

MALLADJUSTED
EPISODE 1
"IT'S A MALL WORLD AFTER ALL"

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EXT. PLAINFIELDVIEW - LATE SUMMER, SUNSET

"Welcome to Plainfieldview" sign sits on a very flat landscape of the clean, midwestern city of Plainfieldview. A large city way off in the distance. A shot of the main street: office buildings, shops, houses with lush green lawns and friendly neighbors. Around a corner and past a field...

EXT. CROSSROADS MALL - SUNSET

An abandoned mall: cracked concrete, weeds, stains, graffiti, broken lights. Three boys are skateboarding. A gaggle of real estate agents are gathered to the side.

The Carson family exit a moving truck at the back of the parking lot. JULES (17) holds their fluffy ginger cat, EDDIE. SAM (15) is dressed as Marty McFly. LAUREN (45) is wearing a bedazzled denim jacket. TREVOR (47) spreads his arms in awe as they stare at the mall.

TREVOR

It's bigger than I remember.

LAUREN

It's... dirtier.

JULES

It says "Grossroads".

TREVOR squints at the nest in the letter C.

LAUREN

Honey, you need glasses.

TREVOR

I can see fine!

He makes a hand circle around his eye to "see better".

LAUREN

Aw Sam, you'll be like a princess, sharing a home with birds.

TREVOR

Those are birds? They gotta go.

SAM

I hate this! I don't wanna live in a capitalist hellscape. I miss our old place in Pinnacle City.

JULES

I miss my life! Cut down in my
prime, the best roles ahead of me-

TREVOR

Enough! We bought a mall, we're
living here, and that's that!

LAUREN

I love when you take charge.

They begin the trek to the entrance.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I told you not to park so far away.

TREVOR

I wanna take it all in! That's what
she-

(realizing who he's with)

So girls, what do you think?

JULES

Why are those people in suits here?

TREVOR

That's the realtor's association. I
guess it's a pretty big deal they
sold this place. I mean, the zoning
commission passed that amendment-

ROB

(from a distance)

Congrats Trevbro!

TREVOR

(he waves to ROB)

Thanks bromigo!

SAM

"Bromigo"? Big yikes, dad.

In the background, ROB celebrates with the group of realtors,
some of them looking depressed as they hand over money.

TREVOR

That's just how we roll. Back in
high school,

CUT TO:

EXT. POOL - 1993

YOUNG TREVOR is in a pool of jello, the lights in the backyard suddenly turn on. YOUNG ROB looks around in panic and runs over the fence, YOUNG TREVOR is stuck-

TREVOR (V.O.)
 Rob and I got into all kinds of
 crazy trouble, he used to convince
 me to do the stupidest things like-

BACK TO:

EXT. CROSSROADS MALL - SUNSET - PRESENT

TREVOR
 (realizing again)
 I mean, he was NOT a good influence
 and he *definitely* took advantage of
 me, but people change. We're bros!

TREVOR turns back and waves to ROB, who is counting cash.

SAM
 No, you're just his ATM.

TREVOR
 Don't say that. He called *in*
concern for a *friend* 'cause he'd
 heard about our apartment fire.

SAM
 AFTER we got our settlement.

JULES
 Now you blew it on this total flop.

TREVOR
 This place is magical! Like a
 palace. It was my favorite place to-

SAM
 Drop the shallow nostalgia for a
 throne to capitalism.

TREVOR
 Hey, I'm outta the rat race. Let me
 have a fun project.

JULES
 (sarcastically)
 Soooo fun.

TREVOR

It's an investment. And a bargain!

TREVOR picks up his pace in excitement.

JULES

What's that saying that's something about "more than we bargained for"?

LAUREN

Let your dad be happy. You'll get your shares when you turn 18-

JULES shows an app that is counting down 255 days.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

Then you can do what makes you happy. Go girl, boss-babe. Until then, just try to make it sparkle!

LAUREN walks ahead with TREVOR. JULES fumes.

JULES

I'll sparkle on stage, back in Pinnacle City, *finally*, a SOLO act-

SAM

Take me with you-

The boys (ZACH, GENTRY, & RICKY) skate by.

TREVOR

HEY HOOLIGANS! THIS IS OUR PROPERTY!

SAM and JULES are mortified.

SAM

Who says "Hooligans"?!

JULES

God Dad, we just got here!

LAUREN

I don't know about this, Trevor.

TREVOR

Don't be scared, they're just kids.

LAUREN

No, I mean I don't know if there's a good spot to hang my curtains.

She lifts up bedazzled curtains, casting a bright light toward the skaters, causing GENTRY to fall in the background.

GENTRY
MY EYES!

At the main steps, TREVOR jingles his keys with pride.

TREVOR
Let's go see!

The family goes to the main entrance. SAM stops by the boys.

GENTRY
Since when is this *your* property?

SAM
Since we bought it.

In the background, TREVOR pulls open the door, it comes off.

TREVOR
I can fix that...
(calling to SAM)
It's unlocked!

GENTRY
No cap, like, actually moving in,
to like, live here?

SAM
Yeah, it's totally stupid, I know.

RICKY
Not only that, but it's *stupid*.

SAM
Right, who lives in a mall?

GENTRY
Especially this one. "Cursedroads".

SAM
What do you mean?

GENTRY
This place is like... haunted.

SAM
With spirits?

RICKY
No, dummy, with ghosts. We think.

ZACH
We were skating here a few months
ago, until... something happened.

SAM
What happened?

GENTRY
I did an ollie down the escalator,
360-shove it off the kiosk-

ZACH
We felt this huge gust of energy.
Something... supernatural.

SAM
Wait, what day was it?

ZACH
March 15th.

SAM
Whoa. The day of the blackout...

SAM looks at the mall with intrigue and excitement.

RICKY
I don't ride in there anymore. I
don't go in there *at all*. For
anything. Mostly 'cuz it's haunted,
but also, you can't shop. *At all*.

SAM
Yeah, I got that.

RICKY points at SAM and laughs.

RICKY
You can't shop! HA!

SAM
I don't wanna-

GENTRY
Right? How stupid do you gotta be
to buy a DEAD MALL?! Stupid chick.

RICKY and GENTRY laugh. SAM gets serious.

SAM
Excuse me?! "Chick"? Chicks,
especially MALES, are treated as
disposable commodities by the meat
industry, and-

RICKY grabs his crotch.

RICKY
I'll give you THIS meat industry.

The two boys laugh. GENTRY skates away, RICKY runs after, dragging his skateboard behind him.

GENTRY
Good luck in there, mall-rat!

ZACH
Sorry about them, they're a little... un-evolved.

SAM
They came from the same primordial soup as my family.

They laugh and smile.

ZACH
I should probably go before your dad goes all Clint Eastwood on me.

SAM
"GET OFF MY... parking lot"?

They laugh. ZACH fiddles with his ripped jeans threads.

ZACH
My name is-um, I'm Zach.

SAM
Imzach?

ZACH
(laughing)
Just- Zach.

SAM
Dang, "Imzach" is such a rad name.

ZACH
Oh-

SAM
But too late, ya blew it.

ZACH looks worried until SAM laughs.

SAM (CONT'D)
I'm messing with you, Zach. Sam.

ZACH
Dope. I'm not scared of the mall.

SAM
Oh good, then, I'll see you around.

ZACH
Bet... See ya.

ZACH skates away and SAM smiles, before turning to head up the steps into the mall. ZACH wipes out and recovers, looking up at her. She didn't see, she goes into the mall.

CUT TO:

INT. CROSSROADS MALL

The interior is worse than the exterior. Broken glass in storefronts, broken planters with dead plants and dirt spilling out, graffiti, a shabby, naked Christmas tree, and the once-magnificent, now moldy fountain is the centerpiece. The family stands in a row, SAM joins them to take it all in.

JULES
We're gonna die here.

TREVOR
Stop.

LAUREN
No.

SAM
I *am* feeling a presence here...

SAM digs sage and a lighter out of her backpack and smudges.

JULES
No way, don't even start on your soul-summoning salt-circle stupid-

Suddenly, a large bird flies overhead with a loud "CAW"! EDDIE jumps out of JULES's arms and takes off out of sight.

JULES (CONT'D)
EDDIE! Is she gonna be okay?

TREVOR
She'll be fine, she's an animal.

LAUREN
It *is* pretty bad, Trev. The photos Rob sent us must've been before whatever apocalypse happened here.

TREVOR
Definitely not how I remember it, but with some sprucing up-

JULES

No! Do I gotta call CPS?!
 (she holds up her phone)
 Look, I don't have a single bar! No
 Wifi?! How will I stream my videos?

TREVOR

You'll be fine. When I was your
 age, streaming meant taking your-

TREVOR AND JULES

Fishing rod to the creek-

JULES

Great, Dad. Thanks. I'm gonna get
 some rare fungal infection-

SAM

You're a rare fungal-

LAUREN

GIRLS! We're here, and we own this,
 so we're stubbornly committing to
 our purchase-

JULES

Cause no one else wants to buy it?

TREVOR

Let's look around before we judge
 it, okay? And if anything goes
 down, run for the nearest exit.

They wander together, starting with the empty food court.

TREVOR (CONT'D)

(to LAUREN, militantly)
 That reminds me, we need to secure
 all entrances, so, remind me to
 remember.

JULES

"Confection Injection"? Are these
 candy needles?

LAUREN

DON'T TOUCH ANYTHING!

TREVOR

Remember the cinnamon rolls they
 had? Anywhere in the mall, you
 could just smell it-

JULES
 (nose plugged)
 I'b not gonna sbell anythigg
 anytibe sood.

SAM
 Don't worry, I'm smudging.

TREVOR
 Have some trust, okay?

They walk toward the center, looking out over the atrium.

TREVOR (CONT'D)
 Just think of it like home. Look at
 that- the JC Nickel, that's me and
 your mom's room.

JULES
 Why do you get the big store?

LAUREN
 Because we're two people.

TREVOR
 And we called it. You wanna share a-

JULES
 No way.

SAM
 Never again.

SAM (CONT'D)
 I'll take... the CassetteShed. Good
 vibes and shelves for my crystals.

JULES
 What's a cassette?

LAUREN
 Shut up.

TREVOR
 Please tell me you're joking.

SAM
 You know, those plastic rectangular
 thingies at the antique store?

LAUREN
 You shut right up-

JULES
 Whatever! I pick the Cuddly Cuties
 Store. Least likely death trap.

LAUREN
 (to TREVOR)
 Does your mom still have those bins
 of Cuddly Cuties?

TREVOR
 Yeah, she's hoping there's still
 some value there.

LAUREN
 Just clinging to an old 90s relic
 like it's some good investment.

SAM and JULES exchange a look.

TREVOR
 Well, I'm glad we're here. Can't
 wait to see this place in all its
 glory.

LAUREN
 It's gonna shine.

LAUREN holds up her bedazzler.

JULES
 Why are there so many escalators?

There are too many escalators. The parents both shrug.

SAM
 I think we were meant to come here.

TREVOR
 Say what now?

LAUREN
 Really?

JULES
 Mold is eating her brain already.

SAM
 I'm just feeling like... we belong
 here.

JULES
 RIGHT, *this* is where we belong...
 with all the pigeon feathers and
 what I hope is *pigeon feces*?!

TREVOR
 Alright, we can all admit, this
 place... is for the birds.

He laughs alone.

TREVOR (CONT'D)
 (to the family)
 We're all laughing, but it's a good sign that that this place sustains life. See the watering hole?

TREVOR squints in the distance.

TREVOR (CONT'D)
 No, wait... did they put in a pool?

LAUREN
 That's the play zone, it's flooded.

TREVOR
 Oh yeah! I remember Father Fred's Fiddlin' Funtown.

Close up on a fallen sign with a country music flair: "Father Fred's Fiddlin' Funtown (donated by the Catholic Church)"

LAUREN
 That didn't age well.

TREVOR
 Yeah, it looks terrible.
 (shrugs)
 Could be a pool eventually. The possibilities are endless! And at least we're not hated here!

JULES
 Give it time.

JULES holds up her phone for reception, no luck.

SAM
 Hey, where'd Eddie run off to?

CUT TO:

INT. CROSSROADS MALL - INDUSTRIAL BACK HALLWAY

A back hallway, untouched by looters. It's dark, but a mysterious glowing off-screen lights the scene. The hall is filled with closed backdoors and spiderwebs. Dusty mannequins and cans are barely visible through the webs. Close up on an old can of nacho cheese, open on the floor. Close side view of EDDIE licking it. She looks up and walks toward a corner, the glowing growing brighter against her fur. She steps into a wall and her body disappears.

CUT TO: