

STRANGER THINGS

EPISODE #102

"CHAPTER TWO: THE WEIRDO ON MAPLE STREET"

by

The Duffer Brothers

Note:

When the text is in RED, it indicates that it is a **past timeline**.

FADE IN:

EXT. MAPLE STREET - WHEELER HOME - NIGHT

THUNDER crashes. It's pouring RAIN.

INT. WHEELER BASEMENT - SAME TIME

MIKE, LUCAS, DUSTIN are standing opposite EL, who is sitting on the couch - out of breath. Frightened.

MIKE

Is there a number we can call? For your parents?

DUSTIN

Where's your hair? Do you have cancer?

LUCAS

Did you run away?

MIKE

Are you in some kind of trouble?

LUCAS

Is that blood?

Lucas reaches for El, but Mike SLAPS his hand away.

MIKE

Stop it! You're freaking her out!

LUCAS

She's freaking me out!

DUSTIN

I bet she's deaf.

Dustin CLAPS HIS HANDS in a surprise move. El FLINCHES.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Not deaf.

MIKE

All right, that's enough, all right? She's just scared and cold.

Mike goes to the LAUNDRY ROOM. THUNDER makes El a little jumpy.

Moments later Mike comes back with clean CLOTHES for El. BLUE JOGGERS and a SWETSHIRT.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Here, these are clean. Okay?

El cautiously accepts the clothing. She removes her jacket, stands, then begins to take off the only other thing she is wearing: the YELLOW SHIRT she got from Benny.

Lucas and Dustin are horrified; covering their eyes and looking away as if they've witnessed something gross.

DUSTIN
Oh, my God. Oh, my God.
LUCAS
No, no, no, no!

Mike stops El, just in time.

MIKE
See over there?
(stammers)
That's the bathroom. Privacy. Get it?

Yes, but she says nothing. Still looking rather confused about the whole situation. El gathers the clothes and heads to the bathroom nearby.

BATHROOM

El walks in; looking around. *Strange looking room.* Mike begins to close the door, but El stops him.

MIKE (CONT'D)
You don't want it closed?

EL
No.

MIKE
Oh, so you *can* speak. Okay, well
... um, how about we just keep the
door ...
(closes until there is a
four-inch gap)
... just like this. Is that better?

EL
Yes.

Pleased with himself, Mike walks away.

INT. WHEELER BATHROOM - BASEMENT - SAME TIME

El's never seen anything like this before. *Privacy. Her own bathroom with no one watching.*

INT. WHEELER BASEMENT - SAME TIME

At the bottom of the stairs, Mike, Lucas and Dustin.

DUSTIN
This is mental.

MIKE
At least she can talk.

LUCAS
(skeptical)
She said *No* and *Yes*. Your three-year-old sister says more.

DUSTIN
She tried to get naked.

LUCAS
There's something seriously wrong with her. Like, wrong in the head.

DUSTIN
(still focused on the naked thing)
She just went like --
(pantomime removing shirt)

LUCAS
I bet she escaped from Pennhurst.

MIKE
From where?

LUCAS
The nuthouse in Kerley County.

DUSTIN
You got a lot of family there?

LUCAS
Bite me.
(then to Mike)
Seriously though, think about it. That would explain her shaved hair and why she's so crazy.

DUSTIN
Why she went like --
(pantomime removing shirt)

LUCAS
She's an escapee is the point.
She's probably a psycho.

DUSTIN
Like Michael Myers.

LUCAS
Exactly!

Mike rolls his eyes.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
We should've never brought her
here.

MIKE
So you just wanted to leave her out
in that storm?

LUCAS
Yes! We went out to find Will, not
another problem.

DUSTIN
I think we should tell your mom.

LUCAS
I second that.

MIKE
Who's crazy now?

LUCAS
How is that crazy?

MIKE
'Cause, we weren't supposed to be
out tonight, remember?

LUCAS
So.

MIKE
So, if I tell my mom, and she tells
your mom ...
(to Dustin)
... and your mom.

DUSTIN

Oh man!

LUCAS

(resigned)

Our houses become Alcatraz.

MIKE

Exactly. We'll never find Will.

BEAT

Then Dustin pantomimes removing shirt.

MIKE (CONT'D)

All right, so here's the plan. She sleeps here tonight.

DUSTIN

You're letting a girl --

Just listen!

MIKE (CONT'D)

MIKE (CONT'D)

In the morning, she sneaks around my house, goes to the front door and rings my doorbell. My mom will answer and know exactly what to do. She'll send her back to Pennhurst, or wherever she comes from, we'll be totally in the clear. And tomorrow night, we go back out. And this time, we find Will.

Dustin and Lucas seem hesitant, but it sounds like an idea.

CUT TO:

INT. WHEELER BASEMENT - LATER

FORT

The Boys have set up a MAKE-SHIFT FORT for El under the TABLE. Sheets COVER THE TABLE, and DOUBLE AS WALLS AND DOORS FOR THE FORT. Mike gives El some BLANKETS and PILLOWS.

STAIRS

Dustin and Lucas are standing on the stairs, HALFWAY UP.

DUSTIN

(quietly, to Lucas)

You really think she's psycho?

LUCAS
Wouldn't want her in my house.

Lucas walks up the stairs. Dustin takes a final look at Mike making El comfortable --

DUSTIN
Mental.

-- before following Lucas up the stairs.

FORT

MIKE
Hey, um, I never asked your name.

El pauses a moment, before lifting her sleeve. Tattooed on her INSIDE LEFT FOREARM, INCHES ABOVE HER WRIST: 011.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Is that real?
(reaches to touch the
tattoo)

El pulls away, startled.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Sorry, I've just never seen a kid
with a tattoo before. What's it
mean? Eleven?

Without speaking, El TAPS HER CHEST TWICE.

MIKE (CONT'D)
That's your name?

EL NODS.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Eleven. Okay. Um, well, my name's
Mike. Short for Michael.
(beat)
Maybe we can call you *El*. Short for
Eleven.

El seems to like the idea.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Um, well, okay. Night, El.

Mike stands.

EL
Night, Mike.

Mike gives a SHY SMILE, before covering the fort's entrance with the sheet.

STAIRS

Mike walks to the bottom of the stairs; pausing a moment - looking back at the fort. Then, he TURNS OFF THE LIGHT, and walks upstairs.

FORT

El rests her head on her pillow. Her lower lip TREMBLES. THUNDER crashes; LIGHTNING flashes.

CUT TO:

OPENING CREDITS

EFFECTS IN:

CHAPTER TWO

THE WEIRDO ON MAPLE STREET

EXT. BYERS' HOME - DAY

At the end of the driveway, A UTILITY WORKER (male, 50s) is using a BUCKET-TRUCK to inspect a nearby TELEPHONE POLE. TWO VEHICLES are parked close to the house: JONATHAN'S and JOYCE'S.

INT. BYERS' HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

JOYCE is sitting at the table, CHAIN SMOKING in between bouts of CRYING. She hasn't slept all night. JONATHAN is preparing breakfast.

JONATHAN

All right, mom, breakfast is ready.

JOYCE

No, no, be careful of the posters.

Joyce moves the POSTERS out of the way, and Jonathan sets A PLATE OF FOOD down on the table in front of her. He remains standing.

JONATHAN

Yeah, okay. All right.

JOYCE
I can't eat.

JONATHAN
I just need you to eat, mom.

JOYCE
Listen, listen, the Xerox
place opens in, like, thirty
minutes.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Yeah.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
And I don't want you to go
alone.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
No, I know. I told you, I got
it.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
So, I'm gonna have Karen take you,
'cause I should be here.

JONATHAN
Okay.

JOYCE
We need to make, what, two-hundred,
three-hundred copies?

JOYCE (CONT'D)
How much is a copy, ten
cents? If we ... ten cents
...

JONATHAN
Okay. Mom, mom...

They talk over each other, until:

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Mom...mom. You can't get like this,
okay?

JOYCE
I'm sorry. I'm sorry.

JONATHAN
No, it's okay.

There's a KNOCK on the front door. Joyce takes a drag from
her CIGARETTE, butts it out, then stands from the table.

INT. BYERS' HOME - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Joyce opens the door. It's HOPPER.

JOYCE
We've been waiting six hours.

Hopper steps in and closes the door behind him.

HOPPER
(remorseful)
Yeah, I know. I came as soon as I
could.

JOYCE
Six hours!

HOPPER
A little bit of trust here, all
right? We've been searching all
night. We went all the way to
Cartersville.

JOYCE
And?

HOPPER
Nothing.

JOYCE
God.
(begins to break down)

BEAT

HOPPER
Flo says you gotta phone call?

JOYCE
Oh, yeah.
(motions to the phone on
the wall)

LIVING ROOM (WALL PHONE)

Hopper takes the lead and begins investigating the phone.

HOPPER
Storm barbecued this pretty good.

JOYCE
The storm?

HOPPER
What else?

Joyce is standing beside Jonathan nearby.

JOYCE
You're saying that that's not
weird?

HOPPER
No, it's weird.
(hangs up the phone)

JONATHAN
Can we, like, trace who made the
call? Contact the --

HOPPER
No, it doesn't work like that.

Hopper leans against the wall.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
Now, uh, you're sure it was Will?
Because Flo said you just heard
some breathing.

JOYCE
No! It was him. It was Will.
(she begins to cry)
And he was scared. And then
something --

HOPPER
It was probably just a prank call.
It was someone trying to scare you.

JONATHAN
Who would do that?

HOPPER
Well, this thing's been on TV. It
brings out all the crazies, you
know. False leads, prank calls, uh -
-

JOYCE
No. Hopper, it was not a prank. It
was him.

HOPPER
Joyce.

JOYCE
Come on, how about a little trust
here? What, you think I'm ... I'm
making this up?

HOPPER
I'm not saying that you're making
it up. All I'm saying is it's an
emotional time for you.

JOYCE

And you think I don't know my own
son's breathing?

(beat)

Wouldn't you know your own
daughter's?

Hopper says nothing. Joyce realizes what she just said.
Daughter. That's a low blow. Hopper turns and walks to the
other side of the room.

HOPPER

You here from, uh, Lonnie yet?

JOYCE

No.

Hopper redirects his anger.

HOPPER

It's been long enough. I'm having
him checked out.

Hopper storms out.

JOYCE

(sighs)

Oh, come on! You're wasting your
time!

EXT. BYERS' HOME - DRIVEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Hopper gets to his TRUCK. He stops before getting inside. He
POPS TWO PILLS from a PILL BOTTLE, and swallows them.
Jonathan is not too far behind.

JONATHAN

Hey, Hopper. Hopper.

Hopper turns to face Jonathan.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

Hey, let me go.

HOPPER

I'm sorry?

Hopper takes out his CIGARETTES, preparing to light one up.

JONATHAN

To Lonnie's. You know, if Will's
there, it means he ran away.

(MORE)

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

And if he sees the cops he'll think he's in trouble. He'll ... he'll hide. You know, he's good at hiding.

HOPPER

Yeah?

(approaches Jonathan, and grasps his arms)

Well, cops are good at finding. Okay? Stay here with your mom. She needs you.

Hopper gets in his truck and drives away, leaving Jonathan standing in the driveway.

INT. WHEELER HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Mike is making EGGOS. THREE pop up from the TOASTER. Mike puts one in his JACKET POCKET, and places the other two on a plate.

INT. WHEELER HOME - DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sitting around the table: NANCY, Mike, HOLLY, KAREN and TED. Family breakfast. Mike is rushing, barely taking the time to chew his food. Nancy looks on in disgust. Karen is slightly amused and curious.

NANCY

Slow down, Mike. That's disgusting.

MIKE

(sarcastic)

You do a lot of *studying* last night?

NANCY

(almost a loss for words)

Yeah, actually, I did.

MIKE

What was your test on, again? Human anatomy?

Nancy kicks Mike's chair, and shoots him a look. Mike kicks back.

KAREN

Hey, what's going on?

Nancy and Mike, in unison, look at Karen.

MIKE
Nothing.

NANCY
Nothing.

INT. WHEELER BASEMENT - LATER

El, still in the fort, is FLICKING THE SWITCHES ON A RADIO SHACK WALKIE TALKIE. We can HEAR FOOTSTEPS APPROACH. The sheet opens.

MIKE
(sitting down opposite El)
Hey, you found my supercomm. Pretty cool, huh? I talk to my friends with it. Mostly Lucas 'cause he lives so close. Signal's pretty weak.
(chuckles)

No response from El. Mike reaches into his pocket and pulls out the Eggo.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Got you breakfast.

El accepts the Eggo and takes a bite.

MIKE (CONT'D)
So, listen, this is gonna sound a little weird, I just need you to go out there ...
(pointing to the window)
Then go to the front door and ring the doorbell. My mom will answer and you'll tell her that you're lost and that you need help. But whatever you do, you can't tell her about last night or that you know me. Understand?

No response.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Really, it's no big deal. We'll just pretend to meet each other again. And my mom, she'll know who to call.

El stops chewing.

EL
No.

Mike wasn't expecting that.

MIKE
No?

EL
No.

El continues eating her Eggo.

MIKE
(trying to understand)
No ... you don't want my mom to get
help?

El slightly shakes her head.

MIKE (CONT'D)
You're in trouble, aren't you?

El looks away momentarily. Her eyes are filling with tears.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Who -- who are you in trouble with?

EL
(softly)
Bad.

MIKE
Bad?
(beat)
Bad people?

Locking eyes with Mike, El nods before looking away again.

MIKE (CONT'D)
They want to hurt you? The bad
people?

El pantomimes a GUN TO HER HEAD. Then she POINTS THE GUN at Mike.

EL
Understand?

Mike stares.

KAREN (O.S.)
Michael, where are you? We're going
to be late. Let's go!

MIKE
(to El)
All right, I'll be back. Just stay
here, okay? Stay here.

Mike stands and pulls the sheet back down, covering the entrance to the fort.

INT. HAWKINS LAB - HALLWAY - DAY

DR. MARTIN BRENNER (50s), head of Hawkins Lab, hurriedly rounds a corner putting on his suit jacket. He's followed closely by TWO STAFFERS; LEAD AGENT (male, 30s), and AGENT CONNIE FRAZIER (female, 30s).

BRENNER
When was this?

FRAZIER
Last night. Less than two miles away.

BRENNER
And the boy?
(checks his watch)

LEAD AGENT
Still missing.

INT. HAWKINS LAB - COMM ROOM - MINUTES LATER

HI-TECH COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT, mostly used for espionage, fills the room. Brenner, using HEADPHONES, is listening to a recent conversation secretly recorded last night. The Lead Agent and Frazier are next to Brenner.

JOYCE (O.S.)
It was my son. I know it. And ...
and I heard something else.

FLO (O.S.)
Something else?

JOYCE (O.S.)
(stammering)
I don't know, it was like, uh, some kind of animal. I don't know. Just please tell Hop to hurry.

EXT. FORESTED AREA - DAY

A SEARCH PARTY (various ages, male, female) combs the forest looking for clues. OFFICER POWELL and OFFICER CALLAHAN are amongst the party. POLICE K-9 units are also involved with the search.

CALLAHAN
Will!

POWELL
Will Byers!

Hopper arrives on scene.

HOPPER
Hey! Anything?

Callahan shakes his head.

CALLAHAN
You?

HOPPER
No. Nothing but a dead phone.

CALLAHAN
Joyce?

HOPPER
About on step from falling off the edge.

POWELL
She's been a few steps for a while now, hasn't she?

HOPPER
Kid's missing, man. Show a little class.

Hopper walks away.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
(to the volunteers)
All right, come on let's go! We gotta lot a ground to cover.

CALLAHAN
(to Powell)
The chief and her, they've screwed before, huh?

Powell gives a sly smile and joins the search party.

POWELL
Will!

CALLAHAN
Is that a yeah, or ... did they ...

EXT. HAWKINS HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

SEVERAL DOZEN STUDENTS (various high school ages) are arriving to start the school day.

INT. HAWKINS HIGH - HALLWAY - ON GOING

BARBARA HOLLAND (17) is walking with Nancy, quizzing her for an upcoming test. Barb is reading from prepared CUE-CARDS.

BARB

When alpha particles go through gold foil, they become ...?

NANCY

Unoccupied space.

Next CARD.

BARB

A molecule than can ...

HALLWAY INTERSECTION

STEVE HARRINGTON interrupts the pop-quiz, taking Barb's cue-cards.

NANCY

Hey!

With Steve are his friends, TOMMY H (17), and Tommy's GIRLFRIEND, CAROL (17).

STEVE

I don't know, I think you've studied enough, Nance.

NANCY

Steve ...

STEVE

I'm telling you, you know, you got this. Don't worry. Now, on to more important matters.

(puts the cue-card in his back pocket)

My dad has left town on a conference and my mom's gone with him, 'cause, you know, she doesn't trust him.

TOMMY H

Good call.

STEVE
So are you in?

NANCY
(genuinely confused)
In for what?

CAROL
No parents? Big house?

NANCY
A party?

CAROL
Ding, ding, ding, ding!

NANCY
It's Tuesday.

TOMMY H
(mocking, condescending)
It's Tuesday! Oh my God --
(chuckling)

STEVE
Come on. It'll be low key. It'll be
just us. What do you? Are you in or
are you out?

Nancy is considering it. But before she can say anything:

CAROL
Oh, God. Look.

She, Tommy, Steve, Nancy and Barb all turn to see what Carol
is pointing out.

STEVE
(indifferent)
Oh, God. That's depressing.

Jonathan is pinning POSTERS to the bulletin board.

NANCY
Should we say something?

CAROL
I don't think he speaks.

TOMMY H
How much you wanna bet he killed
him?

STEVE

Shut up.

Nancy decides to say something. She walks over to Jonathan.

BULLETIN BOARD NEARBY

Jonathan uses available PUSH PINS to finish attaching the poster to the board.

HAVE YOU SEEN ME?



Will Byers Aged 12 4'9"
Brown Hair, Brown Eyes, 73lbs
Last seen wearing Jeans,
Blue Plaid shirt, White T-shirt
Red Down Vest with tan stripe
Carrying Black canvas Day Bag
Any information call Joyce Byers
555-0141

Nancy cautiously approaches.

NANCY

Hey.

JONATHAN

Oh, hey.

NANCY

I just ... I wanted to say, you know, um ... I'm sorry about everything.

Carol, Tommy, Steve and Barb are watching. They're standing about 20-feet away. Save for Barb, they all look bored and uninterested. Jonathan looks over at the group with doubt of their sincerity.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Everyone's thinking about you.

Jonathan says nothing.

NANCY (CONT'D)

It sucks.

JONATHAN

(no kidding)

Yeah.

There's an awkward silence. Then:

NANCY

I'm sure he's fine. He's a smart kid.

SCHOOL BELL RINGS

NANCY (CONT'D)

I have to go.

(chuckles)

Chemistry test.

JONATHAN

Yeah.

NANCY

(backing away)

Good luck.

JONATHAN

Thanks.

Nancy joins her friends. Jonathan continues at the bulletin board, ensuring the poster is secured properly. Just then, the school's PA SYSTEM ENGAGES.

PRINCIPAL (O.S.)
 Attention, faculty and students. At eight PM tonight, there will be an assembly on the football field in support of Will Byers and his family.

Jonathan doesn't stick around to hear it. He quickly leaves the school.

PRINCIPAL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 All are encouraged to attend. Volunteer sign-ups for search parties are still available in the office.

INT. HAWKINS MIDDLE SCHOOL - MR. CLARKE'S CLASS - DAY

Lucas and Dustin take their seat at the front of the class. MR. CLARKE is going from desk to desk handing out today's ASSIGNMENT. STUDENTS (male, female, 12 to 13) are taking their seats. Mike, though, is not there.

DUSTIN
 Oh, this is weird. He's never this late.

LUCAS
 I'm telling you, his stupid plan failed.

DUSTIN
 I though you liked his plan?

LUCAS
 Yeah, but obviously it was stupid, or he'd be here.

DUSTIN
 If his mom found out a girl spent the night --

LUCAS
 He's in deep shit right about now.

DUSTIN
 (lowers his voice)
 Hey! What if she slept naked?

LUCAS
 (rolls eyes)
 Oh, my God, she didn't.

DUSTIN
 (oh crap!)
 Oh, if Mrs. Wheeler tells my
 parents ...

LUCAS
 No way. Mike would never rat us
 out.

DUSTIN
 (not convinced)
 I don't know ...

LUCAS
 All that matters is, after school,
 the freak will be back in the loony
 bin, and we can focus on what
 really matters, finding Will.

EXT. WHEELER HOME - DRIVEWAY - DAY

MRS. WHEELER and HOLLY are in the WHEELER WAGON just driving
 away. As the WAGON LEAVES FRAME, MIKE RIDING HIS BIKE ENTERS
 FRAME.

INT. WHEELER HOME - LATER

HALLWAY

Mike and El come up from the basement. They're walking to the
 kitchen.

MIKE
 You want anything to drink? We have
 OJ, skim milk. What else?

LIVING ROOM

El stops at the living room; adjacent to the kitchen. The
 first thing she sees is the TELEVISION. Mike joins her
 standing at the TV.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 Oh, this is my living room. It's
 mostly just for watching TV. Nice
 right?
 (really excited when
 talking nerd)
 It's a twenty-two inch. That's like
 ten-times bigger than Dustin's.

Not so interested, El walks away and continues checking out the rest of the living room. On the FIREPLACE MANTEL ARE FAMILY PHOTOS.

FIREPLACE

El walks up the mantel to take a closer look. PHOTOS, various sizes, FRAMED.

- Mike and Nancy's school picture.
- Professionally taken photo of Holly; 6 months old.
- Family photo.
- Another of Holly; 1 year old.

EL
 (smiling at Nancy's
 picture)
 Pretty.

MIKE
 (eww, gross)
 I guess. That's my sister, Nancy.

El continues to take a closer look at all the photos.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 And that's baby Holly. And those
 are my parents. What are your
 parents like?

No answer.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 Do they live close?

El walks to the LA-Z-BOY.

LA-Z-BOY (NEAR THE FIREPLACE)

El takes a closer look. Feeling the fabric.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 That's our La-Z-Boy.
 (chuckles)
 That's where my dad sleeps.

BEAT

MIKE (CONT'D)
 You can try it if you want.

El looks for encouragement as she slowly steps around to the front of the chair.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Yeah.

She slowly sits down in the big comfy chair. Mike kneels beside her.

MIKE (CONT'D)
It's fun!

Mike reaches for the ARM on the side.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Just trust me, okay?

Cautiously, El nods, giving Mike the okay to...

FWHAP!

Mike pulls back the arm, and the La-Z-Boy engages it's super-comfortable position - FLAT. The SEAT BACK is on a 20-degree angle, and the FOOT REST IS OUT. Mike CHUCKLES and El LAUGHS NERVOUSLY.

MIKE (CONT'D)
See? Fun, right?

Mike sets the chair back to the SITTING position.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Now you try.

El reaches for the arm, and:

FWHAP!

The La-Z-Boy opens and rocks back and forth to the fully extended position. The two kids share a laugh.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Jonathan, driving his 1971 FORD GALAXIE 500.

INT. JONATHAN'S CAR - SAME TIME

Listening to HARD ROCK MUSIC. Jonathan is staring blankly at the road ahead.

The music changes to: "SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO" by THE CLASH. Jonathan's attention is immediately drawn to the RADIO. Memories come flooding back.

CUT TO:

INT. BYERS' HOME - JONATHAN'S ROOM - SOME TIME AGO

"SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO" continues to play. WILL and Jonathan are listening to a CASSETTE TAPE of THE CLASH on Jonathan's STEREO. They're sitting on the edge of the BED and bopping their heads to the beat.

JONATHAN
Do you like it?

WILL
Yeah, it's cool.

JONATHAN
All right, you can keep the mix if you want.

WILL
Really?

JONATHAN
Yeah, really. All the best stuff's on there. Joy Division, Bowie, Television, The Smiths. It'll totally change your life.

WILL
Yeah. Totally.

The MUSIC CONTINUES but the fun stops the moment Jonathan and Will OVERHEAR Joyce in the other room on the telephone.

JOYCE (O.S.)
Where the hell are you, Lonnie?
(beat)
I don't wanna hear it, I don't wanna hear it.

Will's happiness quickly turns to concern.

JOYCE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
This is ridiculous! I'm so sick of your excuses!

Jonathan goes over to the door and shuts it before returning to Will's side. Jonathan TURNS DOWN THE VOLUME on the stereo.

WILL
He's not coming, is he?

JONATHAN
Do you even like baseball?

WILL
No, but ... I don't know. It's fun
to go with him sometimes.

JONATHAN
Come on. Has he ever done anything
with you that you actually like?
You know, like the arcade or
something?

WILL
I don't know.

Will's too nice of a boy; too sensitive and kind to say
anything negative or bad about anyone.

JONATHAN
No, all right. He hasn't. He's
trying to force you to like *normal*
things. And you shouldn't like
things because people tell you
you're supposed to. Okay?
Especially not him.

Will nods. Jonathan changes the atmosphere by going back to
talking music.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
But you like The Clash? For real?

Will's bright smile returns.

WILL
For real! Definitely.

Jonathan CRANKS THE VOLUME.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - PRESENT DAY - DAY

We SEE JONATHAN'S CAR DRIVE PAST A SIGN: **LEAVING HAWKINS.**
COME AGAIN SOON.

EXT. DOWNTOWN HAWKINS - DAY

A BELL TOLLS. We SEE JOYCE DRIVING HER 1976 FORD PINTO. She pulls into an empty parking space in front of MELVALD'S GENERAL STORE. Her workplace.

INT. MELVALD'S GENERAL STORE - MOMENTS LATER

The store is BUSY WITH CHRISTMAS SHOPPERS. Joyce come in, she's rushing. DONALD MELVALD (60s), her boss, follows closely behind.

AN AISLE BY THE FRONT DOOR

MR. MELVALD

Joyce? I wasn't expecting you today. I brought Jeffrey in to cover.

JOYCE

(stammering)

I -- I'm not here to work. The -- the storm last night ...

She's so pre-occupied, she doesn't know where to look. She stops and faces Mr. Melvald.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

I need a new phone.

INT. MELVALD'S GENERAL STORE - FRONT CASH - MOMENTS LATER

Mr. Melvald rings in Joyce's purchase. He on one side of the counter, Joyce on the other - like a real customer.

MR. MELVALD

Okay, that looks like twenty-two dollars and fifty-six cents.

JOYCE

Uh, yeah, you know, uh ... I gave Jonathan all my money for ... uh, for the copies for the posters. Uh, I need an advance.

Mr. Melvald is a softie.

MR. MELVALD

(empathetic)

Yes, of course.

JOYCE
 (softly)
 Thank you.

Mr. Melvald takes out his CHECKBOOK and begins writing. Joyce SHEEPISHLY takes a look.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
 Uh, yeah, I was thinking, two weeks?

Mr. Melvald and Joyce lock eyes for a moment. An *awkward* moment.

MR. MELVALD
 Yes, I understand, but, you know, I have to pay Jeffrey for covering --

JOYCE
 (with conviction)
 Donald. I've been here ten years, right? Have I ever called in sick, or missed a shift once?

The guilt trip is working on Mr. Melvald. He hangs his head, not wanting to make eye contact with Joyce.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
 I've worked, uh, Christmas Eve and Thanksgiving.
 (voice breaking)
 I don't know where my boy is. I don't know if I'm gonna ever see him again, if he's hurt ...

Joyce composes herself before continuing.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
 I, uh, need this phone, and two weeks' advance.

Mr. Melvald acquiesces, and writes a NEW PAYCHECK for Joyce.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
 And a pack of Camels!

EXT. BYERS' HOME - FRONT DOOR - DAY

A MAN (30s) dressed as a REPAIRMAN from HAWKINS POWER AND LIGHT knocks on the front door. He's carrying a CLIPBOARD. There's no answer at the door, so the Man looks through the window. No movement. He raises a WALKIE TALKIE to his mouth:

AGENT REPAIRMAN
We're all clear.

AGENT #2 (O.S.)
Copy that.

CAMERA PANS to reveal a WHITE SERVICE VAN belonging to HAWKINS POWER AND LIGHT parked in the driveway. The utility's logo on the side of the van, adding to its authenticity.

NEAR THE VAN

The SIDE DOOR SLIDES OPEN. AN AGENT (male, 30s) WEARING WHITE BOOTS AND A WHITE CHEMSUIT hops out. We ONLY SEE THE AGENT'S FEET AND LEGS. A SECOND AGENT (same specs.) hops out; then a THIRD AGENT. They, too, are DRESSED IN WHITE BOOTS AND CHEMSUITS.

AND THEN, a FOURTH MAN steps out of the van. CAMERA TILTS UP TO REVEAL: Dr. Brenner. He, too, is dressed in WHITE BOOTS AND CHEMSUIT. Brenner is carrying a BLACK EQUIPMENT CASE.

EXT. BYERS' HOME - BACK YARD - MOMENTS LATER

Three Agents are carefully walking through the yard; following the SIGNAL FROM THEIR ELECTRONIC SCANNERS. An agent moves closer to the SHED. He cautiously OPENS THE DOOR and steps in.

INT. BYERS' SHED - MOMENTS LATER

As the agent makes his way deeper into the shed, we can HEAR THE SCANNER'S BEEPING BETTING LOUDER. He turns to his RIGHT. The SIGNAL GETS EVEN LOUDER.

WALKING TOWARD THE CAMERA we SEE that the agent is actually Dr. Brenner. And he's found something -- it's OOZING DOWN THE WALL of the shed. Another agent stands behind Brenner.

BRENNER
Extraordinary.

INT. WHEELER HOME - MIKE'S ROOM - DAY

Mike and El are kneeled in front of a table FULL OF TOYS. Mike slams downs a 2-INCH YODA FIGURINE.

MIKE
(Yoda's voice)
Ready are you? What knows you of ready?

El, of course, is mildly amused and confused.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 (normal voice)
 His name's Yoda. He can use the Force to move things with his mind, like this.
 (pushes all the toys off the table)

El stands and walks over to a nearby BOOKSHELF. Mike stays behind at the table.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 (picks up Rory)
 Oh, this is my dinosaur, Rory. Look, he has a speaker in his mouth so he can roar.

AT THE BOOKSHELF

RORY ROARS. El isn't interested. She's more focused on the bookshelf - and Mike's TROPHIES. Mike puts Rory down and joins El at the bookshelf.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 Oh, these are all my science fair trophies. We got first every year. Except for last year, when we got third.

CAMERA PANS to a TROPHIE: **HAWKINS MIDDLE SCHOOL TEAM PROBLEM SOLVING CHAMPIONS.**

MIKE (CONT'D)
 Mr. Clarke said it was totally political.

CAMERA PANS to a PHOTOGRAPH taken at a SCIENCE FAIR: Mike, Will, Lucas and Dustin HOLDING A LARGE FIRST PLACE TROPHY for their project **VOLCANIC ERUPTION.**

El's entire demeanor changes when she sees Will. Her lower lip trembles. She stares *through* the picture. Mike senses something is wrong. El POINTS TO WILL in the picture.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 You know Will? Did you see him? Last night? On the road?

Rapid-fire questions; not giving El a chance to answer. Not that she could, anyway. Her GAZE still locked on the photo.

The SOUND OF A VEHICLE PULLING IN THE DRIVEWAY draws their attention away. Mike rushes over to the WINDOW.

AT THE WINDOW

Karen's back. She's pulling into the driveway in the WHEELER WAGON.

MIKE (CONT'D)
We gotta go.

Mike grabs El by the wrist, and they quickly rush out of the room.

INT. WHEELER HOME - LIVING ROOM - BOTTOM OF STAIRS - ON GOING

Mike and El rush down the stairs. *Too late.* Karen is already coming through the front door carrying Holly in her right arm, and a PAPER BAG OF GROCERIES in the other. Karen skillfully closes the door behind her without dropping her cargo.

KAREN
(to Holly)
I bought pizza and macaroni.

HOLLY
Okay.

KAREN
Okay.

Mike and El turn and run back up the stairs. Karen HEARS THE STOMPING.

KAREN (CONT'D)
Ted? Is that you?

No one is supposed to be home; not even Ted.

TOP OF THE STAIRS

Still 'dragging' El by the wrist, and rushing back to his room, Mike answers.

MIKE
Just me, mom.

KAREN (O.S.)
Mike? What are you doing home?

MIKE
One second!

INT. WHEELER HOME - MIKE'S ROOM - ON GOING

He and El rush through the door. Mike quickly closes the door behind him. El is expressionless, but clearly scared. Mike opens the CLOSET door.

MIKE

In here. I'll be right back, okay?

El doesn't budge.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(pleading)

Please, you have to get in, or my mom, she'll find you. Do you understand?

El stares blankly.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I won't tell her about you. I promise.

EL

(doesn't know the word)

Promise?

MIKE

It means something that you can't break. Ever.

KAREN (O.S.)

Michael?

MIKE

Please.

Nervously looking to Mike, then to the closet space, El gives in. She steps into the closet.

IN THE CLOSET

The door closes. It's DARK. El's breathing becomes RAPID and SHALLOW. She takes a step back; looking around. She closes her eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. HAWKINS LAB - BASEMENT HALLWAY - SOME TIME AGO

TWO ORDERLIES (male, 30s) are forcefully carrying El, one on each arm, to an ISOLATION CELL. *Punishment.*

El, wearing only a HOSPITAL GOWN, is struggling, but she is no match for Brenner's enforcers. Her feet aren't even touching the ground.

EL

Papa!

She cries out to Dr. Brenner. But on *his* very own order is *why* she is going to lock up. From a distance, Brenner supervises the incarceration, but neither says nor anything.

EL (CONT'D)

(screaming, sobbing)

Papa!

The Orderlies do their job without emotion.

EL (CONT'D)

No! Papa!

CELL CORRIDOR

The two Orderlies literally THROW El inside the ISOLATION CELL.

INT. HAWKINS LAB - ISOLATION CELL - ON GOING

The cell is similar to that of a JAIL CELL. Except, *this* cell is smaller. 6-SQUARE-FEET. NO WINDOWS, NO TOILET, NO BED. The SOLID STEEL door doesn't have a window. The WALLS ARE PAINTED MUD BROWN.

El falls to the ground as she is tossed inside like a piece of garbage. The door SLAMS. LOCKS. There is no handle on the inside; no way to even try to unlock the door. El rushes to the door, BANGING ON IT WITH AN OPEN PALM.

EL

Papa!

Two hands, BANGING.

EL (CONT'D)

(sobbing, screaming)

Papa!

It's no use. El walks to the back of the small room and cowers in the corner. Sobbing. It's DARK.

CUT TO:

INT. WHEELER HOME - LIVING ROOM - PRESENT DAY

Mike's sitting on the couch along with Karen. Her arms are crossed.

MIKE

I just ... I don't feel good. I woke up and my head, it *really* hurt bad, and my throat was all scratchy, and I wanted to tell you, but the last time I told you I was sick you made me go to school anyway, and --

KAREN

Michael.

MIKE

Yeah?

KAREN

I'm not mad at you.

MIKE

(surprised)

No?

KAREN

No, of course not.

(sighs, sits closer to Mike)

All this that's been going on with Will, I can't imagine what it's been like for you.

BEAT

KAREN (CONT'D)

I just ... I want you to feel like you can talk to me. I never want you to feel like you have to hide anything from me. I'm here for you. Okay?

Mike nods.

THUD! It's coming from upstairs.

KAREN (CONT'D)

(to Mike)

Is there someone else here?

MIKE
 (calm, oblivious)
 No.

INT. WHEELER HOME - MIKE'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Mike quickly opens the door, comes in, then closes the door behind him and LOCKS IT.

MIKE
 Eleven? Is everything okay.

He rushes over to the closet.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 El?

He opens the door. El is cowering; crying.

EL
 Mike.

MIKE
 Is everything okay?

Clearly not. But she NODS anyway.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 Are you sure?

El puts on a BRAVE FACE, and with a slight smile:

EL
 Promise.

INT. BYERS' HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

Joyce is at the dining room table opening the BOX WITH THE NEW PHONE. It's not a wall phone like the other one. It's a TABLE-TOP PHONE. BEIGE.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

WALL (PHONE OUTLET)

Joyce plugs the PHONE CORD in. She checks to make sure it works. DIAL TONE. She walks to the living room with the phone, but the cord is too short. *Not enough slack.* She reaches for the EASY CHAIR, PULLS IT CLOSER, SITS, then skootches closer (while still sitting) toward the wall. The phone is on her lap.

Now, she waits.

EXT. SATTLER QUARRY - DAY

The search party is at SATTLER QUARRY. While Powell leads the VOLUNTEERS, Hopper and Callahan are close to the edge of the cliff talking. Callahan creeps closer to the edge and looks down.

HOPPER

Whoa, whoa. I need you alive for the next few days, at least.

We can HEAR VOLUNTEERS calling Will's name.

CALLAHAN

Oh, hell. I can survive that.

Hopper gives a "yeah, whatever" laugh.

CALLAHAN (CONT'D)

What? George Burness made the jump. And he was drunk as a skunk. He did it on a ten-dollar bet.

HOPPER

George is a liar. You make that jump from his height, that water turns into cement.

(slaps hands together)

Hit's you like a ton of bricks. Break every damn bone in your body.

Callahan thinks about it for a moment.

CALLAHAN

Nah.

HOPPER'S WALKIE TALKIE COMES ALIVE.

FLO (O.S.)

Chief, you copy?

Hopper grabs his WALKIE from his UTILITY BELT.

HOPPER

Yeah, Flo, talk to me.

FLO (O.S.)

Hey, Chief, we got a call from over at Benny's. I think you need to get there right away.

EXT. BENNY'S BURGERS - DAY

Powell steps out of his SQUAD CAR and heads to the entrance of Benny's. The scene is BUSY with PARAMEDICS, FIREFIGHTERS AND POLICE. Hopper arrives and steps out of his TRUCK. He, Powell and Callahan head for the door.

INT. BENNY'S BURGERS - ON GOING**DINING AREA**

Hopper ENTERS first. Followed by Callahan then Powell. They immediately see BENNY's body at a table. He is HUNCHED OVER; head resting on the table, DRIED BLOOD coming from a BULLET WOUND IN HIS RIGHT TEMPLE. Benny's RIGHT HAND RESTS ON A BLACK REVOLVER; HIS INDEX FINGER ON THE TRIGGER. FLIES are buzzing around his corpse.

CALLAHAN

Ugh, Jesus!
(the smell)

Hopper walks around to the other side of the table, but keeps his distance. He *knows* it's his good friend, Benny. He stares in disbelief and anger.

POWELL

Suicide?

HOPPER

Mmm-hmm.

Hopper is skeptical, but murmurs just for the sake of it.

CALLAHAN

Missing kid, suicide ... You must feel like a big city cop again, huh, Chief?

HOPPER

(still staring at the body)
Well, I mostly dealt with strangers back then.
(beat)
Benny was my friend.

EXT. INDIANAPOLIS SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

A residential street in the suburbs of Indianapolis. We SEE JONATHAN'S '71 FORD SLOWLY DRIVING TOWARD THE CAMERA.

INT. JONATHAN'S CAR - ON GOING

Jonathan is looking for Lonnie's place.

EXT. LONNIE'S HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Jonathan's car comes to a stop. He steps out and makes his way to the house.

PORCH

Jonathan takes a look through the WINDOW IN THE DOOR. We can HEAR THE TELEVISION. We can SEE LIGHTS ARE ON in the living room. Jonathan POUNDS on the door.

JONATHAN

Hello!?

INT. LONNIE'S HOME - SAME TIME**FRONT DOOR**

Jonathan POUNDS ON THE DOOR a second time.

EXT. LONNIE'S HOME - PORCH - SAME TIME

THROUGH THE WINDOW WE CAN SEE CYNTHIA (early 20s), Lonnie's hot girlfriend, storm out of the kitchen. And she's not too pleased to have company. She opens the door.

CYNTHIA

(rudely)

Can I help you.

JONATHAN

Yeah, is Lonnie around?

CYNTHIA

Yeah, he's out back, what do you want?

JONATHAN

(walks in, past Cynthia)

To look around.

INT. LONNIE'S HOME - LIVING ROOM

Jonathan brushes past Cynthia, and continues through the living room.

CYNTHIA
 Hey! What do you think you're
 doing?

JONATHAN
 I'll be fast.

Jonathan heads down the hallway to the bedrooms.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
 Hey, Will?

HALLWAY

He goes from ROOM TO ROOM.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
 Hey, Will? Will, you here?

He gets to a locked door.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
 (bangs on the door)
 Will?

Jonathan checks a different room. The door is open.

INT. LONNIE'S HOME - SPARE BEDROOM

Standing at the door, Jonathan visually scans the room. The
 BED ISN'T MADE. Someone has recently slept there. Jonathan
 turns and walks away.

INT. LONNIE'S HOME - HALLWAY

Jonathan walks down the hallway back toward the living room.
 JUST THEN, LONNIE BYERS (40s) SHOVES JONATHAN INTO THE WALL.
 Jonathan easily PUSHES LONNIE off.

JONATHAN
 Get off!

They're facing each other; three-feet apart.

LONNIE
 Damn! You've gotten stronger.

Standing nearby, closer to the kitchen, is Cynthia.

CYNTHIA
 Would someone please explain what
 the hell is going on?

LONNIE
Jonathan, Cynthia. Cynthia, this is
Jonathan. My oldest.

Cynthia's look softens.

LONNIE (CONT'D)
Come here.
(Lonnie hugs Jonathan)

JONATHAN
Get off me, man!

EXT. WHEELER HOME - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Lucas and Dustin, on their bicycle, roll up to Mike's place. They drive by -- without even seeing -- A MAN (30s) WEARING A HAWKINS POWER AND LIGHT UNIFORM LOOKING INSIDE THE WHEELER'S MAILBOX at the end of the driveway.

INT. WHEELER HOME - MIKE'S ROOM - ON GOING

Lucas and Dustin shut the door behind them. They stare at El, who is sitting, CROSS-LEGGED, on Mike's bed.

LUCAS
(to Mike)
Are you out of your mind?

MIKE
Just listen to me.

LUCAS
You are out of your mind!

MIKE
She knows about Will.

DUSTIN
What do you mean she knows about
Will?

Mike walks to the bookshelf and picks up the SCIENCE FAIR PHOTO.

MIKE
(holding up the picture)
She pointed at him, at this
picture. She knew he was missing. I
could tell.

LUCAS
You *could* tell?

MIKE
Just think about it. Do you really think it was a coincidence that we found her on *Mirkwood*, the same place where Will disappeared?

DUSTIN
(to Lucas)
That is weird.

MIKE
And she said bad people are after her. I think maybe these bad people are the same ones that took Will. I think she knows what happened to him.

Lucas is still skeptical.

LUCAS
Then why doesn't she tell us?

Frustrated, Lucas confronts El.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
(to El)
Do you know where he is?

Lucas grabs El by the shoulders; they're only inches apart.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
DO YOU KNOW WHERE WILL IS?

MIKE
Stop it, you're scaring her!

LUCAS
She should be scared!
(to El)
If you know where he is, tell us!

El is starting to cry. Lucas walks to Mike

LUCAS (CONT'D)
This is nuts! We have to take her to your mom.

MIKE
No! Eleven said telling any adult would put us in danger.

DUSTIN
What kind of danger?

LUCAS
(mocking)
Her name is *Eleven*?

MIKE
El for short.

DUSTIN
(raising voice)
Mike, what kind of danger?

MIKE
DANGER danger.

Mike points a FINGER PISTOL between Dustin's eyes. Then does the same to Lucas. Lucas BATS MIKE'S HAND AWAY.

LUCAS
No, no, no! We're going back to
Plan A. We're telling your mom.

Lucas rushes for the door.

IT SLAMS SHUT.

Lucas opens it --

IT SLAMS SHUT. THE LOCK ENGAGES.

The boys turn, in unison, and look at El.

She's standing. BLOOD drips from her LEFT NOSTRIL.

EL
(serious, with conviction)
No.

EXT. LONNIE'S HOME - BACKYARD - ON GOING

Lonnie is showing off his OLDS 442 MUSCLE CAR to Jonathan.
It's parked on the grass.

LONNIE
Take a look at this beaut.
Should've seen it when I got it.
Took me a year, but it's almost
done.

Jonathan's more interested in what's in the trunk. He checks.

LONNIE (CONT'D)
Really? You wanna check up my ass,
too?

Jonathan closes the trunk.

LONNIE (CONT'D)
I told you the same thing as I told
those cops, he's not here and he
never has been.

Jonathan approaches Lonnie.

JONATHAN
Then why didn't you call mom back?

LONNIE
(indifferent)
I don't know, I just ... I assumed
she just forgot where he was. You
know, he was lost or something.
(beat)
That boy was never very good at
taking care of himself.

JONATHAN
This isn't some joke, all right?
There are search parties, reporters
...

LONNIE
Hopper's not still Chief, is he?

Jonathan says nothing. Lonnie shakes his head in disgust.

LONNIE (CONT'D)
Tell your mother she's gotta get
you out of that hellhole. Come out
here to the city. People are more
real here, you know?
(beat)
Then I can see you more.

Yeah right. Jonathan shakes his head.

LONNIE (CONT'D)
What, you think I don't want to see
you?

JONATHAN
I *know* you don't.

LONNIE

See, that's your mother talkin' right there. She even know you're here?

No response.

LONNIE (CONT'D)

Oh great. So one kid goes missing and the other one runs wild? Some real fine parenting right there.

(beat)

Look, all I'm saying is, maybe I'm not the asshole, all right.

Jonathan takes a POSTER out from his SATCHEL and presses it to Lonnie's chest.

JONATHAN

(walking away)

In case you forgot what he looks like.

Lonnie looks at the poster. IT'S FOLDED, THE PHOTOS OF WILL ARE FACING UP. Cynthia walks up behind Lonnie. She puts her arms around him.

CYNTHIA

(referring to Jonathan)

He's kinda cute, huh? Maybe I'll trade you in for the younger model.

INT. HAWKINS POLICE - OFFICER'S DESK - DAY

Hopper and Callahan are chatting with EARL (50s). Callahan is sitting, casually-like, on the edge of a nearby DESK. Hopper is sitting in a CHAIR opposite Earl, who is sitting on a PADDED BENCH ALONG THE WALL. Earl struggles to LIGHT A CIGARETTE.

EARL

Just doesn't make and sense, Chief.

Hopper USES HIS OWN LIGHTER to light Earl's smoke.

HOPPER

You, uh, notice anything odd about him in the last few weeks?

EARL

No, we were fixin' to go fishing down the Etowah next Sunday.

(MORE)

EARL (CONT'D)

I mean, he was looking forward to it. I know that.

HOPPER

He got any enemies you might know about? I mean people who might not want him around?

EARL

(sighs)

The exes didn't like him much. That's for sure, but ... nah.

HOPPER

When was the last time you saw him?

EARL

Yesterday. Lunch, same as always.

HOPPER

Just you and the boys?

EARL

Yep. Me and Henry and ...

(sighs)

Well, there's this kid -- no kid did this.

HOPPER

Kid?

(beat)

What are you talking about?

EARL

Yeah, at lunch. There was this boy that, uh ... I mean he was trying to steal food out of Benny's kitchen. Can you imagine that?

Hopper looks to Callahan. Callahan stands from the desk and WALKS OVER TO HIS OWN DESK.

HOPPER

This kid? What'd he look like?

Still sitting on the bench, Earl raises his arm about eye-level.

EARL

Well, he's about yea high. You know, tiny like.

(lowers arm, faces Hopper)

I didn't get a good look at him, though. He was back in the kitchen.

Callahan returns with a MISSING PERSON POSTER OF WILL BYERS.

CALLAHAN

(showing Earl the poster)
Did he look like this?

EARL

(accepting the poster)
No, no. That's Lonnie's missin' kid.
(returns the poster)
This one had *really* short hair. I mean, it was buzzed nearly down to the scalp.

HOPPER

Yeah, well, let's ... you know, let's forget about the haircut. I mean, if
(Hopper stands, holding the poster)
I mean, if this kid had a buzz cut, could it be Lonnie's kid?

EARL

(looking at the poster again)
Well, I didn't get a good look at him. About the right height, though. I mean, could've been.
(stammers)
Yeah, that's ... could've been.

Hopper nods, but more for the sake of nodding rather than agreeing with Earl. Neither man is convinced.

INT. WHEELER HOME - NANCY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Nancy is on her BED lying on her back, playing with her hair, and TALKING ON THE TELEPHONE to Barb. MUSIC is playing ON THE RADIO.

NANCY

Because I don't want to go by myself.
(beat, she sits up)
Barb ... Barb, it's not rocket science. You just tell your parents you're gonna stay at my place afterwards.
(beat)
No, tell them we're ... studying.

KAREN (O.S.)
 (from the kitchen)
 Nancy! Dinner!

NANCY
 Coming! Look, I gotta go. I'll see
 you in an hour.

With a smile, Nancy hangs up.

INT. WHEELER HOME - DINING ROOM - LATER

Sitting around the dining room table, CLOCKWISE FROM SIX:
 Karen (currently BACK TO CAMERA), Holly in a HIGH CHAIR,
 Nancy, Mike, Dustin, Lucas, TED WHEELER.

Dinner conversation is null. Mike, Dustin and Lucas seem pre-
 occupied - lost in thought. Lucas, with a FORK STUCK IN A
 PIECE OF MEATLOAF ON HIS PLATE, looks disinterested.

KAREN
 Something wrong with the meatloaf?

DUSTIN
 Ah, no, I had two bologna
 sandwiches for lunch...
 (beat)
 I don't know why.

LUCAS
 (shyly, fake smile)
 Me too.

Nancy, trying to score bonus points:

NANCY
 It's delicious, Mommy.

KAREN
 Thank you, sweetie.

NANCY
 So there's this special assembly
 thing tonight for Will at the
 school field. Barb's driving.

KAREN
 Why am I just hearing about this?

NANCY
 I thought you knew.

KAREN

I told you, I don't want you out after dark until Will is found.

NANCY

I know, I know, but it'd be super weird if I'm not there. I mean, *everyone's going.*

Karen sighs, and relents.

KAREN

Just ... be back by ten.

(beat)

Why don't you take the boys, too

MIKE/LUCAS/DUSTIN

No!

Mike casually takes a sip from his GLASS OF MILK.

KAREN

(to Mike)

Don't you think you should be there? For Will?

JUST THEN, behind Karen, WALKING DOWN THE STAIRS, IS EL.

Mike sees El, THEN SPITS OUT HIS MILK.

Karen TURNS TO SEE WHAT'S BEHIND HER --

DUSTIN POUNDS ON THE TABLE TWICE. Dishes CLATTER, FORKS AND KNIVES COME ALIVE in a cacophony of racket.

Startled, KAREN TURNS BACK TO DUSTIN.

DUSTIN

Sorry. Spasm.

Mike looks at the mess he's made. Lucas looks to Mike and Dustin. *What do we do now?*

Holly is spooked, she slouches in her chair and is about to cry.

KAREN

It's okay Holly. It's just a loud noise.

NANCY

(scolding the boys)

Nice.

EXT. BENNY'S BURGERS - NIGHT

The SEARCH PARTY has moved to the immediate FORESTED AREA around Benny's Burgers. POLICE and VOLUNTEERS with FLASHLIGHTS CALL OUT WILL'S NAME. K-9 UNITS and VOLUNTEERS WITH DOGS join the search.

EXT. FORESTED AREA - LATER

Hopper, Callahan and Powell are, FLASHLIGHTS IN HAND, combing the forest and discussing theories.

CALLAHAN

Hey, you think Earl really saw Will? I mean, what's he doin' with a shaved head? And stealing food from Benny?

They stop walking.

HOPPER

Tell you what, when we find him, we'll ask.

POWELL

You can't ask a corpse a question.

Hopper and Callahan shoot Powell a look.

Just then A MARINE WHISTLE BLOWS.

VOLUNTEER (O.S.)

Hold up!

WHISTLE BLOWS again.

HOPPER

You got something?

EXT. FORESTED AREA - DRAINAGE PIPE - ON GOING

Mr. Clark is crouching BESIDE A DRAINAGE PIPE, buried, but running PARALLEL WITH THE GROUND and with no gate covering the opening. Mr. Clarke's FLASHLIGHT pointing to a PIECE OF WHITE TORN CLOTH IN HIS HAND. Hopper arrives and crouches down beside Mr. Clarke.

HOPPER

Hey, what do you got?

MR. CLARKE

Not sure. Maybe nothing. I found
this in there.

(motions to the drain
pipe)

Mr. Clarke hands hopper the evidence.

POV: INSIDE DRAINAGE PIPE - LOOKING OUT

The pipe has a DIAMETER OF 12-INCHES. Hopper shines his
light. The pipe leads somewhere, but Hopper cannot see the
end.

POWELL

No way a kid crawls through there.

HOPPER

I don't know. Scared enough one
might.

ON HOPPER

HOPPER (CONT'D)

His brother said he was good at
hiding.

EXT. FORESTED AREA - FOLLOWING THE BURIED PIPE - ON GOING

With Hopper leading the way, Callahan, Powell, and the SEARCH
PARTY follow the buried pipe.

EXT. HAWKINS LAB - PERIMETER FENCE - MOMENTS LATER

The team comes to a full stop, about 50-yards from where Mr.
Clarke found the clue. They can't go any farther. Blocked by
a TEN-FOOT HIGH CHAINLINK FENCE; BARBED WIRE RUNS ALONG THE
TOP. A SIGN attached to the fence indicates the property
belongs to: HAWKINS NATIONAL LABORATORY - U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
ENERGY. Under that sign, another: RESTRICTED AREA - NO
TRESPASSING.

INT. WHEELER HOME - BASEMENT - NIGHT

FORT

El is sitting comfortably in the make-shift bedroom. She is
FLICKING SWITCHES on the RADIO SHACK WALKIE TALKIE. Mike
comes down the stairs carrying A TRAY OF FOOD.

MIKE

El?

Dustin and Lucas are behind him. Mike walks over to El and sits down in front of her with the tray.

MIKE (CONT'D)

No adults. Just us and some meatloaf.

El saying nothing, but looks up at Lucas and Dustin. She's wary of them. But Mike tries to reassure El.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Don't worry. They won't tell anyone about you. They promise. Right?

DUSTIN

We never would have upset you if we knew you had superpowers.

Mike smacks Dustin.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Ow!

MIKE

What Dustin is trying to say is that they were just scared ... earlier. That's all.

LUCAS

We just wanted to find our friend.

EL

Friend?

LUCAS

Yeah, friend. Will?

EL

What is *friend*?

LUCAS

Is she serious?

Dustin shrugs.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Um, a friend is someone ...

MIKE

Is someone that you'd do anything for.

DUSTIN

You lend them your cool stuff, like comic books and trading cards.

MIKE

And they never break a promise.

LUCAS

Especially when there's spit.

EL

Spit?

LUCAS

A spit swear means ...
 (spits in his hand)
 ... you never break your word.
 (shakes Dustin's hand)
 It's a bond.

Dustin looks at his hand; grossed out.

MIKE

That's super important, because friends ... they tell each other things. Things that parents don't know.

El says nothing, but seems suspicious about this whole *friends* thing.

EXT. FORESTED STREET - NIGHT

Barb and Nancy are on their way to Steve's party. Barb is driving.

INT. BARB'S CAR - ON GOING

NANCY

Barbara, pull over.

BARBARA

What?

NANCY

Pull over!

She does, and puts the car in PARK.

BARBARA

What are we doing here? His house is three blocks away.

NANCY

We can't park in the driveway.

BARBARA

Are you serious?

NANCY

Yeah, the neighbors might see.

BARBARA

This is so stupid. I'm just going to drop you off.

NANCY

Calm down, Barb, come on! You promised that you'd go. You're coming. We're going to have a great time.

BARBARA

He just wants to get in your pants.

NANCY

(chuckling)
No he doesn't.

BARBARA

Nance. Seriously. He invited you to his house. His parents aren't home. Come on, you are not this stupid.

Nancy starts taking off her SWEATER. She's changing.

NANCY

Tommy H. and Carol are gonna be there.

BARBARA

Tommy and Carol have been having sex since, like, the seventh grade. It'll probably be just, like, a big orgy.

NANCY

Gross.

BARBARA

I'm serious!

NANCY

All right, well, you can be like *my guardian*. All right? Make sure I don't get drunk and do anything stupid.

Nancy is topless, except for her BRA.

BARBARA
Is that a new bra?

Yes. She wore it for Steve.

NANCY
No.

EXT. HARRINGTON HOME - LATER

Nancy and Barb walk up to the front door. We can HEAR MUSIC BLASTING from the END OF THE DRIVEWAY. Nancy RINGS THE DOORBELL.

FRONT DOOR

Barb looks nervous.

NANCY
Barb, chill.

Nancy, however, is as chill as a cucumber.

BARBARA
I'm chill.

The DOUBLE DOORS SWING OPEN. The song "RAISE A LITTLE HELL" by TROOPER plays loudly.

STEVE
Hello, ladies.

INT. HOPPER'S CABIN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hopper is lying awake in BED. Beside him, SANDRA (late 20s), his GIRLFRIEND. She's sound asleep. Hopper sits up on the edge of the bed, and puts his pants on.

EXT. HOPPER'S CABIN - BACK DECK - LATER

It's peaceful. CRICKETS CHURP, a LOON CALLS. Hopper is standing on his deck with a CAN OF BEER. Staring off into the distance. Deep in thought. Moments later, Sandra joins him. She's wearing one of Hopper's FLANEL SHIRTS.

SANDRA
What are you doing? It's freezing.

HOPPER

You ever feel cursed? You know, the last person to go missing here was in, uh, the summer of '23. The last suicide was the fall of '61.

BEAT

SANDRA

When'd the last person freeze to death?

(realizes he's serious)

Hey, come back inside. Warm me up.

HOPPER

Just give me a minute out here.

Sandra sighs, but leaves Hopper be.

INT. WHEELER BASEMENT - NIGHT

El sits down at the TABLE where the D&D BOARD is. It's not game-ready, but there are SIX MINIATURES on the board's surface. El's focus is on those.

LUCAS

What's the weirdo doing?

El places the PALMS OF HER HANDS on the board. She closes her eyes. Mike, Dustin and Lucas move closer.

MIKE

El?

After a BEAT, El opens her eyes. She reaches down and PICKS UP THE WIZARD MINIATURE. She holds it close to her face, inspecting it.

EL

Will.

DUSTIN

Superpowers.

Lucas rolls his eyes. Mike sits down in the CHAIR next to El.

MIKE

Did you see him? On Mirkwood? Do you know where he is?

Using her arm, El SWEEPS THE BOARD CLEAR OF THE MINIATURES. They fall to the floor. She flips the board UPSIDE DOWN.

It's SURFACE IS BLACK. El takes the Wizard -- representing Will -- and puts it CENTER of the UPSIDE DOWN BOARD.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I don't understand.

EL
Hiding.

MIKE
Will is hiding?

El nods.

MIKE (CONT'D)
From the bad men?

El shakes her head.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Then from who?

El places a DIFFERENT MINIATURE ON THE BOARD: THE DEMOGORGON.

EXT. MIRKWOOD - NIGHT

POLICE TAPE AND BARRICADES remain in place. But the scene is abandoned. Jonathan's CAR pulls up. He gets out, opens the TRUNK, and TAKES OUT HIS 35MM CAMERA. He closes the trunk and the crosses the barricades onto Mirkwood.

EXT. MIRKWOOD - FORESTED AREA - ON GOING

Like a FORENSIC PHOTOGRAPHER, Jonathan starts taking PICTURES around the area where Will went missing.

The FLASH fires.

JONATHAN
(quietly)
Where are you?

Another PHOTO. The FLASH fires.

Jonathan takes a FEW STEPS IN ANOTHER DIRECTION, crouches, SNAPS ANOTHER PICTURE. The FLASH fires.

SUDDENLY, a FEMALE'S SCREAM. It's close by. Jonathan RUNS TOWARDS THE SOUND.

EXT. FORESTED AREA - BEHIND STEVE'S HOUSE - ON GOING

Jonathan stops just short of the THRESHOLD. The scream belongs to Carol, Tommy H's girlfriend. He's trying to throw Carol in the POOL.

EXT. HARRINGTON HOME - BACKYARD - ON GOING

MUSIC is playing. The backyard is massive. There's LARGE IN-GROUND POOL. Upon the surrounding POOL DECK ARE LAWN CHAIRS and other PATIO FURNITURE. Tommy is trying to throw Carol into the pool. He's got her in his arms. He's laughing.

CAROL
No, Tommy, stop it!

Tommy puts her down.

CAROL (CONT'D)
You're such an asshole, Tommy.

Barb is sitting in a LAWN CHAIR, away from the action. Nancy is sitting, too, but closer to Steve than she is to Barb. Steve grabs a CAN OF BEER FROM THE COOLER. USING A KNIFE, HE PUNCHES A HOLE IN THE SIDE OF THE CAN, then SHOTGUNS it. Nancy watches, amused. Steve flops down on a LAWN CHAIR. Drunk. He prepares to LIGHT A CIGARETTE.

NANCY
That supposed to impress me?

STEVE
You're not?

NANCY
You are a cliché, you *do* realize that?

STEVE
You are a cliché. What, with your *grades* and your *band practice*.
(lights the cigarette)

NANCY
(laughs)
I'm *so* not in band.

STEVE
Okay, party girl.
(hands her the knife)
Why don't you just show us how it's done, then?

NANCY

Okay.

She takes the knife from Steve.

EXT. FORESTED AREA - BEHIND STEVE'S HOUSE - ON GOING

Jonathan is watching what's going on. From his vantage point, he can see most of the backyard.

EXT. HARRINGTON HOME - BACKYARD - ON GOING

Nancy is preparing the BEER CAN.

STEVE

You gotta make a hole right in the -

-

NANCY

I got it.

TOMMY H

Yeah, she's smart, you douche!

Tommy crushes an empty beer can against his head and drops it on the pool deck.

Nancy starts CHUGGING THE BEER. SHOTGUNNING.

STEVE

Chug! Chug! Chug!

Tommy and Carol join Steve's chants of encouragement.

STEVE (CONT'D)

Chug, chug, chug, chug ...

TOMMY H/CAROL

Chug, chug, chug, chug.

The chants get LOUDER as Nancy nears the end. Then finally -- Nancy DROPS THE EMPTY CAN on the deck. They all CHEER! Except for Barb.

NANCY

Barb, you wanna try

BARBARA

What? No.

Nancy grabs a BEER for Barb.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

No, I don't want to, thanks.

NANCY

Come on!

Nancy approaches Barb with the beer.

STEVE

Yeah!

BARBARA

Nance, I don't want to!

NANCY

It's fun! Just give it a ...

BARBARA

Nance!

NANCY

Just ... just give it a shot.

Nancy gives Barb the beer and the knife.

BARBARA

(unenthusiastic)

Okay.

With the knife in one hand, and the beer in the other, Barb tries cutting a whole in the side of the can. The knife SLIPS. Barb CUTS A DEEP GASH IN HER RIGHT THUMB. It's BLEEDING. BARB gasps.

TOMMY H

Gnarly!

NANCY

Are you okay?

BARBARA

Yeah.

NANCY

Barb, you're bleeding!

BARBARA

I'm fine.

(to Steve)

Where's your bathroom?

STEVE

Oh, it's, uh, down past the kitchen, to the left.

EXT. FORESTED AREA - BEHIND STEVE'S HOUSE - ON GOING

Jonathan snaps PICTURES. WITHOUT THE FLASH. Carol is having a chuckle. And Tommy takes this opportunity to push an unsuspecting Carol, fully clothed, into the pool.

EXT. HARRINGTON HOME - BACKYARD - ON GOING

SPLASHDOWN! Carol SCREAMS! Tommy, feeling very proud of himself, takes a few more DRAGS FROM HIS CIGARETTE. He throws the BUTT to the ground and JUMPS IN THE POOL.

Steve comes up to Nancy from behind and PUSHES HER INTO THE POOL. Then Steve JUMPS INTO THE POOL! The couples playfully ROUGHHOUSE in the water.

EXT. FORESTED AREA - BEHIND STEVE'S HOUSE - ON GOING

With a hint of jealousy, Jonathan continues to SNAP PICTURES.

EXT. BYERS' HOME - ESTABLISHING SHOT - NIGHT**INT. BYERS' HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

Joyce has fallen asleep on the CHAIR; PHONE still in her lap. The HOUSE IS DARK.

SEVERAL SECONDS OF SILENCE is SUDDENLY BROKEN --

PHONE RINGS

Joyce JOLTS AWAKE and answers.

JOYCE

Hello?

There's no response. Joyce STANDS; grabbing the RECEIVER WITH BOTH HANDS.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

(optimistic)

Hello?

MUFFLED BREATHING. Then STATIC.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Who is this?

WHIMPERING.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
 (gasps)
 Will?

STATIC. More WHIMPERING.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
 (starting to cry)
 Will...

The VOICE is barely audible. STATIC. STRAINED BREATHING.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
 Will, it's me. Talk to me. I'm
 here.
 (sobbing)
 Just tell me where you are, honey.
 I can hear you. Please.

STATIC. Then:

WILL
 Mom?

The LIGHTS FLICKER then come alive.

The VOICE IS DISTORTED. But it *is* Will. Joyce GASPS.

JOYCE
 (sobbing)
 Will! Yes it's me. It's me.

ELECTRICITY SPIKING. CRACKLING. BUZZING. A CREATURE MAKING
 CLICKING SOUNDS.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
 Where are you? Where are you? Just
 talk to me --

The LIGHTS GET BRIGHTER; then DIM. BOLTS OF ELECTRIC CURRENT
 SHOOT OUT OF THE RECEIVER. It SHOCKS Joyce (literally and
 figuratively). She SCREAMS and DROPS the RECEIVER.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
 Oh, no, no, no!

She bends down and picks up the phone. It's DEAD. The
 RECEIVER - BLACKEND by the ELECTRICAL CURRENT.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
 No, no, no!
 (sobbing)

Joyce picks up the phone and throws it to the ground in a MOMENTARY FIT OF RAGE. She CRUMBLES into her arms - then:

 JOYCE (CONT'D)
 (screaming, no holding
 back)
NO!
 (sobbing, then, again,
 screaming)
NO!

The LIGHTS flicker. Then go off. The LIGHTS FLICKER, TWICE. Then stay ON.

HALLWAY

Joyce walks down the hall heading to Jonathan's room. The LIGHTS FLICKER again.

 JOYCE (CONT'D)
Jonathan!

Joyce stops, noticing a PATTERN TO THE FLICKERING LIGHTS.

 JOYCE (CONT'D)
 (softly)
What?

RAPIDLY, FLICKERING OFF, THEN ON, THEN STEADY ON. THEN STEADY OFF. Like MORSE CODE.

Unsure of what exactly is happening, Joyce stays close to the wall as she makes her way to Jonathan's room.

A BLAST OF MUSIC and Joyce GASPS. The MUSIC is coming from WILL's BEDROOM. Will's favorite song: **"SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO" by THE CLASH**. The DOOR IS CLOSED. But through the CRACKS, WE CAN SEE LIGHTS FLICKERING. We can HEAR ELECTICITY BUZZING with each FLICKER. The MUSIC continues. It's SO LOUD. Joyce is FRIGHTENED; SOBBING.

She MUSTERS THE COURAGE and approaches the door. She turns the knob, opens the door.

INT. BYERS' HOME - WILL'S ROOM - ON GOING

Joyce slowly walks in.

 JOYCE
 (whispers)
Will?

There's a BOOM BOX on Will's DESK. A DESK LAMP lights the immediate area. The MIX TAPE Jonathan made for Will is PLAYING ON THE BOOM BOX. The RED LEDs of the BOM BOX'S VU METER are FLASHING IN TIME WITH THE MUSIC.

Joyce looks over to a BEDSIDE TABLE. A LAMP is on; it's FLICKERING INTERMITTENTLY. Joyce approaches the lamp.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
 (whispers)
 Will?
 (sobbing)
 Is that you?

With that question, THE ANSWER: The LIGHT BRIGHTENS, BRIGHTER THAN IT'S EVER BEEN, BRIGHTER THAN IT SHOULD EVER BE! The whole room is lit. BRIGHT. Then, WITH A FIZZLE:

LIGHTS OUT. MUSIC STOPS. QUIET. The silence lasts but a FEW MOMENTS. Then:

The WALL beside the lamp. It's **STRETCHING OUT - LIKE RUBBER.** A FACE, THEN HANDS, TRYING TO REACH OUT AND BREAK THROUGH THE "RUBBER WALL."

A GROWL.

Joyce SCREAMS and runs out of the room.

EXT. BYERS' HOME - ON GOING

Joyce dashes out of the front door, never looking back. She jumps in her CAR.

CAR

She fumbles with the KEYS. The car STARTS. At that very moment, THE MUSIC RESUMES. Joyce looks to Will's bedroom. She can see through the window. The LIGHTS ARE FLICKERING. ELECTRICITY CRACKLES.

JOYCE
 (softly)
 Will.

She's unsure about what to do. *Should I stay or should I go?*

BEAT

She KILLS THE ENGINE, takes a deep breath, and gets out of the car.

DRIVEWAY

Joyce slowly makes her way to the front door. Walking, almost in a ZOMBIE-LIKE STATE as the MUSIC CONTINUES. The LIGHTS IN WILL'S BEDROOM FLICKER. *ONLY* the LIGHT'S IN WILL'S BEDROOM. She makes it to the door, opens it, steps inside.

INT. HARRINGTON HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Carol, Steve, Tommy and Nancy have wrapped themselves in TOWELS. They're DRIPPING WET.

CAROL
I'm freezing.

Tommy, the class-act that he is:

TOMMY H
Well, I hear his mom's room has a fireplace.

STEVE
Are you kidding me?

Carol and Tommy make their way up the stairs, ignoring Steve.

STEVE (CONT'D)
Okay, well, you know you are cleaning the sheets.

Steve walks over to Nancy.

STEVE (CONT'D)
You all right?

NANCY
Yeah.

STEVE
Yeah? Come on, let's get you some dry clothes.

Nancy pauses a moment, then follows Steve out of the room.

FOYER

Steve makes his way up the stairs. Nancy is a few steps behind. Barb comes out of the bathroom. Nancy stops half-way up.

BARBARA
Nance. Nancy? Were are you going?

NANCY

No where. Just ... upstairs. To change.

(opens her towel)

I ... fell in the pool
(chuckles, wraps herself again)

Barb shakes her head - part disgust, part disbelief.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Why don't you go ahead and go home.
I'll just ... I'll get a ride or something.

BARBARA

Nance?

No matter how angry Barb may be right now, she doesn't want to leave Nancy alone with Steve.

NANCY

(smiling)

Barb ... I'm fine.

BARBARA

This isn't you.

NANCY

(serious)

I'm fine. Just ... go ahead and go home, okay?

Not waiting for an answer, Nancy turns and walks up the stairs. Barb stands at the bottom of the steps. She SCOFFS.

EXT. FORESTED AREA - BEHIND STEVE'S HOUSE - ON GOING

POV: JONATHAN'S CAMERA. We can see Nancy through the BLINDS OF AN UPSTAIRS BEDROOM. Shutter CLICKS. She's staring out the window, at nothing in particular.

ON JONATHAN

Behind the camera. SNAPS a picture.

INT. HARRINGTON HOME - BEDROOM - ON GOING

Nancy is staring out the window. She's still dressed in WET CLOTHES. Steve comes in the room and hands Nancy some DRY CLOTHES.

NANCY

Thanks.

They smile at each other. Steve is almost in a trance-like state. *Love*. Steve is actually being a gentleman. Or so he thinks.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Um ... some privacy, maybe?

STEVE

(snaps out of it)

Uh, yeah, right. Sorry.

(chuckles)

Steve walks away.

NANCY

Steve?

He turns. Nancy takes off her WET SHIRT.

STEVE

(impressed)

Damn.

NANCY

(chuckles)

Shut up.

They embrace, and KISS.

EXT. FORESTED AREA - BEHIND STEVE'S HOUSE - ON GOING

Jonathan lowers the camera. He saw everything. For just a moment he considers leaving, but he spots Barb sitting on the edge of the DIVING BOARD in the backyard. Her FEET ARE IN THE POOL. He SNAPS A PICTURE. Then ANOTHER.

END OF ROLL. Jonathan winds the film back and prepares to load another roll of film.

EXT. HARRINGTON HOME - BACKYARD

Barb didn't leave. She's sitting on the edge of the DIVING BOARD; her FEET DANGLING IN THE WATER. She's lost in thought. Her thumb is BANDAGED, but not well enough. A SINGLE DROP OF BLOOD drips into the pool. Barb looks at her BLODDY BANDAGE.

THEN, the POOL LIGHTS FLICKER. Then DARKNESS.

Just THEN, WE SEE A LARGE SHADOW COVER BARB IN COMPLETE DARKNESS. She quickly turns her head --

GROWL

EXT. FORESTED AREA - BEHIND STEVE'S HOUSE - ON GOING

We can HEAR BARB'S DISTANT SCREAM. Jonathan looks up from his camera.

POV: JONATHAN. We see the backyard, but no Barb.

ON JONATHAN

He takes a final look at his surroundings from where he is standing, then walks in the opposite direction, heading back down Mirkwood to his car.

INT. HARRINGTON HOME - BEDROOM - ON GOING

Steve and Nancy are making out, standing by the window. They move to the BED. The kissing is tender.

EXT. HARRINGTON HOME - BACKYARD

The POOL LIGHTS FLICKER ON. No sign of Barb. No trace of blood. Nothing left behind.

CUT TO:

BLACK.

END CREDITS.