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screenwriting sample
Ether Run | young adult scifi spec pilot | 2020

In this excerpt:

MATT, back from school, finally learns what's causing his sister RITA's erratic behavior.

"...equal parts creepy and fun." - Blacklist Evaluation

ETHER RUN sample
Unproduced spec pilot

EXT. TEXAS DRAINAGE FIELD - NIGHT

Thunder RUMBLES. RITA's (18) group of four runs through knee-high wild grass followed by her brother, MATT (20).

At the nearest street, a football field away, a police SUV stops. Its SPOTLIGHT CUTS across the field, throwing panicked teenagers into silhouette.

POLICEMAN (SPEAKER)
Don't run through the drainage ditch! There's a lightning warning.

Rita's group runs towards the ditch. Matt catches up to Rita.

MATT
(out of touch)
Is it...drugs? Just tell me.

RITA
Oh my god! Keep running.

They make their way down a steep embankment into the drainage ditch. Rita's group jumps in immediately and SPLASHES to the other side.

Matt stops at the water, breathing hard.

MATT
Are you kidding?

The others are already up the embankment on the opposite side. Matt looks around. There's nowhere to cross. He holds his nose and SPLASHES after them.

EXT. THE CLEARING

Matt crests the opposite side, shaking water off soaked sneakers. Rita, CARL, MACIE and NATE are stopped up ahead, near a line of PINE TREES planted along another road.

MATT
Rita! Stop! I don't care what it is you're into. This ends now.

RITA

We had to run. They would have
arrested us. Carl's dad was there-

Rita falls silent. The anger drains from her face.

MATT

What are you talking about? It
really is drugs, isn't it?

RITA

(quiet)

What's it doing here?

The others are silent too.

MATT

You know what? I don't even want
to know. But if you think just
because Mom is gone that she can't
bring the hammer down, you are
way, way out of...

(finally notices)

Why are y'all so quiet?

Matt turns. A RED DOOR stands in the middle of the field,
attached to nothing.

MATT

Was that there a minute ago?

The others exchange glances. Macie leans towards Carl:

MACIE

(whispered)

It was supposed to show across
Kingsland.

CARL

I know.

Matt circles around the door. The other side is gray concrete.

MATT

What is this thing?

Silence. Matt looks at his sister. She avoids his gaze.

MATT

Rita?

CARL

It's an art installation someone
put up.

RITA
(quickly)
That's right. It's a 'project.'

MACIE
Let's skip it.

NATE
Shame to waste it when it's right
here.

Nate swats at a mosquito on his arm.

MATT
What the *hell* are you talking
about? Why are you being so weird
about this door-

Matt touches the handle. The group TENSES UP. Matt studies
their reaction. He presses down on the handle. Old metal parts
GRIND. Carl reaches for him.

CARL
I wouldn't.

Matt purses his lips. In one quick movement, he SHOVES,
and somehow,
the door OPENS.

On the other side, impossibly, is a crumbling CONCRETE
STAIRWELL, headed down into the earth.

Matt's jaw drops.

RITA
Goddammit, Matt.

He checks around the side again. The back is still there, still
flat gray. He looks into the doorway. It opens on a bunker
stairwell, lit by light bulbs suspended on cable.

And it's a long way down. Five stories? Six?

RITA
Please. Don't tell Mom and Dad.

Silence. Matt didn't even hear her.