

TREEHOUSE

Written by

Kenneth Quinnell

Listen to Soundtrack on Spotify
<https://shorturl.at/rADV7>

334 19th St. NE
Washington, D.C. 20002
850-339-4600

quinnelk@gmail.com

FADE IN.

EXT. GARTH'S HOUSE - MORNING

The McLarnon house is a sprawling one-story modern upper-middle class abode. A lone, but massive tree dominates the back yard. A large treehouse peeks over the roof of the house. Neighboring houses are pretty far away, everybody in this neighborhood needs a riding lawnmower to cut the grass. Behind the house, about the same distance away as the neighbors is a wooded area, with a path leading away from the McLarnon home.

INT. GARTH'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

GARTH MCLARNON, WM, 10, sleeps in his bed. His room is typical for a boy his age. Lots of sports equipment, lots of toys he's getting too old to play with, schoolbooks, comics, etc. His walls are decorated largely with G.I. Joe and Transformers posters.

He tosses and turns in his bed. His father can be heard through the wall, yelling at someone on the phone.

The phone conversation ends and the house goes silent. A few moments later, the front door slams.

Garth bolts upright, now awake. Seconds later, his alarm goes off.

He hits the snooze button and falls back in the bed.

INT. GARTH'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

MUSIC PLAYS: "School Day" by Chuck Berry.

Garth brushes his teeth. He's wearing a "G.I. Joe - A Real American Hero" T-shirt, jeans and Nikes.

The Chuck Berry song ends and the DJ comes on.

DJ

Don't forget that the meteor shower continues tonight, providing a light show for area residents. And be careful out there, we've been hearing reports about attacks from wild dogs. We can't confirm what we've heard, but better safe than sorry. Alright, let's get back to the music with the Everly Brothers!

MUSIC PLAYS: "Bird Dog" by the Everly Brothers.

Garth walks into the kitchen. His brother, DONNIE, WM, 16, is already there. He wears an Eagles jersey and blue jeans. Donnie eats the last Pop Tart.

Garth looks in the pantry. He doesn't see what he's looking for.

DONNIE
What you looking for?

GARTH
Breakfast.

DONNIE
This is the last Pop Tart.

GARTH
Dammit. Dad was supposed to go shopping last week.

DONNIE
He didn't. But he left you some money for breakfast.

Donnie walks over to Garth and hands him a \$5.

RIBBIT, an adult golden retriever, walks into the kitchen and nuzzles Garth's hand. Garth rubs him on his head and Ribbit wags his tail.

GARTH
Hey, boy. Gotta go. Hitting Mickey D's on the way in.

Garth heads for the front door. Ribbit follows.

GARTH (CONT'D)
Later.

DONNIE
Later, man.

Garth exits and shuts the door behind him. Ribbit stands at the door and whimpers. Donnie comes in and rubs the dog's back.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
You gotta wait, boy. I'll let you out once Garth's bus leaves.

Donnie rubs Ribbit's back.

EXT. GARTH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Garth stands next to the road, waiting for the school bus. A car turns onto the street. He gets excited, recognizing the car and the woman driving.

The car stops in front of him. He enthusiastically gets in.

INT. SANDRA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Garth climbs in and hugs his mother, SANDRA, WF, mid-30s, wearing a flower-print dress.

GARTH

Hey, mom. What are you doing here?

SANDRA

I missed you and figured I'd give you a ride to school.

GARTH

Yay!

SANDRA

Does Donnie need a ride?

Garth shakes his head.

GARTH

No, his schools doing final exams this week and he doesn't have one today.

SANDRA

They're letting him skip school.

Garth shrugs.

GARTH

I guess they do that in high school. I can't wait.

SANDRA

Three more years.

Garth frowns.

GARTH

Can we pull through Mickey D's? I haven't had breakfast yet.

SANDRA

Sure.

Sandra frowns.

EXT. PARTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - LATER

Sandra pulls into a parking spot and turns the car off.

INT. SANDRA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Garth finishes his Egg McMuffin and balls up the wrapper. He puts his trash in the bag and rolls the top down so nothing falls out.

GARTH

You didn't have to park. You could've gone through the drop-off lane.

SANDRA

I know, I just wanted to ask... I wanted to spend a little more time with you.

GARTH

Cool.

Sandra takes a second to collect her thoughts and consider her words.

SANDRA

So... how are things going... at the house?

Garth shrugs.

GARTH

Good, I guess.

SANDRA

You guess?

GARTH

Yeah... I... they're good.

SANDRA

You need anything? Is there anything you don't have?

Garth thinks for a second.

GARTH

We don't have enough food. I mean. Dad gives us money for food...

He holds up the McDonald's bag.

GARTH (CONT'D)
But I wish we had more food at the house.

Sandra hides her disappointed look from Garth.

SANDRA
What about your dad?

Garth shuffles in his seat.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
How's he doing? How's his temper?

Garth looks out the window.

GARTH
When we were in court, remember they said you weren't supposed to ask--

SANDRA
No, no, you're right. I'm not supposed to ask.

Garth looks at her, she's a bit ashamed.

GARTH
Mom, we're okay there.

She believes him.

SANDRA
Okay.

She kisses him on the forehead. He gets out and heads to class.

EXT. PARTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - LATER

Garth walks towards the school, moving through clusters of kids. He sees LYLE, BM, 10, wearing a Transformers shirt and tan pants, and PETE, WM, 11, wearing a plaid, button-down shirt and jeans.

Garth waves to his friends and joins them.

GARTH
What's up, losers?

Pete punches Garth in the shoulder.

LYLE
I'm NOT a loser.

They all laugh.

GARTH
You guys still coming tonight?

LYLE
What time?

PETE
The girls coming?

LYLE
Ugh.

GARTH
They said they were.

The school BELL rings. Garth turns to rush inside.

GARTH (CONT'D)
Gotta run. Want to catch Kara and
them quickly before class.

PETE
You'd better hurry.

GARTH
I will.

He does.

INT. PARTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

Garth walks down the busy hall, looking for someone. He sees her and rushes over to talk to her, KARA, 11, BF; and her BFF CELESTE, 11, WF. The girls are dressed in the latest 5th grade fashions.

GARTH
Hey Kara! Hey Celeste!

The girls smile and wave.

KARA
Hey!

She playfully punches his shoulder. They both grin.

GARTH
You guys coming tonight?

KARA
Wouldn't miss it.

CELESTE
Of course. Can my older sister
come?

GARTH
How old is she?

CELESTE
14.

GARTH
Sure.

The bell rings.

KARA
Gotta get to class.

CELESTE
Bye!

GARTH
See ya later!

He runs to class.

INT. PARTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Garth walks down the hall between classes. He sees HENRY, 12, BM, and SCULLY, 12, WM. They're bigger than the other kids, they've each been held back a year. Garth's face drops, He hates these guys.

HENRY
Hey there, Garth Vader.

GARTH
I told you not to call me that.

SCULLY
Why not? I thought your name WAS
Garth?

HENRY
Even though that's a dumb name.

GARTH
No, not that... I mean...

HENRY
So you're saying Garth's not your
name?

SCULLY
Well, we gotta call you something.

Henry grabs Garth's shirt.

HENRY
Maybe you're name is Joe.

SCULLY
Joe Vader? Still a dumb name.

Garth tries to walk away, but they block his path.

HENRY
What's this we hear about you
having a little party?

SCULLY
Yeah. A shindig.

GARTH
I'm not--

HENRY
You calling us liars?

SCULLY
I hate being called a liar.

They move closer to menace Garth.

GARTH
I'm not calling you a liar. It's
just a few friends coming over.
It's not a party.

HENRY
I don't know...

SCULLY
Sounds like a party to me.

GARTH
It's not--

HENRY
Where's our invite?

SCULLY

Don't you think we want to come to your party?

HENRY

With snacks and girls, wait, can you actually get girls to come?

The bullies laugh.

GARTH

Yes, girls are gonna be there.

SCULLY

Sweet! We're definitely gonna come, now.

HENRY

You gonna have drinks... like beer or something.

Garth shrugs. The bullies grin.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Definitely gonna have beer.

SCULLY

We're so th--

MS. WATKINS (O.S.)

Are you boys having some kind of problem?

They all turn to see a teacher, MS. WATKINS, BF, 50s. She wears a flowing white blouse and blue slacks.

SCULLY

No.

HENRY

No problem here.

MS. WATKINS

You boys head on to class.

The bell rings.

MS. WATKINS (CONT'D)

Garth, you're in my class. Come with me.

INT. MS. WATKINS CLASS - LATER

Garth sits in the front row. About half the seats in the class are empty. Garth looks around at the empty seats, uneasy.

MS. WATKINS

We aren't expecting to see another meteor shower of this magnitude for nearly two decades. Make sure you don't miss--

The bell rings. Everyone packs up and leaves.

MS. WATKINS (CONT'D)

Don't forget, quiz on Monday.

Groans and words of protest.

EXT. GARTH MCLARNON'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Ribbit rushes towards Garth, who gets off a school bus and runs for the front door.

GARTH

Ribbit! Who's a good boy? You are!

Ribbit leaps up on Garth, happy to see him. Garth laughs and rubs the sides of Ribbit's head.

The dog follows him inside.

INT. GARTH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Garth walks into the kitchen. Ribbit follows, nipping at his hands. BRETT MCLARNON, 40s, WM, paces back-and-forth, listening to the phone, which is attached to the wall via a spiraled cord. Brett wears an Izod shirt with stained pits, cargo shorts and faded leather sandals. His prematurely gray hair is balding.

BRETT

Dammit, Sandra!

He bellows into the phone.

BRETT (CONT'D)

I can't believe you're pulling this shit! Today of all--

He stops short when he sees Garth, who stands and stares at his father. Brett is embarrassed. He puts his hand over the receiver and whispers.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Give me a minute.

Garth sets his backpack on the floor and walks to the fridge. Brett walks down the hallway. The yelling continues. Garth pulls a Sunny D from the fridge and chugs it.

BRETT (O.S.) (CONT'D)
God dammit! You always do this--

Garth opens a cabinet and pulls out a Fruit Roll-Up. He unpeels and slowly eats it. The yelling continues.

BRETT (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Fuck me? Well, fuck you!

Brett walks back in the room and slams the phone down on the receiver.

Garth stares at him awkwardly. Brett looks towards him apologetically.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Sorry about... you know how your mom gets...

Garth stands motionless and emotionless.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Ever since the divorce... anyway,
how was your day?

Garth shrugs.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Are you're friends coming over?

Garth nods.

BRETT (CONT'D)
I'll order pizzas. Is three good?

Garth shrugs. Brett nods.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Three should be good. I'll order
them before I head out to the Toto
concert.

Brett walks to a cabinet and pulls out a bottle of vodka. He pours it in a tall glass and tops it off with Sunny D. Garth turns and goes out the back door.

BRETT (CONT'D)
 (frustrated)
 Nice talking to you. As always.

Garth takes a big sip of his drink. He puts the vodka away.

EXT. TREEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Garth makes his way to the tree and climbs the ladder. The treehouse is larger than a studio apartment. He opens the trap door in the floor and moves inside.

INT. TREEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The inside of the treehouse is a large open space. A curtain hangs on a rod in the center of the room. When closed, it divides the space in two, but it's currently open.

Along one wall is a series of shelves, mostly filled with board games and a few Hardy Boys books. On the floor below that is a box overflowing with toys. Next to it is a comic book long box.

A half dozen chairs sit around the room. Two bean bag chairs sit under a window opposite the shelves.

Garth locks the trap door below him. He goes to a small battery-operated boom box on the shelf and turns it on.

DISCO
 ...and experts say staying at a distance is your best course of action... Yeah, freaky, freaky stuff. Be safe out there. Now back to another all Bubble Gum Weekend on WROK!"

MUSIC PLAYS: "Oh Boy!" by Buddy Holly.

Garth smiles. He grabs a bookmarked Hardy Boys book and plops down in one of the bean bag chairs.

He sighs as he looks out the window into the forest.

He opens the Hardy Boys book and starts reading.

The CAMERA goes through the window and looks out over the forest, which goes on for miles and miles.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

MUSIC PLAYS: "98.6" by Keith.

Through the window, the sun is starting to set.

Bored, Garth puts the bookmark back in the book. He looks at his watch. It says 6:27.

He puts the book back on the shelf. Garth unlocks the trap door and climbs down the ladder.

EXT. GARTH MCLARNON'S BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Garth leaps off the ladder and drops three feet to the ground, doing a hero pose once he lands.

He stands up and runs for the house.

INT. GARTH'S HOUSE - LATER

Garth walks into the kitchen. He sees a mess on the counter: an empty vodka bottle, a half-full ice bin, an empty glass, a spilled bag of chips.

GARTH

Dad?

No response. Garth walks around, looking for his father.

GARTH (CONT'D)

Dad?

Nothing. Garth walks back into the kitchen. He sees \$40 and a note on the table. He picks up the note.

BRETT (V.O.)

For pizza. Be back late. Dad.

Garth crumples the paper and tosses it in the trash.

MUSIC PLAYS: "Cool Jerk" by the Capitols.

Ribbit comes into the room and pesters Garth. He looks and the dog's bowls and both are empty.

GARTH

You hungry, boy?

Ribbit wags his tail. Garth fills Ribbit's water bowl, then his food bowl. The dog chows down on the food.

Garth starts cleaning up his father's mess.

The phone rings and Garth answers.

GARTH (CONT'D)
Hello.

PETE (O.S.)
Is Garth there?

GARTH
It's me. Pete? Is that you?

PETE (O.S.)
Yeah, man. Hey, I got some bad news.

Garth frowns.

PETE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Not gonna make it tonight.

GARTH
What's wrong?

PETE (O.S.)
My parents are in the hospital.
They were attacked by a... bear or something.

GARTH
A bear?

PETE (O.S.)
Or something...

GARTH
You okay?

PETE (O.S.)
Yeah. I was in the shower when it happened. I never saw the bear.

GARTH
Or something... Okay man. I'll talk to you later.

Garth hangs up.

INT. GARTH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Garth stands in a sparkling clean kitchen, talking on the phone.

PIZZA GUY (O.S.)
So that's three large pepperoni and
sausage.

GARTH
Yes, three.

He nods.

PIZZA GUY (O.S.)
That'll be \$30. Be there in 30
minutes.

GARTH
Thank you.

He hangs up. Garth goes to the pantry and pulls out a case of
grape soda. He puts it in the fridge.

Donnie enters the kitchen.

DONNIE
What's up, dork?

MUSIC PLAYS: "Charlie Brown" by the Coasters.

Donnie musses Garth's hair. Garth shoves his hand away and
laughs.

GARTH
My friends are coming over to hang
out.

Donnie grins.

DONNIE
Dad know you're having a big party?

He laughs.

GARTH
It's NOT a party.

DONNIE
Yeah, right.

GARTH
Dad knows.

Donnie gets serious.

DONNIE
How was he?

GARTH

Dad?

DONNIE

Yeah. With the div--

GARTH

He was angry. Yelling a lot.

Donnie puts a hand on Garth's shoulder.

GARTH (CONT'D)

He got drunk. Went to the concert early.

Donnie pulls Garth into a hug.

GARTH (CONT'D)

I miss mom.

Donnie hugs him tighter.

DONNIE

I know. Me, too.

The doorbell rings. They break the hug.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

That must be one of your little friends.

Donnie playfully pushes Garth and they laugh.

INT. GARTH'S HOUSE, FOYER - SECONDS LATER

MUSIC PLAYS: "Rockin' Robin" by Bobby Day.

Garth opens the door to reveal Lyle. He carries a comic book short box.

LYLE

Sorry I'm early.

Garth chuckles.

GARTH

You're always early. Nerd.

Lyle laughs.

GARTH (CONT'D)

You brought the collection? Nice.

He nods towards the comics.

GARTH (CONT'D)
You gonna let me read 'em this
time.

LYLE
If you follow the rules. You HAVE
to wash and fully dry your hands--

GARTH
What? My hands are clean...

LYLE
You're not getting pizza sauce on
my number ones...

They continue to go back-and-forth as they walk into the
kitchen.

EXT. GARTH'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MUSIC PLAYS: "Little Bitty Pretty One" by Thurston Harris.

Garth and Lyle both drink Sunny D.

LYLE
You finally gonna make your move?

Garth shrugs.

LYLE (CONT'D)
You've been into Kara since 3rd
grade.

GARTH
I know, I know...

LYLE
Then what is it?

GARTH
I... I... If she doesn't like me, I
don't want to, you know--

LYLE
Be known as the fifth grade
creeper?

GARTH
Exactly.

The doorbell rings.

DONNIE (O.S.)
You got it?

GARTH
(yelling)
Yeah.

He heads towards the front door. Lyle follows.

INT. GARTH'S HOUSE, FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Garth opens the door. The PIZZA DELIVERY GUY stands there holding three pizzas.

The girls have arrived: Kara, Celeste and Celeste's older sister, IRMA, 14, WF.

MUSIC PLAYS: "Hey! Baby" by Bruce Channel.

GARTH
Hi.

KARA
Hey.

LYLE
Hi.

IRMA
Hi.

CELESTE
Hello.

PIZZA DELIVERY GUY
Somebody gonna pay for this?

Garth hands the Pizza Delivery Guy the two twenties.

GARTH
Just give me \$10 back.

He hands Garth the pizzas.

PIZZA DELIVERY GUY
Thanks.

He hands Garth his change and leaves. The girls follow Garth inside.

INT. GARTH'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Garth carries the pizzas. Lyle carries the short box of comics.

GARTH
Donnie! Pizza's here.

Donnie walks in, carrying a katana. He's followed by ARNOLD, WM, 17. Arnold wears a Philadelphia Eagles T-shirt and camo shorts.

LYLE
What's that for?

Donnie pretends to chop the pizza boxes.

DONNIE
Gotta cut the pizzas with something.

GARTH
Grab the sodas?

Donnie points the katana at Arnold.

DONNIE
Grab the sodas

Arnold does.

LYLE
(under his breath)
What's he doing here?

Garth shrugs.

ARNOLD
You ladies ready to party?

He holds up the sodas. They mumble half-hearted words of agreement.

GARTH
Let's go.

Garth leads the way outside. Lyle and the girls follow quickly. Donnie and Arnold bring up the rear.

EXT. GARTH'S BACK YARD - SECONDS LATER

Garth climbs up the ladder and opens the trap door. Irma hands him the pizzas. Arnold hands him the sodas. Everyone follows him inside.

INT. TREEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

MUSIC PLAYS: "Hang on Sloopy" by the McCoys.

Everyone sits around finishing their pizza and drinking soda. They're happy.

DONNIE

Before it gets dark, I have a surprise.

He goes over to the shelf and grabs a box of balloons.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Y'all rest a bit. Then it's time for a good old-fashioned water balloon fight!

A mix of cheers and jeers.

IRMA

Are you serious?

KARA

What? It's fun.

IRMA

Ugh. Count me out.

GARTH

(to Kara)
You in?

KARA

Heck yeah!

Garth grins. Donnie takes the balloons through the trap door.

EXT. GARTH'S BACK YARD - LATER

Garth, Kara and Lyle stand before one plastic folding table. Donnie, Arnold and Celeste stand before another. Sitting on each table are buckets filled with water balloons, full enough to burst on contact, but empty enough to handle without bursting. Irma stays in the treehouse, high and dry.

GARTH
(to Kara)
You ready?

KARA
(grins)
Are you?

Garth laughs.

DONNIE
On your mark...

Everyone grabs a water balloon and readies to throw at the other team.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Get set...

Kara and Garth exchange a smile.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Throw!

MUSIC PLAYS: "The Tra La La Song (One Banana Two Banana)" by the Banana Splits.

Donnie nails Garth in the chest, soaking him. The water is cold. He screams.

Kara hits Donnie in the face. Arnold throws at Kara, but he's a bad throw and she ducks.

Lyle nails Arnold in the face. He stumbles backwards and falls on his ass.

Garth shakes off the cold water and throws at Donnie, barely missing.

Kara throws again, hitting Celeste. Celeste returns the throw but misses badly.

Donnie throws at Garth, but misses. Garth returns the throw and hits Donnie in the legs.

Lyle throws at Arnold again, once again nailing him in the face.

KARA
(to Lyle)
Good job.

Lyle grins. Arnold grabs another balloon, but he fumbles it. It hits the grass and breaks, splashing his feet.

Donnie reaches for a balloon, turning his back on his opponents. Kara nails him in the back. He throws his hands up in surrender.

DONNIE
That's enough! I'm done.

Donnie runs towards the back door. Lyle, Kara and Garth smile at each other. They all throw at Arnold. They all hit him. He falls on his back, giving up.

Celeste makes her last throw, which falls well short of hitting anyone. She joins Lyle, Kara and Garth in laughter.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

MUSIC PLAYS: "Good Morning Starshine" by Oliver.

The sun is nearly down. Donnie has changed his clothes and hands out towels.

ARNOLD
You got a shirt I can borrow?
Forgot to bring any.

Donnie hands him a towel.

DONNIE
In my bedroom. You know where they
are.

Arnold climbs through the trap door.

Garth pulls off his wet shirt and tosses it in the corner. He turns to grab a towel and comes face-to-face with Kara.

She smiles. He smiles back, somewhat embarrassed. She very clearly eyes him up and her smile grows. Garth blushes.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Hey! This is a family treehouse!

Donnie grabs the curtain that divides the room and starts pulling it closed.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Boys on this side, girls on that
side.

Everyone complies. He pulls the curtain fully closed. Everyone dries off and changes clothes.

MUSIC PLAYS: "Short Shorts" by the Royal Teens.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

The curtain is open again. Everyone is dry and dressed. Garth finishes drying his hair. Arnold is back, eating more pizza. Wet clothes and towels hang out windows or lay crumpled in corners.

KARA

That was fun, what's next?

ARNOLD

Anything that doesn't involve throwing. Y'all are too good.

Laughter.

GARTH

It was them. Not me.

He points to Lyle and Kara.

KARA

Baseball.

Lyle shrugs.

LYLE

I'm just a naturally talented athlete.

He very clearly isn't. Everyone laughs, Lyle included.

Kara turns to Garth.

KARA

I could teach you, if you like.

GARTH

Ha ha, I'm not that bad.

KARA

For a boy.

Everyone laughs.

GARTH

We could play a game? We have a bunch.

IRMA

What you got?

Garth stands up and walks to the game shelf.

GARTH
We've got Mon--

IRMA
I hate Monopoly!

GARTH
(taken aback)
Well then.

Laughter. Arnold starts playing with a pocket knife. Celeste stares at him, a little afraid. Irma notices Celeste's fear.

IRMA
What kind of loser carries a pocket knife?

Arnold frowns and puts the knife away.

DONNIE
(grinning)
We've got Mystery Date. You like that one?

IRMA
(under her breath)
I'll play Mystery Date with you.

KARA
You guys play Mystery Date a lot?

Laughter.

DONNIE
Sure. I'm very comfortable with who I am. Play all the time.

Everyone laughs except Arnold, who takes it too seriously. And somewhat homophobically.

GARTH
It was our mom's. We don't play it THAT much.

More laughter.

GARTH (CONT'D)
For real, though, we've got Trouble, Operation, Chutes and Ladders, Strat-O-Matic... uh... Spirograph--

ARNOLD
Technically, that's not a game...

GARTH

Uh... Rock 'Em Sock 'Em Robots...

Irma walks over towards the game shelf to look closer.

IRMA

These are all baby games. Don't you have anything for grown-ups?

Garth shrugs and walks away. Irma sees Space Tilt, a wooden maze game, and starts playing it. It's too hard, though, and she gives up.

Kara walks over to the toy box and starts rooting around. She pulls out a View Master and starts flipping through the slides.

ARNOLD

We could play strip poker?

IRMA

Ewww.

Irma walks as far away from Arnold as she can.

Kara pulls out a Pet Rock and laughs. She tosses aside a Stretch Armstrong, an Etch-a-Sketch, and a few G.I. Joe's.

Arnold finds a stack of Playboys and starts flipping through one. Celeste looks over his shoulder furtively. She likes what she sees.

DONNIE

I've got Trivial Pursuit Junior inside.

ARNOLD

Ooh, yeah. Let's play that!

No one else is enthused.

DONNIE

You sure? Trivial Pursuit?

GARTH

Nah.

DONNIE

Okay.

Kara settles on the hula hoop. She tentatively steps into it and tries to spin it. She fails and is embarrassed.

She looks around awkwardly, but no one notices.

She tries again. This time she gets going and is able to keep it going and going.

Garth watches, impressed.

GARTH
You're good.

Kara smiles, taking the compliment.

KARA
(modestly)
Thanks.

Celeste watches Kara, too. She can't keep from smiling.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

Arnold plays with Donnie's katana. He swings it back and forth, a little too close to other people.

DONNIE
Gimme that!

He carefully takes it from Arnold.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
It's not a toy.

ARNOLD
Looks like a toy to me.

Donnie puts the katana in the back corner, far away from anyone. Arnold plays with his pocket knife instead.

Lyle sits on one of the chairs, flipping through the comics in his short box. This draws Arnold's attention. He puts the pocket knife away.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
What you got there?

LYLE
My collection.

ARNOLD
Collection of what?

LYLE
It's all the first issues of the
Marvel series. A complete set.

ARNOLD
Wow, can I take a look?

Lyle is hesitant.

LYLE
Sure, but don't open any of them.

Arnold takes the box and sits down next to Lyle, who looks on apprehensively. He flips through the comics, revealing: Amazing Spider-Man #1, Avengers #1, Captain America #100, Daredevil #1, Doctor Strange #169, Fantastic Four #1, Incredible Hulk #1, Iron Man #1, Nick Fury Agent of SHIELD #1, Sgt. Fury #1, Silver Surfer #1, Sub-Mariner #1 and X-Men #1.

As Arnold flips through the comics, which are stored in plastic bags. Lyle watches with apprehension.

ARNOLD
It's not a complete collection.

Lyle takes the box back in a huff.

LYLE
What are you talking about? Of course it is. There all there.

Arnold shakes his head.

ARNOLD
No, like you have Amazing Spider-Man #1, but you don't have Amazing Fantasy #15. That's Spidey's first appearance. That's the one you should have.

LYLE
I...

He frowns.

ARNOLD
And you don't have Tales to Astonish... Journey Into Mystery... Tales of Suspense... Those are--

Lyle is sad. Irma notices.

IRMA
(to Arnold)
Do you have a complete collection?

Donnie laughs.

DONNIE
No, he only has three of 'em.

Lyle smiles. Donnie climbs down the ladder.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Be right back.

IRMA
So maybe you should quit picking on
the kid who has the most complete
collection I've ever seen.

Arnold frowns. Lyle grins.

LYLE
You read comics?

Irma smiles.

IRMA
Yep. I like the X-Men. Jean's my
favorite.

LYLE
I really like Hank.

IRMA
He is pretty awesome.

Lyle closes the short box and sets it next to Donnie's
katana.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

Donnie climbs back into the treehouse carrying a bottle of
vodka. Arnold is playing around with a telescope.

DONNIE
Who wants a drink?

Arnold and Irma raise their hands. Donnie pours them drinks
and one for himself.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Garth.

Garth looks at Kara. She smiles.

GARTH
Yeah, but only a little one.

He looks to Kara again.

GARTH (CONT'D)

You?

KARA

Maybe a little one.

DONNIE

Little drinks for little kids.

He pours them.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Lyle?

Lyle shakes his head.

LYLE

You know i don't drink that crap.

DONNIE

(to Celeste)

You?

CELESTE

No. I'm too young.

Donnie shrugs.

DONNIE

Suit yourselves.

Donnie holds up his drink.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Cheers!

The others toast as well. They take a drink. Donnie and Arnold chug theirs. Kara sips nervously, as does Garth. He swallows wrong and starts coughing. Kara laughs and pats him on the back.

Donnie refills his and Arnold's cups. Both take another sip. Donnie puts the bottle of vodka on the shelf. Arnold goes back to playing around with the telescope.

He spins it towards the closest neighbor's house.

ARNOLD

Holy shit!

DONNIE

What is it?

Arnold looks up with a too-big grin.

ARNOLD

I think your neighbors are having
an orgy.

Donnie grabs the telescope.

DONNIE

Let me see that.

He peers through the telescope for several seconds. Then he
grins.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

They damned sure are.

Donnie makes no move to relinquish the telescope. Arnold gets
frustrated.

ARNOLD

Hey! I found them! I can't see!

DONNIE

Garth, get the binoculars.

Garth gets up and gets three pairs of binoculars from the
shelf. Irma rushes to him and grabs one.

Arnold holds out his hand. Garth hands him a small, crappy
pair of binoculars.

ARNOLD

These are terrible.

GARTH

Bring your own next time.

Arnold frowns, then uses the crappy binoculars. Garth turns
to Kara.

GARTH (CONT'D)

You can share with me.

Kara smiles.

DONNIE

Dirk and Bitty, at it again.

IRMA

Dirk and Bitty?

DONNIE

The couple who actually lives
there. They're bisexual swingers.

KARA
They do this a lot?

Donnie and Garth turn to face her.

DONNIE AND GARTH
(simultaneously)
Yeah!

Donnie turns back to the telescope. Garth hands his binoculars to Kara. She looks on eagerly.

Arnold looks away.

ARNOLD
There's gay stuff going on.

IRMA
Bisexual.

Arnold offers the binoculars to Garth.

GARTH
Give 'em to Lyle. That's up his alley.

LYLE
I... uh...

He grabs the binoculars and dives in.

ARNOLD
(to Donnie)
You watching the gay stuff?

DONNIE
Dude, there's lesbian stuff going down on the other side of the room.

Arnold frowns. Irma hands her binoculars to Celeste, who moves closer, to see better.

Irma moves closer to Donnie, looking over his shoulder. He turns and sees her. She smiles. He returns the smile, then goes back to the telescope.

ARNOLD
(to Irma)
Are you girls sisters?

IRMA
Celeste is my sister. Kara is her BFF.

GARTH
You thought they were all sisters?

Arnold shrugs. Garth laughs.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

Garth takes Kara by the hand and pulls her towards the back window.

GARTH
You can see the stars over the forest.

KARA
And the meteor shower?

GARTH
Best seat in the house.

Arnold and Celeste follow. Garth pulls the curtain closed for privacy. Garth and Kara sit on one side of the curtain. The others gather on the other side. Both groups can see out the back window, where the stars are bright.

Garth puts his arm around Kara's shoulders.

MUSIC PLAYS: "Put Your Head On My Shoulder" by Paul Anka.

Kara points at a shooting star.

KARA
A shooting star! Make a wish.

She grins. He closes his eyes and makes the wish.

KARA (CONT'D)
What did you wish for?

GARTH
I'm not supposed to tell you.

KARA
If you tell me, it might come true.

He can't resist her smile.

GARTH
I wished for a kiss.

KARA
I thought so.

She leans in and kisses him. No tongue.

They break the kiss. Both are happy.

KARA (CONT'D)

Look!

She points to the sky. It's the meteor shower.

GARTH

That's a lot.

KARA

Crazy.

A meteor flies low enough over their heads that they hear it ROAR. It crashes in the forest, not too far away.

Donnie yanks the curtain back.

DONNIE

That's not even a mile away.

GARTH

We gotta go see it.

KARA

Yeah.

IRMA

Let's go.

Everyone rushes for the trap door except Lyle.

LYLE

I'm gonna hang back. I'm not the hiking type.

ARNOLD

Suit yourself. Maybe when I touch the meteor, I'll get super powers!

LYLE

Maybe it'll explode.

Everyone laughs as they leave.

Lyle plops down in a bean bag chair and starts playing Angry Birds on his phone.

EXT. GARTH'S BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

MUSIC PLAYS: "The Ballad Of Davy Crockett" by Bill Hayes.

The forest is thick, with little light penetrating the canopy. The kids follow a thin, winding path through the woods.

CELESTE

It's really dark out here.

ARNOLD

Are you scared?

CELESTE

N-no.

Donnie turns and glares at Arnold. He leaves the younger girl alone.

Garth and Kara hold hands. Irma walks beside them. She points at their clasped hands.

IRMA

This is new, huh?

Kara grins.

GARTH

It's a good night.

Kara briefly leans her head on Garth's shoulder.

IRMA

I approve.

Kara giggles.

DONNIE

Look!

Some of the treetops are on fire.

IRMA

We must be close.

CELESTE

Are we safe?

IRMA

Stick close to me.

Celeste moves closer to her sister.

As they move forward, there's more fire and many trees are snapped or sheared off. They come to a mostly-new clearing. In the middle of an impact crater is an egg-shaped space rock, glowing red with heat.

ARNOLD
What the hell is that?

IRMA
A meteorite?

KARA
Is it radioactive?

DONNIE
No way to know for sure, but it is
super hot.

GARTH
Stay away from it. It's definitely
dangerous.

The meteorite emits a soft WHISTLE. It grows in volume.

CELESTE
What's that sound?

IRMA
It's coming from the meteor.

Donnie blocks the others, forcing them to back away from the
meteorite.

GARTH
It's getting louder.

DONNIE
Back up, it can't be safe.

CELESTE
We shouldn't be here.

The WHISTLE gets louder. Celeste covers her ears.

GARTH
Let's go!

He and Kara start moving away. Celeste follows.

The meteorite starts cracking. Donnie sees it.

DONNIE
Run!

He turns and bolts. Arnold and Irma do, too.

They round a bend in the path and can no longer see the
meteorite.

That's when it EXPLODES with a loud bang. A shockwave blasts the kids, knocking everyone down. A piece of rock debris hits Arnold in the back, shredding his shirt and drawing blood.

Donnie helps Arnold and Irma to their feet. The others get up and start running again.

A loud ROAR echoes through the forest, coming from where the meteorite landed. It sounds unearthly and everyone stops to look in that direction. Donnie's face is stricken with fear.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Run! Something's coming!

The audible sound of some beast galloping towards them. Everybody runs.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Go to the treehouse!

GARTH
Why?

DONNIE
The house is locked. And the keys are in the treehouse.

GARTH
Fuck!

They round another bend in the path and can see the treehouse.

Garth's house has floodlights on the side and in the back. It's almost as bright as daylight close to the house.

The stampeding sound grows louder. The beast ROARS again.

Donnie looks back and he sees the alien BEAST. It's as large as a bear, but taller and leaner, with more muscle. It is covered in shaggy dark blue fur. Its eyes are fully white, no irises. It has four tusks made of black bone, two on the top, two on the bottom. It has row after row of razor-sharp teeth.

Donnie's horrified.

DONNIE
Run! Run! Run!

Garth looks back and sees the beast. It opens it's maw widely. The teeth and eyes reflect the moonlight.

Garth turns back towards the treehouse. He stumbles and bumps into Kara, knocking her down.

He looks back and makes eye contact to Kara. She screams in fear.

Garth turns and runs. He reaches the treehouse and quickly climbs the ladder.

KARA

Garth!

Irma and Donnie help Kara up. Celeste reaches the ladder and starts climbing. Arnold follows quickly behind her.

The other three reach the tree. They can't see the beast, but they can hear it.

The others help Kara up the ladder. Irma follows.

INT. TREEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Kara emerges from the trap door. Garth extends a hand to help her up, but she slaps it away.

KARA

Stay away from me!

Garth frowns.

EXT. GARTH'S BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Donnie puts his foot on the first rung of the ladder.

He hears the beast roar and looks up.

Donnie sees the beast charging at him.

He rushes up the ladder. The beast reaches the tree, but Donnie is inside. He slams and locks the trap door.

The beast rears back, but it can't reach the treehouse and it can't climb. It's front paws land on the tree, leaving scratches.

It ROARS again.

From the side of the house, Ribbit BARKS aggressively at the beast.

Everyone looks out the treehouse window to see the beast.

IRMA

What the hell is that?

It drops down from the tree and turns to face Ribbit. The dog BARKS uncontrollably.

The dog and beast run at each other.

The beast clamps its jaws on Ribbit, crushing and killing the dog.

Garth and Donnie scream.

The beast tosses the dead dog to the ground.

It turns to face the treehouse.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

The kids sit around the treehouse, faces wracked with fear. They can hear the beast pacing back and forth and growling outside. Notably, Kara sits far away from Garth. She glares at him.

IRMA

What the hell are we gonna do?

CELESTE

Call the police?

Murmurs of assent. Celeste pulls out her phone and tries to get it to work. It's dead.

LYLE

What the hell is that thing?

Donnie tries his phone. It's dead, too.

DONNIE

Can somebody call the cops? My phone is dead.

IRMA

Mine, too.

Arnold, Garth and Kara's phones are all dead, as well.

DONNIE

Garth? Yours dead?

GARTH

Yeah. It shouldn't be. It was fully charged when the pizzas arrived and I haven't been using it.

DONNIE
So, is everybody's phone dead?

A chorus of yesses.

LYLE
Mine's working.

IRMA
But everybody who went to the
meteor?

Nods.

ARNOLD
The wave that knocked us over
must've been an EMP.

CELESTE
A what?

ARNOLD
An electromagnetic pulse.

Celeste still doesn't understand. Arnold offers nothing else.

IRMA
(to Celeste)
A wave of energy that breaks
electronics.

Celeste nods.

DONNIE
Lyle. Call the cops, please?

LYLE
I only have 5% left.

DONNIE
Then call the cops quickly. We're
trapped.

Lyle holds out the phone.

LYLE
You do it.

Donnie grabs the phone and walks to the far side of the
treehouse. He dials 9-1-1.

Garth walks to Kara. She turns away. He walks away.

Donnie comes back. He hands the phone back to Lyle.

DONNIE

The bad news is Lyle's phone died
and we're cut off.

Groans.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

The good news is the cops are on
their way!

Cheers. The beast ROARS in response.

They sit silently. Afraid.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

Kara plays with the telescope, looking at the swinger
couple's house.

Dirk walks onto his back deck, which is well lit. He's
dressed in only his briefs and a bathrobe. He carries a tall
glass of Scotch on the rocks.

KARA

You gotta see this. Dirk's on his
deck!

Donnie grabs binoculars and confirms Dirk is outside.

DONNIE

Shit!

Donnie rushes to the window. He waves his hands and starts
yelling.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Dirk! Dirk!

The angle is bad and Donnie isn't loud enough. Dirk doesn't
hear him.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Guys! Everyone! I need your help.
We have to get Mr. Griffin's
attention. That thing's gonna get
him!

Everyone gathers around Donnie. They start yelling and waving
and calling his name.

Dirk takes a sip of his drink. The kids catch his eye.

DIRK

What?

DONNIE

Get inside! There's a monster!

DIRK

What? I can't--

The beast leaps from the ground onto the deck and bites Dirk in half. Blood splashes the deck.

The kids scream.

Dirk's glass of alcohol lands on the beast's back. It howls in agony as steam rises from its back. Arnold very clearly sees this through the telescope.

The beast smashes through the back door of the house.

Seconds later, Bitty screams.

The beast comes back outside, carrying Bitty's leg in its mouth.

The kids scream again. Most of them move away from the window. Garth and Arnold linger.

The beast tosses the leg up in the air and swallows it.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

Donnie seizes the moment. He grabs the house keys from the shelf. He backhand slaps Arnold on the chest and heads for the trap door.

DONNIE

Come with me.

Donnie starts climbing down. Arnold follows.

GARTH

(concerned)

Where are you going?

DONNIE

Making a break for the house before
it gets back.

About halfway down, Donnie jumps, getting to the ground quicker. Arnold doesn't jump until the bottom rung. Donnie's at the back door before Arnold reaches the ground.

GARTH

You'll never make it in time!

The beast stampedes towards them, shaking the ground as it comes. Arnold pulls out his pocket knife and holds it ready to attack.

It leaps and smashes into Arnold, knocking him to the ground. He stabs the beast with the knife. It draws blood and the beast HOWLS. Celeste sees this and cheers.

The beast SNARLS at Arnold and he's too afraid to move.

The beast turns to face Donnie and SNARLS at him. He hesitates. The beast rushes at him and he dodges, the beast smashes into the back door. Donnie runs for the ladder.

DONNIE

(to Arnold)

Get up!

Arnold struggles to get to his feet.

INT. TREEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Irma notices Donnie's sword in the corner.

IRMA

Why didn't your brother take his sword?

GARTH

He doesn't know how to use it. He's a poseur.

Irma frowns.

EXT. GARTH'S BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Donnie reaches the ladder and starts climbing.

Arnold manages to get to one knee. He looks up at Donnie.

The beast bites Arnold's head off.

Screams from the treehouse.

INT. TREEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Donnie scrambles inside. He slams the trap door shut and locks it.

Irma watches Arnold get eaten. She turns to face the others.

IRMA
Arnold's dead.

Celeste and Kara sit crying.

Garth tries to comfort Kara, but she turns away.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

Irma walks across the treehouse to the boombox.

IRMA
This thing work? It has batteries?

GARTH
It was working earlier.

Irma turns it on and starts tuning through the stations. She finds classical music... NPR talking about the budget ceiling... oldies... light rock... country... alt rock... finally she comes upon a news report.

ANNOUNCER
More reports of meteors crashing down across the city, country and globe. Authorities have no comment at this time. Law enforcement officials say the huge spike in reports of dog attacks could be related to the meteors. No further details were given other than a warning to stay inside and away from any wild dogs or other large animals. The governor is expected to make a statement at 8 p.m. Now on to sports, where Justin Verlander had a no-hitter going until a meteor--

Irma turns off the radio.

DONNIE
So this isn't just happening to us?

LYLE
I hope the police get here soon.

Garth walks over to Kara.

GARTH
Can we talk?

KARA
Are you gonna stop pestering me if
we talk?

GARTH
(wounded)
Y-yes.

She grabs his hand and pulls him away from the other kids.
She closes the curtain and turns to face Garth.

KARA
What?

Garth is afraid, he's never seen her angry before.

GARTH
I know I fucked up.

She laughs sharply.

GARTH (CONT'D)
I was scared.

KARA
We were all scared.

GARTH
I'm 10.

KARA
You're 7 months younger than me.

GARTH
I... I...

KARA
Quit with the excuses.

GARTH
I'm sorry. I just--

KARA
You knocked me down!

Garth looks down in shame.

GARTH
(softly)
I didn't mean to.

KARA
You kept running.

Garth fights to hold back tears.

KARA (CONT'D)
I don't hate you.

Garth brightens up a bit.

KARA (CONT'D)
I just don't like you like THAT
anymore.

Garth looks down again. Kara walks away.

EXT. GARTH'S HOUSE - LATER

Henry and Scully ride up to the front of the house on bikes. They hop off and let the bikes crash to the ground. They walk to the front door.

Henry rings the doorbell. They wait but nobody comes. Henry pushes it again.

SCULLY
Maybe they're not home?

Henry scoffs.

HENRY
Of course they're home. Nobody
skips their own party.

Henry backs up so he can see over the roof of the house. He spots the treehouse, which is easily visible in the floodlights. He walks toward the side of the house.

HENRY (CONT'D)
C'mon, they're out back.

Scully follows.

INT. TREEHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Irma is the first to see Henry and Scully.

IRMA
Some kids are in the yard.

The others crowd the window to see.

DONNIE
Who are they?

LYLE
Henry and Scully.

GARTH
Jerks from our school.

KARA
They're about to be dead jerks from
our school.

Everyone starts waving and making noise.

EXT. GARTH'S BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

MUSIC PLAYS: "Be Bop Baby" by Ricky Nelson.

Henry and Scully arrive in the backyard to the sounds of everyone in the treehouse trying to get their attention. Scully points at the treehouse.

SCULLY
Look.

HENRY
What do those losers--

The beast rushes across the back yard and knocks Scully off his feet.

GARTH
Run!

KARA
Henry! The treehouse!

The beast bites Scully's head off. Henry runs for the treehouse.

The beast notices him running and scrambles to its feet, giving chase.

Henry makes it to the ladder.

The trap door flies open. Kara reaches a hand out.

GARTH
Hurry!

Henry climbs as fast as he can.

The beast smashes into the trunk of the tree, just missing Henry.

Kara helps pull Henry inside. Garth slams the trap door and locks it.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

Everyone looks incredulously at Henry. He stands, hands on hips, breathing hard.

GARTH
What are you doing here?

Henry shrugs.

HENRY
We told you we were coming.

GARTH
You happy now?

KARA
Scully is dead!

Henry walks to the window.

HENRY
How do you know he's dead?

IRMA
The monster bit his head off. Of course he's dead.

Henry looks out the window and confirms Scully is dead. The beast eats of his remains.

DONNIE
Hey, man... Henry, is it?

Henry nods.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Nice to meet you. You have a phone?

Henry checks his pockets, pats himself down. Nothing.

HENRY
I do... I did... I don't know--

Celeste points to the ground, near the beast.

CELESTE
There it is. You dropped it.

Everyone crowds the window to see the phone.

DONNIE

Dammit.

KARA

Aren't the cops already on their way?

GARTH

Let's just wait for the police.

Garth smiles at Kara, trying to score points for agreeing with her. She looks away. Garth frowns.

IRMA

We should check the radio again.

She turns it on to static.

She tunes to another station. Static.

She tries another and another and another.

Static. Static. Static.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

Henry paces back and forth.

HENRY

I thought you said the cops were coming. Where are they?

DONNIE

THEY said they were coming.

HENRY

I'm tired of waiting.

IRMA

Maybe they're helping other people. Against the monsters.

CELESTE

Monsters? What makes you think there's more than one?

Irma walks to the back window and gestures to the sky. The meteor shower is in full effect.

IRMA

We saw the monster come out of a meteor.

DONNIE

And there must be hundreds of
meteors.

GARTH

They weren't just here. I heard on
the radio--

DONNIE

There must be thousands--

IRMA

Hundreds of thousands--

CELESTE

Maybe millions.

They sit quietly with that possibility for a few seconds.

HENRY

Then why haven't we heard about the
monsters?

LYLE

We have.

HENRY

When?

GARTH

Pete said his parents were attacked
by a bear.

DONNIE

The radio keeps mentioning dog
attacks.

LYLE

Did you see how many people skipped
school today?

IRMA

The most I've ever seen.

CELESTE

So that's why the police aren't
here yet? Are they still coming?

No one answers.

HENRY

I'm tired of waiting.

He moves around from window to window.

KARA
What are you doing?

DONNIE
Calm down, kid.

Henry points out the window in the direction of the house.

HENRY
There. The tire swing.

DONNIE
What?

HENRY
I'll get the rope and swing to the
roof of the house.

KARA
Then what?

Henry points.

HENRY
I can go into the attic through
there.

They all look to see the door to the attic.

KARA
No way you can make it.

HENRY
No way I'm staying here.

GARTH
How are you even gonna get the
rope? It's way too far away.

IRMA
He's gonna have to climb out on the
limb.

DONNIE
No way.

Henry climbs through the window and onto the branch. He loses
balance and almost falls. Donnie helps steady him.

HENRY
Thanks.

Henry sits still for a while.

GARTH
What are you doing?

HENRY
You wanna do it? Don't rush me.

After a while, Henry takes a deep breath and crawls out further and further along the branch.

MUSIC PLAYS: "Palisades Park" by Freddy Cannon.

He's at the swing, but he doesn't know what to do next.

HENRY (CONT'D)
What do I do now? I can't pull it up and carry the tire.

LYLE
You should come back. This was a bad idea.

IRMA
Swing it.

HENRY
What?

DONNIE
She's right. We can catch it if you get it swinging back and forth.

HENRY
Okay.

Henry pulls the rope a bit. He throws it away from the treehouse. It goes a short distance and swings back.

Henry pulls on the rope. He's strong, so it works. It starts swinging higher and higher.

CELESTE
It's working!

The beast sees what's happening and gets interested.

LYLE
Uh-oh.

KARA
What?

LYLE
Look!

He points at the beast, which follows the tire back and forth. It raises up and bats the tire, sending it higher.

The beast sniffs at the tire. It doesn't like the smell and loses interest. It lays down, keeping an eye on the action.

The tire swings close to the treehouse. Donnie reaches for it and almost catches it.

DONNIE
Garth! Help me.

Garth rushes to the window.

GARTH
What?

DONNIE
When it comes back, push the tire
as hard as you can, it'll come back
higher next time.

Garth isn't sure.

GARTH
O-okay.

The tire comes back. Donnie and Garth give it a big shove. It works and the tire swings away faster and farther. Henry hangs on tightly to the branch as it wobbles.

The tire swings back towards Garth. He reaches out with his hand and wobbles a bit. Donnie steadies him and the pull they tire as close as they can.

DONNIE
We got it! Come back.

Henry starts scooting backwards, moving slower than before.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Hand me the katana.

Irma is closest. She picks it up and brings it to Donnie.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
(to Garth)
Hold the tire.

Garth takes ahold of the tire. Donnie keeps the rope and uses the katana to cut it as close to the tire as possible.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
(to Garth)
Toss that.

Garth sets the tire against the wall.

Henry climbs back into the treehouse. Celeste hugs him.

CELESTE
Good job.

Henry's a bit embarrassed.

HENRY
Thanks.

Donnie hands him the rope. Henry takes it reluctantly.

DONNIE
You sure about this?

Henry takes a second.

HENRY
Yeah.

Donnie nods.

DONNIE
Okay. Hold on.

Donnie walks to the shelf and pours Henry a shot of vodka and pours one for himself. He hands the shot to Henry and raises a toast.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Cheers! And good luck.

HENRY
Cheers!

They down the shots and Donnie takes Henry's empty cup.

GARTH
Be careful.

KARA
Yeah.

Henry climbs up onto the window, holding the rope straight out in front of him.

The beast sees this. It gets up and walks underneath Henry, looking up.

HENRY

Fuck!

IRMA

Don't look down.

Henry nods. He looks up and focuses on the house. He fights back the tears in his eyes.

MUSIC PLAYS: "The Loco-Motion" by Little Eva.

Henry swings forth. The beast follows him, expectantly.

It looks like Henry is going to swing low enough that the beast can grab him, but the rope swings up again.

LYLE

He's not gonna make it.

Everyone stares, wracked with fear.

The rope is too low and Henry smashes into the roof of the house at chest-level.

He tries to hold onto the roof, but there's nothing to grab ahold of. He slips off the roof and crashes to the ground, twisting his ankle. He screams.

The beast is on him instantly, tearing Henry apart. The kids in the treehouse look away in disgust and fear.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

MUSIC PLAYS: "Tossin' and Turnin'" by Bobby Lewis.

Everyone sits in quiet contemplation. The weight of their situation has finally sunk in.

GARTH

Is there any food left?

IRMA

A few slices.

GARTH

Anything to drink?

DONNIE

Just vodka. We got a lot of that.

KARA

Those supplies won't last long.

CELESTE
What are we gonna do?

LYLE
We're probably gonna die.

GARTH
Lyle!

IRMA
Don't say that!

Irma hugs Celeste.

KARA
What are we gonna do?

No one has an answer. They look at each other, face-to-face, searching for hope, but finding none.

Garth walks over to Donnie and talks in lower tones.

GARTH
What about dad?

DONNIE
(puzzled)
What about dad?

GARTH
He's gonna come home and that thing...

DONNIE
I don't know. We can try to warn him. Maybe we could find a way to signal him. Maybe light a fire?

GARTH
Won't he just come running? We can't tell him anything.

DONNIE
I don't know.

LYLE
Who's to say there isn't a monster wherever he is?

The brothers exchange a look of fear.

KARA
The cops!

GARTH
What about them?

She points toward the front yard. Two police cars, red and blue lights flashing, pull into the front yard and park.

KARA
The cops.

Faces fill with hope for the first time.

EXT. GARTH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

MUSIC PLAYS: "Alley-Oop" by the Hollywood Argyles.

Officer JACKSON, WM, 40s, gets out of the driver's side of the first police car. He holds a metal clipboard and carries a sidearm.

Officer TORV, WF, 30s, gets out of the passenger side. She carries a shotgun and her regular sidearm.

Officer ANDERSON, BF, 30s, gets out of the driver's side of the second police car. She carries a tranquilizer dart pistol and her regular sidearm

Officer DAVID, BM, 20s, gets out of the passenger side. He's armed with a taser and his regular sidearm.

JACKSON
Okay. Let's be careful. The call described a "monster." I'm sure it's just a bear or dog, but whatever it is, it's gonna be dangerous.

DAVID
Yes, sir.

JACKSON
Tranq, then tase, then bullets. We clear?

Nods and murmurs of assent.

JACKSON (CONT'D)
Then let's go.

Jackson leads the officers to the front door. He rings the doorbell.

No answer.

JACKSON (CONT'D)

Let's--

From behind the house, they hear the roar of the beast.

ANDERSON

Back yard!

Jackson leads them around the side of the house.

JACKSON

Spread out. Far enough to give this
damned thing four--

The beast comes running towards them. Anderson kneels and aims the tranq gun. She steadies, then fires. Direct hit.

The beast briefly slows down, then resumes charging. It rushes at Torv.

David fires the taser and hits. It has no effect.

The beast leaps into the air, yanking the taser from David's hand.

David and Jackson pull their sidearms.

The beast's massive mouth envelops the shotgun and Torv's arms, one up to the elbow. Sinking its teeth deep into her arms.

Torv manages to pull the trigger inside the beast's mouth. It seems to have no effect.

Anderson unloads all of the tranq darts into the beast, then pulls her sidearm.

The beast rips Torv's arms off and she screams. The other officers unload their guns at the beast. The bullets have little effect.

INT. TREEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

As the tallest person in the treehouse, Donnie is the only one who can lean out the window far enough to see what's happening with the cops.

DONNIE

It got the first cop. Woman with a
shotgun.

They hear Torv's screams and the gunfire.

CELESTE
How many are there?

DONNIE
There were four. Now there are
three.

Donnie frowns.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Two.

Celeste starts to cry and hugs Irma tighter.

EXT. GARTH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

MUSIC PLAYS: "Chewy Chewy" by Ohio Express.

The beast turns and bites a huge chunk out of Jackson's side. Bones break and flesh tears. When it pulls away, there's a hole that looks like a shark bite. What's left of Jackson falls to the ground.

The beast turns towards Anderson. She fires the last bullets from her gun.

David sees the kids in the treehouse and takes off running in their direction.

The beast eats Anderson's head.

David runs towards the treehouse. The kids yell for him to hurry.

He stops running, but maintains eye contact with Donnie. David drops to his knees. Then he falls forward, his face smashing to the ground.

A large bite has torn through his shirt and a massive bite mark on his back bleeds. The beast leans down to take another bite.

Donnie leans back into the treehouse. The others look to him expectantly.

He shakes his head and looks down. The other faces range from mortal fear to near panic.

INT. TREEHOUSE - LATER

MUSIC PLAYS: "16 Candles" by the Crests.

The mood in the treehouse is morose. Nobody talks, they're all lost in dark thought.

LYLE

We have to get out of here.

GARTH

How?

DONNIE

We can't outrun it.

IRMA

We can't distract it without sacrificing someone.

KARA

We can't do that!

She looks at Garth. He's embarrassed and looks away.

LYLE

We can't stay. We'll die.

Celeste flips one of the pizza boxes closed.

CELESTE

We're out of food.

KARA

We don't have any water.

GARTH

We have no way to call anyone. Or warn anybody about the monster.

DONNIE

Maybe we can hurt it?

LYLE

It's bulletproof.

KARA

But it has been hurt.

GARTH

How?

KARA

Dirk's drink.

Donnie holds up the bottle of vodka.

DONNIE
Alcohol!

CELESTE
Use the katana.

IRMA
What?

CELESTE
Arnold cut it with his pocket
knife.

IRMA
And the katana is just a big knife.
Good job!

She pats Celeste on the back.

DONNIE
Problem. No one knows how to use
the katana, right?

GARTH
And we're too small. We'd get it
one stab and it'd eat us.

IRMA
Can we throw the katana at it?

LYLE
Not with enough force to kill it.

KARA
What if we throw the vodka at it?

DONNIE
We can't be sure the bottle would
break. It might end up do--

CELESTE
The balloons!

They all look at her, most not really getting it.

CELESTE (CONT'D)
Vodka balloons!

Smiles around the treehouse.

LYLE
I don't think they'll do enough
damage to kill it.

KARA

What if we threw them in it's mouth.

Lyle shrugs.

LYLE

If we got enough in there. It'd probably take at least three.

IRMA

How do you know that?

LYLE

I don't. It's a guess. An educated guess.

IRMA

Okay. Who are our best throwers?

GARTH

Donnie's pretty good.

DONNIE

Lyle and Kara were the best.

Kara gestures towards Donnie and Lyle.

KARA

The three of us. Three balloons.

LYLE

What if it closes it's mouth?

CELESTE

It screams when it's hurt.

DONNIE

So we hurt it, then throw the balloons.

He holds up the katana.

KARA

How do we hurt it enough and not get killed?

LYLE

Somebody's gotta jump on its back.

KARA

And bury the katana with the force of the fall.

DONNIE
If we're the throwers, wh--

GARTH
I'll do it.

DONNIE
What?

GARTH
I'll jump with the katana. I kinda
owe it to everybody.

The group rests in silence for a moment. Kara is the first to move. She hugs Garth.

KARA
Thank you.

As she pulls away, she gives him a kiss on the cheek. Garth blushes. The others all thank him, pat him on the back, hug him.

DONNIE
Let's get started on these
balloons.

He grabs the bottle of vodka and the box of balloons off the shelf.

EXT. TREEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

MUSIC PLAYS: "1, 2, 3 Redlight" by 1910 Fruitgum Company.

Donnie finishes up the last vodka balloon. There was enough for 7 balloons.

Garth stands near the window, looking down at the beast.

GARTH
Irma, come here.

She walks to the window.

IRMA
What's up?

GARTH
If I jump at the monster's front
side, it'll snatch me out of the
air. We've seen what it can do.

IRMA

Yeah...

GARTH

Can you climb out on the branch and
get its attention with the rope?
That way I can jump on its back.

IRMA

Y-yeah.

He hugs her.

GARTH

Thanks. Everybody get ready.

They start moving in his direction. Garth grabs the katana.
Donnie brings the vodka balloons.

GARTH (CONT'D)

This isn't going to get any easier.
Let's get it over with.

Irma hugs Celeste. Then she climbs out onto the branch. She
starts scooting towards the rope.

The monster notices and follows her.

KARA

It's working.

GARTH

Get ready.

Garth steps outside the window onto a tiny ledge. Kara, Lyle
and Donnie are ready with vodka balloons. The remaining
balloons sit in a bucket behind them.

Irma reaches the rope. She starts swinging it back-and-forth,
in Garth's direction. The beast moves back-and-forth,
following the rope.

The second time it moves under the window, Garth bends his
legs, ready to jump.

The beast turns its back to Garth.

DONNIE

Go!

MUSIC PLAYS: "My Boyfriend's Back" by the Angels.

Garth leaps. At first it looks like he's going to sail over the beast, but he turns and twists his body, bringing the katana down. It penetrates the beast's hind quarters. Garth holds on for dear life.

The beast HOWLS. It twists its open mouth back towards Garth. And the window.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Now!

Donnie throws his balloon. It misses the beast's mouth and breaks on its head. It burns and the beast howls some more. Smoke rises from where it hit.

It shakes Garth off and he falls to the ground.

In quick succession, Lyle and Kara's balloons land in the beast's mouth. It bites down, breaking the balloons. It howls in pain again.

Donnie has another balloon. He throws and this time, it lands in the beast's mouth.

Kara lands another balloon in the beast's mouth. Lyle's second balloon hits the beast in the face and shatters, blinding it.

The beast starts bucking around in dying pain.

Garth scurries away, just avoiding being trampled.

The beast starts to slow its movements. It stops jumping. Stops spinning.

It crashes to the ground. Motionless, foaming at the mouth.

The kids in the treehouse cheer.

Garth sighs and lays his head face down in his hands.

INT. GARTH'S HOUSE - LATER

MUSIC PLAYS: "Johnny Angel" by Shelly Faberes.

The group sits around the kitchen, drinking water and eating various snacks.

The phone rings. Garth answers.

GARTH

Hello.

BRETT (O.S.)
Hey, it's me. Everyone okay?

GARTH
Me and Donnie are fine.

BRETT (O.S.)
What about your friends?

Garth hesitates.

GARTH
You know about the... uh...

BRETT (O.S.)
The creatures?

GARTH
Yeah.

BRETT
Yes, I've seen a few.

GARTH
There was one here. It got the neighbors, and some co... police officers... Donnie's friend Arnold... and some other kids. But my friends are all okay. We killed it--

BRETT (O.S.)
Killed it? How?

GARTH
Alcohol kills them. Metal, like swords and knives, hurts them, too.

BRETT (O.S.)
That's amazing.

GARTH
What about you? Are you safe?

BRETT (O.S.)
Yes. I'm with Jeff and Jennie. Their house is like a fortress.

Garth lets out a sigh of relief.

GARTH
Good. I'm glad.

BRETT (O.S.)
You guys should stay put--

GARTH
The monsters... they can break
through our back door. We saw one
do it at Dirk and Bitty's...

BRETT (O.S.)
You've gotta find somewhere safe.

Donnie holds his hand out for the phone.

DONNIE
Let me talk to dad.

Garth hands him the phone.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Hey. We've got a police car. I'm
gonna take these kids to their
parents and go to mom's.

BRETT (O.S.)
That's incredibly dangerous--

DONNIE
I wasn't asking. I can't be
responsible for all these people.
And who knows what's next?

BRETT (O.S.)
I... just be careful. There's more
vod--

DONNIE
We know where your stash is.

Silence.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Okay. Gotta go, want to get moving
before more meteorites land.

BRETT (O.S.)
Okay. Be safe. Love you.

Donnie hangs up.

DONNIE
Call mom.

Garth picks up the phone and dials his mother's number. It
rings and rings. Finally someone answers.

SANDRA (O.S.)

Hell--

The line goes dead. Garth dials again, but gets a signal that the line isn't working.

GARTH

We gotta get to mom!

DONNIE

What's up?

GARTH

She answered, but then the phone died.

Donnie looks at him with concern.

GARTH (CONT'D)

I'm worried.

Kara rests a hand on his shoulder.

KARA

We all are.

DONNIE

Let's go. I'm taking everyone home.

CELESTE

Is it safe?

DONNIE

No. That's why we have to be ready.
Garth, go get the balloons.

MUSIC PLAYS: "Simon Says" by 1910 Fruitgum Company.

Garth heads for the back door.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Everyone else, come with me.

Donnie heads for his father's bedroom. The room is bachelor-who-parties-a-lot messy. Donnie opens the closet. He points to a half dozen 1.75 ml bottles of vodka.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Grab those and take them to the kitchen.

Donnie heads for his own bedroom.

INT. GARTH'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Garth is back with the balloons. Kara and the others bring the vodka in and set it on the table.

DONNIE (O.S.)
Wait till you see this!

He walks back in carrying two of the biggest Super Soakers possible.

LYLE
Now we're talking!

DONNIE
Fill up the balloons and the Super Soakers. Lyle, come with me.

Donnie heads for the front door. Lyle follows.

EXT. GARTH'S HOUSE, FRONT YARD - LATER

MUSIC PLAYS: "Red Rubber Ball" by the Cyrkle.

Donnie and Lyle walk towards the side of the house, where the bloody remains of the cops lay. The sun is starting to rise.

DONNIE
This is gonna be gross, but we gotta find the keys to one of those cars.

LYLE
You've gotta be kidding?

DONNIE
Nope. Check over there.

He points towards Anderson's remains. Donnie stops to examine Torv's corpse.

Donnie kneels and searches Torv's pockets. His hands get bloody, but he finds nothing.

LYLE (O.S.)
Got 'em!

Lyle holds the keys up and jingles them.

DONNIE
Awesome.

Donnie wipes the blood on his pants.

INT. POLICE CAR - LATER

MUSIC PLAYS: "The Children's Marching Song (Knick Knack Taddy Whack)" by Mitch Miller.

Donnie drives, the sun high in the sky. Garth rides shotgun, holding a Super Soaker. In the back, Kara sits behind Garth, holding vodka balloons. Irma sits at the other window, holding the other Super Soaker. The windows are rolled up. Lyle holds Donnie's katana.

A series of shots:

-Houses on fire.

-Houses with varying levels of structural damage.

-People looting grocery and liquor stores.

-People locked out or away from home, hiding the best they can.

-A few monsters eating people.

-Random monsters running around.

-A few meteorite impact craters.

-Lots of cars crashed into light poles, buildings, each other.

-Large stretches of quiet and calm because people are hiding.

Donnie pulls the police car onto Lyle's street.

DONNIE

Which one is it?

LYLE

Next to last one on the right.

Donnie accelerates a bit. As they get closer, Garth is the first to see the beast.

GARTH

We got a bogey.

DONNIE

Bogey? Where is it, there,
Maverick?

Garth points down the block on the right, closer than Lyle's house. Donnie pulls to a stop.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
We gotta kill it, right?

Murmurs of agreement.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Garth? You got this?

Garth pumps the Super Soaker.

GARTH
Yeah. Once I hit the mouth, slow
down so I can fill 'er up.

Donnie chuckles. Kara puts a hand on his shoulder.

Donnie starts driving again. Garth rolls down the window and aims the Super Soaker.

As they approach Lyle's house, the beast sees them. It comes running at them.

GARTH (CONT'D)
Oh shit!

DONNIE
You got this.

Encouraging murmurs from the back seat.

The beast slows as it approaches them. It's afraid of the car.

It ROARS at them.

Garth shoots and the stream goes into the monster's mouth. It HOWLS. He keeps the stream going until the beast turns and moves away from them.

GARTH
Stop! We have to finish it off.

Donnie stops the car. Garth hops out and opens the back door for Kara. She follows with balloons in each hand.

Donnie opens the door and Irma runs towards the beast with her Super Soaker.

Lyle hops out the other side, carrying water balloons.

Donnie grabs the katana from the back seat and follows.

MUSIC PLAYS: "I Will Follow Him" by Little Peggy March.

Garth stands about three feet away from the beast, which lies on the ground howling.

DONNIE

Garth, next time it howls, hit it in the mouth again. I'll sneak up from the back and stab it. Then y'all kill it with the balloons.

It goes off without a hitch. The beast HOWLS. Garth sprays its mouth, distracting it so Donnie can sneak up from behind. Donnie stabs it in the back. Kara and Lyle each land their balloons in its mouth. Lyle lands a second.

The beast gets up, but it's heavily wounded. It takes a few steps and falls over dead, foam pouring from its mouth.

The kids cheer. Lyle takes off running towards his house. The others watch, happy for him.

Lyle stops and waves before he goes inside. The others wave back.

DONNIE (CONT'D)

Let's get out of here. This is far from over.

They all head for the police car.

INT. POLICE CAR - LATER

Donnie drives down another city street. These houses are poorer and smaller than the previous neighborhoods.

IRMA

We're past the second stop sign.

KARA

More bogies.

On either side of the police car, a single beast runs along with them. They maintain pace, but don't move any closer to the car.

DONNIE

When we get to the stop sign, hit them with the Super Soakers.

GARTH

We won't be able to kill them.

DONNIE

Don't need to. Just scare them off.

Donnie pulls the car to a stop. Garth rolls his window down and aims the Super Soaker. Irma hands the other Super Soaker to Donnie, who rolls down his window.

MUSIC PLAYS: "See You Later, Alligator" by Bill Haley & His Comets.

Donnie and Garth open fire. Their aim is true.

The beasts HOWL in pain and take off running. Once they're far enough away, Donnie starts driving again.

He pulls into Irma and Celeste's driveway. Their PARENTS rush out and hug their daughters.

The FATHER walks to the driver's side of the police car. Donnie rolls down the window.

FATHER

I assume that's not your car, son?

Donnie laughs.

DONNIE

No, sir.

FATHER

Doesn't matter, you got my girls home safely. Thank you.

DONNIE

They're great girls. They helped.

A beast HOWLS in the distance.

FATHER

We'd better get inside. You're welcome to stay.

DONNIE

Thanks, but we have a couple more stops to make.

Donnie gestures to Kara. The father nods.

FATHER

Understood. Thanks again.

The father leads his family towards the front door.

Irma and Celeste wave goodbye. Kara and Garth return the wave as Donnie backs the car out of the driveway. He drives away.

EXT. CITY STREETS - LATER

Donnie drives along in silence. A few of the beasts are seen in the distance, but none come closer.

INT. POLICE CAR - LATER

MUSIC PLAYS: "(Just Like) Romeo and Juliet" by the Reflections.

Donnie pulls the police car into Kara's driveway. Her house is nicer and larger than Celeste and Irma's, but nowhere near Donnie and Garth's.

Kara and Garth get out. Donnie waits in the car.

GARTH

I'm sorry about earlier. It's my first alien invasion and it took me a bit to catch on.

She smiles. Then she hugs him. He's a bit surprised at first, but then he returns the hug.

KARA

When you figured it out, you really figured it out.

Garth smiles.

KARA (CONT'D)

Thank you.

GARTH

You did as much as I did to save everyone.

She smiles back.

Then she leans in and kisses him. Donnie honks the horn.

GARTH (CONT'D)

Gotta go!

KARA

Call me if the world doesn't end and the phones keep working.

GARTH

I will.

Garth gets in the car.

DONNIE
Good job, bro.

Garth blushes. Donnie drives away.

INT. POLICE CAR - LATER

MUSIC PLAYS: "Yummy Yummy Yummy" by Ohio Express.

Donnie pulls the car into his mom's driveway. Her house is almost as nice as their dad's house, although it's a bit smaller.

GARTH
You think she's okay?

DONNIE
Yeah. Mom's a tough one.

Donnie parks and turns off the car. He picks up a Super Soaker.

DONNIE (CONT'D)
Just in case.

Garth grabs the other one.

GARTH
Good idea.

They get out of the car.

EXT. SANDRA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Garth and Donnie approach the front door, carrying their Super Soakers.

Sandra opens the door and rushes to hug them.

SANDRA
Donnie! Garth! What are you doing here?

GARTH
The phone went out.

DONNIE
We had to make sure you're okay.

SANDRA
What about your father?

DONNIE
He's safe. He was out at a show
when the shit--

SANDRA
Language!

A beast ROARS. It is close.

Donnie and Garth turn around. They see the beast running at them.

Garth steps in front of Sandra. Both boys pump their Super Soakers.

DONNIE
Don't worry, mom.

GARTH
We got this.

They shoot at the beast.

MUSIC PLAYS: "Sugar Sugar" by the Archies.

The CAMERA pans up to show a massive alien spacecraft entering the atmosphere as we:

CUT TO BLACK.