

I SEE MONSTERS

"Pilot"

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TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE/DARK HALLWAY - NIGHT (FUTURE)

It's dark. *Very* dark.

In the distance we see a SMALL BEAM OF LIGHT SWEEP across the screen, then back to black.

We hear the PITTER-PATTER of tiny feet as the beam PANS BACK toward the camera and grows larger. It's blurry. The clarity increases as it approaches the camera, the luminosity as well.

It gets closer grows closer, larger and brighter revealing our protagonist, ZOEY (MARXUACH). She's a little girl of five with pigtails and a gap-tooth, slight Cindy Brady lisp. Adorable.

Zoey sports a pair of feety-pajamas, mini-welding goggles with a flashlight duct-taped to it. That's our light source. Just some ambient nighttime light.

She spots something past/through the camera, frowns, and as she moves in towards the camera, raising her weapon so as to be ready to strike, a large, furry monster rears its head behind her.

A FLOORBOARD CREAKS. Zoey freezes, mid-pose.

She turns slowly, and as she comes face-to-face with the monster, it ROARS.

Off that we...

SMASH TO TITLES.

INT. ZOHEY'S BEDROOM - LATE EVENING

SLOW PAN across Zoey's bedroom.

TITLE CARD
Seventeen hours ago...

It's bright and colorful; full of toys. A large, pink, toy castle sits on her bedside table, with a princess doll in the tower with half a dozen army men and action figures surrounding it, preparing to storm the castle. A sniper with a laser sight points at an ogre climbing the castle wall.

We land on Zoey, who is tucked into bed, clutching her Cthulu stuffed animal. Her eyes are heavy. Her Father, MR. MARXUACH, sits at her bedside, reading from a large book of fairy tales. His eyes are also heavy and he stifles a yawn.

MR. MARXUACH
(reading, in growly voice)
"Can you really love such an ugly creature as I am?"
(normal, narrate-y voice)
said the Beast faintly...

ZOEY snores quietly. Like a child would. *Just* audible.

ANGLE ON: Mr. Marxuach looks off-screen at a sleeping Zoey, replaces the bookmark and closes the book, beginning to stand up. *Quietly/carefully*.

ZOEY (O.C.)
(groggily)
What happens next?

WIDEN OUT to reveal her eyes aren't even open. He leans in to kiss her forehead good night.

MR. MARXUACH
Bedtime happens next for you, young lady.
(yawning)
And for me, too.

ZOEY
Does she fight the monster? With swords n' stuff?

He crosses her room, heading towards the door.

MR. MARXUACH
No, honey, you saw the movie. Beauty loves the Beast. He turns into a handsome prince.

ZOEY

And then she fights him? With punches?

Mr. Marxuach chuckles as he reaches for the light switch (unicorn w/ the switch as the horn) by the door AS HE EXITS.

MR. MARXUACH

No, with hugs. Now, sleep tight, honey. Gotta rest up-- don't wanna be all sleepy when the "Gramma fun" starts. You wanna be ready, don't you?

Mr. Marxuach turns out the light and closes the door. ZOEY BOLTS UPRIGHT IN BED, lit by the rising moon. We CONTRA-ZOOM (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dolly_zoom) towards her face, which is wide-eyed with terror.

ZOEY

(gasping; sotto)

We're going to... Grandma's house??

There is a crack of lightning, AND WE CHANGE FROM FULL COLOR TO SEPIA TONE as...

SMASH/MATCH CUT
TO:

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE (ZOEY'S ROOM) - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

...Zoey flashes back to her room in Grandma's house. She's in bed, looks scared, white-knuckling the blanket all the way up to her nose, her eyes darting back and forth.

ZOEY (V.O.)

There's something awful spooky there. And it only comes out at night.

Shadows dance ominously across the walls, as if something is circling the room (like the shadow-caster in *Buffy* episode "Get it Done."), but the camera (ZOEY'S DARTY-EYED POV) can't quite catch up to it.

Zoey suddenly becomes very still. THE SHADOWS STOP. We focus on Zoey's eyes as the growling starts. Very slowly, she starts to turn her head and we get a glimpse of a monster with very sharp teeth.

Suddenly, HOLDEN, Zoey's older brother of about 9 or 10 flies through the air towards the beast like Michael Fassbender in 300 (<http://www.imdb.com/media/rm2520682240/tt0416449>).

ZOEY (CONT'D)
 HOOOOOLDEEEEEEN!

Holden lands on his feet, we see the monster scamper away.
 Holden points his sword at Zoey.

HOLDEN
 Stay hidden, Zoey. I got this!

Zoey tunnels under the covers. When she reaches comes out the other side, she lifts the blanket, poking her head out to reveal...

INT. ZOEY'S BEDROOM - BACK TO PRESENT

...WE'VE CHANGED BACK FROM SEPIA TO FULL COLOR. She looks around her room.

ZOEY
 (meekly)
 Holden?

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

A large, bright, sunny kitchen. Holden, a little older than he was in the flashback, sits at the table with milk, a bowl and box of Triple-Sugar Pops, which he is ignoring in favor of his handheld game.

ZOEY (O.S.)
 Holden?!

Absorbed in his game, he doesn't even look up.

ZOEY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (little sister whiny)
Hooldeeeeen!

Suddenly, Zoey barrels into the kitchen. She's dressed for school, and carrying her backpack in one hand, and a realistic-looking toy sword in the other (a SCIMITAR). She swings the sword inches from his face. Maybe even stopping centimeters from his eye, displaying her control. He barely flinches.

ZOEY (CONT'D)
 Freeze, Holden! I've got your scimitar!

HOLDEN

Meh. Those're baby toys. I don't want 'em anymore.

Close up on Zoey's face, which DROPS. Her EYES go WIDE, wherein we make like ninjas and...

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK NEAR SCHOOL - A LITTLE LATER

Still EXTREMELY TIGHT on Zoey's face.

ZOEY

Bu-bu-but we're going to Gramma's tonight.

The camera PULLS OUT to a WIDE SHOT and we see that Zoey is walking behind Holden and his friend, struggling to keep up with her little legs.

HOLDEN

Can I borrow it when you're done?
Is it for XBox?

FRIEND

Nah, PS3. Sorry, bro.

HOLDEN

Bummer.

FRIEND

Wanna come over after school? You can help me take down the Golem in level 4.

HOLDEN

Yeah, for sure.

ZOEY

Hoollllden! Didn't you hear me? We're going to Gramma's this weekend. We need--

HOLDEN

Zoey, zip it!

CUT TO:

INT. KINDERGARTEN HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

Holden is dropping Zoey off just outside her kindergarten class. It's bright and sunny and there's all kinds of arts and crafts and drawings hanging on the cubby hole area. Kids are rushing into the classroom, but Zoey clings to Holden's leg, resisting the classroom. She motions for him to come closer, down to her level. He kneels.

ZOEY

(whispering)

You can't go play video games tonight. We're going to Gramma's.

(crystal clearly)

GRAM. MA'S!

HOLDEN

Zoey, you have to let go--

ZOEY

(ignoring him; whispers)

We need to get crossbows n' stuff together. We gotta be ready to...

(makes sure coast is clear)

fight the monsters.

HOLDEN

(sighing)

Zoey, listen to me: that was just a game we played. There's no. Such. Thing as monsters.

ZOEY

B-but I've seen them!

Holden straightens up, looking down the hallway. He notices a tall, cute, RED-HEAD GIRL his age (about 12-13). She's talking to her friends. She flips her hair and laughs IN SLOW MOTION. Holden smiles and walks towards her.

ZOEY (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Holden--

(he's further away; normal)

HOLDEN! Where are you going? What about the mon--

(she looks around; whispering)

Monsters?

HOLDEN

Go to class, Zoey!

Holden joins up with the pretty girls and disappears down the hall. Zoey stands there, incredulous, her mouth hanging open.

Behind her, a voice.

MYSTERIOUS VOICE
 Couldn't help but overhear your
 little problem...

Zoey whips around, searching for the speaker. She squints, searching.

Then, appearing from the shadows like a bad-ass, DREW emerges. He's older than Zoey (about 9) and has an afro, long, purple coat, and walking stick. He looks like a tiny/adorable Mr. Glass (from Shyamalan's *Unbreakable*).

ZOEY
 Who're you?

DREW
 Let's just say I'm a friend.

Suddenly, the school bell rings.

DREW (CONT'D)
 Monkey bars. High noon. Be there.

Drew retreats back into the shadows.

Zoey nods, and starts to walk to her classroom. A WOODEN CLATTER as Drew accidentally drops his cane. She stops, looks back over in the shadowy area, but just sees shadows.

ZOEY
 You still back there?

A LONG BEAT. Drew, kinda mortified, has lost a healthy portion of the mystique he just constructed in Zoey.

DREW
 (defeatedly)
 Uh, yeah.

ZOEY
 Sssooo... High noon? That, like,
 recess?

DREW
 Er... yes. Recess.

ZOEY

Gotcha.

(beat)

This's kinda awkward, huh?

DREW

YYYuupp.

ZOEY

We should probably just get to class then.

DREW

Yeah. See ya later.

Drew attempts to coolly run off down the hallway; Zoey sulks into the classroom...

INT. KINDERGARTEN CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

She SLUMPS down in her tiny chair at the tiny round table, dropping her backpack next to her. She rests her head on her hands, with a look typically found alongside watching paint dry/televised golf.

ZOEY

This's gonna be the longest.
Morning. Ever.

A fellow student, sitting next to her takes a PULL off of a lunchbox thermos as if it were a hip flask. His eyes remain forward, never looking at her, like a seasoned barfly:

STUDENT

Tell me about it...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SCHOOL BUILDING - MID DAY

A BEAT of serenity before the BELL RINGS and children burst through the front doors screaming, running right past the camera with various recess gear (balls, jumpropes, etc).

The camera picks up on Zoey and follows her as she sprints past all of the other children and climbs a small hill towards a deserted play set with monkey bars.

The sun is high in clear, blue sky. A CROW CAWS. The wind blows Zoey's hair epically, and she waits. A WESTERN STANDOFF MUSICAL STING punctuates things.

DREW (O.S.)
Prepare yourself, Zoey...

Zoey whips around to see Drew standing on the platform by the tube slide.

DREW (CONT'D)
Or should I call you Alice? As
you're about to tumble down the
rabbit hole.

CUT TO:

INT. TUBE SLIDE - CONTINUOUS

Drew leads the way down the slide, with Zoey right behind. It's standard bright yellow, seems like a normal slide until he reaches up to the ceiling and flips a switch. Another branch of the slide magically appears to the right, and they switch course down a trippy, rainbow tube that goes down an impossibly long way.

DREW
Get ready!

ZOEY
For what?

Then, suddenly:

INT. THE PLAYGROUND MAIN ENTRY/TRAINING AREA - CONTINUOUS

Drew and Zoey shoot out of the tube and and out onto gym mats. Drew lands squarely on his feet, Zoey lands SPLAT on the mat. She stands, eyes wide, overwhelmed by her surroundings. Drew is heart-attack serious.

ZOEY
What is-- where are we?

We PULL OUT with a CRANE-TYPE SHOT to take in the training section of The Playground. A SWEEPING MUSIC CUE here.

In one section, small heavybags and (lowered) speedbags; weights and training weapons (bo staffs, nunchucks, etc); there's a group of children (in teeny karate gi's(!!!)) in the middle of a martial arts lesson (karate? tai chi? hamster style?); in another section is weapons training with children practicing archery and fencing. It's all ADORABLE.

DREW

This is **The Playground**. It's a training facility.

ZOEY

Training for what?

The camera zooms in on Drew dramatically.

DREW

We're **The KinderGuard**, Zoey. And we fight monsters.

CUT TO:

INT. PLAYGROUND HALLWAY/CAPTURE SECTION - MOMENTS LATER

Zoey follows Drew down a long, glass, dark hallway on a tour. A SHOCK OF LIGHT kicks in every few seconds as they pass by a monster (unicorn, bigfoot, gargoyle, minotaur, dragon, etc.) The monsters lunge at the glass, at Zoey, snarling and being scary (sort of like *Cabin in the Woods* or the Initiative on *Buffy*).

DREW

Ever see something that made your skin crawl? The hairs on the back of your neck stand straight up? A shadow in the corner of your eye? Things really do go bump in the night, Zoey: Bigfoot, Dragons, slime monsters, even ghosts; they're all real. And we--

Zoey whips her head back and forth, trying to take in every monster with her wide eyes. She stops when she sees a unicorn behind the glass.

ZOEY

(in awe)

Even... *unicorns*?

Drew sighs, walks over to the glass and WHACKS IT with his cane (punctuating the "**not**" below). As he speaks, the unicorn eyes him, her eyes turning blood red, smoke fumes from her nostrils.

DREW

Yes, and she is not your friend.

ZOEY

But she's *sooooo* pretty!

DREW

Take note, some monsters can be tamed. Some you can even befriend. But NOT unicorns. Never unicorns. They are the most deadly creatures known to man and they prey on little girls like yourself. They just look innocent. Got it?

Zoey frowns. Drew soldiers on down the hallway.

DREW (CONT'D)

Come along. I've got something very important to show you.

ZOEY

(whispered incredulously)
Unicorns are real.

Drew leads Zoey to a set of steel security doors. He types a code into keypad, and they open leading to the KinderGuard Command Center.

CUT TO:

INT. PLAYGROUND COMMAND CENTER - MOMENTS LATER

In the center, there's a large computer with multiple screens; a science lab complete with test tubes; and an isolated holding cell.

In one corner, retired weapons hang on the wall along with posters/photos of Drew gestures to a large portrait on the wall of Holden, holding the head of a monster in triumph.

DREW

Look familiar?

ZOEY

Holden!

DREW

Your brother was our leader. The best. He was my mentor. Taught me everything I know so I could succeed him.

ZOEY

But this morning Holden said there was no such thing as monsters. Did he lie? Daddy says lying gets you a time out and he wasn't timed out--

Enter EMILY. A year older than Zoey, she has blond pigtails, a face full of freckles, glasses and a beret (her scout group's?). She's wearing a white lab coat, and carrying a clipboard. That clipboard follows her everywhere.

EMILY
(interrupting)
He wasn't lying. He just can't see them anymore.

Drews nods.

DREW
Zoey, meet Emily. Our lead intelligence agent. She gets straight A's and everything.

EMILY
My research indicates that once children begin the 6th grade, they stop believing in monsters.

DREW
Holden's interests-- his *focus*-- has... shifted. Hormones and adolescence and video games cloud his imagination.

Emily leads Zoey over to the cage. Smoke wafts behind the glass.

EMILY
If Holden were here now, he'd see an empty cell.
(beat)
Uh, so, what do you see, Zoey?

SUDDENLY, TWO GLOWING EYES APPEAR IN THE SMOKE. And as Zoey presses her nose up against the smoke monster becomes more defined, resembling a giant, purple octopus.

ZOEY
(whispers)
I see... a *monster*.

Drew paces back and forth, not paying any attention to Zoey, who's begun tapping on the glass. Eventually, Emily waves her off to stop.

DREW
There comes a day-- a day I dread-- where every child believes for the last time. Holden's reached that point. Me?

(MORE)

DREW (CONT'D)

I believe less and less every day.
And that scares me more than the
monsters do. Which brings me to
you. I need someone to train. A
protector. Someone to take my
rightful place before it's too--

Zoey swipes a sword mounted on the wall and is already
through the door, a blur behind her (*or if you want to be
cartoonier, a Zoey shaped cloud remains and she's already
inside the room*).

ZOEY (O.S.)

I'm in!

CUT TO:

INT. PLAYGROUND OBSERVATION ROOM/MONSTER CAGE - CONTINUOUS

WE INTERCUT AS NEEDED between Zoey and the octopus monster in
the cage and Drew and Emily observing in the adjacent room.

Zoey is midair, ready to slice one of the monster tentacles.
She's blindsided, however, by another tentacle and knocked
right into the window where Drew and Emily are watching. As
she slides down the glass, Emily begins making notes on her
clipboard.

EMILY

Our new recruit is impulsive.

DREW

She's also brave.

Zoey runs at the monster, weaving and flipping through the
tentacles.

EMILY

Hmm... Athletic.

Zoey runs around the monster, pulling the tentacles, wrapping
them around the body of the beast.

DREW

And resourceful.

Zoey ties the tentacles together in a bow and turns to the
window.

ZOEY

Can I start training today? I gotta
get ready for this weekend.

Drew and Emily exchange knowing glances.

EMILY

Why? What's this weekend?

Close-up on Zoey's face. She grins. She's not alone anymore.

ZOEY

I'm going to Gramma's house.

Zoey pulls down a pair of goggles over her eyes. There is an LED light duct-taped to the nose of the goggles. She switches it on. THE LIGHT BLOWS OUT THE CAMERA, WHICH WE USE TO DISGUISE A CUT (BELOW).

During the DIP TO WHITE:

ZOEY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

"And this time, I'll be ready."

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE/HALLWAY - EVENING

Zoey looks one direction and the brightness drops. We see we're back at Grandma's House (as partially seen in the TEASER). But this is a couple hours before that.

The camera PULLS BACK and we see that Zoey is standing in the foyer of her Grandmother's house wearing the specialized headgear and blue tooth headpiece.

She walks down the hallway, swinging her head left and right, casting beams of light down the darkened hallway; looking for a monster in every corner.

She opens the bathroom door and carefully ventures inside...

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE/BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

A quick sweep reveals... nothing. She touches the earpiece.

ZOEY

Eight-thirty P.M. Downstairs
bathroom: all clear.

Venturing out into the hallway once more...

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

This time, she eyes the closet door under the stairs. She cautiously opens the door, like she were defusing a bomb, cutting that wire, only to find the closet stuffed with junk (board games, chairs, boxes, tennis rackets) and begins to paw through the junk, searching for... something.

Suddenly A THUMP. She jumps. Another THUMP. She dives out of the closet and turns back to watch as a tennis ball bounces out of the closet, ricocheting off a chair, and rolls out into the hallway. FOLLOWING HER SIGH OF RELIEF, an entire box of Christmas ornaments tips and spills into the hallway, burying Zoey completely.

GRANDMA

(O.S.)

Zoooeey?!

GRANDMA enters the room. She's in her 60's, textbook grandmother look, faint resemblance to Zoey and Holden. Hands on hips, she looks down at the pile of junk on the ground.

GRANDMA (CONT'D)

What are you doing, young lady?

Zoey pops her head out of the pile and smiles innocently.

ZOEY

Playing?

GRANDMA

Well, it's time for bed, Peanut.

ZOEY

Aww--

GRANDMA

I want you to march down to the basement, grab some extra blankets, wash up, and then straight to bed while I clean this mess up.

ZOEY

Oh! The basement! Sure thing, Gramma!

(sotto)

I was gonna patrol there next anyway.

Like the Flash, Zoey bolts out of the room, the ornaments clattering about in her wake.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDMA'S BASEMENT - MINUTES LATER

Zoey cautiously descends the staircase into the dark basement. As she scans the room, the beam from her headlight illuminates the items stored in the basement. A table, an large, storage freezer, a sewing table, a Christmas tree, an old sofa, a unicorn, the washer and dryer-- WAIT, A UNICORN?!

Zoey turns off her headlight and DIVES BEHIND THE WASHER. She scoots to the edge of the cover and pulls out a tiny mirror taped to a telescoping pointer from her pocket, which she extends and holds out, trying to get an exact location on the unicorn. Zoey spots the unicorn's shadow, and slowly draws out her sword/weapon.

ZOEY
(sing-songy whispering)
I gooottt yoooouuuu...

Zoey snaps the mirror closed and springs through the air like a cat, and attacks the unicorn. She rolls around on the ground, struggling with the beast, when suddenly the lights switch ON.

HOLDEN BOUNDS DOWN THE STAIRCASE, frowning, he's on his cellphone.

HOLDEN
Yeah, I know, but I don't think she likes you, dude. Ha-Hang on a minute.
(shouting)
Zoey! You down here?

Holden looks over at Zoey. She's standing next to a large cardboard box labeled "toys," where she's beheaded a unicorn stuffed animal. She looks at the toy, then looks up at Holden and back.

ZOEY
(laughing nervously)
Can't be too careful.
(dead serious)
Did you know that unicorns eat children?!

Holden sighs. And picks up the quilts on the old sofa. Holding them up, he gives Zoey a stern look.

HOLDEN
Bedtime.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDMA'S GUEST ROOM - A LITTLE LATER

It's dark, but the room is lit by moonlight. It's an adult room, but there is a bookcase facing the bed that is full of creepy porcelain dolls. Zoey is sleeping in a large bed, tossing and turning. She stops. Looks up at the dolls.

ZOY

So, you guys wanna come to life so we can fight? This's boo-ring...

The dolls stare back blankly. Zoey sighs and swings down from the bed and puts on her headlamp.

ZOY (CONT'D)

Pssh... you guys are no fun. I'm getting some milk.

She EXITS into...

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS

...and strolls down the hallway towards the kitchen. She doesn't seem to notice the creaking footsteps behind her. Zoey enters the kitchen...

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

...and opens the fridge and pulls out the milk. As she closes the fridge door, we see two glowing eyes in the distance.

Zoey climbs up on a stool and pulls down a tiny glass from the cupboard (looks like a shot glass). She pours some milk and then takes it down like a shot.

THE MONSTER MOVES CLOSER AND CLOSER.

ZOY

(to no one)

Another one, barman!

She pours another shot and drinks it. She jumps off the stool and opens the fridge. Zoey struggles to get the heavy milk back up on the shelf. She's up on tiptoes, straining.

From behind her, A LARGE, FURRY ARM grabs the milk and puts it back up on the shelf.

ZOY (CONT'D)

(murmurs)

Thanks.

Zoey slams the door and starts off towards the hallway in a daze...

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

...not registering what just happened for a beat. BUT THEN--
HER EYES WIDEN.

THE CAMERA SWITCHES TO HER P.O.V. and she looks around the hallway in a panic. A shadow catches her eye and she stops, and steps towards it.

The camera switches angles, and now, we watch as a large, furry, yellow monster with horns rises up behind Zoey and begins growling. She turns. Her eyes widen.

ZOEY

Where have you been?!

The monster frowns, cocking its head to the side like a confused puppy:

MONSTER

Barooo?

ZOEY

Seriously. I've been waiting for you to show up all--

The monster SWIPES AT Zoey, knocking her down the hall, into the wall. She rebounds quickly, and charges at the monster. She kicks him, and drops to the ground. The monster reaches for her, but she rolls behind him between his legs and he stumbles forward, crashing into the wall. While he grabs his head in pain, she jumps up and kicks him in the back. The monster falls forward and growls as he slams his fist into the ground, electricity spewing forth.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE HOLDEN'S ROOM - MEANWHILE

Inside the other guest room, Holden plays a wartime first-person shooter. It's dimly lit and he has a gaming headset on.

HOLDEN

Yeah! Headshot, yo!

Then: THUMP TH-THUMP-UMP comes from the hallway, through the walls.

FRIEND (O.S.)
 (via headset)
 Is that your sister again?! Man,
 glad I'm an only child...

HOLDEN (CONT'D)
 (into headset)
 Yeah, I'm gonna camp out in the
 shadows. Hit the head, see what's
 going on out there. Get her to keep
 it down. Keep an eye on me.

CUT TO:

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

A door in the hallway opens and HOLDEN EMERGES. Both Zoey and the monster look at him expectantly.

ZOEY
 Holden! Help! I need a weapon!

Holden heads to the door across the hall, the bathroom door.

HOLDEN
 (annoyed)
 Kinda in the middle'a something
 right now, Zoey.

He closes the door. And the monster looks back at Zoey. She shrugs and charges the monster again. Flying through the air, she's poised to punch, but the monster grabs her midair, and the camera follows them as they wrestle to the ground and roll down the hallway.

It halts when they hear the SOUND OF A FLUSHING TOILET, and HOLDEN REEMERGES from the bathroom.

ZOEY
 Seriously, a little help here...

HOLDEN SIGHS as he makes his way back to his bedroom. He stops at the doorway, RUBBERNECKING between Zoey and his game.

HOLDEN
 (distractedly)
 O-Ok, ok. Here's, uh, a little tip:
 you have to weaken a monster before
 you can defeat it.

Zoey jumps up and KICKS THE MONSTER in the face. It doesn't even flinch.

ZOEY
How do I do that?

HOLDEN
Simple. Stop believing.

The monster WHAPS her in the head.

ZOEY
That's gonna be a *little* difficult
right now!

The monster REARS BACK AND ROARS. Zoey's eyes widen and she starts running away. The monster gives slow chase.

HOLDEN
Your fear is only making it
stronger.

Zoey stops abruptly.

ZOEY
What?
(half beat)
Wait; I got an idea!

HOLDEN
Does it involve going back to bed
before you wake up Grandma?

Zoey turns and runs towards the monster, flips over him, and then grabs him from behind. Zoey, full of love, dives at the monster, holding on to its neck and hugs it (literally) to death. The monster is put off; confused.

ZOEY
Oh, my God, I love you, Beastie!
You're the cutest thing ever!

As Zoey hugs the monster, he starts shrinking.

ZOEY (CONT'D)
I *lovelovelove* you!

The camera cuts to Holden, he is leaning against the wall with his arms crossed. Patiently waiting for Zoey to finish playing.

WE SWITCH TO HIS P.O.V. and we see that Zoey is merely hugging a small stuffed animal version of the monster.

HOLDEN
Ok, looks like you won. Back in
bed. NOW.

The camera zooms in on Zoey's face. She looks elated, beaming with pride:

ZOEY

I won.

CUT TO:

INT. ZOEY'S BEDROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Zoey is in her bedroom, she crosses the room, and opens her hamster cage. She tosses in the monster stuffed animal and slams the cage door. Same pride:

ZOEY

I won.

CUT TO:

INT. ZOEY'S CLASSROOM - THE NEXT DAY

Zoey's teacher, from the waist down, is pacing in front of the chalkboard. Zoey looks on from her desk, bored, head in hand. Her classmate from earlier sits next to her, his head is on the desk, his eyes are sleepy. Like if a child were hungover.

ZOEY

I want recess.

CLASSMATE

Ugh, I know...

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - A LITTLE LATER

Zoey runs up the hill, smiling and laughing.

ZOEY

I won! Drew, I beat it!

She climbs up the playset to the mouth of the tube slide and jumps down the slide head first.

ZOEY (CONT'D)

You hear me? I won!

Zoey exits out the regular end of the slide instead of into The KinderGuard HQ. Her face falls. She looks around.

ZOEY (CONT'D)

Drew?

Zoey looks around, distressed.

SFX: TAP TAP TAP

Zoey turns to see Drew, standing next to the entrance of the slide, tapping his cane against the side.

DREW

To get in the Kinderguard, you
gotta have a key.

ZOEY

I slayed the monster. Uh, gimme a
key?

Drew chuckles to himself and tosses a key down to Zoey, who jumps up and catches it midair.

DREW

C'mon, rookie. We got a mission.

Drew jumps down the slide.

The camera follows him and as the slide gets deeper, the shot
TUNNELS OUT TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE.