

STRANGER THINGS

Episode #101

"Chapter One: The Vanishing of Will Byers"

Written & Directed by

The Duffer Brothers

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STRANGER THINGS**"Chapter One: The Vanishing of Will Byers"****CAST LIST**

JOYCE BYERS
POLICE CHIEF JIM HOPPER
MIKE WHEELER
NANCY WHEELER
JONATHAN BYERS
ELEVEN/YOUNG GIRL
LUCAS SINCLAIR
DUSTIN HENDERSON
KAREN WHEELER

DR. MARTIN BRENNER
WILL BYERS
STEVE HARRINGTON
BARBARA HOLLAND
FLORENCE
OFFICER CALLAHAN
OFFICER POWELL
CONNIE/FRIENDLY WOMAN
THE MONSTER
HOLLY WHEELER
TED WHEELER

MR. CLARKE
BENNY HAMMOND
EARL
LEAD AGENT
SCIENTIST #1
AGENT #1
JAMES
TROY
MIDDLE-SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
VOLUNTEER
LOCAL NEWSWOMAN

*

STRANGER THINGS**"Chapter One: The Vanishing of Will Byers"****SET LIST****INTERIORS**

BYERS HOUSE
 LIVING ROOM
 KITCHEN
 HAWKINS LABS
 FREIGHT ELEVATOR
 LABORATORY (RIFT)
 PREP ROOM
 RADIO MONITORING ROOM
 SUB-LEVEL CORRIDOR
 WHEELER HOUSE
 BASEMENT
 DINING ROOM
 KITCHEN
 LIVING ROOM
 NANCY'S ROOM
 UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

BENNY'S BURGERS & ICE CREAM
 DINING ROOM
 KITCHEN
 PREP AREA
 STORAGE ROOM

BYERS SHED

CASTLE BYERS

HIGH SCHOOL
 GIRLS' BATHROOM
 HALLWAY

HOPPER'S TRAILER
 BATHROOM
 BEDROOM
 LIVING ROOM

LOCAL NEWS DESK

MIDDLE SCHOOL
 A.V. CLUB ROOM
 MR. CLARKE'S CLASSROOM
 PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE

POLICE STATION
 BULLPEN
 ENTRANCE
 HOPPER'S OFFICE

EXTERIORS

BYERS HOUSE
 BACK YARD
 SHED
 FRONT YARD

BENNY'S BURGERS & ICE CREAM
 BACK
 FRONT

FOREST
 ROAD & SHORTCUT

HIGH SCHOOL

HOPPER'S TRAILER

HAWKINS LABS

MIDDLE SCHOOL
 BACK (BIKE RACKS)

NEIGHBORHOOD
 DUSTIN'S HOUSE
 LUCAS'S HOUSE
 WHEELER HOUSE
 GARAGE

* POLICE STATION

WOODS

We HEAR A LOW-END RUMBLE. Like the GROWL OF AN UNSEEN BEAST.

Superimpose titles:

NOVEMBER 6th, 1983

HAWKINS, INDIANA

1 EXT. HAWKINS - SKY - NIGHT 1

1

FADE UP on the night sky. Dark clouds swallow the stars.

WE TILT DOWN to find an IMPOSING BUILDING, sitting alone in a dense woods. Superimpose titles:

HAWKINS NATIONAL LABORATORY

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

2 INT. HAWKINS LABS - SUB-LEVEL CORRIDOR

2

We are now inside the laboratory... SLOWLY CREEPING down a long windowless corridor toward a STEEL DOOR. Fluorescent lights flicker... a SIREN WARBLES... And we continue to HEAR that LOW-END RUMBLE...

We DRAW CLOSER to the door... and closer... and...

WHOOM! THE DOOR EXPLODES OPEN. THE HINGES SHRIEKING.

A SCIENTIST staggers out. Terrified.

He sprints down the corridor. Running for his life.

Faster, faster, faster --

3 INT. HAWKINS LABS - SUB-LEVEL CORRIDOR & ELEVATOR

3

He rounds a corner. Up ahead: a FREIGHT ELEVATOR.

He mashes the CALL BUTTON. As he waits for the elevator to arrive, he keeps looking back over his shoulder... down that long corridor. Terrified.

The elevator arrives. The doors grind vertically open.

The scientist leaps inside. He hits the button for the top floor. As he waits for the doors to close, he hears:

A STRANGE RUMBLING NOISE. COMING FROM ABOVE HIM.

He looks up at the ceiling. His eyes grow wide and --

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

WATCH THROUGH THE FLICKERING LIGHTS AS THE SCIENTIST IS SUCKED UP TOWARD THE CEILING BY *SOMETHING*. HIS LEGS KICK VIOLENTLY IN MID-AIR AND HE SCREAMS IN HORROR AND THEN --

The elevator doors snap shut.

4 **EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT**

4

HISS! LAWN SPRINKLERS kick on.

We are now in a 1980s SUBURBAN CUL-DE-SAC. Quiet. Calm.

We HEAR the VOICE OF A YOUNG BOY. Dramatic, intense.

MIKE (V.O.)
Do you hear that? Listen...

We FOCUS on a TWO-STORY HOUSE at the end of the cul-de-sac.

The mailbox reads: "THE WHEELERS."

MIKE (V.O.)
... Something is coming...
something hungry for blood...

5 **INT. WHEELER HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT**

5

A GROUP OF BOYS, 12 years old, play DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS.

They sit around a CARD TABLE. A GRID MAP is spread out on the table before them, along with a nearly empty pizza box, canned Cokes, and the all-important DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS MONSTER MANUAL.

MIKE WHEELER, 12, is the "Dungeon Master" and de facto leader of our group.

MIKE (CONT'D)
... A shadow grows on the wall
behind you... swallowing you in
darkness... it is almost here...

The other boys lean forward. Riveted. We survey them:

LUCAS SINCLAIR, 12, playing as a knight. He is very small but his loud mouth more than makes up for it.

DUSTIN HENDERSON, 12, playing as a dwarf. He is the most fearful -- and least confident -- of our group.

WILL BYERS, 12, playing as a wizard. He is soft-spoken, gentle, delicate.

5 CONTINUED:

5

WILL
... What is it?

DUSTIN
What if it's the Demogorgon? We're
in deep shit if it's the Demogorgon --

LUCAS
It's not the Demogorgon --

Mike waits for them to settle down. Then:

MIKE
An army of Troglodytes charge into
the chamber!

He slams SIX WINGED MINIATURES onto the map.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Their tails drum the floor. Boom!
Boom! Boom!

DUSTIN
Troglodytes?!

LUCAS
Toldja.

DUSTIN
Pfff.

Mike looks over his shoulder. His eyes grow wide.

MIKE
Wait... do you hear that? Boom!
Boom! BOOM! That sound... it
didn't come from the *Troglodytes*.
No. It came from something else...

Mike slams a LARGE TWO-HEADED MONSTER MINIATURE onto the map.

MIKE (CONT'D)
THE DEMOGORGON.

The boys stare.

DUSTIN
We're in deep shit.

MIKE
Will, your action.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

5

Will swallows. God, he wishes it wasn't his turn.

WILL
I -- I don't know --

LUCAS
Fireball him --

WILL
I'd have to roll thirteen or higher --

DUSTIN
Too risky. Cast a protection spell --

LUCAS
Don't be a wimp! Fireball him!

DUSTIN
Protection spell -- !

MIKE
The Demogorgon is tired of your
silly human bickering. It stomps
toward you. BOOM!

LUCAS
FIREBALL HIM WILL!

MIKE
Another step. BOOM!

DUSTIN
Cast protection!

MIKE
It roars in anger --

LUCAS DUSTIN
Fireball -- ! Protection --

MIKE
And --

WILL
FIREBALL!

Will rolls the dice. Too hard. The dice scatters to the
other side of the basement. It lands by the basement steps.

LUCAS
What is it?!

WILL
I don't know!

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (3)

5

DUSTIN
Is it a thirteen?

WILL
I DON'T KNOW!

The boys scramble to look at the dice when --

WHOOM! The basement door swings open. The boys look up to find KAREN WHEELER, late 30s, Mike's mom, standing at the top of the stairs.

MIKE
Mom, we're in the middle of a campaign --

KAREN
You mean the *end*.

She taps her watch.

KAREN (CONT'D)
Fifteen after.

6 INT. WHEELER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

6

Mike chases his mom up out of the basement.

MIKE
Just twenty more minutes --

KAREN
It's a school night, Michael, and I just put Holly to bed. You can finish next weekend --

MIKE
That'll ruin the flow --

KAREN
Michael --

MIKE
I'm serious, Mom! It took two weeks to plan. How was I supposed to know it'd take ten hours -- ?

KAREN
You've been playing *ten hours*?

Mike's dad, TED, 45, is watching TV. Or *trying* to. The signal is terrible; a snowstorm of STATIC obscures the image.

He smacks the TV.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

MIKE
Dad, don't you think -- ?

TED
(not even listening)
I think you should listen to your
mother. DAGGUM PIECE OF JUNK!

He smacks the TV again. The static flares.

7 INT. WHEELER HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

7

Lucas, Dustin, and Will stuff belongings into backpacks.

WILL
Does the seven count?

LUCAS
(shit)
It was a seven?

Will nods.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
Did Mike see it?

Will shakes his head.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
Then it doesn't count.

The boys zip up their backpacks and race up the stairs.

Dustin holds up the pizza box. Still one slice left.

DUSTIN
Hey guys -- anyone want this?!

LUCAS/WILL
No!

Dustin looks back at the pizza. Considers.

8 INT. WHEELER HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

8

Dustin heads upstairs, pizza box in arms. He walks up to a bedroom door. Through a crack in the door, he sees...

NANCY WHEELER. This is Mike's sister, 16, girl-next-door pretty. She is on her bed in pajamas, a phone in hand, fingers twisting its cord, slender legs kicked in the air.

8 CONTINUED:

8

NANCY

I know, I know, but -- I don't
think so -- yeah, he's cute, but --
Barb -- BARB! -- listen to me --

Dustin waves, getting her attention. Holds up the pizza box.

DUSTIN

Hey Nancy, there's a slice left if
you want. Pepperoni and sausage --

NANCY

(into phone)

Hold on --

Nancy walks over and --

SHUTS THE DOOR in Dustin's face.

9 EXT./INT. WHEELER GARAGE - NIGHT

9

WHOOM! Dustin shuts the garage door behind him.

He's in the middle of eating the last pizza slice. The other
three boys are out here already: Lucas and Will are climbing
onto their bikes; Mike is seeing them off.

DUSTIN

(talking with mouth full)

Something's wrong with your sister.

MIKE

What're you talking about?

DUSTIN

She's got a stick up her butt --

LUCAS

It's 'cause she's seeing that barf
bag, Steve Harrington --

DUSTIN

Yeah, she's turning into a real
jerk.

MIKE

She's always been a real jerk --

Dustin climbs onto his bike.

DUSTIN

Nu-uh. She used to be cool. Like
that time she dressed up as an elf
for our Eldertree campaign --

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

MIKE
Four years ago!

DUSTIN
Just sayin'.

Dustin and Lucas bike off out of the garage.

Will lingers behind a second longer. Turns back to Mike.

WILL
... It was a seven.

MIKE
What?

WILL
The roll. It was a seven. The
Demogorgon -- it got me.
(shrugs)
See you tomorrow.

Will smiles at Mike, then bikes away, joining the others.

BZZZZZ. The light in the garage flicks. Strange.

Mike switches it off and heads back inside.

10 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

10

The boys bike home. Their handlebar lights wink in the night. And good thing, because it's very dark out here.

Lucas peels off from the group.

LUCAS
See ya, ladies.

DUSTIN
Kiss your mom 'night for me.

Lucas flips him the bird and bikes up a driveway towards a TWO-STORY HOUSE. It looks almost identical to Mike's.

Will and Dustin bike on in silence for a beat, then:

DUSTIN (CONT'D)
Race to my place? Winner gets a comic?

WILL
Any comic?

10 CONTINUED:

10

DUSTIN

Yeah --

Will has heard enough. He starts pedaling. *Fast.*

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Hey!

Dustin pedals in pursuit. But he's already behind. And...

11 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - A FEW MINUTES LATER - NIGHT

11

Will whizzes past a house at the far end of neighborhood.

He waves at Dustin. Now fifty yards back.

WILL

I'll take your "X-Men" one-three-four!

Dustin stops. Out-of-breath.

DUSTIN

(really bummed)

... Man.

12 EXT. FOREST ROAD - LATER - NIGHT

12

Will is now biking along an empty forest road. All alone.

He lives much further out than the rest of his friends. It is even darker out here and quiet; unnervingly so. Only the SOUND of CICADAS and a gentle breeze to keep him company.

He bikes past a LARGE METAL FENCE. A warning sign reads:

HAWKINS NATIONAL LABORATORY.
RESTRICTED AREA. NO TRESPASSING.

His bike's headlight flickers. Will looks down at it. After a beat, the light returns to normal. He looks back up and --

A TALL FIGURE STANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD.

Will yanks the handle bars -- loses control --

He veers off the road -- explodes into --

13 EXT. WOODS - CONTINUOUS

13

And CRASHES. Will flies off the bike. He skids, rolls, eats dirt. As he lies there on the ground, gasping, he hears:

STRANGE GUTTURAL SOUNDS. COMING FROM BEHIND HIM.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

He pushes to his feet and turns to the sound. Foliage shudders. The SOUNDS GROW. Something is *coming*.

Will abandons his bike --

And runs.

14 EXT. BYERS HOUSE - NIGHT

14

Will bursts out of the woods. Up ahead: his HOUSE.

It is small, one story, lower class, falling apart.

15 INT. BYERS HOUSE - NIGHT

15

Will slams the door shut behind him and bolts the lock.

A shaggy dog, CHESTER THE MUTT, races to greet him.

WILL
MOM?! JONATHAN?! MOM?!

He checks his MOM'S BEDROOM. His BROTHER'S BEDROOM.

No one is home. *He is all alone.*

16 INT. BYERS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

16

Will scrambles back to the living room window.

He cups his hands to the glass and peers out into the yard.

It is dark. Murky. Quiet. A gust of wind blows and...

Day-old laundry flutters on a clothes line to REVEAL...

THAT FIGURE AGAIN. JUST STANDING THERE AMONGST THE BILLIONG LAUNDRY. WE CAN'T MAKE OUT ANY FEATURES, BUT ITS PROPORTIONS SEEM... OFF. ITS HEAD IS TOO LARGE. ITS ARMS ARE TOO LONG. ITS BODY IS SWOLLEN AND BENT IN A STRANGE, TWISTED SHAPE.

Another gust of wind. The clothes flutters again and...

The Figure is gone.

Will pales. His heart in his throat.

17 INT. BYERS HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

17

Will rips the phone receiver off the kitchen wall. Dials 911. But --

It does not ring. Just hums with LOW-END STATIC.

17 CONTINUED:

17

WILL
Hello?! HELLO -- ?!

Will pauses. He HEARS SOMETHING on the other line. But not a voice... it is that GUTTURAL SOUND he heard in the woods. The pitch rises and falls, making a series of strange sounds. Words? It is as if the figure... whoever... whatever it is... is somehow speaking to him through the phone receiver.

Behind him, Chester begins to GROWL at the front door.

Will lowers the phone. And looks back at the door.

A SHADOW fills the crack at the base of the door.

And then somehow, *impossibly*, the chain bolt begins to slide open, as if drawn by an invisible hand. The metal SHRIEKS.

Will drops the phone and --

18 EXT. BYERS HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT

18

WHOOM! Will explodes out the back screen door.

He sprints into an OLD WOODEN SHED and --

19 INT. BYERS SHED - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

19

WHAM! He slams the shed doors behind him. Breathing hard.

His eyes dart. Searching for *something*.

The shed is cluttered and dark, lit only by a NAKED LIGHT BULB, hanging from the ceiling. The bulb buzzes, flickers.

At last he spots it:

AN OLD REMINGTON RIFLE. DUSTY. HANGING ON A WALL MOUNT.

Will yanks it down, retrieves a few AMMO SHELLS from a work bench, and loads the rifle as fast as he can, which isn't very fast at all; he is so scared his hands sweat and shake.

Will finishes loading the rifle. He snaps the chamber shut and aims it at the door. The rifle trembles in his hands.

While Will keeps his eyes trained on the door, we notice a SHADOWED FIGURE SLOWLY RISE behind him.

Will senses movement. Turns. He doesn't fire.

He just stares. Paralyzed by fear. Shock.

He fights tears.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

WILL
... P-please --

A HIGH-PITCHED SHRIEKING SOUND SUDDENLY FILLS THE SHED.

WE DON'T SEE WHAT HAPPENS TO WILL; WE JUST WATCH THAT NAKED DANGLING LIGHT BULB. IT GLOWS BRIGHTER AND BRIGHTER AND BRIGHTER, FILLING THE SHED WITH OVERWHELMING WHITE LIGHT. WE THINK THE GLASS OF THE BULB IS GOING TO SHATTER BUT THEN --

The TERRIBLE SHRIEKING sound abruptly stops.

The bulb dims. Returning to normal wattage.

We PULL AWAY from the light.

The shed is empty.

Will has vanished.

MAIN TITLES

20 INT. HOPPER'S TRAILER - LIVING ROOM - MORNING 2

20

We FADE UP on a CHILD'S DRAWING on the wall.

It depicts a perfect family: a MAN, a GIRL, a WOMAN.

WE PAN from the picture and slowly survey this mess of a trailer. We see, among other things...

A dusty TV from which a LOCAL NEWSWOMAN drones (see Appendix #1):

LOCAL NEWSWOMAN (ON TV)
... reports of surges and outages across
the county... We reached out to Roane
County Water and Electric, and...

- A CLUTTER OF BEER BOTTLES
- Opened PLASTIC VIALS.
- A scattering of RED AND BLUE PILLS.
- And last but certainly not least:

-- JIM HOPPER, or "HOP," early 40s. He is sprawled out on a grungy sofa, shirtless, wearing only a pair of worn Levi jeans and a BLUE BRACELET on his wrist.

A RAY OF SUN slices through blinds. Waking him.

He blinks. Grimaces. Hungover.

21 **EXT. HOPPER'S TRAILER - MORNING**

21

Hopper steps out onto a decrepit porch.

He lights up a HAND-ROLLED CIGARETTE. Drags on it.

His trailer is perched on the shore of a lake. It's a bit lonely out here. But damn if it isn't beautiful.

Hop rubs his arms. Getting cold. Enough beauty for now.

22 **INT. HOPPER'S TRAILER - BATHROOM - A LITTLE LATER - MORNING**

22

- Hopper showers. So tiny in here his body barely fits.

- Hopper studies his beard in the mirror. Considers shaving. Doesn't.

- Hopper pops open a PLASTIC VIAL labeled "TUINAL." He shakes out two capsules. Red and blue. Scoops a mouthful of water. Washes them down.

23 **INT. HOPPER'S TRAILER - BEDROOM - A LITTLE LATER - MORNING**

23

Hopper dresses. He yanks on a pair of brown pants... a matching brown collared shirt... a belt with a holster... a 9MM GLOCK... a gray hat... and lastly, he clips on...

A GOLD BADGE. It reads:

HAWKINS POLICE. CHIEF.

Behind him, the TV continues to drones...

LOCAL NEWSWOMAN (ON TV)
... In other news, it seems like
you may want to stay in tonight --
or pack an umbrella. Let's go now
to everyone's favorite morning
weatherman, Charles. Charles?

Hopper heads out the door. The trailer door RATTLES shut.

24 **OMITTED**

24

25 **EXT. BYERS HOUSE - MORNING**

25

We TILT from the darkening sky to find the Byers house. The laundry hangs. It billows a bit in the gathering wind... A storm is coming...

26 **INT. BYERS HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING**

26

JONATHAN BYERS, 16, Will's older brother, cooks breakfast.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

He is lanky with long hair. Quietly handsome... but he wouldn't believe it if you told him.

JOYCE (O.S.)
Where the hell are they?!

His mom, JOYCE BYERS, late 30s, races past, frazzled. She wears a wrinkled "Melvald General Store" uniform.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
Dammit!

JONATHAN
Check the couch.

Joyce does. She finds her keys under a cushion. *Thank God.*

She snatches them up, gives Jonathan a quick peck on the cheek, and races for the door, only to pause at the last second, realizing something. She turns back to Jonathan.

JOYCE
-- Will? Where's Will?

JONATHAN
Sleeping, I guess.

JOYCE
You gotta make sure he's up,
Jonathan, how many times -- ?

JONATHAN
I'm making breakfast --

Joyce shakes her head. Irritated. She hurries down the hallway. CLAPS HER hands.

JOYCE
Will -- Will come on, get up.

Joyce throws open the door to Will's room. It's empty.

27 INT. BYERS HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

27

She strides back over to Jonathan. Worried now.

JOYCE
He came home last night, right?

JONATHAN
He's not in his room?

JOYCE
He come home or not?

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

JONATHAN

I don't know --

JOYCE

You don't know?

JONATHAN

I got back late, I was working --

JOYCE

You were working?

JONATHAN

Eric asked if I could cover for him, I said yeah; I figured we could use the cash --

JOYCE

We talked about this -- I told you not to take shifts on nights I'm tending, I specifically told you --

JONATHAN

He was over at the Wheelers' all day. I'm sure he just stayed over.

JOYCE

I can't believe this.

JONATHAN

I'm sorry --

JOYCE

I can't believe it.

Joyce grabs the kitchen wall phone. Dials a number.

28 **INT. WHEELER HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING - INTERCUT**

28

A WALL PHONE RINGS at the Wheelers. It is chaos over here.

Mike is grabbing syrup from a cabinet; Nancy is eating scrambled eggs, HOLLY, 3, is crying; Ted is watching the morning news; and now the phone is ringing. *The fucking phone.*

Karen answers. Holly squirms in her arms.

KAREN

Hello?

JOYCE

Karen -- it's Joyce.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

KAREN
Joyce, hi --

Behind her, Mike pours syrup onto his scrambles eggs.

NANCY
That's *disgusting*.

MIKE
It's good, swear.

Mike squeezes some onto Nancy's eggs.

NANCY
WHAT THE HELL MIKE?!

TED
Hey, language!

Karen puts the phone on her shoulder. She can't hear Joyce.

KAREN
(to kids)
QUIET!
(back to phone)
I'm sorry, one of those mornings --

JOYCE
Was that Will I heard back there?

KAREN
Will? No, no -- just Michael.

JOYCE
Will didn't spend the night?

KAREN
... No. He, he left here a little
after eight.
(worried now)
He's not home?

29 INT. BYERS HOUSE - MORNING

29

Joyce tries to hide her panic.

JOYCE
(into phone)
I -- I was working late last night.
I'm sure he just left early for
school. Thanks... thanks Karen --

Joyce hangs up the phone.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

She looks scared. And so does Jonathan.

30 EXT. HAWKINS MIDDLE SCHOOL - MORNING

30

Mike, Lucas, and Dustin ride their bikes past the high school, making their way toward Hawkins Middle School -- a quaint one-story brick building tucked beneath a WATER TOWER.

A31 EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - BACK - MORNING

A31

As the boys slot their wheels into bike racks, they look around at all the kids streaming in. *Looking for Will.*

MIKE

... I don't see him. Weird.

LUCAS

I'm telling you: his mom's right,
he just went to class early again --

DUSTIN

Yeah -- he's always paranoid
Gursky's gonna give him a pop quiz.

Mike nods. Feeling better.

TROY (O.S.)

Step right up, ladies and
gentlemen! Step right up and get
your tickets for the freak show!

The boys look to find two kids, JAMES and TROY, 14, headed toward them. Our boys don't run... they just stand there like statues. This is clearly a regular occurrence, and this is how they deal with it: with passivity.

Troy sizes them up.

TROY (CONT'D)

Who do you think would make more
money at a freak show: "Frogface,"
"Midnight," or "Toothless?"

JAMES

Ooof. Tough call, tough call.
(eyes Dustin)
I'd go with Toothless.

DUSTIN

My teeth are coming in, I told you
a million times, it's called
cleidocranial dysplasia --

A31 CONTINUED:

A31

JAMES
(mocking lisp)
I told you a *million times* --

TROY
Do the arm thing.

Dustin hesitates.

JAMES
Do it, freak.

Dustin sighs, relents. He pulls his arms across his body. Because Dustin has no collar bones, his arms stretch all the way across.

The bullies share disgusted looks, shiver...

TROY
Gets me every time! Every time!

They shove past our boys and head into the school, laughing.

LUCAS
(under breath)
Numbskulls.

MIKE
(to Dustin)
... I think it's cool. It's like a superpower or something. Like Mr. Fantastic.

DUSTIN
Yeah, except I can't fight evil with it.

The boys pull on their backpacks and head to school.

31 **EXT. HAWKINS HIGH SCHOOL - MORNING**

31

Nancy heads into the high school.

32 **INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - MORNING**

32

Nancy wades through a bustling hallway.

BARBARA, 16, her best friend, a bit dorky, catches up.

BARBARA
So? Did he call?

NANCY
Keep your voice down --

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

BARBARA

Did he?

Nancy shakes her head. Walks up to her locker.

NANCY

I told you, it's not like that.

Barbara shoots her a look.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Okay, I mean, yes, fine, he likes me, you know, but not like *that* --

(lowers voice)

We just made out a couple times.

BARBARA

(mocking)

"We just made out a couple times."

Jesus, you're gonna be so cool now it's ridiculous --

NANCY

No I'm not!

BARBARA

You better still hang out with me, that's all I'm saying. If you become friends with Carol and Tommy H --

NANCY

Gross. And I'm telling you, this was just a one-time --

(off Barbara)

-- two-time thing, alright?

Nancy silences. There is a FOLDED NOTE taped to the inside her locker, addressed "NANCY." She opens it. It reads:

MEET ME. BATHROOM. STEVE.

Nancy looks up at Barbara. Speechless.

BARBARA

You were saying?

33 INT. HIGH SCHOOL - GIRLS' BATHROOM - MORNING

33

Nancy is now full on MAKING OUT with --

STEVE HARRINGTON, 17, wealthy, athletic, charm to spare. Their make-out session gets more and more intense when --

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

THE BELL RINGS. Nancy crashes back to reality. She pulls away from Steve. Her cheeks are flushed.

NANCY

Okay -- I -- I have to go --

STEVE

One more minute --

Steve kisses her again. Nancy gives in for a bit, but...

NANCY

Steve --

STEVE

(between kissing)

Yeah --

NANCY

I really --

(kiss)

-- like, seriously ---

(kiss)

-- have to go --

She finally tears away from him. Pulls on her backpack.

STEVE

Let's do something tonight, yeah?

NANCY

I-I can't -- I have to study. For Kaminsky's chem test --

STEVE

What's your GPA again? Three-point-ninenineineninenine-- ?

NANCY

Kaminsky's tests are impossible --

STEVE

So let me help --

NANCY

You failed chem.

STEVE

C-minus.

NANCY

Oh, well, in that case...

33 CONTINUED: (2)

33

STEVE

So should I come over, say, eight?

NANCY

Uh, are you crazy? My mom won't allow that, no way --

STEVE

Who says she needs to "allow" anything? I'll just climb through your window -- she won't even know I'm there. I'm stealthy -- like a ninja.

NANCY

You are crazy.

STEVE

Okay, okay, forget your place -- we'll just chill in my car, find a nice quiet place to park --

NANCY

Steve, I have to study -- I'm not kidding.

STEVE

Why do you think I want it nice and quiet?

Nancy can't help but smile.

NANCY

You're an idiot, Steve Harrington.

Nancy heads for the door. At the last second:

NANCY (CONT'D)

I'll meet you at Dearborn and Maple. At eight. To study.

With that -- she's out.

Steve gives a victorious karate chop!

34 EXT. HAWKINS POLICE STATION - MORNING

34

An American flag flutters on a flagpole.

We are outside the LOCAL POLICE STATION. It is quaint. As in, really quaint. If the sign out front didn't read "POLICE", you'd probably mistake it for a gift shop.

Hopper's CHEVY BLAZER POLICE CAR pulls into the lot.

A35 **INT. POLICE STATION - ENTRANCE - MORNING**

A35

Hopper lumbers inside. Smoking a cigarette.

His secretary, FLORENCE, 61, sits behind a glass partition.

FLORENCE

Good of you to show --

HOPPER

Mornin' to you too, Flo.

Hopper heads straight into --

35 **INT. POLICE STATION - BULLPEN - MORNING**

35

He makes a beeline for the coffee machine.

OFFICER CALLAHAN and OFFICER POWELL look up from a game of five-card draw, their boots kicked up on their desks.

The mood here is casual, to say the least.

OFFICER CALLAHAN

You look like hell, Chief.

HOPPER

Your wife looked worse when I left her.

Powell cackles at this. *Burn!*

Hopper begins to make himself a cup of coffee. Florence walks up to Hopper, yanks the cigarette out of his mouth, and snubs it out.

FLORENCE

While you were drinking or sleeping or whatever it is you deem so important on Monday mornings, Phil Larson called, said some kids stole the gnomes out of his garden again --

HOPPER

Gnomes again, huh? Yeah, tell Phil I'll get right on that.

Hopper heads back through the bullpen with his coffee.

He's already lighting up another cigarette.

Florence nips at his heels.

35 CONTINUED:

35

FLORENCE

A more pressing matter -- Joyce
Byers can't find her son this
morning --

HOPPER

Yeah, alright, I'll give her a
call. Just give me a minute --

FLORENCE

Chief, Joyce is very upset and --

HOPPER

What have we talked about? Morning
is a time for contemplation and
coffee.

FLORENCE

Chief, she's --

HOPPER

Contemplation. And coffee.

Hopper heads up to the second floor.

A36 **INT. POLICE STATION - UPSTAIRS - MORNING**

A36

He crashes to a stop. Almost spilling his coffee. *Shit.*

REVERSE ANGLE:

Joyce is already *in* his office.

She looks back at him. Not happy.

36 **INT. POLICE STATION - HOPPER'S OFFICE - MORNING**

36

WHAP! WHAP! WHAP! Type-hammers slam ink onto a police
report.

A single, ominous word forms one letter at a time: "MISSING."

Hopper looks up from the typewriter. He now has on a pair of
READING GLASSES, which lend him a more earnest look. His
desk, however, shatters the illusion: it's cluttered with
papers and mugs and candy wrappers, like the desk of a child.

Joyce paces. Dragging on a cigarette. She's on edge. So
far out she might just fall right off.

JOYCE

I've been waiting an hour --

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

HOPPER
And I apologize again --

JOYCE
-- AN HOUR --

HOPPER
I understand. But a boy his age,
most likely he's playing hookey --

JOYCE
Not my Will, no. He wouldn't do
that. He's not like that --

HOPPER
You never know. My mother thought
I was on the debate team, when
really I was screwing Chrissy
Carpenter in the back of my dad's
boat --

JOYCE
Will's not like you. He's not like
me. He's not like most.

She's takes another drag on her cigarette. Fights tears.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
He's got a couple of friends. But
everyone else, they -- they make
fun of him. Call him names, laugh
at him, his clothes --

HOPPER
His clothes? What's wrong with his
clothes?

JOYCE
I-I don't know. Does it matter?

HOPPER
Maybe.

Joyce takes another drag.

JOYCE
Lonnie... Lonnie always said he was
queer --

HOPPER
Is he?

JOYCE
He's missing. That's what he is.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

Hopper scratches his stubble.

HOPPER
You hear from Lonnie lately?

Joyce hesitates. This is an uncomfortable subject.

JOYCE
He was in Indianapolis last I
heard. That was about a year ago.
But he's got nothing to do with
this.

Hopper rummages around his desk. Unearths a pen and a pad.

HOPPER
What's his number?

JOYCE
I told you, he's got nothin' to do
with this --

HOPPER
Kid goes missing, ninety-nine times
outta a hundred the kid's with a
parent or relative --

JOYCE
What about the other time?

HOPPER
What?

JOYCE
You said "ninety-nine outta a
hundred." What about the other
time? The one.

Hopper removes his reading glasses. Leans forward.

HOPPER
This is Hawkins, Joyce. In four
years, you know the worst thing
I've seen? You know what it was?
(beat)

When that owl attacked Eleanor
Gillespie. Thought her hair was a
nest. I mean -- it does look like
a nest, doesn't it? All that
frizz?

Hopper chuckles at the memory. Trying to lighten the mood.

Joyce begins to relax a little. But only a little.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (3)

36

JOYCE

I'll call Lonnie. He'll talk to me
before he talks to a --

HOPPER

-- pig?

JOYCE

Cop.

Joyce sits down. She snuffs her cigarette in an ashtray. Then she looks back up at Hopper. Her eyes are bloodshot. Glassy.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Find my son, Hop. Find him.

Hopper takes this in. All at once he feels burdened with a responsibility he doesn't want. He finds his composure, nudges his glasses back on his nose, and resumes typing.

Hammer type SLAMS paper. WHAP! WHAP! WHAP!

A37 EXT. HAWKINS LABS - DAY

A37

Black, unmarked sedans accelerate up to the entrance.

They slam to a stop and --

37 OMITTED

37

&

&

38

38

39 INT. HAWKINS LABS - CORRIDOR - DAY

39

WHAP! WHAP! WHAP! Shoes drum on linoleum as...

DR. MARTIN BRENNER, 40s, leads a group of NSA AGENTS through the corridors of the lab. Dr. Brenner wears a casual suit, loose tie, stubble. He clearly hasn't slept in some time.

All around them -- chaos. Scientists whipping to and fro.

SCIENTIST #1 turns to the LEAD AGENT.

SCIENTIST #1

We've evacuated the east wing --
sealed it off, following quarantine
protocol --

They arrive at a PLASTIC QUARANTINE DOOR.

Brenner ZIPS open the plastic door and --

40 **INT. HAWKINS LABS - PREPARATION ROOM**

40

A SERIES of very quick, very CLOSE SHOTS as --

Dr. Brenner, Scientist #1, the agents, and a TRIO OF SOLDIERS silently dress into HAZMAT SUITS. They secure hoods. Gloves. Boots.

PRE-LAP: THE SOUND OF GROANING METAL.

41 **INT. HAWKINS LABS - FREIGHT ELEVATOR**

41

The freight elevator GROANS and SHUDDERS as it carries...

Dr. Brenner, Scientist #1, the agents, the soldiers down into the bowels of the labs. The soldiers are armed with M16-style rifles with barrel-mounted flashlights.

The Lead Agent looks up at the ceiling, uneasy, and...

42 **INT. HAWKINS LABS - SUB-LEVEL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS**

42

WHOOM! The elevator CRASHES to a halt. The doors open.

The group exits into the dark corridor.

A43 **INT. HAWKINS LABS - SUB-LEVEL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS**

A43

They retrace the path of the scientist in the opening scene.

As their flashlights sweep around, we see that a few things have changed since our last visit: The fluorescent lights are now completely dead. The atmosphere is dense, clouded in a white fog... spore-like particles dance in the air... there are cracks in the cement... It's like this place is... dying.

43 **INT. HAWKINS LABS - MAIN LABORATORY**

43

The group of men enter the lab. Sweep the area.

It's a total nightmare in here. FLESHY MOLD-LIKE GROWTHS cling to the walls, and the atmosphere is even denser, making it difficult to see.

SCIENTIST #1
Doctor Shepherd and Doctor Braun
were over there, Doctor Wilkins and
Doctor Manning over there...

He motions at an OBSERVATION WINDOW.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

SCIENTIST #1 (CONT'D)
... myself and Doctor Brenner were
observing.

Lead Agent's flashlight cuts through fog, illuminates...

THE FAR WALL. This is the beating heart of this subterranean nightmare. Fleshy mold-like growths smother the entire wall, alive, wet, throbbing. In the center of this growth, there is what appears to be a TWELVE-FOOT-DIAMETER OPENING. This is...

THE RIFT. IT UNDULATES. ALMOST BREATHING. ALIVE.

HEAVY BREATHING through gas masks as our men take in this extraordinary sight.

AGENT #1
... This is where it came from?

Dr. Brenner nods.

LEAD AGENT
(to Dr. Brenner)
And the girl...?

DR. BRENNER
She can't have gone far.

We CUT TO A WIDE SHOT of our men staring at this rift. And then, slowly, we DOLLY TOWARD...

AN UPRIGHT ISOLATION TANK. It has a clear viewing window.

It's filled with water. But no one's in there. *Not anymore.*

44 OMITTED

44

45 EXT. BENNY'S BURGERS AND ICE CREAM - DAY

45

CLOSE ON: Two bare feet. Stepping onto grass.

WIDEN TO REVEAL: A YOUNG GIRL, 12, standing outside a forest.

She makes an immediate impression on us: Her hair is buzzed close to the scalp. Her feet are bare. Her skin is pale. She wears a tattered white hospital gown spattered with MUD.

She is more like a wild animal than a child.

She stares at a RUN-DOWN RESTAURANT. A sign reads:

"BENNY'S BURGERS AND ICE CREAM."

The side screen door swings open and...

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

BENNY HAMMOND, late 40s, lumbers out carrying a TRASH BAG. He has sleeve tattoos, a greasy apron wrapped around his waist.

The Young Girl watches him closely as...

He dumps out the trash, then heads back inside.

46 INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - STORAGE ROOM - DAY

46

The Young Girl sneaks through the side screen door.

She creeps forward into...

47 OMITTED

47

A48 INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - DINING ROOM - DAY

A48

She stops and watches very intently as, in the dining room, Benny drops a plate of burgers and fries off at...

A table of CHAIN-SMOKING REGULARS, including one we'll get to know as EARL.

EARL

Benny, how about Kellogg last night? Who-ee --

BENNY

Oh yeah, oh yeah --

EARL

He's gonna win us the championship,
I just know --

BENNY

Eh, if we hadn't traded English --

EARL

Don't get me started on that, too
damn early --

As their idle sports talk continues (see Appendix #2)...

48 INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

48

The Young Girl sneaks into the kitchen.

She steps up to a PAN OF FRENCH FRIES. She reaches in and picks one up. It's almost... like she's never seen a french fry in her life.

She tries it. Loves it. She starts to eat more when --

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

BENNY
HEY -- !

She snaps back around --

Benny is headed back into the kitchen.

She grabs up the PAN OF FRENCH FIRES and sprints out of the kitchen. She blows through the swinging doors --

A49 **INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - DINING ROOM**

A49

... sprints through the dining room...

B49 **INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - STORAGE ROOM - DAY**

B49

... and races as fast as she can for the back door!

But a split second before she reaches the door --

WHAAM! Benny catches her.

The french fries go SCATTERING across the floor.

Benny whirls her around.

BENNY
Think you can steal from me, boy?

The Girl writhes in his arms, trying to tear free but --

Benny holds her tight. But his expression softens as he realizes that this is no boy at all. It's also not a girl either, not exactly, at least not like any he has ever seen.

BENNY (CONT'D)
... What in the hell?

Finally the Girl stops struggling.

She locks eyes with Benny. Breathing hard. And...

49 **OMITTED**

49

50 **INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - MR. CLARKE'S SCIENCE CLASS - DAY**

50

EEEEEEE! A BELL BLARES and CHAOS REIGNS as...

A SWARM OF MIDDLE SCHOOLERS grab up their books and backpacks and hurry out of class, talking loudly amongst themselves.

Their teacher, MR. CLARKE, 30s, calls after them:

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

MR. CLARKE

Remember: Finish Chapter Twelve,
and answer twelve-point-three on
the difference between an
experiment and other forms of
science investigation --

Mr. Clarke silences as he realizes he's talking to no one --
everybody is gone. Well, that is, almost everybody.

MIKE (O.S.)

Did it come?

Lucas, Mike, and Dustin gather excitedly by his desk.

Mr. Clarke hesitates. Gives the boys a sad look.

MR. CLARKE

Sorry, boys, I hate to be the
bearer of bad news, but...
(beat)
It came.

51 INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - A.V. CLUB ROOM - DAY

51

The door to the A.V. Club bursts open.

Our boys race inside. Mr. Clarke follows close behind.

MR. CLARKE

The Heathkit ham shack. Ain't she
a beaut?

A BRAND-NEW HAM RADIO sits on a desk amidst a pile of older
equipment. The boys examine it with wide, expectant eyes.

DUSTIN

I bet you can talk to New York on
this thing --

MR. CLARKE

Think bigger --

LUCAS

California -- ?

MR. CLARKE

Bigger.

MIKE

Australia?

Another nod. Holllly shit.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

LUCAS

Oh man. When Will sees this he's going to totally lose his shit --

MR. CLARKE

Lucas --

LUCAS

Sorry.

The boys sits down by the radio. As Lucas starts to work the dials, Mike grabs up the transceiver, practices:

MIKE

(bad Australian accent)
'Ello, this is Mike Wheeler,
President of Hawkins Middle A.V.
Club --

Dustin takes the receiver. His turn.

DUSTIN

(worse Australian accent)
'Ello, this is Dustin Henderson,
Secretary and Treasurer of Hawkins
Middle A.V. Club -- Do you eat
kangaroos for breakfast -- ?

A SHARP KNOCKING SOUND interrupts the fun. Mr. Clarke turns.

The PRINCIPAL is in the doorway.

MIDDLE-SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Sorry to interrupt... but may I
borrow Michael, Lucas, and Dustin?

Chief Hopper and Officer Callahan now step into view.

Off Mike, Lucas, and Dustin, expressions darkening.

HOPPER (PRE-LAP)

... So you were... racing?

52 **INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY**

52

Our three boys are now scrunched together on a couch.

Hopper and Callahan sit opposite.

DUSTIN

It was me and him, actually --

LUCAS

My house is the first up --

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

MIKE
He takes Mirkwood home --

DUSTIN
We were racing on a bet and --

HOPPER
Whoa, whoa, whoa. One at a time.
(points at Mike)
You. You said he takes... what?

MIKE
Mirkwood.

HOPPER
"Mirkwood?"
(to Callahan)
You ever hear of a "Mirkwood?"

OFFICER CALLAHAN
Sounds made-up.

LUCAS
It's from "Lord of the Rings" --

DUSTIN
"The Hobbit" --

LUCAS
It doesn't matter -- !

DUSTIN
He asked -- !

HOPPER
Hey! What'd I just say? One at a
damn time.

He points at Mike.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
You.

MIKE
Mirkwood. It's a real road. It's
just the name that's made-up --

HOPPER
What's its real name?

MIKE
I don't know. It's where
Cornwallis and Kerley meet.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: (2)

52

Hop jots this information down onto his pad.

HOPPER

Yeah, I think I know it.

MIKE

We can show you --

HOPPER

I said I know it.

MIKE

We could help look --

Hopper looks up at Mike sharply.

HOPPER

No, after school, you go straight home. All of you.

He looks at the other boys. Making eye contact with each.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

That means no biking around looking for your friend, no investigating, no nonsense. This isn't some "Lord the Rings" book --

DUSTIN

"The Hobbit."

Hopper bites his tongue.

HOPPER

Do I make myself clear?

(firmer)

I make myself clear?

The boys share looks. Worried. Shaken by his tone.

They nod.

A53 EXT. WOODS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

A53 *

Joyce strides through the woods.

*

She still wears her Melvald's uniform, but she looks calmer than we'd expect... happier. We don't realize it yet, but we're back in time.

*

*

*

We PAN WITH HER to REVEAL her destination:

*

*

(CONTINUED)

A53 CONTINUED:

A53

A SMALL CHILD'S FORT, a beautiful teepee constructed out of sticks and tarp. Even though it is makeshift, we can tell that a lot of attention and care went into building this.

A hand-painted sign out front reads: "CASTLE BYERS."

Joyce kneels down by the "sheet" door.

JOYCE

Ding dong! Anyone home?

A familiar voice answers from inside the fort.

WILL (O.S.)

Password?

JOYCE

Rad-fast -- no --

(beat, remembering)

Rhada -- Rhadagast.

WILL (O.S.)

You may enter.

Joyce pulls aside the sheet and enters...

AB53 INT. CASTLE BYERS - DAY (FLASHBACK)

AB53 *

It's a twelve-year-old boy's dream in here. Comic books. Drawings. Toys. And, sure enough, sitting inside --

Will. He's reading a comic.

JOYCE

I got off early today, you believe that? And I was thinking...

She removes two movie tickets to "POLTERGEIST". 7pm.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

What do you say?

Will leans forward and grabs the tickets, excited.

WILL

I thought I wasn't allowed --

JOYCE

Well, I changed my mind. But I swear, if you have nightmares all week --

(CONTINUED)

AB53 CONTINUED:

AB53

WILL

*I won't, I don't get scared like
that anymore --*

JOYCE

Not even by clowns --

WILL

No --

JOYCE

What about when I do my witch?

WILL

No --

JOYCE

No?

WILL

I'm not five anymore --

*Joyce starts to curl her hand. Turning herself into an old
witch.*

WILL (CONT'D)

Mom, stop, it's just gross --

She closes one eye.

JOYCE

*I'm going to GET YOU WILLIAM BYERS!
I'M GOING TO COOK YOU IN MY STEW!*

WILL

Mom!

She grabs him and tickles him.

As his laughs fill the small fort, we suddenly CUT TO:

B53 INT. CASTLE BYERS - DAY (THE PRESENT)

B53 *

An empty fort.

REVERSE ANGLE TO REVEAL: Joyce, present day. Desperate.

A panicked voice shatters the silence:

JONATHAN (O.S.)

Will! WILL!!!!

C53 **EXT. CASTLE BYERS - DAY**

C53 *

Jonathan calls into the empty woods for his brother. *

Joyce exits the fort and joins his side. *

JOYCE
Will!!! WILL!!!!

There is no response. *

Only silence. *

53 **INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - KITCHEN - DAY**

53

SNAP-HISS! A well-seasoned hamburger patty slaps to the broiler. Benny tends it.

54 **INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - DINING ROOM - DAY**

54

Benny slides a plate of burger-and-fries to the Young Girl.

She is seated at a table in the dining room. It is just her now; the regulars are gone.

54 CONTINUED:

54

Her gown has been replaced with a "BENNY'S BURGERS AND ICE CREAM" T-shirt. It droops to her knees like a dress.

The Girl snatches up the burger and begin to devour it.

BENNY
Your parents forget to feed you?

The Girl doesn't respond. Just keeps eating.

BENNY (CONT'D)
That why you ran away?

Still nothing.

BENNY (CONT'D)
They... hurt you?

Nothing.

BENNY (CONT'D)
And... you went to the hospital,
that it? But you got scared, ran
off, found your way here?

The Girl finally looks up at Benny. *Has he hit close to the mark?* It seems like she is finally going to speak, but then she returns to eating her burger.

Benny has no choice -- he yanks away the plate.

The Girl looks up at him, confused.

BENNY (CONT'D)
I'll give it back, you can have as
much as you like, maybe even some
ice cream; but first, you gotta
answer a few 'a my questions. We
got a deal?

No response.

BENNY (CONT'D)
We'll start easy. My name's Benny.
Benny Hammond.

He holds out his hand. Wraps it around her tiny hand.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Nice to meet ya. And you are...?

Still no response. Benny sighs. He starts to withdraw his hand when he notices a SMALL TATTOO on the inside of her lower left wrist. It reads in simple black lettering: 011.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: (2)

54

BENNY (CONT'D)
"Eleven"?

The Young Girl yanks her hand away.

BENNY (CONT'D)
What's that mean?

YOUNG GIRL
No.

BENNY
Well I'll be damned. She speaks.
(beat, considers)
No? No what?

Still nothing.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Alright, guess "no" more food then.

Benny starts to walks with her plate when:

YOUNG GIRL
... Eleven.

Benny turns back around.

BENNY
Eleven. Yeah. What's it mean?

The Young Girl points to herself. We'll now know her as:

YOUNG GIRL/ELEVEN
Eleven.

55 INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - KITCHEN - DAY

55

CLOSE ON: A PHONE BOOK OPEN TO THE SOCIAL SERVICES PAGE.

Benny is now on a corded phone in the kitchen. Voice hushed.

BENNY
... All I know is, poor thing's
scared to death... confused...
(beat)
I think she's been abused or
kidnapped or somethin'.
(beat)
It's 4819 Randolph Lane. Randolph,
right.
(beat, starts to spell)
R-A-N --

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

55

As Benny continues to talk (see Appendix #3), we return to...

56 INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

56

Where "Eleven" is finishing off her fries. She becomes aware of a soft, HIGH-PITCHED NOISE. Eeeee. Eeee. Eeee. She looks up. It's an old and rusty OSCILLATING METAL FAN. It SQUEAKS with every turn. Eeeee. Eeee. Eeeee.

It is incessant. Annoying. Eleven narrows her eyes and --

The fan and the blades stop. Like they somehow *froze*.

Eleven looks away. Content now.

She continues eating her fries.

57 EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY

57

WHOOSH! TWO POLICE CARS speed down the road.

58 OMITTED

58

59 EXT. WOODS - MIRKWOOD SHORTCUT - MINUTES LATER - DAY

59

Hopper trudges down the road, searching for signs of Will.

Behind him, we can see Callahan and Powell. They call out:

OFFICER CALLAHAN
Will Byers?! WILL BYERS?!

OFFICER POWELL
WILL -- ?!

Hopper pulls a vial out of his pocket. Pops two more of those red-and-blue pills. And... his eyes narrow. Noticing something off the side of the road.

60 EXT. WOODS - DAY

60

Hopper heads into the woods. Calls out to Callahan and Powell:

HOPPER
Hey, I got something here.

Hop kneels down by...

WILL'S BICYCLE. Brushes away some leaves.

Callahan and Powell race over to him.

60 CONTINUED:

60

OFFICER CALLAHAN
That his bike, Chief?

Hopper nods. Notes some SCRAPED BARK.

HOPPER
Looks like he crashed.

OFFICER CALLAHAN
Maybe he got hurt in the fall.

Hopper looks back to the road. Squints in the sun.

HOPPER
Not so hurt he couldn't make it
home. And a bike to these kids...
that's like a Cadillac. Doesn't
make sense he'd leave it out here.
(beat)
He'd walk it home.

A beat. Then:

HOPPER (CONT'D)
He was in hurry.

A61 EXT. HAWKINS LABS - DAY

A61

ZOOM IN on a LARGE RADAR DISH.

B61 INT. HAWKINS LABS - RADIO MONITORING ROOM

B61

We SLOWLY DOLLY DOWN A LINE of a HALF-DOZEN AGENTS. They are seated before bulky radio equipment, all wearing headphones.

As we pass each agent, we can HEAR SNIPPETS of what they're listening to... (see Appendix #4)

PARENT VOICE
(filtered)
... going to the store...

TEACHER VOICE
(filtered)
... be home by...

OFFICE WORKER VOICE
(filtered)
... meeting with Tom in ten...

And it hits us: they're listening in on the town. *Spying.*

We land on the last agent in the line.

(CONTINUED)

B61 CONTINUED:

B61

He's listening to a familiar voice:

JOYCE'S VOICE (OVER PHONE)
Lonnlie. It's Joyce --

CYNTHIA'S VOICE (OVER PHONE)
Lonnlie isn't here right now --

61 INT. BYERS HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

61

Joyce is on the phone. Pacing. Dragging hard on a cigarette. (See Appendix #5)

JOYCE
Who is this? Cynthia? This is
Joyce -- Joyce, Lonnlie's ex-wife.
I need to speak to him -- This is
an emergency... no, not later, now
bitch --

CLICK. The phone goes dead. Joyce burns with anger.

IN THE LIVING ROOM, Jonathan works on a MISSING PERSON POSTER.

JONATHAN
Mom, you need to stay calm.

JOYCE
I'm calm.

She hangs up, dials the number again. The phone RINGS.

But this time no one answers. It goes to message.

RONNIE'S VOICE (OVER PHONE)
(filtered)
Hey, you've reached Lonnlie, I'm not
here at the moment but...

Joyce's rage rises and rises and... BEEP. Her turn.

JOYCE
Lonnlie, some teenage whore just
hung up on me. You don't call me
back in the next hour I'll report
you for not paying child support I
swear to God I will and I'll make
sure you rot in jail where you
belong --

WHAM! Joyce slams the phone down.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

JONATHAN
Mom.

JOYCE
What?

And that's when we realize: Jonathan isn't looking at her.
He's looking out the window.

JONATHAN
Cops.

62 EXT. BYERS HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER - AFTERNOON

62

Joyce explodes out onto the porch. Jonathan follows. It's...
Hopper and the officers, parking in the driveway.
As Hop exits, he pulls Will's bike out of the back.

Joyce and Jonathan fight panic and --

63 INT. BYERS HOUSE - VARIOUS - LATER - AFTERNOON

63

Hopper and his officers search the Byers' house.
Joyce and Jonathan trail. On edge.

JOYCE
And it was just sitting there -- ?

HOPPER
Yes --

JOYCE
Was there any blood or -- ?

HOPPER
No --

JONATHAN
If you found his bike out there,
why're you here?

HOPPER
He's got a key to the house?

JONATHAN
Yeah --

HOPPER
So maybe he came back here.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

63

JOYCE

So -- what? You think I haven't
checked my own house -- ?!

HOPPER

Never said you didn't.

Hopper inspects the back door. The adjacent wall is dented,
the paint chipped. He opens the door: its handle aligns with
the damaged wall. Someone threw it open. *Hard*.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

This always here?

JOYCE

Probably. I got two boys. Look at
this place --

HOPPER

But you're not sure?

Joyce hesitates. *Not sure*. Suddenly they HEAR --

WHIMPERING. COMING FROM THE BACK.

64 EXT. BYERS HOUSE - BACK YARD - AFTERNOON

64

Hopper and Joyce step outside onto the porch.

They find Chester pacing in front of the shed. WHIMPERING.

HOPPER

This normal?

JOYCE

Just hungry, I'm sure. Come on...

Joyce leads Chester back to the house by his collar.

But Hopper doesn't follow. Not yet.

His eyes turn to the shed. As...

A65 INT. BYERS HOUSE - JONATHAN'S ROOM - DAY

A65

Callahan and Powell inspect Jonathan's room.

Jonathan watches them, arms crossed.

JONATHAN

What're you looking for exactly?

They ignore him. Powell checks under the bed. Nothing.

(CONTINUED)

A65 CONTINUED:

A65

Callahan eyes an "EVIL DEAD" poster on the wall.

OFFICER CALLAHAN
What's going on there?

JONATHAN
The tree's possessed. It's...
going inside her.

OFFICER CALLAHAN
Yeeeeeeesh.

OFFICER POWELL
Hey kid, you got some water or
juice or something? Dying here.

Jonathan nods. Exits.

Callahan exhales. Looks at Powell.

OFFICER CALLAHAN
You see that?

OFFICER POWELL
See what?

OFFICER CALLAHAN
Suspect number one. Am I right?

Off Powell...

65 INT. BYERS SHED - AFTERNOON

65

EEEEEEE. Wood GROANS as...

Hopper heads into the shed. Still dark in here.

Hop flips a light switch. The naked light bulb hums to life.

He walks up to the rifle wall mount. The rifle is, of course, missing. He inspects the mount. There are fingerprints in the dust. Someone was here... recently.

BZZZZ! THE LIGHT BULB BEGINS TO FLICKER.

Hopper turns and looks up at the light. It fluctuates, growing bright, then dim, then bright, then dim, then --

WHOOM. THE LIGHT CUTS OUT. LEAVING US IN DARKNESS.

WE HEAR A FAINT GUTTURAL SOUND. LIKE SOME KIND OF GROWL.

Hopper looks around. '*The hell is that coming from?*

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

HOPPER
That you, buddy? You hungry?

Hop removes a flashlight from his utility belt, clicks it on, and slowly sweeps its beam across the darkness. He makes out nothing. But that sound, whatever the hell it is, persists.

Gets louder. Louder. LOUDER STILL. And then --

The beam illuminates an APPROACHING FIGURE.

Hop reaches for his gun, but --

Officer Callahan steps into the light.

OFFICER CALLAHAN
You deaf? I've been callin' you.

Hopper looks back at the light bulb. It flickers back to life. Returning to 48 Watts. Strange.

Hop shakes it off and --

66 EXT. BYERS HOUSE - BACK YARD - AFTERNOON

66

Hopper strides to the Byers house. Moving fast.

Callahan struggles to keep up...

OFFICER CALLAHAN
You sure you're alright, Chief?

HOPPER
I want you to call Florence, have her get a search party together, as many volunteers as she can muster, flashlights too --

OFFICER CALLAHAN
Think we got a problem here?

Hopper doesn't answer. Uncertain.

He heads inside. The door slaps shut.

67 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT 2

67

HISS! A sprinkler kicks on. Night in the suburbs again.

MIKE (PRE-LAP)
We should be out there right now.
We should be helping look for him.

68 INT. WHEELER HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

68

The Wheeler family is seated at the dining table.

A home-cooked meal is before them. But Mike isn't eating.

KAREN

We've been over this. The chief said --

MIKE

I don't care what the chief said.

KAREN

Michael --

MIKE

He's not even real police, Mom. We have to do something -- Will could be in danger!

KAREN

More reason to stay put.

MIKE

Mom --

KAREN

End of discussion.

Mike looks away, upset. The family resumes eating in silence. Or, rather, some of them do. Nancy just moves her food around with a fork. Then, in as casual a tone as she can summon:

NANCY

So... me and Barb... we're gonna study for the chemistry test at her house tonight. That's cool, right?

Karen looks up from her meal.

KAREN

No. Not cool.

NANCY

What? Why not?

KAREN

Why do you think? Am I speaking Chinese in this house? Until we know Will's okay, no one leaves.

68 CONTINUED:

68

NANCY
So we're under house arrest?

KAREN
Don't be dramatic, Nancy.

NANCY
This is such bullshit!

TED
Language!

NANCY
Barb lives two minutes away, just
because Mike's friend got lost on
his way home --

MIKE
This is Will's fault -- ?!

KAREN
Nancy, take that back --

NANCY
No!

MIKE
You're just pissed because you
wanna hang out with Steve --

TED
Steve?

KAREN
Who is Steve?

MIKE
Her new boyfriend --

NANCY
YOU'RE SUCH A DOUCHE MIKE --

TED
LANGUAGE!!!

Nancy shoves out of her chair. Storms off.

KAREN
Nancy! Come back! NANCY!

But Nancy is already bounding up the stairs to her bedroom.

Karen wants to follow her but can't; the argument has caused Holly to cry. Karen picks her up and rocks her in her arms.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: (2)

68

KAREN (CONT'D)
There, there, shhhh...

TED
See, Michael: This is what happens.

MIKE
What happens when what? I'm the
only one acting normal here -- I'm
the only who cares about Will!

Ted takes a bite out of a chicken drum. Chews.

TED
That's not fair, Michael. We care.

Mike stares at his dad. He can't take his apathy, not
tonight. He stands up from the table and hurries off.

Holly cries louder. Ted continues to chew.

Karen shoots daggers at him.

KAREN
I hope you're enjoying your
chicken, Ted.

She carries Holly out of the room.

69 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

69

A constellation of flashlights glimmer in the night.

Over two dozen SEARCH AND RESCUE VOLUNTEERS are scouring the
woods for Will. They wear orange vests, grave expressions.

We FIND Hopper. Mr. Clarke walks at his side.

MR. CLARKE
He's a good student.

Hopper turns. Surprised this man is speaking to him.

HOPPER
What's that?

MR. CLARKE
Will. He's a good student. A
great one, actually. I can't
fathom him getting into any kind of
trouble.

Hopper nods. Looks away.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

69

Mr. Clarke offers his hand.

MR. CLARKE (CONT'D)
I don't think we've met. Scott
Clarke. I teach at Hawkins Middle.
Earth and Biology --

Hopper shakes his hand. Then averts his gaze.

HOPPER
Always had a distaste for science.

MR. CLARKE
Maybe you had a bad teacher.

HOPPER
Ms. Ratliff was a nasty piece of
work.

MR. CLARKE
Ratliff? You bet. She's still
kicking around, believe it or not --

HOPPER
Oh I believe it. Mummies don't
die, or so they tell me.

Mr. Clarke smiles softly.

MR. CLARKE
So you're local?

HOPPER
Class of fifty-eight.

MR. CLARKE
Sixty-two. Just missed each other.

They walk for another beat. Hopper seems lost in thought.

HOPPER
Sara, my daughter. Galaxies, the
universe, whatnot: She always
understood that stuff. Maybe she
got it from her mother, I dunno.
There's enough down here, I don't
need to go lookin' elsewhere.

MR. CLARKE
Your daughter. What grade is she?
Maybe I'll get her in my class.

69 CONTINUED: (2)

69

HOPPER
She lives in the city. With her mother.

MR. CLARKE
Oh.

Hopper slaps Mr. Clarke on the back.

HOPPER
Thanks for coming out, teach.
Appreciate it.

Hopper picks up his pace, leaving Mr. Clarke behind.

A nearby VOLUNTEER whispers to Mr. Clarke:

VOLUNTEER
She passed a few years back.

MR. CLARKE
Sorry?

VOLUNTEER
His kid.

Mr. Clarke darkens. He looks back at Hopper.

He is a distant silhouette now.

70 INT. WHEELER HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

70

The Demogorgon gazes at us. Four angry eyes.

Mike is lying down by the Dungeons-and-Dragons map. He looks worried and restless. He examines the field of miniatures. The Troglodytes... the knight... the dwarf... and the wizard.

He picks up the wizard. Studies it. Considering.

MIKE (PRE-LAP)
Lucas? It's Mike. You copy?
Lucas?

71 INT. WHEELER HOUSE - BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

71

Mike is now at the table. Calling into a walkie-talkie.

Lucas finally answers. His voice crackles.

LUCAS'S VOICE (OVER WALKIE)
Hey, it's Lucas.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

MIKE

I know it's you. And say "over" when you're done talking or I don't know you're done. Over.

LUCAS'S VOICE

I'm done. Over.

MIKE

I'm worried about Will. Over.

LUCAS'S VOICE

Yeah. This is crazy. Over.

MIKE

I was thinking... Will could've cast Protection last night. But he didn't. He cast Fireball. Over.

LUCAS'S VOICE

What's your point? Over.

MIKE

My point is... he could've played it safe. But he didn't. He put himself in danger to help the party. Over.

A very long beat. Then:

LUCAS'S VOICE

Meet me in ten. Over and out.

72 INT. WHEELER HOUSE - BASEMENT - LATER STILL - NIGHT

72

Mike jams a few flashlights into his backpack.

73 EXT. WHEELER HOUSE - NIGHT

73

Mike wheels his bike out of the garage.

He starts down the driveway when he suddenly notices --

Steve. He's attempting to climb up to Nancy's room. He locks eyes with Mike. A very awkward beat.

Steve holds up a hand. Hey.

Mike just stares. *Unbelievable.* Then, without saying a word, he climbs on his bike... and pedals off into the night.

74 **INT. WHEELER HOUSE - NANCY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

74

Nancy sits at her desk, morosely studying her CHEM BOOK, when she hears a dull sound: TAP TAP TAP. She turns to find...

Steve outside her window. Nancy stares in shock, tries to wave him away, but he just knocks again, more urgently.

Nancy hurries over and opens the window.

NANCY

(whispers urgently)

What're you doing? I told you I have to stay in tonight --

STEVE

I know, so we'll study here --

NANCY

No, I told you, absolutely not, go away -- !

STEVE

I don't want you failing tomorrow --

Steve climbs in anyway...

Or tries to. His foot catches on the window frame and he stumbles, nearly toppling over a bedside lamp. He catches himself, turns back to Nancy, and strikes a pose.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What'd I tell you? A ninja.

Nancy shakes her head. Unbelievable.

She shuts the window. Closes the blinds. WHOOSH!

75 **INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

75

WHOOSH! Water rushes out of a faucet as Benny cleans dishes.

Eleven sits on a counter. She eats STRAWBERRY ICE CREAM out of a pint-sized container.

BENNY

You like that ice cream, huh?

Eleven looks at him, smiles. For the first time this day, she seems like an actual kid. Benny knocks off the faucet.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Hey. A smile looks good on ya.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

Eleven stares at him. Confused.

BENNY (CONT'D)
A smile.

Benny gives a big smile. Eleven smiles back.

But her smile fades when shes hears --

THE SOUND OF KNOCKING. *Someone's at the front door.*

Eleven tenses. Nervous.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Just... stay put. Whoever it is,
I'll turn 'em away, a'ight?

Eleven watches while eating ice cream as...

A76 OMITTED

A76

76 INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

76

Benny lumbers to the front door. He swings it open to find --

A FRIENDLY WOMAN, 40s. She smiles.

FRIENDLY WOMAN
You must be Mr. Hammond?

BENNY
'fraid so. Also 'fraid we've
closed shop. Why don't you try
back tomorrow --

Benny starts to shut the door, but the woman extends a hand.

FRIENDLY WOMAN/CONNIE
Connie Frazier. Social Services.

Benny stops. Opens the door back up. Embarrassed.

BENNY
Social Services. Apologies.

He takes her hand. His grip is firm.

BENNY (CONT'D)
Didn't think you were gonna make it
here so quick. That's a heckuva
drive.

CONNIE
Not too bad this time of night.

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

76

Benny nods, lowers his voice.

BENNY

Listen. I still haven't told her about you. I didn't want her runnin' off again. She's a tad skittish.

CONNIE

Children I work with usually are.
(smiles)
Where is she now?

BENNY

In the back. Come on. I'll introduce ya.

Benny turns and lumbers toward the kitchen.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Apologies again for trying to turn you away. It's funny, your voice, it sounded different on the phone --

CONNIE

Mister Hammond?

BENNY

Yeah -- ?

As Benny turns...

Connie raises a SILENCED PISTOL and --

POP! SHE SHOOTS HIM IN THE SIDE OF THE HEAD. HIS BODY GOES LIMP AND HE CRASHES TO THE GROUND WITH A HEAVY THUD.

HIS BODY TWITCHES. THEN STILL. HE IS DEAD.

A77 INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A77

Eleven watches in wide-eyed horror. She drops the ice cream, turns around, and sprints back thorough the kitchen.

AB77 INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - DINING ROOM

AB77

Eleven blows through the double doors as --

B77 INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - DINING ROOM/KITCHEN - NIGHT

B77

THE AGENTS we met earlier sweep into the kitchen.

They are followed closely by Dr. Brenner.

77 **INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT**

77

Eleven sprints for the back screen door. But she crashes to a halt as --

TWO MORE AGENTS sweep through from the back door.

She is *trapped*.

AS THE AGENTS RAISE ELECTRICAL SHOCK STICKS ...

WE DOLLY IN FAST ON ELEVEN --

AND --

A78 **INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

A78

LOUD NOISES ECHO FROM THE STORAGE ROOM. SCREAMING. CHAOS.

Dr. Brenner and the agents exchange looks and --

AB78 **INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

AB78

Dr. Brenner and the agents blow through the double doors and race into --

B78 **INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - STORAGE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT** B78

They find BOTH AGENTS unconscious on the ground.

Bones twisted. Heads bleeding.

C78 **EXT. BENNY'S BURGERS - BACK - NIGHT**

C78

Dr. Brenner explodes out the back door.

He looks around. Desperate. But --

He sees only darkness.

Eleven is gone.

78 **EXT. FOREST ROAD - NIGHT**

78

Silence as our kids bike down "Mirkwood" road.

Mike leads the way. He slows to stop.

Lucas and Dustin pull up beside him.

LUCAS

Why are we stopping?

Mike doesn't answer. He just looks off into the woods.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

78

Dustin and Lucas follow his gaze to a find a LINE OF POLICE TAPE, wrapped around a row of trees along the side of the road.

The reality of what happened hits our boys right here. This isn't some make-believe D&D campaign. This is... *real*.

BOOM! HEAVY RUMBLE SHATTERS THE SILENCE.

They boys look up. Sheet LIGHTNING flashes the sky, illuminating dark STORM CLOUDS.

A PLOP OF WATER hits Dustin in the face.

DUSTIN

Oh man. You guys feel that?

Dustin holds out a hand. Watches water strike his palm.

It's raining.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Maybe we should go back.

Mike isn't listening. Or if he is, he doesn't care. He removes a walkie from his backpack, hands it to Dustin.

MIKE

No splitting up or anything stupid like that, but stay on channel six. Just in case.

With that, Mike heads into the woods, ducking under the caution tape. Lucas follows.

Dustin is now all alone.

BOOM! Another thunder crash! It scares the shit out of him.

DUSTIN

Hey, guys, wait up! WAIT UP!

He races after his friends as ANOTHER BOOM rattles us and --

79 **INT. WHEELER HOUSE - NANCY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

79

Steve and Nancy now sit on her bed. A few feet apart.

Steve reads homemade flash cards, while Nancy answers the questions. MUSIC PLAYS on a boombox ("Sweet Dreams" by The Eurythmics) loud enough that their voices don't carry out of the room...

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

79

STEVE

"... Which Polymers occur naturally?"

NANCY

... Starch and cellulose.

STEVE

(yup, switches cards)

"In a molecule of CH₄, the hydrogen atoms are spatially oriented toward the centers of a regular -- "

NANCY

Tetrahedron.

STEVE

(switches card)

Jesus, how many of these did you make?

NANCY

You said you wanted to help!

STEVE

How 'bout this: Every time you get something right, I have to take off an item of clothing. Every time you get something wrong...

NANCY

Uh, pass.

STEVE

Come on, it'll be fun --

NANCY

No!

STEVE

(next card)

"During fractional distillation, hydrocarbons are separated according to their -- "

NANCY

Melting points.

STEVE

EEEEEE! Boiling points.

NANCY

That's what I meant --

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED: (2)

79

STEVE

But it's not what you said.

He mimes unbuttoning a shirt.

NANCY

No. NO!

STEVE

No? You need help?

Steve pushes down on the bed, and kisses her. Soon they're going at it, hot and heavy. After a moment of making out, Steve begins to unbutton her top but --

Nancy stops him.

NANCY

Steve, come on --

STEVE

What?

NANCY

Are you crazy? My parents are here --

STEVE

(looking around)

Weird. I don't see them.

Nancy slides away.

NANCY

Was this your plan all along? Get in my room, then... get another notch on your belt?

STEVE

What -- no! Jesus, no.

NANCY

I'm not like Laurie. Or Amy. Or -- or Becky --

STEVE

You mean you're not a slut.

NANCY

That's not what I'm saying.

STEVE

You're cute when you lie.

79 CONTINUED: (3)

79

NANCY

Shut up.

Steve smiles. He picks up a Holly Hobbie doll and makes it shake its head in disapproval, speaks in a squeaky voice:

STEVE

"Bad Steve, bad; stay away from
Miss Nancy!"

Nancy can't help but laugh.

NANCY

You're an idiot, Steve Harrington.

STEVE

You're beautiful, Nancy Wheeler.

Nancy blushes.

Steve picks up the flash cards. Clears his throat. And...

STEVE (CONT'D)

"Compared to the rate of inorganic reactions, the rate of organic reactions generally is..."

Off Nancy, falling for this guy...

80 OMITTED

80

&

&

81

81

82 INT. BYERS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

82

Jonathan and Joyce sit around the coffee table.

They are working on the MISSING PERSONS POSTER for Will. Bold red letters at the top read: "HAVE YOU SEEN ME?"

There is an EMPTY SPACE for a photo in the middle.

They flip through the portfolio, looking for a photo. There are many photos of Joyce and Will, as well as the town, and the people who live here. All artfully taken by Jonathan.

JOYCE

Wow. Jonathan. These are great...

Jonathan doesn't say anything, embarrassed by the compliment.

She flips through more pages.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

82

JOYCE (CONT'D)
I've been working so much lately...
I feel like I barely know what's
going on with you anymore...

She looks up. Notices Jonathan is fighting tears.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
What is it, baby?

JONATHAN
Nothing.

JOYCE
What is it?

Joyce takes his hand.

JONATHAN
It's just... last night... I
just... I should've been here --

Joyce squeezes his hand.

JOYCE
Hey. This wasn't your fault, baby,
you hear me? You *hear me*?

Jonathan averts his gaze.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
He's gonna come home soon. I know
it. I know it... because I feel
him. I *feel him* in my heart. He's
close. *He's close*. You believe
me, Jonathan, right?

Jonathan finally looks at his mom. And nods.

Joyce smiles faintly. She then returns to looking at the pictures. She finds one of Will at the park, smiling big.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
Oh this one -- I... I always liked
this one.

She holds it up. Jonathan smiles softly.

JONATHAN
... Me too.

An emotional beat. Then:

The KITCHEN PHONE BLARES TO LIFE.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED: (2)

82

Joyce and Jonathan look up sharply. *News.*

A83 **INT. BYERS HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT**

A83

Joyce grabs up the phone. Her voice tense, strained.

JOYCE

Yes -- hel-hello?

There is no answer. But she can HEAR the SOUND of LOW BREATHING on the other end.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Lonnie...? Hopper...?

Still no answer.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Who is this?

Jonathan stands up. Getting worried now.

The SOUND OF BREATHING grows louder. It sounds... like the breathing of a *child*. Joyce pales. Tears rush to her eyes.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Will?!! Will?!!

Jonathan races over to his mom.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Where are you, baby?! Talk to me!

WILL?! WILL?!

But Will's breathing is now gone. In its place...

ANOTHER SOUND. GUTTURAL. INHUMAN. Shifting in pitch.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

WHO IS THIS? WHAT HAVE DONE WITH
MY BABY?! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!!

Silence. Then --

A HIGH-PITCHED SHRIEK ERUPTS FROM THE RECEIVER.

Joyce gasps in pain and drops the phone. She looks at her hand. Her palm is SEARED. She backs away from the phone. Her eyes wide with dread.

Jonathan grabs up phone. His voice shakes.

JONATHAN

Who is this?! WHO IS THIS?!

(CONTINUED)

A83 CONTINUED:

A83

But the phone line is now dead.

Joyce slumps down to the floor. And begins to sob.

83 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

83

BOOM! Another CRASH OF THUNDER.

Our boys are deep in woods. Soaked now.

Their flashlights illuminate the rain.

MIKE

Will? WILL???

LUCAS

BYERS?!
DUSTIN

I've got your "X-Men!" One-thirty-four!

No response. Only silence.

They march for a little bit longer.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Guys, I really think we should turn back --

LUCAS

Seriously, Dustin, if you want to be a baby, just go home already.

DUSTIN

I'm just being *realistic*, Lucas --

LUCAS

No, you're being a sissy --

DUSTIN

You ever think Will went missing because, you know, he ran into someone bad? And now we're going to the place where he was last seen, and we don't even have weapons or anything --

MIKE

-- Dustin shut up --

DUSTIN

-- I'm just sayin', does that seem smart to you -- ?!

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED:

83

MIKE
Shut up!

Dustin silences. Everyone turns to Mike.

He's not mad. He's -- *listening...*

MIKE (CONT'D)
(low)
You guys hear that?

The boys listen. Hear RUSTLING FOLIAGE. Everyone tenses.

Mike slowly swings his flashlight around the dark woods. Ten degrees, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty --

WHOOSH! A SHADOWED FIGURE DARTS BEHIND THEM.

They whirl around. Startled. Their flashlights illuminate -- ELEVEN. Bald head. Wild eyes. Benny's T-shirt.

Mike looks at her. She looks at Mike.

Their gaze holds.

THUNDER BOOMS.

And...

END EPISODE

APPENDIX #1

(Local Newswoman Drones On)

20 INT. HOPPER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING 2

20

A LOCAL NEWSWOMAN drones on a dusty eight-inch TV:

LOCAL NEWSWOMAN (ON TV)

... Thank you, Donna. We turn now to local news. We're receiving reports of surges and outages across the county... We reached out to Roane County Water and Electric, and a spokesperson for the utility is confident that power will be restored to any remaining affected homes within the next several hours.

(beat)

In other news, it seems like you may want to stay in tonight -- or pack an umbrella. Let's go now to everyone's favorite morning weatherman, Charles. Charles?

END APPENDIX #1

APPENDIX #2

(Benny & Earl Sports Talk)

A48 INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - DINING ROOM - DAY

A48

EARL

Benny, how about Kellogg last
night? Who-ee --

BENNY

Oh yeah, oh yeah --

EARL

He's gonna win us the championship,
I just know --

BENNY

Eh, if we hadn't traded English --

EARL

Don't get me started on that, too
damn early --

As their idle sports talk continues...

BENNY

All I'm sayin' is, I don't know
what they were thinking. George
McGinnis?

EARL

George is family --

BENNY

This isn't about bein' sentimental --
this is about wins.

EARL

Complaining ain't gonna change a
damn thing.

BENNY

Yeah, yeah. You want a Schlitz or
what?

EARL

You gotta ask?

END APPENDIX #2

APPENDIX #3

(Benny's Phone Call)

55 INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - KITCHEN - DAY

55

Benny is now on a corded phone in the kitchen. Voice hushed.

BENNY

... All I know is, poor thing's
scared to death... confused...

(beat)

I think she's been abused or
kidnapped or somethin'.

(beat)

It's 4819 Randolph Lane. Randolph,
right.

(beat, starts to spell)

R-A-N-D-O-L-P-H. Yeah, and that's
in Hawkins. What time you think
you can get out here?

(checks watch)

Anything else I should do or...?
Okay, okay. Uh-huh... Alright,
thank you, Connie, thank you, I
really appreciate your help on
this... Yeah, you too.

END APPENDIX #2

APPENDIX #4

(Intercepted Phone Voices)

B61 INT. HAWKINS LABS - RADIO MONITORING ROOM - DAY

B61

... As we pass each agent, we can HEAR SNIPPETS of what they're listening to...

PARENT VOICE

I'm going to the store now... Do you want anything special? I thought we'd have T-bones for dinner.

PARENT #2 VOICE

No, that sounds good, hon --

TEACHER VOICE

The annoying part is I thought I'd be home by six at the latest but these after-school activities are so poorly run...

TEACHER #2 VOICE

It's a shame you're not in charge.

TEACHER VOICE

Tell me about it.

OFFICE WORKER VOICE

I can't talk long. I have that meeting with Tom in ten minutes...

OFFICE WORKER #2 VOICE

I agree, it's best if Allen handles the proposal. Yeah... I like Scott, but it's too important...

END APPENDIX #4

APPENDIX #5

(Joyce & Cynthia's Phone Call)

61 INT. BYERS HOUSE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

61

Joyce is on the phone. Pacing. Dragging hard on a cigarette.

JOYCE

Lonnie. It's Joyce --

CYNTHIA'S MUFFLED VOICE (OVER PHONE)

Lonnie isn't here right now --

JOYCE

Who is this?

CYNTHIA'S MUFFLED VOICE

Cynthia.

JOYCE

Cynthia?

CYNTHIA'S MUFFLED VOICE

His girlfriend. Who the hell is this?

JOYCE

This is Joyce --

CYNTHIA'S MUFFLED VOICE

Who?

JOYCE

Joyce, Lonnie's ex-wife. I need to speak to him --

CYNTHIA'S MUFFLED VOICE

Lonnie's not here, I told you --

JOYCE

This is an emergency...

CYNTHIA'S MUFFLED VOICE

Why don't you call back later --

JOYCE

No, not later, now bitch --

CLICK. The phone goes dead. Joyce burns with anger. She hangs up, dials the number again. The phone RINGS. But this time no one answers. It goes to message.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

LONNIE'S VOICE (OVER PHONE)
(filtered)
Hey, you've reached Lonnie, I'm not
here at the moment but leave a
message and I'll holler right back
at ya.

Joyce's rage rises and rises and... BEEP. Her turn.

JOYCE
Lonnie, some teenage whore just
hung up on me. You don't call me
back in the next hour I'll report
you for not paying child support I
swear to God I will and I'll make
sure you rot in jail where you
belong --

WHAM! Joyce slams the phone down.

END APPENDIX #5