Episode #209

"Chapter Nine: The Gate"

by

The Duffer Brothers

Directed by

The Duffer Brothers
### WONDER VIEW

"Chapter Nine: The Gate"

#### REVISION HISTORY

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<td>FULL SCRIPT</td>
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<td>04/30/17</td>
<td>(BLUE)</td>
<td>CAST, SETS, 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 15A, 28, 30, 37, 44, 45, 48, 49, 49A, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 55A, 63, 64, 67, 70/71</td>
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WONDER VIEW

"Chapter Nine: The Gate"

CAST LIST

JOYCE BYERS
POLICE CHIEF JIM HOPPER
MIKE WHEELER
NANCY WHEELER
JONATHAN BYERS
ELEVEN
LUCAS SINCLAIR
DUSTIN HENDERSON
KAREN WHEELER
WILL BYERS
STEVE HARRINGTON
MAX MAYFIELD
BILLY HARGROVE (fka BILLY MAYFIELD)
DR. SAM OWENS

TED WHEELER
MURRAY BAUMAN

MR. CLARKE
CLAUDIA HENDERSON
ERICA SINCLAIR
MRS. HOLLAND
MR. HOLLAND
SUSAN HARGROVE (fka SUSAN MAYFIELD)

CUTE GIRL
STACEY
TV NEWS ANCHOR
MIDDLE SCHOOL BOY #1
## Episode #209

### WONDER VIEW

"Chapter Nine: The Gate"

#### SET LIST

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We pick up right where we left off as...

MIKE and ELEVEN gaze at one another, making eye contact for the first time all season... slowly, so slowly, they move toward one another, as if drawn by some unseen force.

Mike isn't even sure if what he's seeing is real.

Are his eyes deceiving him? Is he... dreaming?

MIKE

... El?

Eleven gives a small nod. Then --

Mike pulls her into an embrace. She's real alright. He holds her tight, so tight, as if he's never going to let her go again.

EVERYONE ELSE watches from the sidelines. Slack-jawed.

MAX looks at LUCAS and DUSTIN.

MAX

(low, awed)

Is that...?

Lucas and Dustin nod. Speechless.

Mike and Eleven finally pull out of their embrace. Mike's eyes are filled with tears; his voice trembles with emotion.

MIKE

I... I never gave up on you... I...
I called you -- I called every night... every night for --

ELEVEN

Three-hundred fifty-three days.

(off Mike, surprised)
I... heard.

MIKE

You were... there? Listening?

Eleven nods. She's fighting tears of her own now.

MIKE (CONT'D)

... Why didn't you say anything?
Why didn't you tell me you were there? That you were okay?

(CONTINUED)
Eleven hesitates.

HOPPER (O.S.)
... Because I wouldn't let her.

Mike turns in surprise to find HOPPER, who steps over to Eleven. He looks her up and down, examining her strange new punk clothes, her slicked-back hair.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
What is all this? Where have you been -- ?

Eleven snaps back --

ELEVEN
Where have you been?

And suddenly it hits Mike. He looks at Hopper. Eyes wide.

MIKE
You've been hiding her... hiding her this whole time.

Hopper hesitates, not even sure where to begin here. But one thing is clear -- he's not denying it. Everyone shares stunned looks as they take in this bombshell.

DUSTIN
Holy. Shit.

Mike is so shocked he can't even find words. He just... stares at Hopper in growing anger. He's about to explode.

And Hopper senses it.

HOPPER
... Let's talk. Alone.

We PUSH IN on Mike as his anger grows, and...

MIKE (PRE-LAP)
"Protecting" her??!!

INT. BYERS HOUSE - WILL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Mike and Hopper are now in Will's room with the door shut.

They're mid-argument, trying to keep their voices down -- but that's difficult for Mike, who is so angry his voice shakes.

MIKE
"Protecting" her -- ?!

(CONTINUED)
HOPPER
The more people who know about her, the more danger she's in -- the more danger you and your family are in --

MIKE
Oh, okay! So I should be -- what?! Thanking you?!

HOPPER
I'm not asking you to thank me -- I'm just asking you to try to understand --

MIKE
Well I don't, I DON'T understand --!

HOPPER
Just... don't blame her, alright? She's upset enough --

MIKE
I don't blame her -- I blame YOU --

HOPPER
And that's okay --

MIKE
No, no, it's NOT OKAY!! NOTHING about this is OKAY!!

WHAM! Mike suddenly punches Hopper right in the gut!

Hopper winces. Jesus, that kinda hurt.

MIKE (CONT'D)
You're a stupid -- disgusting -- lying PIECE OF SHIT!

WHAM! Mike punches Hopper again! Again!

MIKE (CONT'D)
A LIAR!! A LIAR!! A LIAR!!

Mike continues to pummel Hopper's gut.

Hopper lets him get a few more shots in, then --

HOPPER
Hey, okay -- that's enough -- hey hey!! That's enough -- !!!

Hopper pulls Mike toward to him to stop the punching and --

(CONTINUED)
Mike just folds into his arms -- and begins to cry. All of his emotion pouring out of him. Hopper doesn't know even what to do. So... he hugs him back.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, kid... I'm sorry...

Off Hopper, holding Mike tight, we CUT TO:

INT. BYERS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A CLOSE UP of Eleven, her head now SMUSHED between...

Dustin and Lucas, who are hugging her at the same time.

LUCAS
... We missed you.

DUSTIN
Yeah. We talked about you like -- pretty much every day.

They finally pull away. Eleven smiles softly.

ELEVEN
I missed you -- too.

Dustin flashes his classic smile. Eleven startles.

ELEVEN (CONT'D)
... Teeth?

DUSTIN
Huh?

She points at his mouth --

ELEVEN
You have teeth.

Dustin perks up.

DUSTIN
Oh! Yeah! You like my "pearls"
huh?

Dustin makes his PURRING sound:

DUSTIN (CONT'D)
GRRRRRR!!!

Lucas rolls his eyes. What an idiot. Then --

(CONTINUED)
MAX (O.S.)
... Eleven?

Eleven turns to find Max walking over to her now. Max is timid in her approach, clearly in awe of Eleven.

It's almost like she's... a fan girl or something.

MAX (CONT'D)
Hey... I'm Max. I've heard... a lot about you.

Max extends a hand. Eleven looks it. Considers. Then -- Nah. She strides past Max, blowing her off.

Off Max, a little hurt by this...

WE MOVE INTO THE KITCHEN AREA,

Where Eleven walks up to Joyce instead -- and embraces her.

JOYCE
Hey... hey there...

Joyce pulls Eleven closer, gently caresses her hair.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
It's okay... I'm here... I'm here...

As Eleven withdraws from the embrace, she looks up at Joyce with knowing, worried eyes.

ELEVEN
Can I see... him?

Off Joyce...

INT. BYERS HOUSE - JONATHAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Eeeeee... The door opens as Eleven enters Jonathan's room.

WILL is laid out on the bed, still unconscious.

Eleven walks over and kneels by his side. She places a hand on his cheek, feeling his cold skin with her open palm.

His eyes still move under his eyelids. We hear the gentle thump of his heartbeat. Thump. Thump. Thump.

The group hovers behind Eleven. An audience.

(CONTINUED)
JOYCE
... He's sick.

ELEVEN
... I know. I saw.

Shared looks from the kids and teens.

DUSTIN
Super powers...

Joyce considers. Then:

JOYCE
... What else did you... see?

INT. BYERS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Eleven walks up over to the kitchen table where the Morse code message is clearly written: C.L.O.S.E. G.A.T.E.

Joyce sits beside Eleven.

JOYCE
You opened this... Gate before, right?

FLASHCUT TO: ELEVEN OPENING THE GATE FROM EP #106.

Eleven winces. Feeling guilt, regret.

ELEVEN
... Yes.

JOYCE
If we got you back there... could you... close it again?

We SLOWLY PUSH IN ON ELEVEN. Scared, but determined.

As we continue to PUSH IN ON ELEVEN, we PRE-LAP:

THE SOUND OF A GROANING coming from...

INT. UNDERGROUND RIFT CHAMBER - NIGHT

The MASSIVE RIFT. We're back underground now.


We SLOWLY PULL BACK TO FIND Hordes OF DEMO-DOGS swarming the grounds below. Guarding The Gate. The Mind Player's Army. How in the hell will they even get Eleven in here?
As we ponder the impossible task ahead...

DART steps into close-up. And ROARS.

And right here we CRASH TO --

MAIN TITLES

INT. WHEELER HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT

We open on FLICKERING CANDLES. CHEESY ROMANTIC MUSIC PLAYS.

The candles are all perfectly lined up along the back rim of a bathtub. Where are we? We DRIFT FURTHER BACK to find...

KAREN WHEELER TAKING A BUBBLE BATH!

She's got a glass of red wine in one hand, a ROMANCE NOVEL in the other. The book cover features a half-naked hunk with flowing hair. She flips the page, spellbound, when --

DING DONG! The doorbell rings, jarring her out of her fantasy! She ignores it, returns to her book, but then --

DING DONG! Again!

KAREN

Ted -- would you please get that??

DING DONG!

KAREN (CONT'D)

TED!!

INT. WHEELER HOUSE - TV ROOM - NIGHT

TED isn't getting anything -- he's SNORING LOUDLY in his La-Z-Boy with the TV BLARING. He doesn't hear the doorbell, much less Karen. DING DONG! There it goes again!

INT. WHEELER HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT

Karen sighs. She starts to push up out of the tub and...

INT. WHEELER HOUSE - STAIRS - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: Bare wet feet as...

Karen hustles down the steps now, exasperated and annoyed now. She drips water as she hastily ties on a bathrobe.

DING DONG!!
KAREN
Just -- hold on -- please!

INT./EXT. WHEELER HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Karen swings the door. Her annoyance abruptly vanishes.

REVERSE TO REVEAL A VERY SURPRISING VISITOR: BILLY. He looks stunningly like the hunk on her romance novel. It's like her fantasy man just... materialized outside of her own home!

Billy seems equally taken by her appearance. He glances down at her (somewhat exposed) legs and body.

BILLY
Oh -- hi --

Karen pulls her robe tighter, suddenly self-conscious.

KAREN
(flustered)
-- Hi...

BILLY
I didn't realize Nancy had a sister --

Karen almost chokes on a laugh. Billy is confused --

BILLY (CONT'D)
... What's so funny?

Karen can't tell if he's messing with her or not. She blushes regardless.

KAREN
I'm Nancy's mother --

BILLY
No --

KAREN
Yes --

BILLY
Mrs. Wheeler?

Karen flings her wet hair, laughs a bit --

KAREN
I know. Hard to believe --

BILLY
It is. It is. Wow.
Karen can hardly stand this flattery!

Karen
And you are...?

Billy
Oh -- I haven't even introduced myself, have I?

Billy laughs, holds out his hand.

Billy (CONT'D)
Billy.  Billy Hargrove.

Karen shakes his hand.

Karen
And... you're here for Nancy...?

Billy
Nancy?  No no -- not my type.  No, actually -- I'm looking for my little sister -- Maxine, goes by Max.  Redhead?  She's been missing all day and I've been worried sick.  I thought she was at Lucas's house.  But Mrs. Sinclair said your house is the designated hangout, so...

Billy leans an arm up against the door frame --

Billy (CONT'D)
Here I am.

Karen
... Here you are.

Off Karen, blushing, charmed, we CUT TO:

INT. WHEELER HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

A pen scribbling across a SCRAP OF PAPER as --

Karen writes down directions.  She's bent over the counter a bit, giving Billy quite the view of her cleavage.

Karen
... Their driveway is really dark at this time, so just drive slow --

Billy
Oh -- always.

She looks up.  Hands Billy the address.

(CONTINUED)
KAREN
And when you see Mike, tell him to come home already, okay?

BILLY
I can't think you enough Mrs. Wheeler. You're a real life saver.

KAREN
Any time.

Billy gives her one last look, then saunters off.

Karen watches his ass sway, lost in another fantasy, and --

INT./EXT. BILLY'S CAMARO - WHEELER HOUSE - NIGHT

WHAM! The door slams shut as Billy climbs back into his Camaro. As he slots his key into the ignition, his smile slowly vanishes from his face. He's back on mission mode. He hammers the gas and the car peels off into the night.

He's headed for the Byers...

EXT. BYERS HOUSE - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

A SEA OF FOG drifts across the lawn...

HOPPER (PRE-LAP)
It's not like before -- it's grown... a lot.

INT. BYERS HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Hopper and the group debate the plan...

Hopper seems nervous -- scared even.

HOPPER
And that's even if we get in there -- that lab is crawling with those dogs --

DUSTIN
Demo-dogs.

HOPPER
What?

DUSTIN
Demo-dogs. (off Hopper) Demogorgon dogs. Demo-dogs --

(CONTINUED)
HOPPER
How is this important right now?

ELEVEN
... I can do it.

Everyone turns to Eleven.

HOPPER
You're not hearing me --

But Eleven is emboldened with a newfound confidence:

ELEVEN
I'm hearing. I can do it.

Before Hopper can argue back, another voice chimes in --

MIKE
... Even if El can -- there's another problem.

All eyes now turn to Mike.

MIKE (CONT'D)
If the brain dies -- the body dies.

MAX
I thought that was the whole point --

MIKE
It is. But if we're really right -- if she closes the Gate and it kills the Mind Flayer's army...

LUCAS
(picking up on this now)
Will is part of that army...

Mike nods. Bingo.

MIKE
Closing the Gate will kill him.

An OMINOUS SILENCE washes over the group. Everyone scared.

We PUSH IN on Joyce as an idea begins to form. And...

INT. BYERS HOUSE - JONATHAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Joyce steps back into Jonathan's bedroom.
As Hopper and others step up behind her, wondering what she's thinking, her eyes move from Will to the open window behind him. The curtain billow gently in the cold breeze.

*SILENT FLASH TO WILL STANDING OUTSIDE THE BATHROOM IN #204. STARING IN FEAR AT THE TUB AS THE WATER HISSES -- BOILS. HE THEN TURNS TO HIS MOM AND TELLS HER THAT --

JOYCE (low, almost to herself) ... He likes it cold.

HOPPER ... What?

JOYCE "He likes it cold." Will told me that. And we just -- we just keep giving it what it wants.

As Joyce strides over to the open windows, the others begin to pick up on her idea:

NANCY If this is virus, and Will's the host --

JONATHAN We need to make the host uninhabitable.

Joyce SLAMS the window shut. Silencing the wind. Then -- She turns back to the others. More confident now.

JOYCE Maybe we can burn it out of him.

Shared looks from all. It just might work but --

MIKE We'd have to do it somewhere he doesn't know this time --

DUSTIN Somewhere far away.

We PUSH IN ON HOPPER as an idea hits him. He knows just the place. Off his look --

EXT. BYERS HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

WHOOM! The front door to the house explodes open as -- (CONTINUED)
Hopper carries Will outside to Jonathan's car. Joyce and Jonathan walk with him. Hop talks fast.

HOPPER
-- Stay on Denfield until you see a big oak tree -- then swing a right. You'll hit a dead end -- it's a five-minute walk from there --

JONATHAN
And it's channel ten -- ?

HOPPER
Yeah, ten. As soon as he's safe -- you let me know.

Jonathan opens the back of his car. Hopper lays Will gently down inside. Off Jonathan, watching, nervous as hell...

EXT. BYERS HOUSE - SHED - NIGHT

Steve and Nancy rummage through the junk pile, when --

STEVE
... You should go with him.

Nancy looks at Steve, confused.

NANCY
What -- ?

STEVE
With Jonathan.

Nancy shakes her head. Resumes rummaging.

NANCY
No -- I, I'm not leaving Mike --

STEVE
No one's leaving anyone. I may be a shitty boyfriend, but turns out I'm a pretty damn good babysitter.

Steve unearths a PAIR OF DUSTY SPACE HEATERS. He passes one to Nancy.

They lock eyes. Nancy still seems unsure, but --

STEVE (CONT'D)
It's okay, Nance.
They share a knowing, emotional look. They both know that this is Steve letting Nancy go -- in more ways than one.

STEVE (CONT'D)
It's okay.

Before Nancy can respond, Steve grabs up his space heater and starts walking away. Nancy watches him go for a beat -- Then she follows. As...

OMITTED

EXT. BYERS HOUSE - NIGHT

Mike hugs Eleven by the porch. A heart-wrenching goodbye.

MIKE
Just... be careful, okay?

Eleven nods. Mike pulls out of the hug, fights tears.

MIKE (CONT'D)
... I just... I can't lose you.
Not again.

A tear slips down his cheek.

ELEVEN
... You won't. You won't lose me.

MIKE
... You promise?

ELEVEN
Promise.

Mike doesn't seem so confident, but...

ELEVEN (CONT'D)
Friends don't lie.

Eleven reaches out a hand, gently wipes his tear away. Their eyes lock... their breathing quickens...

Are they going to kiss again??

HOPPER (O.S.)
El.

Eleven snaps out of the moment, turns to find -- Hopper, standing by his car, ready.

(CONTINUED)
HOPPER (CONT'D)

It's time.

Off Eleven and Mike, realizing this is it...

EXT. BYERS HOUSE - NIGHT

Hopper and Eleven climb into the Blazer.

A few feet away, Jonathan, Nancy, and Joyce get into Jonathan's car.

As Nancy starts to climb in, she looks back at Steve, who is watching her from the porch with the kids. They share an emotional look.

* Nancy climbs into the car. Shuts the door. And...

EXT. BYERS HOUSE - NIGHT - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

VROOM! TIRES SQUEAL, spitting up a wave of dirt as...

Jonathan and Hopper's cars drive away from the house.

Steve, Mike, Max, Dustin, and Lucas all stay behind, watching from the steps of the porch. Everyone is nervous and scared, feeling just... helpless. All they can do now is... wait.

INT. HOPPER'S BLAZER - BYERS HOUSE - NIGHT

Eleven looks out the rear window, watching as Mike recedes from view. He gets smaller... and smaller... and...

EXT. FORESTED ROAD - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

WE SOAR THROUGH THE NIGHT SKY AS WE FOLLOW...

Hopper's Blazer. Speeding down a dark and empty road.

INT. HOPPER'S BLAZER - FORESTED ROAD - NIGHT

Hopper and Eleven ride in awkward silence.

Hopper glances at Eleven, checking out her new look again.

Then he looks back at the road. Then back at Eleven.

Then... back at the road.

HOPPER
So... we're just... not gonna talk about this, huh?

(CONTINUED)
ELEVEN
... About... what?

Hopper stares.

HOPPER
I don't know... just curious, you know -- why you all of a sudden look like some... MTV punk.

ELEVEN
MTV?
HOPPER
Don't play dumb. I know you've been watching that garbage.

Eleven looks away, annoyed. Whatever.

Hopper sighs. Shit. He knows this is not the way in.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
I'm not mad, alright, kid? I just -- I want to know where you've been. That's all.

Eleven looks back at the road. Then, finally:

ELEVEN
(low)
... To see Mama.

Hopper turns to her. Surprised.

That was NOT the answer he was expecting.

HOPPER
... Okay.

He gathers his composure, then...

HOPPER (CONT'D)
... And... how'd you get there?

ELEVEN
A truck.

HOPPER
A truck?

ELEVEN
A big truck.

Hopper looks at her. Freaked out by this.

HOPPER
A big truck? Whose big truck -- ?

ELEVEN
A man's --

HOPPER
What man -- ??

ELEVEN
A nice man.

(CONTINUED)
Hopper takes a real deep breath. Don’t snap. Don’t snap.

HOPPER

... Okay. So I'm just... getting this all straight in my head now. A... nice man... in a big truck -- he drove you to your Mama's. And then Becky -- your aunt -- did she give you those clothes? That makeup?

Eleven hesitates. And suddenly we FLASHCUT TO IMAGES FROM EPISODE #207: KALI AND THE GANG DANCING IN THE CAR -- RAY CARROLL SLIDING ALONG THE FLOOR -- BEGGING FOR HIS LIFE -- THE FBI RAIDING THE WAREHOUSE -- GUNFIRE SPARKING -- AND --

She fights back tears from these painful, charged memories. She's faced with a dilemma here. Lie? Or tell the truth?

ELEVEN

I...

Screw it. She opts for a third option: omission.

ELEVEN (CONT'D)

... I shouldn't have left.

Hopper shakes his head. Not accepting this.

HOPPER

No. No. This isn't on you. I -- I should've been there. And -- I never should've lied to you about your mom. Or about when you could leave. I... I shouldn't'a done a lot of things.

He looks back at the road. Getting emotional now.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

... Sometimes -- I don't know. I... I just feel like I'm this... black hole or something.

ELEVEN

Black hole?

HOPPER

It's a -- thing in space. It sucks everything toward it, destroys it. Sara, she uh -- she had a picture book. About outer space. I can show you.

(CONTINUED)
ELEVEN
Who is... Sara?

Hopper grip tightens on the steering wheel.

FLASHCUT TO SARA SPRINTING THROUGH THE PARK. GIGGLING.

HOPPER LIFTS HER UP INTO HER ARMS. LAUGHING TOO.

HOPPER
... My girl. She's my little girl.

Eleven looks at him. Surprised.

ELEVEN
Where... is she?

HOPPER
That's... the thing. She left us -- too early. Way too early.

ELEVEN
(realizing)
... Gone.

Hopper nods. "Gone."

HOPPER
Sometimes bad things-- they happen to good people, you know? The black hole. It took her.

FLASHCUT TO SARA FLATLINING.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
... And I've just -- I've been scared, I guess. That somehow -- it'd take you too.

Shit he's starting to cry now.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
... I think that's why I get so mad. 'Cause I'm scared, you know? It's not an excuse... I'm just trying to figure out why I've been the way I've been. Towards you. And I guess I just... I wanna say...

He looks at Eleven. Finally gets it out.

(CONTINUED)
HOPPER (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. For everything.
Sometimes I can just...
(searching for the words)
I can be so... so...

ELEVEN
Stupid.

HOPPER
Yeah. Stupid. Real stupid.

Eleven considers. Then:

ELEVEN
... I've been stupid too.

Hopper smiles softly.

HOPPER
... Guess we broke our own rule,
huh?

Eleven. Yeah. They did.

Hopper removes his blue bracelet.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
... This was Sara's.

He hands it to Eleven. Eleven takes it.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
I think it'll help with your look.
Give it a little color, you know?

Eleven slips it on her wrist. Moved by this gesture.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
I don't hate it, by the way.

Eleven looks back at Hopper. He motions to her outfit.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
This whole -- thing, I mean. It's kinda cool.

ELEVEN
Bitchin'.

HOPPER
Yeah. Okay. Sure.

(beat)
Bitchin'.
They share a soft smile. And then...

EXT. FORESTED ROAD - NIGHT

VROOM! The Blazer drives away from camera.

As it gradually recedes into darkness...

EXT. BYERS HOUSE - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

We DRIFT toward the Byers house. The porch swing sways.

INT. BYERS HOUSE - NIGHT

LEFTOVER FOOD is now scattered across the entire kitchen!

WIDEN TO REVEAL: Dustin clearing everything from the fridge!

    DUSTIN
   Okay, he should fit now...

He turns to the DEAD DEMO-DOG, body wrapped up in a blanket on the kitchen floor.

    STEVE
   ... Is this really necessary?

    DUSTIN
   This is a significant scientific discovery -- you can't just bury it like some common mammal --

    STEVE
   Alright, well -- you're explaining this to Mrs. Byers...

As Dustin and Steve work to SHOVE the dog into the fridge...

THE LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mike paces. Back and forth. On edge.

Lucas and Max work to sweep up all the broken glass.

Lucas is getting annoyed by Mike's pacing

    LUCAS
   Mike -- would you please stop it, already? You're just making it worse --
MIKE
You weren't in there. Okay, Lucas?
That lab is swarming with hundreds
of those dogs --

DUSTIN
(correcting from kitchen)
Demo-dogs!!

Lucas rolls his eyes, turns back to Mike.

LUCAS
The chief will take care of her --

MAX
Like she needs protection.

Steve SLAMS the fridge shut. That did it!

STEVE
Dude, listen -- if a coach calls a
play in a game, bottom line -- you
execute it.

MIKE
Okay, first of all, this isn't a
stupid sports game -- and second,
we're not even in the game, we're
benched --

STEVE
My point is...
(what was his point?)
Right. We're benched. So. Yeah.
There's nothing we can do.

DUSTIN
Well... that's not entirely true.

All eyes go to Dustin.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)
I mean... the Demo-dogs have a hive
mind. They ran from the bus
because they were called away --

Max and Lucas share looks, picking up on this.

LUCAS
... So if we get their attention --

MAX
Maybe we can draw them away from
the lab --

(Continued)
MIKE
And clear a path to The Gate.

STEVE
Yeah -- and then we'll all die.

DUSTIN
Well, that's one point of view --

STEVE
No, that's not a point of view -- that's a fact.

But Mike is into this plan. He fast walks into --

THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

He taps the X on the tunnel map, energized.

MIKE
-- This is where the chief dug his hole -- this is our way into tunnels --

The other kids begin to crowd around him. Drawn in now too.

MIKE (CONT'D)
And look -- here -- right here --

Mike drags his finger to a HUB of some sort.

MIKE (CONT'D)
This is like a... hub. See how all of the tunnels feed into this?
(the kids nod)
So maybe if we set this on fire --

STEVE
Okay, yeah -- that's a NO --

DUSTIN
The Mind Flayer would call away his army --

LUCAS
They'd all come to stop us --

MIKE
(motioning to map)
And we'd circle back to the exit here. By the time they realized we were gone --

(CONTINUED)
MAX
El would be at the Gate.

STEVE
Guys!! HEY!! HEY!!

They turn to find Steve, his hands raised in disbelief. This is not the Steve that they're used to. This is not fun Steve. This is a "Dad" Steve. And he's not happy.

He motions to the tunnels angrily.

STEVE (CONT'D)
This -- this is NOT happening --

MIKE
But --

STEVE
NO. No "BUTS." I promised to keep you shithheads safe, and that's exactly what I'm going to do. We're sitting here -- on the bench -- and we're waiting for the starting team to do their job. Does everyone understand that?

The kids share frustrated looks.

MIKE
(under breath)
This isn't a sports game --

STEVE
(firmer)
DOES EVERYONE UNDERSTAND?

More shared looks.

STEVE (CONT'D)
I need a YES.

Before anyone gets a chance to give Steve his "yes" --

THERE IS A GROWL OUTSIDE. BUT NOT FROM A DEMO-DOG.

IT'S FROM A CAR ENGINE. A FAMILIAR ONE.

Max's eyes go wide. It can't be...

INT. BYERS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Max races to the living room. Throws open the curtain.
MAX'S POV: BILLY'S CAMARO SPEEDING UP THE DRIVEWAY.

MAX

... It's my brother --

LUCAS

What -- ?

She spins back and locks eyes with Lucas, panicked.

MAX

He can't know I'm here -- he'll kill me -- he'll kill us.

Steve's eyes go to Lucas. Realizing the situation. Then --

EXT. BYERS HOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: A BOOT STOMPING THE GROUND AS --

Billy exits his car. His eyes narrow, baffled, as he spots --

Steve! He's walking out to meet him on his own.

BILLY

Am I dreaming -- or is that you, Harrington?

STEVE

It's me. Don't cream your pants.

WIDE PROFILE SHOT AS: The two "kings" meet halfway between the car in the house. A showdown in the Byers driveway.

BILLY

What are you doing here, amigo?

STEVE

I could ask you the same question. Amigo.

BILLY

I'm looking for my stepsister. A little bird told me she was here --

STEVE

Huh. That's weird. Don't know her.

BILLY

Small. Redhead. Bit of a bitch?

(CONTINUED)
STEVE
Yeah... that's not ringing any bells, man. Sorry.

Billy steps closer to Steve. Studies him. Eyes narrowed.

BILLY
This whole situation, I don't know, Harrington... it's giving me the heebie-jeebies.

STEVE
Yeah? How's that?

BILLY
My thirteen-year-old sister is missing all day. Then I find her with you... at a stranger's house... and -- you lie to my face about it --

STEVE
Dude. Were you dropped too much as a child or what? I don't know what you don't understand about what I said: She's NOT here --

Billy sniffs. Rubs his nose.

BILLY
Yeah -- okay. Then who is that?

Billy motions behind Steve. Steve turns and sees --

The kids spying out the window. Clearly visible.

INT. BYERS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The kids quickly duck back into hiding.

DUSTIN
Shit! Did he see us???

EXT. BYERS HOUSE - NIGHT

Steve grimaces. Idiots!!! He turns back around --

STEVE
Listen man -- I can exp--


Steve falls to the ground. Lands on his back. WHOOM!

(CONTINUED)
BILLY
I told you to plant your feet.

BAM! Billy STOMPS Steve now, driving the HIS BOOT HEEL into the pit of Steve's stomach. As the wind SUCKS OUT OF STEVE --

INT. BYERS HOUSE - NIGHT

WHOOM! The front door EXPLODES open as --

Billy bursts inside. He scans the house. Locks onto --

The kids. Now backed up into the kitchen. Terrified -- Max most of all. Lucas stands in front of her -- protective.

BILLY
Well, well, well... if it isn't Lucas Sinclair. What a surprise.

Billy starts to move toward the kids. His eyes move to Max.

BILLY (CONT'D)
I thought I told you to stay away from him, Max --

MAX
Billy, go away --

BILLY
You disobeyed me. And you know what happens when you disobey me.

MAX
Billy -- !

BILLY
I break things.

WHOOM! Billy suddenly pivots -- grabs Lucas by the jacket -- then drives him backwards -- deeper into the kitchen and --

WHAM! He SLAMS Lucas into a shelf. Pots scatter!

The other kids SHOUT and SCREAM --

MIKE/DUSTIN
Let him go! HEY!

MAX
BILLY!

LUCAS
Get off me!!! GET OFF!

(CONTINUED)
But Billy doesn't get off. He leans in. Seething.

**BILLY**
Since Maxine won't listen to me, maybe you will: You stay away her.
STAY AWAY FROM HER. You hear me???

**LUCAS**
I SAID: GET -- OFF!!!

KA-WHAM! Lucas KNEES Billy in the balls! Billy falls back. Stunned. Then he looks back at Lucas. His eyes flare.

**BILLY**
Oh, Sinclair, you're DEAD -- you're dead -- !

**STEVE**
No. You are.

Billy turns just in time to meet --

Steve's CLOSED FIST. BAM! IT SOCKS HIM RIGHT IN HIS JAW.

Billy stumbles back. Shaken.

Steve is back, baby!!!

Billy wipes blood from his nose as he looks at Steve. He seems actually -- impressed.

**BILLY**
You got some fire in you after all, huh? I've been waiting to meet this "King Steve" they tell me so much about.

Steve points to the open door.

**STEVE**
Get. Out.

Billy laughs. Rubs his nose again. Then --

WHOOM! He swings at Steve. SUDDEN and HARD.

But Steve is ready for it. Ducks. Evades. Then --

BAM! Steve punches Billy again. Lands it!

The kids cheer for their hero!

**DUSTIN**
KICK HIS ASS STEVE!!!

(CONTINUED)
BAM! Steve punches Billy again. BAM! Again. BAM! Again.

Steve knocks Billy into the kitchen stove. He's winning!

But then Billy grabs a PLATE with his free hand -- SWINGS IT -- * CLANG! THE PLATE SMASHES STEVE across the head, shattering * on impact!

Steve stumbles back, woozy. He touches his head. It's bleeding.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

STEVE -- !

MAX

BILLY STOP -- !!

Billy doesn't stop. He tracks the now-woozy Steve into --

THE LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Billy grabs Steve by the jacket.

BILLY

No one tells me what to do.

BAM! HE HEADBUTTS STEVE. Steve DROPS, his eyes flag.

Billy straddles him.

BAM! He now begins to PUMMEL STEVE. FIGHT CLUB-style.

BAM! Again -- BAM! Again -- BAM! Again --

He's going to kill him!!! Just as things get unbearable:

THUNK! A NEEDLE PLUNGES INTO BILLY'S NECK.

Billy whips around in shock to find --

Max. Standing behind him.

Billy RIPS the needle out of his neck. Stares at it.

BILLY (CONT'D)

... The hell is this -- ??

We know. It's the IV needle used to sedate Will!

Billy rises, staggers toward Max, seething.
BILLY (CONT'D)
You little shit -- what did you do?? What did yo -- y -- o --

Billy's words slur. His knees buckle. And --

WHUMP! HE FOLDS DOWN TO THE GROUND. LIMP AS A RAG DOLL.

His eyes flutter. His consciousness is fading.

But Max isn't through with him. Not yet. She grabs Steve's NAIL-STUDDED BAT. Then stands over her brother. She's got a wild fire in her eye. And for the first time all season --

Max has the upper hand.

MAX
From here on out -- you're going to leave me and my friends alone -- Do you understand???

Billy manages a few slurred words:

BILLY
... Screw... you --

Max swings the bat. WHAM-THUNK!

The nails dig into the wood floor, inches from Billy's leg.

MAX
SAY YOU UNDERSTAND!

She raises up the bat again and we get the feeling that she's NOT bluffing. She's really gonna do it.

MAX (CONT'D)
SAY IT!!!! SAY IT!!!!

BILLY
(low)
O... kay --

MAX
I couldn't hear you --

BILLY
I -- I under... stand...

MAX
What -- ??

BILLY
I... understand...

(CONTINUED)
And then: Billy's eyes flutter to a close. *He's out cold.*
Max exhales. Shaken. She tosses the spiked bat.
The other kids stare at her. Slack-jawed. Speechless.
Even *Mike* is impressed. Maybe Max *is* awesome after all.
Max kneels down, digs into Billy's jacket, and removes --
*HIS SKULL KEYCHAIN.* The Camaro keys jangle.
She looks back at the others.

MAX
Let's get out of here.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

WHOOM! *BOUNCING HEADLIGHTS* cut through the dark as...
Jonathan's car winds its way down a dark dirt road in the
woods. As it pulls to a stop by a familiar tree, CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

WIDE SHOT: Three silhouettes march through woods as...
Jonathan, Nancy, and Joyce head through the woods. Joyce *
carries the space heaters, Nancy carries a MELVALD BAG and a
FLASHLIGHT, Jonathan carries Will. *
They make their way toward...
HOPPER'S SECRET CABIN.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

The door creaks open, *WOOD GROANING,* as...
Jonathan, Joyce, and Nancy enter. Joyce places down the space
heaters, then flips on the lights, revealing this curious
space. The group takes it all in. *Hopper's hidden life...*
All a little weird and unexpected, but --
NANCY
(surprised)
It's... kind of nice actually.

As Jonathan sets Will down on the couch, Joyce crouches by the stove, looks it over, then turns back to the teens --

JOYCE
We'll do it here.

WE MOVE INTO A FAST-PACED MONTAGE AS:

-- Joyce and Nancy drag Eleven's bed out of the bedroom --
-- They position the bed in front of the wood stove --
-- Jonathan carries Will over -- lays him onto the bed --
-- Jonathan ties down Will's legs using rope --
-- Joyce secures his hands -- yanking the rope tight --
-- Nancy tosses wood into the stove -- more wood --
-- Joyce sets the radio frequency to channel ten -- tests it --
-- Jonathan sets the various space heaters (two old, three new from Melvald's) onto the floor surrounding the bed --
-- Jonathan plugs the heaters into an extension cord -- and --

WIDEN OUT TO REVEAL: Will secured on the bed, encircled by the various heating sources. They've created a makeshift oven for Will. Everyone exchanges looks. Nervous.

JONATHAN
(to Joyce)
... You sure this is a good idea?

Joyce looks at Will. Lying sick on the bed.

JOYCE
This thing has had Will long enough.

Her eyes harden with determination.

She looks back Jonathan. Fierce.

JOYCE (CONT'D)
Let's kill the sonofabitch.
MOMENTS LATER.

FWOOM! Joyce strikes a match and --

Tosses the match into the stove. Wood catches and flames rise as Jonathan and Nancy turn on the space heaters.

CLOSE ON: The black coils heat up.

They begin to turn RED, growing hotter...

And hotter... and...

EXT. HAWKINS LABS - MAIN GATE - NIGHT

VROOM! Hopper's Blazer SPEEDS through the open lab gate.

EXT. HAWKINS LABS - FRONT PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The Blazer SLAMS to a stop in the parking lot.

The doors fly open as Hopper and Eleven exit on either side.

As Hopper crosses to the trunk to grab more weapons, we hold Eleven, whose gaze is fixed on one thing and one thing only:

Hawkins Labs. It towers before her. Imposing. Scary.

AS WE PUSH IN ON ELEVEN, WE FLASHCUT TO VIOLENT, VERY BRIEF MEMORIES FROM HER PAST HERE: ELEVEN DRAGGED DOWN THE HALLWAY -- AN EEG NEEDLE SCRATCHING -- THE CAT HISSING -- AND --

CHA-CHOK! The sound of COCKED SHOTGUN snaps her out of it.

She turns to find Hopper. Armed and ready now. He's got:

The ASSAULT RIFLE taken from the M.P. guard -- a BULLETPROOF VEST over his chest -- a SHOTGUN slung over his shoulder.

He looks almost like... well... a little like Rambo.

HOPPER

... Let me do the heavy lifting up front. Save yourself for when we're below.

Eleven nods. Got it. Then she looks back to the lab. Uneasy.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

... You okay?

Eleven gathers her composure. And then, without a word...
She starts walking toward the lab. **Determined.** *Guess that's a... yes?* Hopper hoists the shotgun over his shoulder and follows.

As these two small figures approach the giant building...

We hear the **ROAR OF THE MONSTERS** from within.

And then we **SNAP TO** --

**INT. BILLY'S CAMARO - COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT**

AN EXTREME CLOSE UP OF Steve's eyes fluttering awake.

We SLOWLY REVEAL what's happening from Steve's **BLURRY POV**:

-- He appears to be inside the Camaro. He's buckled up, which is good, because the ride itself seems to be a rocky one.

-- **ON HIS LEFT,** Mike holds a can of gasoline in his lap. The gas can bobs up and down. The gas inside of it sloshes.

-- **ON HIS RIGHT,** Dustin, inches away, holds a bag of ice to Steve's bleeding head. He speaks to us in a soothing voice.

**DUSTIN**

Shhhh, stay still, it's gonna be okay, shhhh...

-- **IN THE FRONT PASSENGER SEAT,** Lucas reads directions from a **GIANT FOLD-OUT MAP OF HAWKINS** (the same one that Bob used).

**LUCAS**

... Okay, you're gonna keep straight for half a mile or so, then take a left on Mount Sinai...

-- AND **IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT,** Max... **DRIVES**!

Let us be clear here: Max is **DRIVING**.

Steve begins to panic, fumbling for words:

**STEVE**

What -- what is happening?

Dustin calmly reassures him:

**DUSTIN**

Don't worry, she's driven before --

**MIKE**

In a parking lot --

(CONTINUED)
LUCAS
That counts --

STEVE
Oh my God --

DUSTIN
They wanted to leave you behind --

STEVE
Oh my God --

DUSTIN
But I promised them you'd be cool --

We now shift our focus to Max. Her hands grip tight to the steering wheel and her eyes are fixed on the road ahead. She is propped on a phone book and there is a wood block tied to the accelerator (Temple of Doom style!) so that her foot can reach the pedal. She HAMMERS the gas and --

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

VROOM! The car ROARS down the road, careening wildly. She's driving alright. Just... not very well.

INT. BILLY'S CAMARO - COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Steve is now full-on panicking.

STEVE
-- Stop -- stop the car, STOP THE CAR -- !

MIKE
I told you'd he'd freak out -- !!

DUSTIN
Steve please don't freak out -- !

STEVE
STOP THE CAR -- !!

MAX
WOULD EVERYONE SHUT UP I'M TRYING TO FOCUS!!

Lucas looks out the window, spots a street sign.

LUCAS
That's Mount Sinai -- !
MAX
What -- ?

LUCAS
Turn left -- LEFT!!!

Max spins the wheel hard to the left. Steve SCREAMS as --

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

SCREEECH! The Camaro SWERVES around the corner -- too tight -- it careens off the road -- SMASHES into a mailbox -- then --

Swerves back onto the road again.

It SQUEALS away from us and --

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

Silence. We DRIFT through the dark woods towards the cabin.

The windows are now fogged up, glowing a burnt orange...

It looks like Hell in there.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Will stirs awake. He tries to look around, but --

His hands and legs are tied.

WILL
(panicked)
What -- what is happening -- ??

Jonathan, Nancy, and Joyce are standing outside of the "heat circle". They've shed layers of clothing and are down to undershirts. Their hair is soaked, their skin dripping sweat. This little makeshift oven is clearly working...

No one dares speak to Will. They just watch. On edge. As...

Will grimaces. In pain.

WILL (CONT'D)
Please -- it -- it hurts -- it
hurts --

Joyce fights tears. God this is hard to watch.

Will's breathing quickens --

WILL (CONT'D)
IT HURTS IT HURTS! IT HURTS!!!!

(CONTINUED)
Will thrashes wildly, trying to free himself --

WILL (CONT'D)
LET ME GO LET ME GO LET ME GO!!!
IT HURTS IT HURTS IT HURTS!!!!

Jonathan fights tears himself. Nancy notices, takes his hand. Squeezes tight. As Joyce clocks their contact, we --

FLASHCUT TO BOB HOLDING HER HAND AS THEY DANCE ON HALLOWEEN.

Joyce's eyes harden with determination. *Fuck this thing.*

She silently moves around the bed, and, one by one --

Dials up the space heaters.

Jonathan and Nancy share a look. *Holy shit.*

Jonathan moves forward, worried --

JONATHAN

Mom --

But she doesn't stop. She turns up another. Another.

The heater coils turn a DARKER RED.

Jonathan can't watch anymore. Turns away as --

Will's SCREAMS INTENSIFY and --

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MERRILL'S FARM - NIGHT

WHOOM!! The Camaro runs over the "PICK YOUR OWN PUMPKINS" SIGN!

It BUMPS and CAREENS its way over uneven terrain and --

INT./EXT. BILLY'S CAMARO - MERRILL'S FARM - NIGHT

SCREECH! THE CAMARO SLAMS TO A VIOLENT STOP BY THE GIANT HOLE.

Max shifts the car into park. Exhales. *Whew.*

Steve looks like he's about to throw up in the back.

The boys, however, are impressed.

DUSTIN

Whoa.

LUCAS

That was...

(Continued)
MIKE
Incredible.

MAX
Told you. Zoomer.

EXT. MERRILL'S PUMPKIN PATCH - BY HOLE - NIGHT

WHOOM! The Camaro door explodes open and everyone leaps out.

Steve stumbles out last. Still dazed. He finds his balance, then staggers his way around to the back of the car, where --

Dustin distributes supplies from the trunk. Each kid receives one of the following item: 1) swim goggles 2) bandanas 3) gloves 4) gas cans, and 5) flashlights. Of course.

Steve watches in growing disbelief. Exasperated:

STEVE
Hey -- guys -- guys!! HELLO??

The kids ignore Steve and continue to put on their protective gear. Goggles go over eyes, bandanas over their mouths.

They look like little POST-APOCALYPTIC BANDITS!

STEVE (CONT'D)
You think you're going down there -- you're -- you're wrong! Okay???
This -- this ends RIGHT NOW!!

The kids keep moving forward with their plan. Mike ties a ROPE to the front of the car as Steve watches in disbelief.

DUSTIN
Listen -- Steve. I get you're upset, okay? But the bottom line is a party member requires our assistance. And it's our duty to provide that assistance.

Mike carries the rope toward the giant hole. His body vanishes over the lip of the crater. Max and Lucas follow.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)
But I know you promised Nancy you'd keep us safe -- so...

(CONTINUED)
Dustin holds out a STACK OF SUPPLIES AND STEVE'S SPIKED BAT.

Dustin brought gear for Steve.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)
Keep us safe.

Off Steve, realizing what this means, we SMASH TO --

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - HOLE - NIGHT - A FEW MINUTES LATER

WHOOM! Dirt falls as tennis shoes dangle into view as...

Steve drops down into the tunnels! He's coming with them!

He's now wearing the bandana over his mouth and his goggles and he wields his SPIKED BAT. He looks... well... badass.

His eyes go wide as he takes in the tunnel.

STEVE
... Holy shit...

We SLOWLY PULL BACK to reveal that the other kids are already down here, exploring this INCREDIBLE, ENORMOUS TUNNEL SYSTEM.

Max and Lucas scan the walls with their flashlights, while Mike studies a HAND-DRAWN MAP (based on Will's drawings).

MIKE
Alright, we don't have much time.
Everyone stay close to me, okay?

Mike starts to lead them down the tunnel, but then --

Steve places a hand on his shoulder, halting him.

STEVE
Any of you little shits die down here -- I'm getting blamed.

He snatches the map away from Mike.

STEVE (CONT'D)
From here on -- I lead the way.

CLICK! Steve hits on his flashlight and starts "leading."

The kids share looks. Then follow "Dad Steve".

As our "Goonies" slink into darkness...
INT. HAWKINS LABS - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Hopper and Eleven slink through a dark lab hallway.

Lights FLICKER, illuminating remnants from the massacre: papers everywhere, a dented wall, a hint of blood on the floor. But there are no Demo-dogs. At least -- not yet.

They round a corner, slip through a door, and enter...

INT. HAWKINS LABS - STAIRWELL LANDING - NIGHT

Hopper shuts the door behind them, takes a deep breath.

They've almost made it. But they're not safe yet --

A TRAIL OF BLOOD SLIPS DOWN THE STEPS. Then: A FAINT SHUFFLING SOUND ECHOES from below. Demo-dogs?

Hopper holds up a hand, motioning for Eleven to stay.

INT. HAWKINS LABS - NEXT STAIRWELL LANDING - NIGHT

Hopper creeps down to the next landing. Ready to fight.

But then: his face darkens, his gun lowers.

REVERSE TO REVEAL: DR. OWENS. He's slumped with his back against the wall on the next landing down. And he doesn't look good. He's been attacked by a Demo-dog!

HOPPER

... Shit.

Hopper walks down to the landing and kneels by Owens. He's got two nasty cuts across his chest and a DEEP GASH on his right leg.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

... Suckers got you pretty good, huh, Doc?

Owens manages a small nod. He tries to speak, but it's taking a lot of energy, and --

HOPPER (CONT'D)

Don't talk. Just -- hold on -- hold on, okay? I got you.

Hopper, thinking fast, removes his belt from his pants to create a MAKESHIFT TOURNIQUET. As Hopper works...

TAT TAP TAP. APPROACHING FOOTSTEPS. Owens looks up as...
Eleven creeps down the steps and into view. Owens' eyes glint with recognition -- confusion. It... can't be...

As Hopper wraps the belt around Owens' leg...

HOPPER (CONT'D)
Oh, yeah... I've been meaning to
tell you, Doc... This is Eleven.
Eleven, meet Doc Owens. Doc Owens,
Eleven.

Hopper threads the belt's tongue through the buckle.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
She's been staying with me this past
year and she's about to save all our
asses. Then, after that -- maybe
you can help her out, huh? Let her
live a normal life, you know --
where she's not poked and prodded
like some lab rat -- I don't know --
Just a thought. But...

Hopper cinches the tourniquet tight. Owens grimaces.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
Think about it. Yeah?

Hopper now removes the handgun from his holster.

He curls it into Owens' hand.

HOPPER (CONT'D)
Don't go anywhere.

With that, Hopper starts down the stairs, Eleven follows.

Off a stunned Owens, watching Eleven, holding his gun...

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL SYSTEM – NIGHT

Steve leads our "GOONIES"-squad deeper into the tunnels.

They round a bend and enter...

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS – SPORE CHAMBER – CONTINUOUS

The SPORE ROOM. Their eyes go wide with awe, fear.

The fog is dense in here. Spores dance in the air. Their flashlights illuminate disgusting, bulbous growths on the wall, just visible beneath the curtain of fog and spores.

(CONTINUED)
LUCAS
... God --

MAX
... What is this place...

STEVE
Guys, come on -- let's keep moving.

Steve pushes forward, leading them out of the spore room and into the tunnel opposite. That is, everyone except for...

Dustin. He freezes. Hears a STRANGE GROANING SOUND.

He follows the sound up, shining his flashlight up at --

THE ENORMOUS CHANDELIER GROWTH. IT SWELLS AND THEN --

SPEEWWW! It HEAVES, SPEWING SPORES RIGHT INTO HIS FACE!!!

Dustin screams, hurries away and --

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS – ADJACENT TUNNEL – CONTINUOUS

Dustin joins the others. Full-on panicking now.

DUSTIN
Ohmygodohmygod --

MAX/LUCAS
Dustin?!

STEVE
What happened??

Dustin rips off his bandana.

DUSTIN
I think some got in my mouth!! I THINK SOME GOT IN MY MOUTH -- !!!

Everyone stares, scared, as --

Dustin doubles over and SPITS frantically on the ground.

A tense moment passes then --

Dustin looks back up.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)
... I'm okay.

Shared looks. Jesus Christ. And...
WE CRANE DOWN as one by one the gang enters THE HUB. Their flashlights sweep the area.

Steve checks the map.  X marks the spot.

STEVE
Alright -- I think this is your hub, Wheeler.

Mike looks around.  Seems so. He turns to the others.

MIKE
Drench it.

The kids quickly set to work, drenching the room in gas. Mike and Max use gas cannisters; Max sprays gas out of the weed killer. Soaking the vines, the walls, the floor, EVERYTHING IN SIGHT. They are gonna burn this place to the ground.

As gas SPLASHES OFF THE WALLS...

The FIRE ROARS and --

Will SCREAMS. Still straining against those ropes.

Jonathan, Nancy, and Joyce continue to watch him from behind the heaters. Holding firm. But it is getting harder and harder to stomach this.

JONATHAN
-- It's not working --

He looks at Joyce.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
(more certain now)
It's not working!

Tears stream down Joyce's face. But she doesn't budge. She keeps her eyes fixed on Will.

Jonathan steps toward Joyce.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)
Mom are you listening to me??

JOYCE
Just wait --

(CONTINUED)
JONATHAN
How much longer -- ??!

JOYCE
Just wait --

JONATHAN
Mom look at him!! It's NOT WORKING! It's just killing Will!!

WILL
HEELPPP HEEELLLLPPPP!!!

But Joyce makes no move to help him. Jonathan stares at his mom. There's a wildness in her eyes -- a recklessness. Finally he can't take it anymore. He just can't. He races to one of the heaters and starts to dial it back down but --

JOYCE
NO!!!

Joyce charges over and shoves Jonathan away and SCREAMS --

JOYCE (CONT'D)
LEAVE IT!! LEAVE IT!!

Before Jonathan has a chance to respond --

NANCY
-- Jonathan -- !

Jonathan looks back up at Nancy.

NANCY (CONT'D)
His neck!!

Jonathan and Joyce follow her gaze to find that the veins on Will's neck are visible now. DARK AND THROBBING AND SLOWLY RISING up toward the base of his neck.

The heat is doing something to him. Holy shit.

NANCY (CONT'D)
It's happening -- !

Will suddenly unleashes an ANGRY SCREAM -- DEEP and GUTTURAL.

The lights in the cabin begins to flicker as his possessed body makes a last-ditch attempt to free itself.

Will yanks on the rope, harder, harder. The skin on his wrists CHAFES against the rope, skin peeling away, and --

WHOOM! HIS HAND TEARS FREE!

(CONTINUED)
As Will reaches to free his other hand --
Joyce runs up to the bed -- into the scorching heat -- and shoves Will down flat with all of her strength, but --
Too late. Will's HAND shoots upward and --
WHOOM! GRABS JOYCE BY THE THROAT. CHOKING HER.
His eyes bore in his "mother" with a look that can only be described as PURE RAGE. Whoever this is... whatever this is... it's NOT WILL. As the sockets around his eyes darken --
The lights FLICKER EVER MORE WILDLY and --

INT. HAWKINS LABS - STAIRWELL, RIuft LAB LEVEL - NIGHT

CH-CH! Lights flicker in the Rift Lab hallway as...
Hopper and Eleven reach the bottom of the stairs.
They slowly step forward. Ahead they hear:
THE SOUND OF MONSTERS. CLOSE.
Hopper holds up a hand --

HOPPER
Stay here.

INT. HAWKINS LABS - RIuft LAB HALLWAY - NIGHT

Hopper edges his way toward the lab. He can't see anything in there... but he can hear those monsters. They're in there alright. He presses his back against the wall by the door.
Then, keeping quiet, he... removes the KNIFE from his belt... inches it out SAVING PRIVATE RYAN-style... and...
IN THE REFLECTION OF THE KNIFE BLADE, WE SEE DOZENS OF DEJCH-DOGS IN THE RIuft LAB. IT'S THE ARMY -- GUARDING THE GATE.
Hopper pulls the knife away and drops back. His face is pale.

HOPPER
(low)
... Shit.

As he readies his assault gun, bracing for battle...
INT. HAWKINS LABS - FURTHER BACK IN THE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Eleven waits anxiously in the hallway...

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL HUB - NIGHT

WE TRACK a TRAIL OF GASOLINE into...

AN ADJACENT TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Where "Dad" Steve stands before his "children."

He holds a METAL LIGHTER in his hand.

STEVE
(low)
... You guys ready?

MAX/LUCAS/MIKE
Ready.

DUSTIN
Light 'er up.

STEVE
(to himself)
... I am in such deep shit.

Steve spins the lighter wheel. The FLAME catches and --

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

WHOOM! HOT FLAMES leap from fire as...

Will continues to choke Joyce. Tightening his grip.

She can't breathe. Can't breathe...

Jonathan tries to pry Will from his mother, but Will holds his mother tight -- this Will is strong -- too strong --

NANCY (O.S.)
Jonathan -- stand back!!!!

Jonathan looks up to find --

Nancy. Standing by the fireplace with THE FIREPLACE POKER.

She thrusts its red-hot tip into Will's side.

THWOOOM-HISS! Will SCREAMS IN TERRIBLE PAIN -- and finally --

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

He releases Joyce.

INT. HAWKINS LABS - RIFT LAB HALLWAY - NIGHT

Hopper sweeps around the corner with his assault rifle -- Ready to fight -- to die -- finger ON THE TRIGGER... as --

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Joyce SLAMS Will back down onto the bed. Pissed now.

JOYCE

GET. OUT. OF. MY. SON!

Will SCREAMS, veins throbbing, as --

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - ADJACENT TUNNEL - NIGHT

Steve tosses the lighter. It SOARS through the air in SLOW-MOTION... Then...

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL HUB - NIGHT

Flame meets gas. FWOOOOOOM! The hub GOES UP IN FLAMES!! THE VINES SHRIEK -- THRASH -- IN TERRIBLE PAIN AS --

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Will SHRIEKS and THRASHES in TERRIBLE PAIN TOO as...

INT. HAWKINS LABS - RIFT LAB - NIGHT

The Demo-dogs SHRIEK and THRASH TOO! The hive mind at work.

Hopper staring, baffled. He didn't even fire a shot.

He lowers his gun, watching as the Demo-dogs leap through the shattered glass partition. They scramble back down into the excavation hole as...

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

WILL CONTINUES TO SCREAM IN PAIN.

Joyce scrambles away as his back arches up and...

INT. HAWKINS LABS - RIFT LAB - EXCAVATED HOLE - NIGHT

WE CUT TO AN OVERHEAD SHOT of Demo-dogs clambering down into the throat-like hole, which we then MATCH CUT TO:
INT. CABIN - NIGHT

AN OVERHEAD SHOT OF WILL -- his back still arched upward -- as a VORTEX OF BLACK PARTICLES ERUPT OUT OF HIS THROAT.

Joyce and Jonathan and Nancy watch, stunned, as --
The TRAIL OF PARTICLES races through the cabin and --
WHOOM! The PARTICLES EXPLODE OUT the cabin door.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

Nancy races outside onto the cabin porch. She watches in awe as the particles swirl into the dark forest -- dissipating.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

WHOOM! Will collapses back down onto the bed. Limp.

Jonathan RIPS the extension cord out of its socket. As the heat lamps ZAP out -- killing this makeshift oven --
Joyce drops by Will's side.

JOYCE
Will -- baby -- Will -- can you hear me??!!? Can you hear me??!!

A tense beat as Will doesn't answer. And then --

His eyes flutter open and he looks up at...

WILL
(low)
... Mom?

Joyce nods through tears. Her voice trembles.

JOYCE
Yeah... it's me -- it's Mom...

She pulls Will tight, tears rushing down her cheeks as...

INT. HAWKINS LABS - RIFT LAB - NIGHT

Eleven joins Hopper in the now-empty Rift lab. She looks up at him. Baffled. Where did they go?

Before Hopper even has a chance to explain --

HISS! His radio CRACKLES TO LIFE:
RADIO VOICE  
(filtered)  
Hopper? You copy? Do -- you -- copy??

Hopper, still shaken, answers --

HOPPER  
Yeah. ... I -- I copy.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

It's Jonathan. He now sits at the desk by Hopper's transponder. He's drenched. Exhausted. He looks at...

Joyce. She's still holding Will. Crying now. Then...

He turns back to the transponder. And says, simply:

JONATHAN  
Close it.

INT. HAWKINS LABS - RIFT LAB - NIGHT

Hopper and Eleven share a look. And we SMASH TO:

INT. HAWKINS LABS - RIFT LAB - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Gears and pulleys turn as...

INT. UNDERGROUND RIFT CHAMBER - NIGHT

WHOOM! The elevator begins to drop toward us from high above, silhouetted by the light of the Rift Lab.

We MOVE TIGHT on Eleven as they journey downward, the cage swaying in the air as they drop. A look of awe and fear washes over her as she watches the ENORMOUS RIFT pass before them. A hundred feet tall. Fifty feet wide.

It GROANS in anger -- almost as if it is taunting her.

She instinctively reaches out and takes Hopper's hand as --

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - NIGHT

Steve and the kids sprint back through the tunnels.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - THE BONE CHAMBER - NIGHT

They burst into the bone chamber.

It's dark in here. Scary. There are many "doors" but --

(CONTINUED)
Steve reads the map and --

**STEVE**

This way -- this way!!

The kids follow Steve toward a "door" on their right when --

Mike suddenly trips -- falling HARD. He spins to find:

A NETHER VINE ENSNARING HIS ANKLE. He frantically tries to kick his leg free, but the vine *tightens* its grip -- and then it begins to travel UP his leg like some python, HISSING!

**MIKE**

HELLLPP!!!

**INT. UNDERGROUND RIFT CHAMBER - PLATFORM**

Hopper hits the red button on the platform and --

WHOOM!! The platform ROCKS to a violent stop.

We now CUT SUPER WIDE: The small cage hangs directly before the very **center** of the **ENORMOUS RIFT.** The **heart.** The platform seems tiny before it.

Hopper looks at Eleven. Eleven looks at Hopper. Then...

Eleven takes a deep breath... removes her hand from Hopper...

She slowly raises it up... targeting the Rift's **heart.**

We SLOWLY PUSH IN ON ELEVEN as she exerts her power.

Her hand trembles... BLOOD slips from her nose...

The Rift GROANS... THROBBING faster...

It seems to be reacting. And then...

* A dark shape emerges behind the Rift.

**THE MIND PLAYER.**

* Eleven locks eyes with it... terrified... as...

* MIKE (PRE-LAP)

   Help!! HELP!!

**INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - THE BONE CHAMBER - NIGHT**

The kids race back to Mike as --

The vine continues to climb up his leg.

(CONTINUED)
STEVE
Everyone back -- EVERYONE BACK!!

Steve raises up his spiked bat and WHACK! He brings it crashing down into the vine. WHACK! Again! WHACK! Until --
The vine RIPS IN HALF, spewing black blood!!! The severed "snake" HISSES in anger as it slithers away, retreating.

Mike staggers back to his feet. Free at last. When --

A GUTTURAL GROWL ECHOES OUT FROM BEHIND THEM.

The kids slowly turn around. Shit.

WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL: A DEMO-DOG standing in their doorway. It has a very familiar yellow BIRTH MARK on its back.

This is not just any Demo-dog. This is --

DUSTIN

... Dart.

Everyone backpedals away. That is, everyone except...

Dustin. Who takes a step toward Dart.

MIKE/MAX/LUCAS/STEVE

Dustin! Get back!! DUSTIN!

Dustin ignores them and continues to approach Dart.

DUSTIN

... Hey Dart... hey. It's me... It's... Dustin. Your friend? Remember?

Dart looks at Dustin. He breathes heavily. But... he's not attacking. Shared looks from the others. Is it working?

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

Will you... let us pass?

Dart GROWLS. Everyone tenses. But Dustin remains calm. He slowly unzips his backpack, reaches inside, and digs out...

A THREE MUSKETEERS BAR.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

... You hungry?

He unwraps the candy.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)

... Nougat... your favorite.

Dustin kneels down and tosses the candy bar on the ground.

Dart stares at it. Then pads up to the candy bar. Nudges it. He seems to be considering it. And then, finally...
He begins to eat it.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)
That's a good boy. Good boy...

The other kids share stunned looks. Holy shit.

Dustin looks back at his friends and waves them on! Come on!

They all begin to sneak past Dart. Dustin pushes to his feet and follows. He pauses at the door and casts one look back at --

Dart. Still eating the candy bar.

DUSTIN (CONT'D)
... Bye, buddy.

And with that, he turns and leaves and --

INT. UNDERGROUND RIFT CHAMBER - PLATFORM

CLOSE ON: Eleven's outstretched hand trembling violently.

The Mind Flayer draws closer to the Rift. Coming for Eleven.

Eleven blocks out her fear. Shuts her eyes. And...

WE FLASHCUT TO #207

KALI (FLASHBACK)
... I want you to find something from your past -- something that angers you... channel it.

BACK TO SCENE

Eleven's eyes re-open. Determined now. Angry.

As she remembers back:

-- HER MOTHER IS DRAGGED AWAY FROM HER

-- ELECTROCUTED BY RAY AND BRENNER

THE SIDES OF THE RIFT BEGIN TO NARROW.

IT'S STARTING TO CLOSE!!!

OMITTED

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - NIGHT

As the kids sneak through the tunnels -- (CONTINUED)
BOOM! The whole tunnel shakes. They look around --

MAX
-- What was that --?

And that's when they hear it. GROWLING.
COMING FROM BEHIND THEM. MORE DEMO-DOGS. THE ARMY.

MIKE
Run -- RUN!

Everyone runs.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - THE HOLE - NIGHT

They race through the tunnels. Fast as they can.

They hear the ROAR OF THE ARMY BEHIND THEM.

LUCAS
There!

A shaft of moonlight ahead! The exit!!

STEVE
GO GO GO!

Steve lifts Max up. She grabs onto the rope and starts to pull herself through the hole and --

EXT. MERRILL'S PUMPKIN PATCH - THE HOLE - NIGHT

Max climbs out onto the ground above. She drops onto her knees and helps Lucas up the rope. They're escaping one at a time.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - THE HOLE - NIGHT

As Steve begins to helps Mike onto the rope --

Dustin's eyes shoot wide. ACROSS THE TUNNEL: THE ARMY OF DEMO-DOGS race around the corner. Charging right for them.

WE GO SLOW MOTION AS: Steve raises his spiked bat. Not going down without a fight. Dustin squeezes his eyes shut --

EXT. MERRILL'S PUMPKIN PATCH - THE HOLE - NIGHT

SLOW MOTION: Mike reaches down his hand -- screams:

MIKE
DUSTIN!!!!
INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNELS - THE HOLE - NIGHT

But it's too late. WHOOM! SHAPES BLUR past Dustin. He slowly peels his eyes back. He's... still alive. The Demo-dogs are racing right past him and Steve. Running... around him. Where are they going???

EXT. MERRILL'S PUMPKIN PATCH - THE HOLE - NIGHT

We PUSH IN on Mike as he realizes:

MIKE
... Eleven...

OMITTED

INT. UNDERGROUND RIFT CHAMBER - PLATFORM

Eleven's hand shakes as she continues to close the Gate. The Mind Flayer SCREECHES in anger as it narrows more and more. It's working! But then --

THE CAMERA WIDENS BACK TO REVEAL: A DOG CLIMBING UP THE WALL!

Hopper hears it. Turns. Doesn't see anything. But then --

WHOOM! The Demo-dog suddenly SLAMS ON TOP OF THE CAGE! The entire cage shakes wildly. The dog then drops its head down into the cage and roars. Hopper fires. BANG BANG BANG!!

He blows the fucker off the side of the cage. But then --

Behind Hopper we see ANOTHER DEMO-DOG leaping toward him.

It slams onto the side of the cage!!

BANGBANGBANG! Hopper shoots that fucker down too!!

But he hears more sounds. He pivots left.

His flashlight beam illuminates:

DOZENS OF DEMO-DOGS CRAWLING ALONG THE WALL.

He opens fire. BANGBANGBANG! CLICK! He's out of bullets.

A Demo-dog turns and -- seeing an opportunity -- lunges at Hopper!

(CONTINUED)
Hopper quickly switches to his shotgun. BOOM!

He shoots that fucker down in mid-air. As the dog spirals down --

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! He keeps firing at more dogs off-screen, doing everything he can to protect --

ELEVEN. AS WE SLOWLY PUSH IN ON HER, WE FLASHCUT TO MORE MEMORIES FROM HER PAST: SHE IS THROWN INTO THE ISOLATION ROOM -- REFUSES TO KILL THE CAT -- SNAPS THE GUARDS' NECKS -- TOUCHES THE MONSTER -- SCREAMS IN THE ISOLATION TANK --

AS THE GATE CONTINUES TO CLOSE...

THE MIND FLAYER MOVES AN ARM THROUGH THE RIFT...

IT IS REACHING FOR ELEVEN!

PARTICLES SWIRL... A MINI-TORNADO SWIRLING TOWARD HER...

AS...

EXT. MERRILL'S PUMPKIN PATCH - THE HOLE - NIGHT

Dustin and Steve clamber up out of the hole as...

The Camaro's HEADLIGHTS begin to glow brighter and brighter... their flashlights grow brighter too!

Shared looks among the kids. Something is happening...

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Jonathan, Joyce, Nancy, and Will looks up as --

The lights in the cabin begin to glow brighter too...

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

Light pours through the slats covering the cabin windows --

Growing bright and brighter as...

INT. UNDERGROUND RIFT CHAMBER - PLATFORM

The MIND FLAYER'S ARM draws closer to Eleven as...

She continues to close the gate, cycling through those painful memories:

A LOOP OF PAIN AND SUFFERING AND VIOLENCE. HER WOUND IS DEEP AND PAINFUL AND UNHEALED. BUT SHE CONFRONTS IT ALL --

(CONTINUED)
TEARS SPILL DOWN HER CHEEK... MIXING WITH BLOOD FROM HER NOSE...

THE RIFT THROBS AND GROANS --

THE ARM DRAWS CLOSER --

IT ALMOST HAS ELEVEN --

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

The lights grow brighter and brighter as...

INT. UNDERGROUND RIFT CHAMBER - PLATFORM

The ARM is inches away from Eleven when...

ELEVEN’S FEET SUDDENLY LIFT UP A FEW FEET THE PLATFORM. SHE’S LEVITATING. REACHING A NEW STATE OF POWER.

SHE THRUSTS OUT BOTH HANDS NOW --

RELEASES ONE FINAL SCREAM --

AND --

The arm sucks back into the Upside Down a split-second before --

CRACKKK-RARRRRR! THE GATE CLOSES WITH A THUNDEROUS ROAR!!!

Eleven collapses back onto the platform as we CUT TO --

INT. UNDERGROUND RIFT CHAMBER - NIGHT

An EPIC view from below as the ARMY OF DEMO-DOGS RAIN DOWN FROM ABOVE. As they hit the ground, limp, we PUSH IN on one.

Dark veins creep up its body and its skin shrivels and grays... dying...

EXT. MERRILL’S PUMPKIN PATCH - NIGHT

The glass headlights dim as...

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

The lights in the cabin dim too as...
We DRIFT THROUGH a tunnel as... the vines wither and die...

Dart dies by his candy wrapper. As his skin turns gray...

The kids share stunned looks. It's over. All thanks to --

Eleven. Hopper pulls her up into his arms.

She's weak, but alive. They both fight tears as they share the faintest hint of a smile. She did it. They did it.

As Hopper pulls her into an emotional embrace...

We VERY SLOWLY PULL AWAY from them...

Until they are just TWO SMALL FIGURES...

Suspended in darkness...

Our MUSIC CRESCENDOS...

And...

WE SLOWLY FADE TO BLACK

A long breath of silence. Then...

CLOSE ON: A HEAVY CHAIN WRAPS AROUND DOOR HANDLES.
WIDEN TO REVEAL: AN M.P. GUARD is locking up the lab.

TITLE CARD: ONE MONTH LATER.

He snaps a padlock over the chains. CA-CHUNK!

EXT. HAWKINS LABS - DAY

The Guard climbs into a MILITARY VEHICLE. It drives off, linking up with a CARAVAN OF MILITARY VEHICLES.

EXT. HAWKINS LABS - MAIN GATE - DAY

The CARAVAN exits through the main gate. They're leaving!

WE PULL BACK TO REVEAL: MURRAY BAUMAN!! He sits cross-legged on the hood of his van, watching this caravan pass.


TV NEWS ANCHOR'S VOICE
... Since the release of the incendiary tape, the once quiet town of Hawkins, Indiana, has spent time in a place it never expected: (beat) The national spotlight.

As the last vehicle exits the facility...

The GATE SWINGS swings shut, revealing a new sign:

AREA CLOSED. TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

We CRANE DOWN to find a small group of mourners gathered beside an open grave. We survey the various mourners:

Nancy, Jonathan, Steve, Karen, Ted, and...

MR. and MRS. HOLLAND. We're at Barb's funeral.
... Under mounting pressure, several high-ranking members from the U.S. Department of Energy have admitted to involvement in the death and cover-up of Hawkins residents Barbara Holland and Bob Newby, who died due to exposure to an experimental chemical asphyxiant which had leaked from the grounds of the lab...

The FUNERAL DIRECTOR releases the lock on a lowering mechanism and the casket slowly begins its descent.

The Hollands sob and hold tight to one another.

The NEWS REPORT continue to play out on a TV above a bar.

... We sent our own April Kline to Hawkins to speak to residents...

We PULL AWAY from the TV and we DRIFT past a few day-drinkers. Residents. Their eyes are glued to the TV...

... Residents who told us they thought they lived in a safe town -- the kind of town where, they say, nothing ever happened...

We arrive at the front door just as... DING! Hopper enters.

Hopper sits at a booth opposite a surprising "date":

Dr. Owens. A pair of crutches nearby, but otherwise he seems to have recovered quite well from the attack. He's eating -- and appears to be enjoying -- A ROAST-BEEF SANDWICH.

DR. OWENS
Chief-o.

HOPPER
How's the leg?

DR. OWENS
Better. But pretty sure my football career is over.

(CONTINUED)
Owens swallows a bite, motions to his sandwich.

DR. OWENS (CONT'D)
Want some? No way can I eat all this...

He slides half the sandwich to Hopper. Hop pushes it away.

HOPPER
... On a diet --

DR. OWENS
You're a better man than me.

Dr. Owens wipes his hands with a napkin, then brings out a MANILA ENVELOPE and slides it across the table to Hopper.

Hopper takes a peek inside. It's a BIRTH CERTIFICATE.

Hopper looks back up at Owens -- surprised. Thankful.

HOPPER
I thought --

DR. OWENS
Sometimes I impress even myself. Still -- I'd let things cool off awhile if I were you.

Hopper slips the BIRTH CERTIFICATE back into the envelope.

HOPPER
... What's "awhile?"

DR. OWENS
You want to be safe? Give it a year.

Hoper winces. That's a long time. A real long time. Screw it, he takes the half of the roast-beef sandwich and starts to stress-eat.

Then, reluctantly, and against his better judgement:

HOPPER
What about... one night out?

DR. OWENS
One night?

HOPPER
Yeah. How... risky would that be?

Owens considers this. A little miffed.

(CONTINUED)
DR. OWENS
... What's so important about one night?

Hopper hesitates, not sure how to put this, and...

We PRE-LAP: THE JINGLE BELL ROCK and we CUT TO:

INT. HAWKINS MIDDLE SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM - NIGHT 9

MR. CLARKE standing on a ladder! He looks down at THE ELDERLY TEACHER (from #204), who hands him colored string.

As Mr. Clarke lifts the string and tapes it to the wall, we widen out to reveal that he's hanging a BANNER which reads:

"HAWKINS MIDDLE SCHOOL SNOWBALL -- 1984!!"

"THE JINGLE BELL ROCK" plays. The songs carries over as --

INT. BYERS HOUSE - WILL'S ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: A NEW DRAWING on the wall. This one depicts a familiar-looking man in a red cape. Titled: BOB NEWBY, SUPERHERO.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL: Joyce helping Will put on a tie.

Jonathan records with Bob's video camera.

JOYCE
-- How's that?

WILL
It's too short, Mom --

Yeah, um, it's wayyyyy too short.

As Joyce tries again, she shoots Jonathan a look.

JOYCE
Jonathan, come on, just help --

JONATHAN
I don't know how! And someone's gotta document this -- failure --

Joyce rolls her eyes, redoubles her efforts.

INT. WHEELER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

SNAP! SNAP! SNAP! Karen takes Polaroids of Mike, in a suit, who stands awkwardly in front of the family Christmas tree.

(CONTINUED)
MIKE
Okay okay -- that's enough, Mom --

KAREN
Just one more --

MIKE
No --

KAREN
You look so handsome --

MIKE
Moommm --

KAREN
Miiiiiikeee --

Karen SNAPS another picture as --

INT. SINCLAIR HOUSE - LUCAS'S ROOM - NIGHT

Lucas, in a suit, looks in the mirror, his eyes dreamily narrowed.

LUCAS
... "Hey -- so... you wanna... dance?"
(beat, more casual)
"Hey, maybe we should, you know -- get out there. You and me?"
(beat, more chirpy)
"I love this song. You?"

He holds out his hand to an imaginary girl, when --

ERICA (O.S.)
(girly voice)
"Yeah! I love it!"

Lucas turns to find Erica. Watching from the doorway.

ERICA (CONT'D)
"But not as much as I love you, Lukeeeeee!!"

LUCAS
GET OUT OF MY ROOM!

Lucas walks over and SLAMS the door on his sister as --
INT. MAX'S HOUSE - MAX'S ROOM - NIGHT

MAX
OW! That hurts!

Max winces as her mom, SUSAN, pins up her hair.

SUSAN
It's gonna be worth it -- promise!

As Susan continues to get her hair just right, Billy saunters past the door. He shoots Max daggers -- and Max shoots daggers right back. Billy bites his tongue and stalks off.

Susan finishes with the hair, looks Max over.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
See -- pretty -- !

MAX
... Yeah okay --

SUSAN
... Now -- you surrrre you don't want to wear a dress?

Max looks at her mom. Then stalks away in response as --

INT. HENDERSON HOUSE - NIGHT

Dustin races through his house, searching for something.

DUSTIN
Sonofabitch -- sonofabitch!!

He's wearing a colorful suit, complete with a bow tie.

He hustles past CLAUDIA, who cradles a NEW KITTEN.

CLAUDIA
Where did you see it last?

DUSTIN
Where I put it -- right here --

Dustin checks a bowl on the kitchen counter. Not there.

CLAUDIA
What's in there that's so important anyway? You look fabulous baby!!

But just then, Dusting finds it. Hidden behind a BAG OF CAT FOOD: A SHOPPING BAG FROM MELVALD'S!!

(CONTINUED)
DUSTIN

Got it --

As Dustin races away, sprinting back past his mom --

The doorbell RINGS --

CLAUDIA

That's your ride! Dusty???

INT. HENDERSON HOUSE - DUSTIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

The bag from Melvald's upends. Out tumbles --

A BOTTLE OF FARRAH FAWCETT HAIR SPRAY.

Dustin picks it up. Takes a breath. And... here goes nothing.

CLOSE ON: His finger as he squeezes the trigger.

As SPRAY meets hair, we SMASH TO:

EXT. HAWKINS MIDDLE SCHOOL - NIGHT

The SNOWBALL!! We CRANE DOWN as a PARADE OF KIDS head into the gym. They are all dressed to the nines. Ready to party!

A BMW pulls into the front of the drop-off line. This is...

INT. STEVE'S BMW - HAWKINS MIDDLE - NIGHT

Steve talks to an off-screen passenger:

STEVE

Alright... so remember --

DUSTIN

Pretend like I don't care.

REVERSE ANGLE TO REVEAL: Steve is talking to Dustin!!

His hair is now CRAZY BIG.

STEVE

You're learnin', my friend.

Dustin checks himself out in the rearview mirror.

STEVE (CONT'D)

You look great, dude. Now get out there and slay 'em dead --

(CONTINUED)
DUSTIN
Like a lion --

Dustin does his signature purr. Steve winces.

STEVE
But don't -- don't do that.

DUSTIN
Yeah -- right. Okay.

Dustin takes a deep breath. And...

EXT. HAWKINS MIDDLE - GYM ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Dustin exits the car. He struts up to the ticket booth, which is manned by Mr. Clarke. Dustin hands Mr. Clarke his ticket.

MR. CLARKE
Looking very snazzy tonight, sir.

DUSTIN
Thank you, my Lord.

INT. STEVE'S BMW - HAWKINS MIDDLE - NIGHT

Steve watches Dustin talking to Clarke. This is a new side of Steve: "proud dad" Steve! But then Steve's expression changes as, through the open gymnasium door, he sees -- Nancy. Smiling. Serving punch to kids from behind a table.

Steve pushes back his emotions, then speeds away.

INT. HAWKINS MIDDLE - GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

Dustin now heads through a BALLOON ARCHWAY and enters...

The Snowball! We CRANE UP to reveal the party. The dance floor is jam-packed with students, a disco ball glowing above, the whole gym smothered in decorations -- magical.

As Dustin heads into the dance, he waves hello to -- Nancy, who is serving punch to a line of MIDDLE SCHOOLERS. All of her "customers" are... boys. They ogle her like she's some kind of exotic species.

MIDDLE SCHOOL BOY #1
What's in this...?

NANCY
Pure fuel.
As Nancy scoops more punch, she glances over at --

Jonathan, who is taking pictures at a PHOTO STATION. He's the official Snowball photographer tonight!!! CHOOM! He snaps a kid's photo, then looks up and makes eyes with Nancy. He smiles. And just the way these two are looking at each other, we can tell they're still together -- and in love.

ON THE FAR SIDE OF THE GYM,

Dustin walks up to Mike, Lucas, Will, and Max.

They stand around a fold-out table in the (way) back.

All eyes go straight to his hair.

MIKE
Whoa -- what happened??

DUSTIN
What?

"What?"

LUCAS
Dude -- !!!!

MAX
Your hair!

Lucas reaches out to touch it.

LUCAS
Is a bird nesting in there???

Everyone laughs. That is, everyone except for Dustin, who is now suddenly self-conscious about his new look. But before he has a chance to say anything in his defense --

A ROMANTIC SLOW SONG BEGINS TO PLAY. Couples move onto the dance floor. Dustin, per Steve's advice, tries to act like he's not interested.

Lucas, meanwhile, turns to Max.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
Hey -- Max -- you uh -- you -- uh --

(CONTINUED)
Are you trying to ask me to dance, Stalker?

No. No... I mean -- unless -- do you -- want to?

Max shakes her head.

So smooth. Come on...

Max takes his hand and drags him onto the dance floor.

Dustin watches them go, his heart-sinking, when...

Hey, zombie boy.

Will turns to find a cute girl walking over to him.

Wanna dance?

Will hesitates, uncertain --

I, I don't know, I --


Will turns back to the girl. Awkward.

I mean -- yeah -- sure.

Will follows her onto the dance floor, which leaves --

Mike and Dustin alone. Dustin watches the dance floor as...

Lucas wraps his arms around Max's waist. Dustin averts his gaze. Damn it hurts. But he perks up a bit as his gaze shifts to a group of cute girls nearby. A new objective!

He takes a deep breath. Pats down his hair a bit. And...

Wish me luck, Mike. I'm going in.

Dustin saunters up to the girls.
Hey -- uh -- Stacey? Stacey?  
The cutest girl -- STACEY -- stares at him like he's some alien.  

... Yeah?  

Dustin extends his hand, staying confident.  

... Shall we?  

Stacey looks at her friends. GIGGLES.  

Um, no thanks...  

Stacey and friends hurry away, giggling. Dustin watches them go, clearly hurt by the rejection. He shifts his gaze to --  

Another PAIR OF GIRLS. He starts to walk toward them --  

But they walk away as soon as they see him. Giggling too.  

Dustin is now alone. Abandoned. And hurting.  

AT THE PUNCH STATION,  

Nancy sees Dustin all alone. He keeps looking around. But everywhere he turns, girls laugh and walk away.  

Off Nancy, her heart breaking a bit...  

OVER AT THE BLEACHERS,  

Dustin, defeated, sits down on the bleachers all by himself. He's given up. His eyes return to the dance floor, where he sees --  

Max and Lucas. Max rests her head on Lucas's shoulder.  

It's almost too much to bear. As tears fill his eyes...  

NANCY (O.S.)  
... Wanna dance?  

Dustin looks up to find Nancy. She holds out a hand.  

Dustin quickly wipes his tears away.  

DUSTIN  
Huh -- ?  

(CONTINUED)
NANCY
Come on. Let's go.

Nancy yanks Dustin to his feet and...

DANCE FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Nancy drags Dustin onto the dance floor! He doesn't even know what to do now that he's out here -- he just stands stiffly in place, a few feet from Nancy, rocking awkwardly.

NANCY (CONT'D)
... Like this... here...

She places his arms around her waist and --

NANCY (CONT'D)
... Closer...

She draws him closer to her. Dustin can hardly breathe.

NANCY (CONT'D)
Now. Feel the song... the rhythm... move to it...

Dustin begins to feel the rhythm.

NANCY (CONT'D)
There... yeah, that's good.

Stacey and her friends all watch in disbelief!

Nancy smiles at Dustin.

NANCY (CONT'D)
You know -- of all my brother's friends, you're my favorite.
You've always been my favorite.

We can tell this means the world to Dustin.

DUSTIN
... Really?

NANCY
Girls this age are... dumb. But when they get a little older and wise up -- you're gonna drive 'em nuts.

DUSTIN
... You really think so?
NANCY

I know so.

Dustin beams. The glint of a tear in his eyes.

EXT. HAWKINS MIDDLE - GYM - NIGHT

The music grows faint as we DRIFT DOWN TO FIND...

Joyce, resting up against her car outside the gym. She hears FOOTFALLS. Looks up to find Hopper.

HOPPER

... Thought I might find you here.

He smiles. Leans next to her. She smiles softly.

JOYCE

Will wanted space, so... I gave him a few feet.

Hopper pulls a hand-rolled cigarette from his pocket.

HOPPER

... Whaddaya say? I'm pretty sure Mister Cooper retired in the seventies, so... I think we're good.

Hopper lights the cigarette, takes a puff in silence, then passes it to Joyce. As she takes a drag, Hopper eyes her.

There's a sadness in her eyes.

HOPPER (CONT'D)

... How you holding up?

JOYCE

Oh -- you know...

She takes another heavy drag. Hopper knows alright.

HOPPER

... That feeling -- it never goes away. But it's true -- you know. What they say. Every day, it gets a little bit easier.

Joyce takes this in, passes the cigarette back to Hop. As he smokes, she gently rests her head on Hopper's shoulder.

We SLOWLY PULL AWAY from these two old friends, sharing a cigarette just like old times as...
"IN THE AIR TONIGHT" begins to play now. Nearly all of the kids are out on the dance floor now. That is, everyone save for...

Mike. Sitting alone at the fold-out table. He taps his foot, desperate for this night to just be over already. But then, suddenly -- his breath catches, his heart skips, and...

He pushes to his feet. ACROSS THE GYM:

Eleven enters the Snow Ball! She wears a dress. Her hair is longer, done up. Her make-up inspired by her time with Kali.

She surveys the crowd, overwhelmed, until at last she sees -- Mike. Their eyes lock. Mike gathers his composure. Then...

He begins to walk toward her. She walks toward him.

They finally meet. Mike stares. Heart-in-throat.

MIKE
... You -- you look --
(beat)
Beautiful.

Eleven smiles, flustered. An awkward beat, then...

MIKE (CONT'D)
Do you want to... dance?

Eleven looks out at all those other kids. Nervous.

She's a little embarrassed by this, but --

ELEVEN
I... don't know... how.

MIKE
Neither do I.

A shared smile.

MIKE (CONT'D)
You want to... figure it out?

She smiles. And takes Mike's hand.

DANCE FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Mike leads Eleven onto the dance floor. He gently places his hands on her waist. As they sway to the song, eyes locked...

(continued)
WE MOVE THROUGH the packed dance floor, finding all our kids one final time...

-- Lucas with Max, her head still on his shoulder.

-- Dustin with Nancy, still not believing his luck.

-- Will with the Cute Girl, dancing awkwardly. But his eyes aren't on the cute girl. They are on --

-- Mike, who is dancing with Eleven. Their eyes firmly locked. They look like they're just about to burst with happiness. As "IN THE AIR TONIGHT" swells with emotion...

EXT. HAWKINS MIDDLE SCHOOL - NIGHT

We PULL AWAY from the school gym. Further and further.

It seems like we've reached the end of our story. But then, ever so slowly, we begin to ROTATE around 180°. As we do, the world slowly deteriorates around us, until we once again find ourselves in --

THE UPSIDE DOWN.

TOWERING OVER THE GYM, BENEATH A RAGING STORM:

THE MIND PLAYER. STILL ALIVE. ANGRY.

BOOM! RED LIGHTING SPLITS THE SKY --

AND WE SMASH TO --

BLACK.

STRANGER THINGS 2

OMITTED

THRU

124

END SEASON