time of year? Around nine thirty, right?

RUBY

Boy, you are uber-smart.

SCOOTER

And the... what's it called? How does that work?

RUBY

The Portal? Here.

She opens the Almanac. Scooter looks at the page and the illustration of a figure standing in a stone circle before a mirror exploding with light.

SCOOTER

Whoa. That's what you're gonna be doing? That's some encore.

(indicating the stone circle)

What's this?

Ruby tips the bag of stones onto the floor between them.

RUBY

The stone circle concentrates the power. It has to be ten feet across. If the circle isn't complete, it won't work.

SCOOTER

Man... you're gonna need some space.

RUBY

I know. The stage is the only space big enough.

SCOOTER

But we'd have to...

RUBY

... be on that stage at nine-thirty.

SCOOTER

So...

RUBY

So we have to get into the final showdown Scooter. It's the only way.

SCOOTER

I see a problem. What if the bad guys see the stones? They're gonna figure something's up right?

RUBY

I got that covered. And you're gonna help me.

78 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, RUBY'S BEDROOM - DAY

78

Ruby and Scooter struggle with an old bedsheet. As MUSIC plays they go to work with paints, glue and glitter -- making a Ruby and the Misfits banner.

MUSIC CONTINUES OVER:

79 LATER

79

The banner is nearing completion. Carefully, Ruby glues her seven stones into a circle across the banner, Scooter measures the diameter with a tape measure.

SCOOTER

Ten feet exactly.

RUBY

Would you know they were there?

SCOOTER

(shrugs)

Maybe if I was really looking for them. You think it'll work?

RUBY

Has to. C'mon, we gotta let it dry.

80 EXT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - DAY 80

The squad car of Sheriff Wilcox, parked a block away as he watches Ruby's house through binoculars.

POV as Ruby and Scooter hang their banner out of her bedroom window. Wilcox zooms in on the stone circle.

WILCOX

Oh Ruby Strangelove... you're as sly as your mother ever was.

81 INT. TED'S GARAGE - NIGHT 81

The band are rehearsing. Ruby holds up a piece of sheet music.

RUBY

Our options for the Battle. We are going to have to learn these, and learn them good. \*

The Band nod. Ruby hands sheets to Eric and Erica, who begin straight away to work on their parts.

RUBY (CONT'D)

Okay... three days guys. Remember -- believe, believe in yourselves and you can do anything.

The band kick into (SONG: 'BELIEVE, BELIEVE'). They are better -- much better. They have a chance... \*

82 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - NIGHT 82

Ted fills out job applications -- he looks up as he hears a ring at the door. Ted opens it to ten or twelve KIDS.

KID #1

Is this Ruby Strangelove's house?

TED

Sure... and you are?

KID #1

We're fans.

TED

Fans?

KID #1

OMG. Is that them?

The Kids rush past Ted towards the garage -- depositing coats, scarves and hats on him as they pass.

83 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, TED'S GARAGE - NIGHT 83

The band play on -- their new found fans smiling and laughing as they play.

Hold on Ted watching through the garage door -- a smile on his face.

84 OMITTED 84

85 INT. WICKER ELEMENTARY, HALLWAY - DAY 85

KIDS high-five Ruby as she makes her way along the corridor for the final rehearsal.

86 INT. PARALLEL WICKER, DANFORTH'S MANSION - DAY 86

Sara is helped into a grand evening gown by her ever-smiling Dresser.

The door opens and Danforth appears, flanked by Jacob and more Clown Police.

DANFORTH

Ravishing. You will be the talk of our Eve of Alignment celebrations -- as you should be.

Danforth leads her out, past Jacob -- their eyes meet, just for a moment.

87 INT. SCHOOL THEATER - DAY 87

RIVAL BAND MEMBERS are littered around the auditorium, as ANOTHER BAND soundchecks. The Maintenance Men are hoisting a Glitterball into place high above the seats.

Principal Maguire circles the room with his beloved clipboard, handing out sheets.



PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

(passing sheets)

This is the last rehearsal before the Battle. I need these Parental Permission slips handed in before you arrive tomorrow. Now if you arrive any later than 8PM you will not, I repeat, you will not be allowed to participate, is that clear?

ALL

(mumbled)

Yes Principal Maguire.

Scooter sits down alongside Ruby. She is watching the maintenance men as they hoist the Glitterball.

RUBY

Hey...

SCOOTER

Are we ready?

RUBY

Ready as we'll ever be. You did good Scooter. Real good.

Scooter beams. Eric and Erica join them.

ERICA

Hey guys. We're up after these. Go, Misfits! Right?

ALL

Right!

88 INT. PARALLEL WICKER, DANFORTH'S MANSION - DAY

88

Sara is escorted along a corridor by the Clown Police, down a staircase past an extraordinary stained glass window. Danforth waits for her.

DANFORTH

My Dear... the car is waiting.

89 INT. SCHOOL THEATER - DAY

89

Ruby and the Band are setting up their equipment. Alex moves toward Principal Maguire, slipping him a note as she passes.

\*  
\*

ALEX

\*

My dad asked me to give this to  
you. He said you'd understand.

Maguire reads the note, looking to Ruby his eyes narrow. Ruby  
doesn't flinch, looking right back at him. Stepping to the  
mic...

RUBY

(defiant)

One, two, three, four!

The band launch into an instrumental number (SONG: 'LIKE A  
ROCKSTAR' -- INSTRUMENTAL). In the auditorium, Maguire looks  
to the lighting rig above the stage -- closing his eyes in  
concentration, beads of sweat appear on his brow...

\*

\*

The Band plays on. Above Ruby, the rig begins to tremble as  
Principal Maguire concentrates harder, and harder...

A bolt on the now shaking rig is working itself loose...

90 OMITTED

90

91 INT/EXT. PARALLEL WICKER, CAR - DAY

91

Sara and Danforth are driven through crowded streets by Two  
Clown Police. WELL-WISHERS line the route -- they wave flags  
and cheer as they smile their unnatural smiles. The ever-  
present Clown Police standing-by to keep order.

DANFORTH

Smile, my dear. Wave at your  
people. They adore you.

(smirks)

Anybody would think you weren't  
looking forward to the wedding.

The Clowns in the front of the Vintage Automobile laugh  
loudly -- throwing confetti and tooting their rubber horns.

DANFORTH (CONT'D)

Enjoy it while you can. For after  
the ceremony, this will be the last  
memory you have of the air outside  
the palace.

92 INT. SCHOOL THEATER - DAY

92

Scooter hears a noise, he struggles to identify it above the music...

The bolt is working looser, and looser...

Scooter looks up -- just in time to see the bolt fly from the rig and the whole thing come crashing down towards Ruby.

He flings himself out towards her -- pushing her out of the way just in time before the rig smashes into the stage.

Screams from those present as the Band stop. Ruby rushes to Scooter, who cradles his hand.

RUBY

Scooter! Are you okay?

SCOOTER

(in pain)

It's my hand... my hand... I think  
it's busted.

Ruby flashes angry eyes to Maguire, who stares straight back at her. Alex grins to herself. \*

93 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

93

Ted, Ruby and the Twins sit in the waiting room. A doctor speaks with Mrs. Madison along the corridor. He finishes up and walks past them.

RUBY

Excuse me Doctor? We're friends of  
Scooter? Scooter Madison? \*

DOCTOR

I see. As I was just explaining to  
Scooter's mother -- he has two  
fractured Metacarpals in his left  
hand. Other than that, he's fine. \*

RUBY

He plays the drums, can he still  
play?

DOCTOR

Not for a few weeks, no. After  
that, not a problem.

He heads away. Ruby slumps back in her chair.

94 INT. CAR - NIGHT

94

Ted drives Ruby home. Rain lashes the windshield.

TED

We'll think of something.

POV as they turn into their street: two squad cars and three other vehicles are parked on their drive. Furniture is piled high on the lawn.

An AGENT hammers a Real Estate sign into the ground whilst the Bank Manager -- NEIL REAGAN slaps a 'FORECLOSURE NOTICE' across the front door. Sheriff Wilcox watches on approvingly. \*

TED (CONT'D)

What the...?

95 EXT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - NIGHT

95

Ted is out of the car and running to the house.

TED

What is going on? What are you doing?

REAGAN

Foreclosure, Strangelove. You can't go through life just not paying your bills. \*

TED

What are you talking about? I pay my bills Reagan, you know I do. \*

REAGAN

Well not according to your account records, you don't. \*

He passes Ted a printout -- Ted runs his eyes down the page. Strings of zeros against his account -- the mortgage arrears column reads 22,000 dollars. Ruby climbs from the car.

TED

That's impossible.

REAGAN

Well we called your employers to check what was going on, they said you didn't work for them any more. \*

TED  
But... that's only been a few days.  
This is... this is insane.

RUBY  
Dad? What's happening?

TED  
Nothing honey, stay in the car.

Sheriff Wilcox saunters across.

WILCOX  
(holding up a sheet of  
paper)  
This here is a Foreclosure Notice,  
effective immediately. I'd say best  
thing you can do is take ten  
minutes to collect some things, and  
then find you and your kid a place  
to sleep for the night.

TED  
(desperate)  
Sheriff? You got to help me here--

WILCOX  
Nine minutes fifty seconds,  
Strangelove.

96 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE, RUBY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 96

A suitcase of clothes lays open on the bed. Ruby places things into it: the banner with the stone circle on it, her mothers' spellbooks, the photo of her mom and the mother of pearl compact all go in and she zips the bag.

Ruby sits on the bed. She looks broken. Ted appears in the doorway.

TED  
We gotta go.

Ruby picks up her case and walks past him without a word.

97 OMITTED 97

98 EXT. CHEAP MOTEL - NIGHT 98

Ted's car pulls into the parking lot. He turns to Ruby.

TED  
 Only for a few days sweetie, I  
 promise. Monday morning we can get  
 all this straightened out. You  
 understand?

Dry tears streak Ruby's face.

98b INT. MOTEL RECEPTION - NIGHT

98b

The MOTEL RECEPTIONIST hands Ted and Ruby the keys to their  
 room.

99 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

99

Ted and Ruby enter. The place is bare and shabby.

TED  
 Not too bad, huh? Ruby? Come on  
 honey... I know it's a lot to deal  
 with--

RUBY  
 It's too much! Your job, Scooter's  
 hand, our house... it's too much.  
 What's going on?

TED  
 Ruby honey, why don't you get some  
 sleep. Things always look better in  
 the morning--

RUBY  
 Why do grown ups always say that?  
 Things never look better in the  
 morning. They look just the same,  
 only there's more light to see them  
 and less time to fix them.

TED  
 You might be right there. I don't  
 know... what are we gonna do,  
 honey?

RUBY  
 You can't say that! You can't!  
 You're my dad, you're supposed to  
 have the answers.

TED  
 What can I say Ruby? I'm sorry, but  
 sometimes I just don't.

RUBY

Come on, Dad! You're always telling me to believe... believe in myself. If you want me to do it. Why can't you?

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

TED

Because grown ups are just like kids. We don't have all the answers. Sometimes we just hope that it'll all work out.

(beat)

But you? You're different. Whether you like it or not you have something in you that can fix things. A gift.

RUBY

How does a gift help anyone if they never get a chance to use it?

\*  
\*

TED

That's what life is, Ruby. It's learning. Every day is learning how to live the next. Let's get through tomorrow, and start again. Huh?

RUBY

Start again? How? If Scooter can't play I won't be there to open the portal. Don't you get it? I'm never gonna get Mom home. I'm never gonna see her again. Never!

Ruby runs into the bathroom, slamming the door. Ted sits on the edge of the bed, head in his hands.

100 OMITTED 100

101 EXT. DREAM, FOREST - NIGHT 101

A shaft of light picks out Ruby -- asleep in the in the dark of the forest

SARA (O.S.)

Don't be afraid.

RUBY

(waking)

Mom?

As before -- Sara moves in the shadows.

SARA

We bear a great responsibility,  
Ruby.

RUBY

I want our house back. I want Dad  
to find a job. Why can't I use what  
I have to do that?

SARA

The world doesn't run on magic,  
Ruby, it runs on people. If your  
heart is true, you need never know  
regret.

RUBY

What should I do?

SARA

You already know what you will do.

RUBY

You're just a dream aren't you?  
You're not really here.

SARA

A dream is always part of you Ruby.  
Remember, far away but never apart.  
Use The Power wisely and we'll be  
together soon. Believe, Ruby...  
believe... believe... believe...

102 OMITTED

102

103 INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

103

The curtains are thrown aside with a 'swoosh!'. Ruby jumps  
onto Ted's bed and bounces him awake.

TED

What time is it?

RUBY

Time to rise and shine, sleepyhead.  
Big Day today. How cut... you have  
bedhead.

TED

You okay? You seem... much happier.



RUBY

That's because I am. And you were right. Things do look better in the morning.

104 INT. WICKER ELEMENTARY, HALLWAY - DAY

104

Groups of KIDS are playing Ruby's songs and dancing (SONG: 'WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE') as Ruby runs the hall, shouting out to them as she goes.

\*  
\*

RUBY

Hey, you seen Scooter? Have you seen Scooter? Have you seen Eric or Erica?

She passes Einstein, dancing with the others, having the time of his life, as he drums out a rhythm on a locker. As she passes, Ruby grabs Einstein by the arm, dragging him away.

RUBY (CONT'D)

We need to talk...

105 EXT. SCHOOL GARDEN - DAY

105

Ruby runs through the garden -- there sit Scooter, Eric and Erica. Scooter's hand is heavily bandaged.

RUBY

There you are. I've been looking all over. Listen, Scooter--

ERICA

(standing)  
Ruby, wait. We know.

RUBY

You do? How could you possibly--

ERICA

We know everything. Scooter told us. Don't be mad at him, I made him. I know you were trying to protect us, that's cool.

RUBY

It is?

ERICA

Of course. I mean we'd kinda figured it out anyway.

RUBY

You did?

ERICA

I mean... duh? I get that you might not wanna tell us everything, Scooter's not the only one with smarts. I mean, I'm sitting for my SAT's next year and I'm nine, right? So...

RUBY

Yeah, I get that.

ERICA

But you gotta be honest... there's been something different about you the last few days... and then my cousin told me all the rumors about your Mom.

Ruby has an amused smile on her face.

RUBY

The rumors?

ERICA

Yeah... that she was, y'know. Special. Gifted. That she was a... You want me to say it?

RUBY

A witch?

ERICA

If you wanna put a label on it... Look, something... special, is going on and with Scooter's hand and all... I'm sure it wouldn't go against any code to help out a friend, would it?

RUBY

I'm sure you're right. But that's not why I'm here.

(she moves to Scooter)

Scots, I know how bad you wanted to play.

SCOOTER

I promised you. I won't let you down.

RUBY

Let me down? You? You saved me. We knew we were up against it. But there might be a way.

SCOOTER

Really?

RUBY

(smiling -- then off)  
Get out here!

Einstein shuffles into view, drumsticks in hand, looking apologetic.

SCOOTER

Are you kidding me? No way.

ERICA AND ERIC

(together)  
Whoa.

RUBY

What d'you say, Scoots? You think you can teach him the parts? For me?

A long beat as Scooter looks from Einstein to Ruby.

SCOOTER

For you? Of course, Ruby.

RUBY

Thank you. You being okay with this? It means a lot to me.  
(turning to Erica)  
And the other thing? Nice work, Sherlock.

ERICA

I knew it! Personally, I think it's kinda neat that you're a little spooky.

Ruby smiles.

107 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

107

Ruby holds her Almanac and paces, psyching herself up. She is dressed in her stage clothes and looking like a million dollars. Ted exits the bathroom.

TED

Okay, time to move. We still gotta pick up Scooter and the others. You know what you're doing?

RUBY

Check.

TED

You got the stones?

RUBY

On the backdrop.

TED

Of course, of course... then we're good, right?

RUBY

Good to go.

TED

Then let's do this.

They head out of the room.

A Beat... Before Ruby rushes back in, snatching the mother of pearl compact from the nightstand, she exits at speed.

108a INT. PARALLEL WICKER, DANFORTH'S MANSION - NIGHT

108a

Sara sits on her bed. She looks to her Wedding Dress hanging on a stand beside her as her Dresser enters.

DRESSER

The big day... oh the excitement.

Sara stands without a word. The door opens and Jacob enters, bearing a trailing bouquet of flowers.

JACOB

(to the Dresser)  
You're wanted downstairs.

DRESSER

But, I--

JACOB

Now.

Fussing to herself, the Dresser leaves.

JACOB (CONT'D)

(urgently -- to Sara)

We've got to make it look real --  
we don't have much time.

109 INT./EXT. CAR - NIGHT 109

Ted drives as Ruby sits alongside him -- Scooter and Einstein in the back.

They pull up outside a house and Ted sounds his horn. Scooter, Einstein, Eric and Erica run from the house and into the car. They pull away.

108b INT. PARALLEL WICKER, DANFORTH'S MANSION - NIGHT 108b

A banging at Sara's door -- a FIGURE in a wedding dress and veil sits at the window. The door crashes in and Danforth and his Clown police enter.

Danforth strides to the Figure.

DANFORTH

Why didn't you answer? Sara? Answer me.

He spins the chair around. The Figure remains slumped. Danforth's ripping off the veil to reveal Jacob -- clown make up still in place, dressed in Sara's wedding dress, unconscious. Danforth's rounding on his men:

DANFORTH (CONT'D)

Find her!

110 INT. PARALLEL WICKER, GRAND STAIRCASE - NIGHT 110

Follow a CLOWN as it makes it's way down the stairs, slipping through doors and moving along passageways.

Move round onto the face of the Clown -- it is Sara, in Jacob's uniform. Gaudy make up across her face.

111 EXT. WICKER - NIGHT 111

Ted's car races through the streets.

112 INT./EXT. CAR - NIGHT

112

Ted drives on.

RUBY  
What time is it?

TED  
A quarter to eight. We're good --  
plenty of time. Oh.

He pulls to a halt. Before them, the road to the School is jammed with cars winding their way towards the Battle.

RUBY  
Dad! We can't be late -- not after  
everything.

Ted and Ruby look at each other.

TED AND RUBY  
(together)  
Plan B.

The car squeals in a U turn and races away.

113 EXT. FOREST ROAD - NIGHT

113

Ted's car speeds along the road, the forest runs beside them. As they round a bend in the road -- red and blues, Police, a roadblock...

Sheriff Wilcox is moving towards them.

TED  
What is it Sheriff?

WILCOX  
Road's closed, Strangelove. You'll  
be wanting to turn around, I  
expect.

TED  
I gotta get these kids to their  
concert.

WILCOX  
Now that ain't gonna happen, is it?  
(leaning in)  
Why won't you people just accept  
when you're beaten?

RUBY  
 (defiant)  
 Because we're not beaten!

Wilcox turns away, and walks back to his car, laughing.

RUBY (CONT'D)  
 We're not beaten. Tell me we're not  
 beaten, Dad?

Ted looks to the floor. A moment...

TED  
 No we're not.  
 (to Ruby)  
 Don't worry about me, you just get  
 to that school.

RUBY  
 But, Wilcox--

TED  
 You leave Wilcox to me.

Ted's out of the car and walking toward Wilcox.

TED (CONT'D)  
 Say, Sheriff? You know you really  
 are a jerk.

Ruby nods to the kids and they slip out of the car and move  
 into the shadows.

WILCOX  
 Excuse me?

TED  
 No. No, I don't think I will. In  
 Fact I think I'll say it again. You  
 really are a jerk.

The kids are creeping past the roadblock.

TED (CONT'D)  
 I mean you look the part, in your  
 fake Aviators and your diving  
 watch, and that mustache, oh -- did  
 I mention? The Village People  
 called, they'd like that back--

WILCOX  
 Right, Strangelove--

TED

I mean, they have people looking  
for that--

Wilcox and TWO OFFICERS grab Ted and begin to wrestle him to  
the ground.

TED (CONT'D)

--I think there are copyright  
questions, and possibly hygiene  
issues--

Ted raises his head and meets eyes with Ruby beyond the  
roadblock. She smiles back. The Band run into the darkness.

114 EXT. PARALLEL WICKER, MAIN STREET - NIGHT 114

Sara moves along Main Street, heading for the Big Top, past  
billboards advertising the upcoming wedding of Danforth and  
herself.

115 EXT. FOREST - NIGHT 115

Ruby and The Band run through the Forest. Everywhere they  
turn seems to be identical and impenetrable.

ERICA

Which way Ruby? Which way?

RUBY

I don't know...

ERICA

So what do we do? \*

... out of nowhere... louder all the time... footsteps across  
the forest floor. The Kids are scared -- they look wildly  
around them as the footsteps get louder. \*

HOMELESS MAN (O.S.)

You kids in need of a little  
direction? \*

They turn in terror to see the Homeless Man, bearing a  
flaming torch. He smiles, warmly. \*

HOMELESS MAN (CONT'D) \*

Don't be afraid. \*

ERIC

But... but... how did you know?



HOMELESS MAN  
My job to know, son. Follow me,  
Misfits.

The Homeless Man begins to lead them through the forest.

RUBY  
Where did you come from?

HOMELESS MAN  
Me? Oh, I've always been here.

EINSTEIN  
Man, you're weird.

HOMELESS MAN  
Some might say, son...  
(to Ruby)  
I'm a Guardian. I'm wherever I'm  
needed, looking out for people like  
you, Ruby Strangelove.

\*

Ruby smiles. They emerge from the Forest -- the school rising  
ahead of them.

RUBY  
Will I see you again?

HOMELESS MAN  
Oh, you'll see me again. You can be  
sure of that.

\*  
\*

He smiles. The Band run toward the school at speed.

RUBY  
(for herself)  
I'm with you Mom...

116 EXT. PARALLEL WICKER, BIG TOP - NIGHT 116

Sara runs for the Big Top -- her eyes shining -- energized by  
Ruby's power.

She slips under the canvas and inside... we see the trucks  
and vehicles of the CLOWN POLICE arriving at speed.

117 INT. WICKER ELEMENTARY, HALLWAY - NIGHT 117

The Band weave their way between PARENTS and TOWNSPEOPLE  
filing into the School Theater.

118 INT. SCHOOL THEATER - NIGHT

118

The Band burst into the theater -- Ruby's eyes flash to a large clock on the wall: one minute to eight. They're heading for Principal Maguire and his clipboard, past Alex who turns in disbelief as she sees Einstein with them.

\*  
\*

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE  
(grins broadly)  
Oh, I'm sorry. Ruby and the  
Nitwits, wasn't it? I don't seem to  
have your parental  
Consent forms.

Maguire flicks through his forms. Ruby's form is not there.

RUBY  
But I handed them in yesterday.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE  
Nope. Not here. Sorry.  
(fixing eyes)  
I know you had a lot riding on  
this, Miss Strangelove, but rules  
are rules, right?

MISS HOWIE (O.S.)  
Ruby! There you are. Go on through,  
you're first up.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE  
Or would be if their Consent Forms  
had been handed in. It's a real  
shame.

MISS HOWIE  
But Ruby gave me the consent forms  
yesterday, Principal Maguire.  
They're on your clip board. I put  
them there myself.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE  
Well they're not now.

MISS HOWIE  
Why don't you check again?

Principal Maguire looks around him -- several PARENTS are watching. He rifles through the papers.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE  
This is really a waste of --

He pulls the completed forms from the clip board. His face falls. Miss Howie smiles.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE (CONT'D)

I don't... I don't understand...  
How did?

MISS HOWIE

Good thing you checked.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Yes. Yes, indeed. Well off you go.

Ruby and the Band beam at Miss Howie and run backstage.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE (CONT'D)

(pointed)  
Thank you, Miss Howie.

MISS HOWIE

Thank you, Principal Maguire.

119 OMITTED 119

120 INT. HALL OF MIRRORS - NIGHT 120

Sara is inside -- pulling a ticket booth onto its side to block the door of the Hall of Mirrors -- the Clown Police can be seen banging on the other side of the door as she runs into the hall, wiping the make up off as she goes.

121 INT. SCHOOL THEATER - NIGHT 121

Ruby and the Band take the stage to much applause. Einstein and Scooter share a drum stool -- Scooter taking the left part and Einstein the right.

They play a rousing, familiar number (SONG: 'LIKE A ROCKSTAR') and the AUDIENCE lap it up. Dancing, singing and applauding like crazy. \*

Ruby looks to a large window at the rear of the theater -- she is snatching glances at the full moon through the rain clouds as she sings. \*

122 INT. PARALLEL WICKER, HALL OF MIRRORS - NIGHT 122

In the Hall of Mirrors. Sara digs among the fold of her costume -- pulling out seven stones as she heads for a large mirror at the end of the Hall.

123 INT. SCHOOL THEATER - NIGHT

123

Habeus Corpus play: they have gotten better. Ruby and Scooter watch from the wings.

RUBY

They're better.

SCOOTER

Don't worry. Did you see the audience? They loved you.

RUBY

Us, Scooter. They loved us.

Habeus Corpus bring their song to a grinding climax. Applause. Principal Maguire walks onstage.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Thank you, Habeus Corpus. And of course all of our other acts. The time has come for you to decide the final two bands who will compete in our Battle. Could we have the acts onstage please?

The FOUR ACTS file out, Ruby and Alex exchanging looks. \*

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE (CONT'D)

And so, to determine who those bands will be... Mrs. Peach? The Clapometer, if you will.

Mrs. Peach wheels on an oversized Decibel Meter.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE (CONT'D)

Now when I call the name and number of your chosen act, please applaud as you see fit. Now let's begin.

SCOOTER

This is it, Ruby. I got everything crossed.

RUBY

Me too.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

If you're favorite is Act One: 'The Spaghetti Incident'. Please, applaud now.

A ripple of applause, a few whoops. The Clapometer crawls to forty.

124 INT. STATION HOUSE - NIGHT

124

Sheriff Wilcox throws Ted into a cell.

WILCOX

Not exactly a front row seat.  
You'll be spending your kid's big  
night in here, Strangelove.

TED

She doesn't need me. She'll do just  
fine on her own.

WILCOX

(grinning)  
You're such a loser, Strangelove.  
Did no one ever tell you that nice  
guys finish last?

TED

We'll see.

WILCOX

I guess we will.

125 INT. SCHOOL THEATER - NIGHT

125

The voting continues.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

For Act Two: DJ Sonic and the Beat  
Brothers, please applaud now!

Light applause, barely reaching sixty. DJ SONIC -- 7 years  
old, skinny with a backwards cap -- throws his cap to the  
ground.

SONIC

Darn it!

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

If your favorite Act was number  
three, the mighty Habeus Corpus,  
show your appreciation now!

Whoops, cheers, and enthusiastic applause. Move over the  
AUDIENCE -- picking out the bad in the town: the Waitress,  
Neil Reagan, the Crossing Guard, Mrs. Peach. \*

Ruby and Scooter exchange worried looks, Alex milks the  
adulation as the Clapometer reaches ninety. \*

126 INT. PARALLEL WICKER, HALL OF MIRRORS - NIGHT 126 \*

Sara kneels in silence before the mirror -- closing her eyes and blocking out the sound of the Clown Police banging at the door.

127 INT. SCHOOL THEATER - NIGHT 127

The last vote. Ruby crosses her fingers behind her back.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE  
(throwaway)  
And for Ruby and the Misfits. Act  
Four, vote now.

Wild applause from the audience. Ruby looks in shock to Miss Howie -- who smiles a broad smile. The Clapometer is past ninety decibels and rising.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE (CONT'D)  
(a grimace)  
And that means that Ruby  
Strangelove and the Misfits... will  
go head to head with Habeus Corpus  
in our Final Battle. Well done  
there. So if our final two will  
step forward.

Habeus Corpus and Ruby and the Band join Maguire. Ruby looks to the clock. It is almost nine.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE (CONT'D)  
(to the Audience)  
And so -- as is traditional -- a  
coin toss will decide the running  
order.

RUBY  
(whispered -- to Scooter)  
We need to go on last. Otherwise  
we'll be too early.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE  
(covering the mic)  
Never gonna happen Strangelove,  
trust me.  
(to Audience)  
And I will ask the first Act to  
reach tonight's final to nominate.  
That's Habeus Corpus. Miss Wilcox?

Maguire winks, Alex grins. Ruby watches, suspicious.

\*

\*

ALEX

I think we'll take heads, Principal Maguire. Thank you sir. \*

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

Thank you Alex. \*

He tosses the coin, as we see wheels turning in Ruby's mind. At the last second, Maguire's hand is extending, ready to catch the coin, and...

RUBY

Stop!

And just like at the lake -- everything stops. Time freezes as Ruby plucks the coin from where it is suspended in mid-air.

She looks at it: a DOUBLE-HEADED COIN.

RUBY (CONT'D)

I knew it.

In a flash, Ruby leaps into the motionless Audience. Neil Reagan stands frozen in the front row as Ruby delves into his jacket pocket, pulling out a silver coin. \*

Jumping back onstage she replaces the coin in mid-air and closes her eyes... everything comes back to life, the coin falls into Maguire's palm.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE

And it's He-- Tails?

The Audience applauds as Maguire grimaces.

PRINCIPAL MAGUIRE (CONT'D)

First or second, Strangelove? I mean, Ruby?

RUBY

Second I think, Principal Maguire. Don't you?

She looks to the window -- the moon is rising slowly.

SARA kneels before the mirror -- the stones in a perfect circle around her. She looks to the door, hearing the Clown Police battering from the other side.

SARA

Come on... Come on Ruby...

INTERCUT BETWEEN: RUBY and SARA.

Onstage, Habeus Corpus finish their set. They strut off stage, triumphant. Alex bumps into Einstein -- deliberately. \*

ALEX \*

Didn't see you there, Judas.  
(to Ruby)  
Follow that, Strangebug.

KIDS dressed in black -- the stage crew -- hurry to change over equipment -- three of them are removing Habeus Corpus' backdrop and replacing it with Ruby and Scooter's. In the wings, Ruby and the Band huddle.

RUBY

This is it guys. Follow my chord changes and just do your best.

ERICA

Forget the Battle, Ruby. You just do what you came here to do.

RUBY

No, Erica. We started something here. Something for us. Let's do both. Right?

ALL

Right!  
(they all put their hands  
into the circle)  
Go Misfits! Believe!

Habeus Corpus finish to applause. Ruby and the Misfits take the stage.

RUBY

(into mic)  
This is for all of you whose hearts  
are true.

They play (SONG: 'EXPLODE'). \*

In the Hall of Mirrors, Sara spreads her arms and breathes deep.

As Ruby sings, the moon is rising. She looks to the Glitterball.



Sara looks deep into the mirror -- the mists in her mirror are building. The sound of the Mob, banging at the doors.

SARA

Come on, Ruby... you can do it.

Ruby kicks the Band on as spotlights hit the GLITTERBALL from every angle and it's MIRRORS are spectacularly illuminated.

Ruby looks to the Glitterball.

Across the dimensions, Ruby and Sara close their eyes as power swells from within them...

... the Portal bursts open from deep within the Glitterball. Behind Ruby, the stones on the backdrop shine like a sun.

Sara's Portal is open and her stones also shine. She stands before the mirror.

In the theater the Audience and the Band Members freeze -- apart from the Bad Elements -- -- Principal Maguire, Neil Reagan, Mrs. Peach, the Crossing Guard, Alex and OTHERS -- who are one by one locked into the lightstream and sucked back into the Portal...

\*

... and flung into the Parallel World.

129

INT. STATION HOUSE - NIGHT

129

Sheriff Wilcox sits with his feet on his desk, facing Ted in his cell.

WILCOX

You know, Strangelove. Today's a great day.

TED

Oh yeah? How's that?

WILCOX

I think today is the day I finally get you and your freaky kid out of my world.

\*

Ted looks past the Sheriff -- through the window a LIGHTSTREAM is shooting across the town, heading for the Station House.

TED

I wouldn't bet on that if I were you, Sheriff.

WILCOX  
Oh yeah, why's that?

TED  
Just a feeling.

The lightstream smashes through the glass, grabbing hold of the Sheriff and pulling him backward toward the window.

WILCOX  
Strangelove! Strangelove, help me!

Ted nods to the bars, shrugging. Wilcox takes the keys from his belt and throws them to Ted, who unlocks his cell.

WILCOX (CONT'D)  
Strangelove!

TED  
You know what, Wilcox? I don't think so.

Wilcox is sucked out of the window and propelled across the countryside, into the School Theater and...

127b INT. SCHOOL THEATER - NIGHT 127b  
... into the Portal.

RUBY  
Mom? Where are you? Mom?

128b INT. PARALLEL WICKER, HALL OF MIRRORS - NIGHT 128b  
In the Parallel World, the doors to the Hall of Mirrors give way -- the Clown Police are rushing in -- Sara's head snaps up and she's running for the Portal when a hand is clamped across Sara's mouth and strong arms spin her around.

DANFORTH  
Hello, Sara. You were so close.

INTERCUT BETWEEN: RUBY and SARA

In the theater, the Waitress/Nurse narrows her eyes -- and runs for the stage. She's almost there when her path is blocked -- by Miss Howie.

MISS HOWIE  
I don't think so. Time for you to go back where you came from.

WAITRESS

Not 'til I get my free barbecue.

They wrestle as Ruby watches from the stage. With a great effort, The Waitress/Nurse pitches Miss Howie into the Audience.

MISS HOWIE (V.O.)

Ruby!

Ruby turns too late as she is grabbed by the Waitress/Nurse.

WAITRESS/NURSE

You're comin' with me... just like your Momma...

Together they are sucked towards the Portal.

In Sara's world, Danforth releases his grip.

DANFORTH

She's on her way, Sara. I'm sure little Ruby will enjoy our wedding.

Ruby and the Waitress/Nurse fly through the Portal into the Hall of Mirrors. Ruby tumbles across the floor -- landing alongside Sara.

They turn to see the Bad Elements of the town advancing -- smiling, laughing -- led by Danforth. Ruby looks to Sara. Eyes on...

DANFORTH (CONT'D)

Well, well, well...

SARA

True will, Ruby. True will.

DANFORTH

Some you win...

A moment between her and her Mom.

RUBY

'Facing mirrors... Facing mirrors will do battle.'

DANFORTH

... and some you lose.

Ruby's diving into her jeans pocket, pulling out her compact and opening it. For a moment, Ruby's eyes meet those of Alex, advancing with a deadly smile...

\*  
\*

Sara puts her hand onto the mirror and together they direct the glass towards the Lightstream... screaming the verse.

RUBY AND SARA

(together)

Facing mirrors will do battle. One  
for good and one for ill. Out of  
darkness, light will triumph. If  
the bearer shows true will!

Light shoots from her compact, the two lightstreams collide and with great strength, Ruby and her compact turn the Enemy's lightstream back onto itself.

Danforth, the Clown Police and the Bad Elements are blinded by the lightstream. \*

\*  
\*

RUBY

And stay out of my town!

Sara grabs Ruby's hand and together they run -- diving into the Portal -- riding the lightstream back into their own world.

130 OMITTED 130

131 OMITTED 131

132 INT. SCHOOL THEATER - NIGHT 132

Ruby and Sara clatter onto the Stage -- Ruby collapsing after her efforts.

Ruby is fading fast. Sara kneels to tend her daughter. She places her hand on Ruby's cheek and instantly, she is revived. \*

\*

Ted bursts through the doors at the rear of the hall, running along the aisle between the frozen audience and leaping onstage to embrace his wife and daughter. Miss Howie smiles from beside the stage as the portal closes on the parallel world. \*

\*  
\*  
\*  
\*  
\*

SARA

(to Ruby)

Don't you have a song to finish? \*

\*

Sara and Ted take their place in the crowd and with a click  
of her fingers, Sara brings the crowd and the band back to  
life. Sara turns to Ted -- they kiss -- and together, watch  
their little girl bring it home (SONG: 'EXPLODE').

The Audience go nuts. Ruby grins at her Bandmates.

RUBY  
Pretty good for a bunch of Misfits.

ERICA  
Ruby, we've never played that well.  
Did you... y'know?

RUBY  
Did I what?

SCOOTER  
Maybe just a little magic?

RUBY  
I didn't have to. The magic was in  
you all along. You just needed to  
believe to find it.

The friends embrace.

133 EXT. ES. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - DAY 133

134 INT. STRANGELOVE HOUSE - DAY 134

Close on a TROPHY, the dedication visible:

'RUBY STRANGELOVE AND THE MISFITS - WINNERS OF THE WICKER  
ELEMENTARY BATTLE OF THE BANDS 2014'

In the kitchen, Ted and Sara are talking with a new BANK  
MANAGER, there are forms spread before them.

BANK MANAGER  
Once again, I cannot apologize  
enough for the conduct of Mr..  
Reagan. There will be a full  
enquiry launched by my employers at  
the bank, but -- as I'm sure you  
appreciate -- following the  
unexplained disappearance of Mr..  
Reagan, he may never have to answer  
for his actions.

\*

\*

TED

Oh, I don't know. Thank you for coming by Mrs. Fitch, if you'll excuse me, I don't wanna be late for work. Not on my first day back.

BANK MANAGER

Oh course, well. Welcome to your new... sorry, welcome back.

SARA

It's certainly nice to be home.

The Bank Manager leaves. Ted calls up the stairs.

TED

Ruby? Ruby?  
(to Sara)  
Where is she?

134b EXT. LAKE - DAY

134b

Ruby and Scooter sit on the fallen tree -- looking out across the still water.

Long beat, as Ruby looks to Scooter.

RUBY

Couldn't have done it without you, Scoots.

SCOOTER

(grins)  
Anytime.

A beat as Ruby leans in, kissing Scooter on the cheek. She breaks the kiss -- the two of them shocked, looking straight ahead. Eyes locked on the water.

RUBY

That never happened.

SCOOTER

Nope.

RUBY

Tell a living soul and I'll turn you into a frog.

SCOOTER

Understood.

135 OMITTED 135  
136 OMITTED 136  
137 INT. HOTEL - DAY 137

The Tall Man in an overcoat crosses to the reception desk,  
the HOTEL RECEPTIONIST smiles.

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST  
Good morning sir. Do you have a  
reservation?

DANFORTH (O.S.)  
I do. Name of Danforth, Thomas  
Danforth.

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST  
Ah yes. Will you be staying in  
Wicker long, Mr.. Danforth?

DANFORTH  
Oh, I think I'm going to be here  
for quite a while...

Danforth meets our eyes and smiles. Ruby and Sara's battle  
may have only just begun...

FADE OUT.