

FADE IN:

EXT. MORGANS MARKET -- NIGHT -- ESTABLISHING

A GIRL exits the back door. She hurries toward a simple wood framed clubhouse.

On the door a sign painted in large purple letters, Secret Sister Club.

EXT. SECRET SISTER CLUB -- NIGHT

CHARLIE MORGAN a freckled faced thirteen year old, unlocks the door.

INT. SECRET SISTER CLUB -- CONTINUOUS

She flips the switch of an old fashioned lamp. Light illuminates her sanctuary. A row of classic books lean comfortably on a shelf above her desk.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
Everybody has a dream.

She takes a sheet of paper and begins to write.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Some dreams are magical.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STANSFIELD HOME -- LIBBY STANSFIELD'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

LIBBY STANSFIELD a thirteen year old bespectacled girl, sits atop a patchwork bedspread. Classical music CRACKLES from an old transistor radio. She conducts the symphony with a well chewed pencil.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
Some dreams are simple.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STANSFIELD LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

FLICKERING LIGHTS from a television. TOM STANSFIELD fourteen year old brother of Libby, SLAPS a baseball back and forth into his mitt as he roots for his team.

DISSOLVE TO:

CHARLIE (V.O.)
Some dreams are not.

INT. STEWART HOME -- KITCHEN -- NIGHT

KATE TAYLOR an attractive thirteen year old blonde, chats with her grandma MILDRED STEWART, a pleasant looking woman in her sixties. EDWARD STEWART, a sinewy old man ENTERS the back door. He washes his hands vigorously at the kitchen sink. Ignoring them both, he strides up the back stairs.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
Some dreams seem impossible.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MORGANS MARKET -- UPPER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

JEAN MORGAN, a tall woman in her forties, tucks WILL MORGAN JR. a dark haired boy with large green eyes, into bed. He is Charlie's fraternal twin brother. Jean tidies the books that are scattered all over the floor. He watches her in silence.

CHARLIE
And others just out of reach.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DAVIS HOME -- NIGHT

MEGAN DAVIS, a thirteen year old brunette, sneaks into her father's bedroom. Searching through his desk she finds the key to an old safe. She opens it, retrieves an address and EXITS the room.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
My dream is to be a writer, and to
one day win the Pulitzer Prize.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SECRET SISTER CLUB -- CONTINUOUS

She SIGHS, crumples the paper and tosses it into an overflowing waste basket. Another sheet. She begins again.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
Everyone had a dream that summer.

EXT. BALLPARK -- DAY

Tom Stansfield is up to bat. He swings and misses.

CHARLIE
Come on Tom, keep your eye on the
ball.

Tom glances over at Charlie. Grimaces, swings again, connects.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Go Tom, run, run fast.

Megan and Libby tease Charlie.

MEGAN
He's got a crush on you Charlie, did
you see that hit? That was for you.

CHARLIE
Oh don't be silly.

LIBBY
Okay have it your way, but he does
like you.

MEGAN
It's so obvious.

CHARLIE
Well it doesn't really matter, because
when I grow up I'm going to marry a
tall dark handsome man, like Mr.
Rochester or Rhett Butler or

LIBBY
I know, I know, we've heard it before.

CHARLIE
Who's that girl over there?

MEGAN
Her name's Kate, she moved in with
the Stewarts, last week.

CHARLIE
Let's go say hello.

LIBBY
Not me, she's really stuck on herself.
(MORE)

LIBBY (CONT'D)

She's already made friends with Sarah and Laura, and you know what they're like.

Tom, LARRY EVANS, a lanky boy of fourteen, and PETER OWENS his chubby friend, approach.

TOM

Hey Libby, good game huh? Did you see that home run?

LIBBY

Yea, I knew you could do it if you'd just concentrate on the ball, instead of who's watching from the bleachers.

Larry and Peter notice Kate.

LARRY

Whoa ... who's that girl?

LIBBY

She just moved in with the Stewarts. Her name's Kate. I hear she's very friendly. You should go and introduce yourselves.

LARRY

Okay, come on Peter.

PETER

Nah, you go ahead.

LIBBY

Don't be shy Larry, she won't bite.

Larry's sees his kid brother BOBBY playing with friends.

LARRY

Bobby, come over here buddy, I need ya for a minute

BOBBY

Aww. Do I hafta?

LARRY

Yea you do, unless you want me to tell Mom who broke her best mixing bowl.

Bobby rushes over. They take off towards Kate.

LARRY (CONT'D)
Hello Mrs. Stewart, great game wasn't it?

Larry tries to catch Kate's eye.

MILDRED
Yes, it was Larry, and I think your pitching is improving nicely.

LARRY
Thanks, we really want to win the championship this year.

Larry gawks at Kate. She ignores him.

BOBBY
Aw why don't you say hi to her.
Isn't that what we came over here for?

Larry jabs Bobby hard.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Ow. What was that for?

LARRY
(to Kate)
I'm Larry, did you like the game?

Kate walks slowly towards him. Larry turns on his biggest smile and offers his hand. Without a glance she walks past him to the parking lot.

LARRY (CONT'D)
(crushed)
Well ... nice to meet you too.

BOBBY
Gee Larry, I think she really likes ya.

LARRY
(under his breath)
Unbelievable.
(beat)
Be quiet Bobby, you wait 'til you get older. Girls can be very complicated.

INT. SECRET SISTER CLUB - AFTERNOON

A unique KNOCK at the door. Charlie peers through the spy hole.

CHARLIE
Proclaim the password.

LIBBY
(whispers)
We are the music makers, and we are
the dreamers of dreams.

Charlie unlocks the door, and pulls her inside.

CHARLIE
I thought you'd never get here, grab
a cookie, Will just brought them
down. They're delicious.

LIBBY
Mmmm they are good.
(beat)
That was the best game today, I wish
my dad could've seen Tom play.

CHARLIE
How come he didn't come? Tom's one
of the best players on the team.

LIBBY
I know, but there's just too much
work to do on the farm, and my mom
isn't getting any better. She can't
help out as much as she used to.
I'm sure he would have, if he had
the time.

Another unique KNOCK.

CHARLIE
Proclaim the password.

MEGAN
(Staccato)
We are the music makers, and we are
the dreamers of dreams.

Charlie unlocks the door.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Sorry I'm late, My dad was home and I had to make sure I got to the mailbox before he did.

CHARLIE

Did you get another letter?

MEGAN

Uh huh.

Megan takes a letter out of her back pocket.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

She sent me a picture too.

LIBBY

She did? Are you going to tell your dad?

MEGAN

No, not yet.

CHARLIE

You're gonna have to tell him some day. I bet he won't be as mad as you think.

MEGAN

You don't know him like I do. He'll be furious, and I don't blame him. I want to tell him, but I'm scared.

LIBBY

Maybe you should bake him a cake or some cookies. Then when he's all done eating, you just let him have it, while he's still in a good mood.

CHARLIE

Yea good idea. My dad loved it when I baked him his favorite cookies.

(re the letter)

So, what does it say?

Megan reads to the girls.

INT. STEWART HOUSE -- AFTERNOON

Mildred shapes an apple pie at the kitchen table, she POUNDS the dough furiously as she scolds Kate.

MILDRED

I don't know what gets into you Kate. You were so rude to that nice young man this afternoon. He was only trying to be friendly

KATE

But Grandma, did you see him? His face was all blotchy from playing ball, and he was really sweaty. Besides all boys are gross.

MILDRED

Well he seemed smitten by you my dear, and it's about time you made some friends around here.

KATE

I have friends at school Grandma, Sarah and Laura. They're the cool girls, not like Charlie Morgan and her silly Secret Sister Club. Everyone at school knows they're misfits. And, Sarah's having a party for her birthday soon. All the cool kids are going to be there and she invited me.

MILDRED

Charlotte Morgan is a very sweet girl. Did you know she lost her father last summer? Her brother hasn't spoken a word since. It's been hard on the whole town. Try to be a little more pleasant, alright?

KATE

I don't care about Charlie and her brother. And I don't care about her dad! Why should I? What about me? Don't you care about what happened to me Grandma?

Kate runs up the back stairs to her bedroom and SLAMS the door.

INT. KATE'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Kate picks up a photograph of her parents. She traces their faces with her fingertip.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. DARK WET ROAD -- NIGHT

EXT. MOMENTS LATER - THE TAYLOR'S CAR ON THE WET ROAD

INT. MOMENTS LATER - TAYLOR'S CAR

JOSEPH AND EMILY TAYLOR sit together in the front seat.

Kate SINGS happily in the back. Without warning a deer runs into the road, Kate SCREAMS loudly.

KATE
Dad ... Look out!

The car careens out of control and CRASHES down a steep embankment.

MONTAGE

- Kate in the car sobbing.
- Flashing lights of an ambulance
- Emily and Joseph, faces covered.
- Kate standing in the rain.

END MONTAGE

BACK TO SCENE

Kate stands at the window watching Ed Stewart as he works in the yard. He glances up for a moment, then simply turns away.

INT. MORGAN'S MARKET -- BACK KITCHEN - NIGHT

Charlie and Jean sit at the kitchen table. Will reads a book, in the corner.

CHARLIE
Mom, tell me the story about how you
and Dad met.

JEAN

Haven't I've told you that story a hundred times?

CHARLIE

I know, but I want to hear it again. You do too, don't you Will?

Will nods, but continues reading.

JEAN

Alright, just one more time. We met when we were juniors in high school. He was one of the popular boys, and me, well I was like you honey, kind of shy and I just knew he'd never notice me.

Charlie leans forward on the table. Her hands tucked under her chin.

CHARLIE

Was it romantic, like when Jane Eyre meets Mr. Rochester on the moors?

JEAN

No, it wasn't. In fact, it was very embarrassing. I was carrying my lunch tray in the cafeteria and I slipped on some food. I landed right at his feet She laughs and her eyes sparkle at the memory.

CHARLIE

Oh Mom. What did he do? Did he pick you up? Did he laugh?

JEAN

No, at first he just looked down at me. I was so embarrassed I didn't know what to do, so I just sat there. Then he took out his handkerchief and wiped the food off me.

CHARLIE

Then what? Did he kiss you?

Jean smiles at the expectant look on Charlie's face.

JEAN

No, you silly girl. He just helped me to my feet and said, "Alright, little lady, next time try to watch where you're going."

Charlie groans.

CHARLIE

That's it? That's all he said?

JEAN

Yes, that's all he said. Remember Charlie, life isn't always like story books, or your Mr. Rochester. But I knew then he was the one for me. And we had a good marriage, even though it wasn't all hearts and flowers like you think it should be. He was a good husband, and he loved us.

CHARLIE

I know he did, that's why I love my clubhouse, because he made it for me. And sometimes when I'm in there writing, I can feel him. It's almost like he's reading over my shoulder, the way he used to.

(beat)

Mom, there's a literature contest at school. The prize is a thousand dollars. Can you believe that? If I win, maybe we can get one more doctor, to take a look at Will.

JEAN

Well, you should enter Charlie, heaven only knows you've got a million stories floating around in that romantic head of yours.

Charlie reaches over and tousles Will's hair.

CHARLIE

I'm gonna write the best story ever. You wait and see and I'll dedicate it to you.

EXT. STANSFIELD FARM -- SUNRISE

INT. BARN -- CONTINUOUS

JIM STANSFIELD SWABS the barn. Tom ENTERS. His hair has that 'just got out of bed look'.

JIM
You're late son, the cows have been waiting a half hour.

TOM
Sorry Dad, I overslept.

Jim takes a pitchfork and puts hay into each stall.

JIM
If you spent more time doing your chores instead of dreaming about baseball, this farm would run a lot smoother.

TOM
Okay, Dad.

JIM
I don't think you understand. I can't take care of this farm by myself. I'm depending on you to help out. If you keep this up, there'll be no more baseball.

TOM
It won't happen again. I'll be home right after practice to help you with the rest of the chores.

JIM
You'd better, this farm is what keeps this family going. With your mom the way she is, I need you and Libby to pick up the slack. I'm warning you if it happens again, that's it.

TOM
It won't I promise.

INT. WILL MORGAN JR'S BEDROOM -- MORNING

Will dresses. Grabbing shoes and socks from his closet he runs down the back stairs into the store.

INT. MORGAN'S MARKET - MORNING -- CONTINUOUS

JEAN

Did you get something to eat?

Will darts past her. She grabs him.

JEAN (CONT'D)

Okay young man, let me have a look at you.

Will stands still for inspection. He is the image of his father.

JEAN (CONT'D)

Let me see, what's this on your chin? Looks like raspberry jam. And look at that hair, it won't ever stay in place, will it?

She smooths his cowlick. Will motions. He wants to get to school.

JEAN (CONT'D)

Alright, off you go, be a good boy today. Do you have your homework? Did you find your sister's book? She's not going to be happy when she finds out you lost it.

Will bolts out of the door.

JEAN (CONT'D)

Don't forget your lunch

Too late, it's sitting on the counter.

EXT. JACKSON JR. HIGH SCHOOL -- MORNING

The morning bustle. Cars pull to the curb. Kate sits on the steps with SARAH MAXFIELD, a cool and collected thirteen year old girl, she's adorable and knows it. Beside her LAURA SIMPSON, thirteen, a brunette with enormous brown eyes.

LAURA

And you'll never guess what I heard about Tom Stansfield, he has a crush on Charlie Morgan. Can you believe it? That little nobody, how could any boy like her?

SARAH

Well if you ask me, he must be blind,
have you seen the way she dresses?
And those freckles. I can't figure
out what he sees in her.

Sarah admires herself in her pocket mirror. Satisfied, she continues.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I heard her talking to Mrs. Strong
about that literature contest. She
actually believes she's going to
win. If anyone's going to win, it'll
be you Laura.

Kate looks up at Sarah. Curiosity piqued.

KATE

What contest?

LAURA

It's for Mrs. Strong's English class,
if you enter you get extra credit,
and the prize is a thousand dollars.

The bell rings. The girls scurry to the entrance.

EXT. ED STEWART'S WORKSHOP - MORNING

A large workbench. An immaculate workshop.

Mildred ENTERS. She puts her arms around Ed's waist, and he turns to kiss her on the forehead.

ED

Good morning sweetheart, is breakfast
ready? I'm starving.

MILDRED

Should be in a few minutes, I wanted
to come see your newest creation.

Ed pushes her away gently.

ED

You'll see it soon enough. Now run
along and I'll be there in a few
minutes.

MILDRED

(hesitantly)

Ed.

(beat)

I need to talk to you about Kate.

Ed turns his back.

ED

I don't want to talk about her, you know how I feel. You knew before you brought her here. I told you I didn't want her to come, but you sent for her anyway. She should have gone to live with her other grandparents, they practically raised her.

MILDRED

You know that's not possible, her Grandpa Taylor is very ill.

(beat)

You're a stubborn selfish old man Edward Stewart. Life's too short to hold grudges. I've been patient with you for a long time, but now, I'm weary of it. We've got a second chance with Kate, an opportunity to mend things. Are you going to give that up, because you're too hard headed to forgive?

The question hangs in the air. Silence is the answer.

INT. MORGAN'S MARKET -- AFTERNOON

Jean, perches on a ladder stocking shelves. COACH MATTHEW HENDERSON, a tall athletic man, opens the door. He waits patiently for Jean to see him, but she's a thousand miles away.

MATTHEW

Well, well, well, aren't you a sight for sore eyes this morning.

Jean startles and nearly slips off the ladder. Matthew sprints easily over the counter to catch her.

JEAN

Oh my goodness, you scared the daylights out of me. What do you

(MORE)

JEAN (CONT'D)
 think you're doing? Sneaking up on
 someone like that.

Flustered she disengages herself from his arms and straightens her apron.

Matthew enjoys her agitation. He saunters to the old fashioned refrigerator. Takes a bottle of root beer, he places it on the counter.

MATTHEW
 How much?

Jean smiles shyly, and takes his dollar bill.

JEAN
 Let me see now, for you, fifty cents.

Matthew takes the change and heads to the door.

MATTHEW
 You coming to the baseball game
 Saturday? The team's going to be
 terrific this year. Young Tom
 Stansfield's quite the hitter and
 Larry Evans is pitching like he means
 it.

Jean wipes her hands on her apron, and comes towards him.

JEAN
 And who's going to mind the store
 while I go to the game? I have to
 work for a living you know.

MATTHEW
 I know, I know, but just think about
 it.

JEAN
 I'll think about it, but I'm not
 promising anything.

She pushes him out the door playfully.

INT. MRS STRONG'S ENGLISH CLASS -- DAY

Charlie sits doodling at her desk. The afternoon sun bakes the classroom. Fidgety kids watch the clock. Kate whispers to Sarah.

KATE

Is this day ever going to end? I'm so bored.

SARAH

Yea, me too. Do you want to walk home with me and Laura? We're going to get ice cream.

KATE

Okay, but I'll have to ask my Grandma first, you know how old people are.

She giggles and gestures towards Mrs. NANCY STRONG an older fussy looking woman, who sits grading papers.

Charlie continues to stare out of the window.

KATE (CONT'D)

Look at little Miss dreamer, she's got her head in the clouds again.

SARAH

I know, I hope she gets in trouble for not paying attention.

KATE

That would be nice.

MRS. STRONG

Alright students, for your homework tonight please read chapter five in your books, and write a paragraph on each question.

GROANS from the class.

MRS. STRONG (CONT'D)

Settle down please, now I have the entry forms for the literature competition on my desk, please take one as you leave this afternoon.

Megan nudges Charlie.

MEGAN

Did you know Kate won first prize in a writing contest at her old school? I heard her talking to Mrs. Strong about it this morning.

Charlie rolls her eyes.

CHARLIE

Are you serious? She can't be that good can she? I have to win, I just have to.

MEGAN

Don't worry, she couldn't be a better writer than you.

EXT. JACKSON JR HIGH SCHOOL -- AFTERNOON

Charlie and Will sit on the front steps. Kate approaches.

KATE

So, you must be Will Morgan Jr. I've heard so much about you. You're the strong silent type huh?

(beat)

Well, speak up, cat got your tongue?

Charlie jumps to her feet in a protective gesture.

CHARLIE

Leave him alone Kate.

KATE

I was only trying to be friendly, don't get all upset. Anyhow, I wasn't talking to you, I was talking to him. Can't he speak for himself?

Will motions for them to leave.

CHARLIE

It's okay Will, we'll go in a minute.

Sarah and Laura approach the group.

SARAH

He's not going to talk to you Kate, because he's got a secret that he's keeping all to himself, isn't that right Willy boy?

Will tears off down the street and bumps into Matthew.

EXT. STREET -- MOMENTS LATER

Will struggles with Matthew. Charlie catches up.

CHARLIE
Will are you okay?

MATTHEW
What's going on Charlie? He's very
upset.
(to Will)
Hold still now.

CHARLIE
Nothing's going on Mr. Henderson,
come on Will let's go home.

MATTHEW
I can give you a ride if you like,
I'm was going to drop by the store
anyway.

Charlie grabs Will and pushes him along the street. She turns
and fixes Matthew with a cold stare.

CHARLIE
No thank you, we can walk it's not
that far.

MATTHEW
Well I'm going that way, I want to
say hello to your mother. It's no
trouble.

CHARLIE
We'll be just fine thank you. And
don't bother, I'll just tell her you
said hello, okay?

EXT. DAVIS HOME -- AFTERNOON

Megan hurries to the mailbox, she reaches inside and grabs
the mail. She flips through, then quickly stuffs a letter
inside her jacket.

INT. MEGAN'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Megan flops on her bed, and begins to read.

EXT. DAVIS HOME -- MOMENTS LATER

A car pulls into the driveway. JACK DAVIS, an average looking
man in his forties, steps out.

INT. DAVIS HOME -- MOMENTS LATER

Jack walks to the bottom of the stairs.

JACK
Meg, are you up there?

MEGAN
Just a sec Dad, I'll be right down.

She grabs a box out of her nightstand and crams the letter on top of several similar envelopes. SLAMMING the drawer shut, she EXITS the room.

She bounces down the stairs and hugs her father.

JACK
So what has my girl been up to today?

MEGAN
Nothing much really, just school and stuff. Hey I think I'm going to fix you spaghetti and meatballs tonight, with my famous garlic bread. Maybe I'll even bake you a cake.

JACK
That sounds terrific, I'll be in my office working on some accounts.

MEGAN
Dad?

JACK
Yes?

She can't risk it, yet.

MEGAN
Oh nothing, is a chocolate cake alright?

Jack rubs his stomach in mock anticipation and disappears into his office.

INT. STANSFIELD LIVING ROOM -- EVENING

Libby combs ALICE STANSFIELD'S hair. The strains of classical music fill the air. Libby chatters incessantly

LIBBY

Mom, you should have been there. It's the most beautiful piano I've ever seen. It was in Randolphs Music Store, right there in the front window. I went inside for a closer look and Mr. Randolph told me I could go over and open the lid. It was wonderful.

ALICE

I'm sure it was lovely sweetheart.

LIBBY

Oh it was, it's the best piano in the whole world.

(beat)

I think I'm going to enter the writing competition. I know I'm not as good at writing stories as Charlie, but if I won, maybe we could afford piano lessons so that one day, I'll be able to play like Beethoven.

Libby prances around the room. Fingers drumming on the dining room table. She's playing a grand piano.

ALICE

One day you'll learn to play. It might not be until you're older, but I know you, nothing's going to stand in your way.

LIBBY

You're right, nothing will. Oh mom, can you imagine what that piano would look like in this room? You'd sing and I'd play and you'd feel so much better, I know you would.

(beat)

But, Charlie wants the prize money for Will, do you think I should enter?

ALICE

It's a competition silly goose, it's for everyone.

LIBBY

Alright, then that's settled, I'm going to start on my story right now. Nite Mom.

ALICE
Goodnight dear, sweet dreams.

EXT. SECRET SISTER CLUB -- NIGHT

A soft KNOCK. Charlie peers through the spy hole. Will stands waiting.

CHARLIE
I thought you'd gone to bed hours ago. Are you feeling better?

Will nods.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Don't let Kate bother you, she's just rotten, if I had my way, I'd make her walk the plank.

Charlie grabs a book from the shelf.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Okay now where were we?

They sit on the bed together, Will finds the page.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Oh yes, the part where Jo sells her hair, so Marmee can go on the trip to Washington. It's my favorite part in the whole book, well, except for when she falls in love with Professor Bhaer.

She twirls a lock of her hair, contemplating.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I could never do something like that, Will. I could never be so brave and unselfish.

INT. STEWART HOME -- KITCHEN -- MORNING

A SIZZLING breakfast. Kate bounces downstairs.

MILDRED
Good morning dear, you'd better hurry or you'll be late for school.

KATE

I know Grandma. I overslept, I've been working really hard on my story. I want to read it to you.

MILDRED

Well, we don't have time right now, but how about this afternoon? We can sit on the porch together and you could read it to both of us.

(hopeful)

What do you think Ed?

Ed shifts in his chair. He mumbles, then falls silent.

KATE

Grandpa, did you hear Grandma? Do you want to listen to my story? It's a tribute to Mom and Dad, only not a mushy one.

Ed stands up sharply. Breakfast dishes scatter. The back door SLAMS and the room is silent.

KATE (CONT'D)

What's the matter? Why did he run out like that?. He hates me, I know he does.

(beat)

I want to go back to Illinois and live with Grandma and Grandpa Taylor.

MILDRED

Hush dear, you know that's not true, he doesn't hate you. He's just a grumpy old man this morning. It's probably his bursitis acting up. Now you go along and get your things, I'll drive you to school.

Kate runs upstairs. Mildred cleans up the mess.

INT. ED STEWART'S WORKSHOP -- CONTINUOUS

Ed reaches into an old cedar chest. He pulls out a large scrapbook. On the cover, 'To The Bestest Daddy In The World.'

FLASHBACK. EXT. STEWART HOME -- AFTERNOON

A petite six year old blonde girl sits on the front porch.

It's EMILY STEWART. She's clutching something in her tiny hands. Her daddy approaches, she runs to him.

EMILY

Daddy, daddy, see what I made for you? I made it at school today. I did it all by myself.

ED

Wait a minute now. Here, let's sit on the porch and I'll take a good look at it.

He sits beside her on the weathered glider.

EMILY

See Daddy? It says, to the Bestest Daddy in the world.
(she giggles)
That's you Daddy ... do you like it?

ED

It's beautiful sweetheart, it's the nicest thing anyone's ever given to me. I'll keep it forever.

EMILY

You'll always be my bestest Daddy, in the whole world.

ED

And promise me you'll always be my little girl.

EMILY

I promise.

BACK TO SCENE.

INT. ED STEWART'S WORKSHOP -- MORNING

Ed places the book with all it's memories back in the drawer and resumes working on his project.

INT. JACKSON JR HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY -- AFTERNOON

TOM

(out of breath)
Libby, I need your help.

LIBBY
What's the matter?

TOM
The coach called a practice today
after school, but I promised Dad I'd
paint that fence.

LIBBY
And what do you want me to do about
it?

TOM
Will you do it for me?

LIBBY
Well, now let me see ... do I feel
like painting a fence this afternoon?

TOM
Don't tease me please, this is a
mandatory practice. I promise I'll
do all your chores on Saturday, and
I'll even ask Peter if he'll loan
you some of his books on famous
composers.

LIBBY
Alright, but you owe me. And you'd
better pray dad doesn't find out.

TOM
Thanks, you won't regret it, I
promise.

LIBBY
(teasing)
Don't make promises you can't keep.

Tom dashes off. Libby returns to her friends.

LIBBY (CONT'D)
I won't be able to come to the club
meeting this afternoon. I have to
help Tom out with his chores.

CHARLIE
It's okay, I want to work on my story
anyway. I'll meet you after school
and we'll walk home together.

LIBBY

Great, I want to stop by the music store to see my piano on the way home, okay?

CHARLIE

Sure, see you then.

EXT. RANDOLPH'S MUSIC STORE -- AFTERNOON

Libby stands with her nose to the window.

LIBBY

Wait here a minute, I want to go inside.

MEGAN

Okay but hurry, I've got to get home before the mail comes.

CHARLIE

And me and Will have to help mom in the store.

She ruffles Will's hair affectionately and he flashes her a rare smile.

INT. ICE CREAM STORE. ACROSS STREET -- AFTERNOON

Sarah sees the group outside the music store. She smiles to herself, and walks to the door.

SARAH

Come on, let's go and have a little fun.

LAURA

But, I haven't finished my ice cream yet.

KATE

Me either.

SARAH

Oh come on, unless you don't want to go to my birthday party.

They toss their cones in the garbage can, and hurry to catch up to Sarah.

EXT. RANDOLPH'S MUSIC STORE -- MOMENTS LATER

SARAH

So what are the little Secret Sisters up to? Shouldn't you be doing whatever it is you do in that homely little clubhouse of yours?

CHARLIE

Oh don't worry about what we're doing. If I were you I'd worry about that pimple on your nose. Ouch, I think that's going to be a real doozy.

Sarah grabs her mirror. A small red spot appears enormous.

SARAH

(eyeing Will)

At least I don't have a dumb brother hanging around me all the time. Don't you get sick and tired of him Charlie? It must be such a drag.

Charlie's face turns bright red. Megan stands back waiting for the volcano to erupt.

CHARLIE

Shut up Sarah Maxfield. Say one more word about Will and you'll have more than that hideous pimple to worry about!

Charlie steps closer to Sarah.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Now take your dimwitted minions here and go crawl back under the rock you slithered out of.

(beat)

I'm going to close my eyes and count to three, and you'd better be gone by the time I open them.

Charlie closes her eyes.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

One.

Kate tries to drag Sarah out of harms way.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Two.

Libby EXITS the music store and appraises the situation.

LIBBY

If I were you, Sarah, I'd skedaddle.

SARAH

Stay out of this. You're a weirdo Charlie Morgan, and so is your brother. Hey Will, why don't you speak up and tell us what secrets you're hiding. Tell us what really happened to your Dad up there at the lake.

CHARLIE

Three!

Charlie advances. Sarah retreats.

MEGAN

Don't mind her Will, you don't have to say a word if you don't want to, right Charlie?

CHARLIE

Let's just go

LIBBY

Oh no, I was supposed to go straight home and get started on that fence. Tom's gonna kill me. I've got to get there before Dad finds out.

EXT. BALLPARK -- AFTERNOON

Matthew huddles with his team. Everyone's paying attention, except Tom, Larry, and ALEX JONES, the catcher.

TOM

Okay Alex, you know the Miners are gonna try and steal home when they're on third. Be ready, okay?

ALEX

You can count on me, it's Larry's pitching I have to watch out for, he's beamed me a couple of times.

LARRY

Well you just need to learn how to pay attention.

ALEX

Very funny. Why are you so grouchy anyway? Didn't you get any sleep last night?

LARRY

(sighs)

Not much.

TOM

I bet you were moping about 'Kiss me Kate'. Or should I say, 'Won't kiss me Kate'? Ha ha.

LARRY

I can't even get her to talk to me, never mind kiss me. Anyway, what about you and Charlie? Huh? Huh?

TOM

Okay, okay ... truce.

MATTHEW

Alright guys, can we pay attention for a few more minutes?

An old TRUCK approaches. Alex nudges Tom.

ALEX

Isn't that your Dad?

TOM

Oh man, what's he doing here?

Jim EXITS the truck and strides toward the bleachers.

MATTHEW

Hey Jim, good to see you.

JIM

I'm here to pick up my son. Get in the truck Tom

TOM

But Dad ... we haven't started practice yet.

JIM
 There's not going to be a practice
 for you, we had a deal remember?

MATTHEW
 What's the problem? Can I help?

JIM
 This is between me and my boy, I'll
 handle it.

Tom slouches inside the truck. Staring out the window,
 humiliated.

INT. JIM STANSFIELD'S TRUCK -- MOMENTS LATER.

JIM (CONT'D)
 Didn't I ask you to paint that fence
 this afternoon?

TOM
 But, Libby said she'd do it for me.

JIM
 I told you to do it, not Libby. She
 tried to cover for you, but it was
 your responsibility.

TOM
 Why do I always have to be
 responsible?

JIM
 When I was your age, I was practically
 running the farm by myself.

TOM
 (under his breath)
 You were never my age.

EXT. STEWART HOUSE -- AFTERNOON

Kate and Mildred sit together on the old glider.

MILDRED
 That's a wonderful story. Your mother
 used to write stories too you know.

KATE
 She did?

MILDRED

Yes, once she wrote a short story about your Grandpa. I'm sure he still has it somewhere. She was the apple of his eye.

KATE

Why did he hate daddy so much?

MILDRED

Your Grandpa had his heart set on her going to college. He wanted her to be somebody, he didn't want her to get married that young.

KATE

She was somebody Grandma. She was a schoolteacher, and she was a great mom too.

(beat)

She missed you both so much. She kept a picture of you by her bed. And one time when I was snooping in her bedroom.

Mildred feigns shock.

KATE (CONT'D)

(laughing)

Ooops, well, I was looking under her bed and I found a pile of letters in a box. They were addressed to Grandpa, but they were unopened and marked 'Return to Sender'

MILDRED

He was angry and bitter. He'd used the money he'd made from selling his sculptures, to pay for her tuition. So when she decided to get married and not go to college. He was devastated. After she left he closed up inside. He forbade me to even mention her name, and foolishly, I let him have his way. I should have stood up to him. Maybe things would've turned out differently.

Sarah and Laura walk along the sidewalk towards the house.

MILDRED (CONT'D)

Well, here are your school friends dear, I'll go in and get started on dinner.

SARAH

Let's go up to your room, I've got something to show you.

INT. KATE'S ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Sarah locks Kate's bedroom door and pulls a newspaper clipping out of her purse.

SARAH

Listen to this.

Sarah sits cross legged on the floor.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Twelve year old, Will Morgan Jr. walked into Morgans Market early Saturday morning. He'd been camping with his father at Crystal Lake. The boy seemed confused and despite their questions he refused to give police any information. Local authorities searched the campsite, but there was no sign of Will Morgan Sr. Police are still investigating the case.

KATE

So? We knew all that before.

SARAH

I know, but aren't you curious about what happened? Don't you want to find out?

LAURA

Maybe someone murdered Mr. Morgan and told him never to speak of it, on peril of his life!

KATE

You've been watching too much television Laura. Anyway, I feel sorry for him, something must have happened up there that scared him to death.

SARAH

Well I don't feel sorry for him or his stupid sister. I'm going to get even with her. Meet me at the school entrance tomorrow before the bell rings. We'll wait for Will and make him tell us what really happened up at Crystal Lake.

KATE

And just how are you going to do that?

SARAH

You'll see.

KATE

If you want to get back at Charlie, I'm game, but I don't want to pick on Will, he hasn't done anything to us.

SARAH

Don't you get it? She adores her brother, so this is a perfect way to get revenge.

(beat)

You'd better be there, or you won't be invited to my party.

LAURA

We'll be there, won't we Kate?

Sarah and Laura EXIT. Kate closes her door behind them.

EXT. JACKSON JR. HIGH -- MORNING

Kate paces nervously.

KATE

Let's just forget it.

SARAH

What's wrong with you? All of a sudden you're Miss Goody Two Shoes? I thought you didn't like Charlie.

KATE

I dont.

Will and Bobby walk through the playground.

SARAH
Hey Bobby, come over here for a
minute.

BOBBY
Hi Sarah.

SARAH
(ignoring Bobby)
Hey Will, how's school?

No response.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Hey, I'm talking to you. Don't you
know it's rude not to answer people
when they're talking to you?

Sarah pulls the newspaper clipping out of her purse.

SARAH (CONT'D)
I found this news article about you
and your dad going camping last year.
So ... you go to Crystal Lake, and
then out of the blue you come home
all alone. What's the story? What
really happened up there?

Sarah backs Will up to the wall.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Come on, you can tell us what
happened, it'll be our little secret.
We won't tell a soul, will we girls?

Will's struggles. His green eyes full of tears.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Speak up Willy boy. You're not leaving
here until you do.

Kate grabs Sarah and turns her around.

KATE
Stop it Sarah.

SARAH
Leave me alone Kate, I'm busy.

Sarah pushes Kate out of the way, and turns back to Will,
who is now running across the playground

BOBBY

Will, where are you going? The bell's going to ring.

KATE

Come back, we're sorry.

Sarah shrugs.

SARAH

I'm not sorry. You're such a wimp, we were just having a little fun.

The school bell RINGS.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Are you coming in with us?

KATE

No.

SARAH

Well don't bother coming to my party, because you're not invited anymore.

LAURA

Kate, please, tell her you're sorry, then she'll let you come, won't you Sarah?

Sarah waits for Kate to grovel.

KATE

(to Sarah)

I don't want to come to your party. I don't want to be friends with you anymore. You're cruel and hateful.

SARAH

Have it your own way, why don't you see if Charlie and the misfits will let you be their friend?

Kate turns away, so they won't see her tears.

EXT. WOODS -- MORNING

Will hikes through the woods.

INT. MRS STRONG'S ENGLISH CLASS -- MORNING

MRS. STRONG

Would those who're entering the competition, please bring their stories to me by the end of the day?

The kids chatter excitedly. Charlie whispers to Libby.

CHARLIE

I stayed up all night working on my story, but it's not ready. I can't get the ending right. Do you think she'd give me more time?

LIBBY

I don't think so, she's sending them out tonight.

CHARLIE

I guess it'll just have to do.

LIBBY

Don't worry Charlie, it'll be great I'm sure.

Mrs Strong RAPS on the desk.

MRS. STRONG

Alright students, settle down. Turn to your chapter books, and we'll read together. Charlie will you begin?

Charlie is still worrying about her story.

MRS. STRONG (CONT'D)

Charlie?

The class GIGGLES.

INT. MORGAN'S MARKET -- LATE MORNING.

Jean waits on customers. Matthew strolls to the fridge and takes out a bottle of his favorite pop. He sets it on the counter.

JEAN

That will be five dollars and twenty five cents, Mrs Evans.

MRS. EVANS

Thank you, I appreciated you sending the box of groceries to the house when Bobby was sick. I couldn't leave him for a minute not even to pick up my groceries.

JEAN

That's just fine. I glad he's feeling better.

Mrs. Evans takes her purchases and EXITS the store.

MATTHEW

My, my, my, don't you look lovely this morning? I don't believe there's a prettier woman this side of the Wasatch Mountains.

JEAN

Stop it, you're making me blush. Now, what do you want?

MATTHEW

Well now, what do I want? What do I want? How about coming to the baseball game and watch me coach the little hooligans on Saturday?

JEAN

I told you I can't close up on a Saturday afternoon. I need the business.

MATTHEW

What if I pay Charlie and Will to mind the store for a couple of hours? Half the town will be at the game anyway.

JEAN

I'll think about it, but for now you get along, I've got too much work to do, to waste time chatting with you Mr. Matthew Henderson.

MATTHEW

Alright, I'm leaving. But I'm going to talk to Charlie and Will after school. I'll be looking for you, Ms. Jean Morgan on Saturday afternoon.

EXT. JACKSON JR HIGH SCHOOL -- AFTERNOON

The bell RINGS. Kids explode out of every door. Charlie and Megan wait for Will.

CHARLIE

Will's usually one of the first one's out.

MEGAN

Maybe he got detention again?

CHARLIE

(shrugs)

Maybe, I'm going inside to find him, you go on ahead so you can get the mail before your Dad gets home.

INT. JACKSON JR. HIGH. HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Charlie runs through the halls. Matthew pops his head out of his office.

MATTHEW

Hi Charlie, you're just the person I wanted to talk to, where's your brother?

CHARLIE

I don't know, I'm looking for him.

MATTHEW

Maybe he already went home?

CHARLIE

He'd never do that, he always waits for me. I'm going to check his locker.

MATTHEW

Need some help?

CHARLIE

(motioning him to stop)

No, no, that's okay. I can manage by myself.

MATTHEW

You sure?

CHARLIE
Yes, I'm sure. Bye.

MONTAGE

--Charlie looking in Will's empty locker.

--Charlie searching the playground.

--Charlie running to the baseball field.

END MONTAGE

EXT. MORGAN'S MARKET -- AFTERNOON

CHARLIE
(catching her breath)
Is Will here? I've been looking
everywhere for him.

Jean puts down her broom, and hurries inside.

JEAN
Will, are you up there?

CHARLIE
I'll go see if he's hiding in his
room.

Charlie surveys the empty room. An old stuffed bear abandoned
on the floor. Books scattered. Silence.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
He's not up here. Mom, I've looked
everywhere, even the baseball field.
So where could he be?

Jean pick up the phone.

JEAN
Hello Mrs. Wilson? This is Jean
Morgan. Will hasn't returned from
school. I'm worried. Did you keep
him after class? I know he's been a
bit of a handful lately ...
(beat)
He didn't? Alright, yes, yes I will,
thank you.

CHARLIE
What did she say?

JEAN
She said, he didn't come to school
today.

Jean DIALS the phone again.

JEAN (CONT'D)
Hello? This is Mrs. Morgan, my son
Will is missing. His teacher said he
didn't arrive at school this morning.
(beat)
No, I can't remember what he was
wearing. Well, yes he has been late
before, but he's never skipped school.
Please ... can you come over to
Morgans Market? We're on Main Street
in Laketown.

INT. MORGANS MARKET -- BACK KITCHEN -- LATER

Matthew sits beside Jean as OFFICER EDWARDS 55, a nervous,
balding man, officiates.

JEAN
Of course he didn't run away. He's
never done this before. Once in a
while he comes home late, but he's
never skipped school. Something's
happened to him, I know it ... I
can't take this ... we need to find
him.

Jean's voice rises with panic. Matthew comforts her.

OFFICER EDWARDS
(flustered)
Ma'am please, try to stay calm, kids
go missing all the time. Usually we
find them at a friends house.

JEAN
You don't understand. Will's
different. He goes to school and he
comes home. That's what he does.

Jean realizes how pitiful that sounds.

JEAN (CONT'D)
You have to organize a search party.

OFFICER EDWARDS

I, well, I can't do that tonight.
It's almost dark, and we don't have
the man power to go looking for every
little kid that comes home late from
school.

JEAN

Listen to me very carefully. He did
not make it to school this morning.
He's been missing for over eight
hours. You have to do something,
now!

OFFICER EDWARDS

I do understand Ma'am, but there's
nothing I can do tonight. I'm sorry.

Charlie listens at the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHARLIE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Charlie DIALS the telephone.

CHARLIE

(whispers)
Hello Megan, this is Charlie meet me
at the clubhouse in fifteen minutes,
it's urgent.

She hangs up and DIALS again.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Hi Libby, this is Charlie

EXT. SECRET SISTER CLUB -- NIGHT

Megan and Libby arrive simultaneously. Charlie dispenses
with the password ritual.

CHARLIE

(whispering)
Come inside and shut the door.

MEGAN

What's wrong?

LIBBY

There's a police car in front of your store. What's going on?

CHARLIE

Will didn't make it to school this morning. We've looked everywhere and that policeman isn't doing a thing about it.

LIBBY

But, I saw him at school, he was with Kate and her friends.

CHARLIE

(seething)

I should have known she had something to do with it.

(beat)

Alright I want you to go home and gather stuff together. Pack warm clothes, water and food. I'm not waiting for that empty-headed policeman to do something. We're going to find Will ourselves. But first we're going to take a little detour to Kate's house. Put some pillows in your bed so your parent's will think you're asleep. Get back here as fast as you can.

INT. CHARLIE'S BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Charlie stuffs a backpack with matches, food, clothing, and Will's favorite toy, his overstuffed bear.

INT. SECRET SISTER CLUB -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

Charlie scribbles a note.

A KNOCK.

CHARLIE

Come in, come in.

MEGAN

Lucky my dad was already in bed, he's got an early meeting tomorrow. Are you sure this will be okay? I'm not sure we should be doing this.

CHARLIE
Yes I'm sure, wait here for Libby,
I'm going upstairs to fix my up my
bed.

MEGAN
Okay, but

Charlie and Libby bump into each other at the door.

CHARLIE
I'll be right back.

She gestures towards Megan.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(whispering)
She's nervous.

LIBBY
(smiling)
What else is new? Okay, I'll talk to
her.

EXT. STEWART HOUSE -- NIGHT -- MOMENTS LATER

Charlie and Libby carry a ladder. They place it against the
house. Charlie begins to climb.

MEGAN
Be careful, Charlie.

CHARLIE
You're coming up too.

MEGAN
I am? Are you sure it's safe?

CHARLIE
Yes, I'm sure, follow Libby.

They climb the ladder. Charlie opens the window.

INT. KATE'S ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Kate sleeps in her pink canopy bed. Charlie places a hand
over Kate's open mouth. Her eyes widen.

CHARLIE
Don't say a word just get up and get
dressed. Got it?

KATE
(mumbling)
Get your hand off my mouth.

CHARLIE
I said, be quiet!
(to Libby)
Get some stuff out of the closet and
throw it in her backpack.

Kate glares at the girls as she pulls on her clothes.

MEGAN
Okay, got it.

KATE
(between her teeth)
What kind of stupid game are you
playing. Is this some moronic
initiation into your stupid club?

LIBBY
As if we'd ever let you into our
club. Now get moving.

MEGAN
I'm scared to climb down the ladder,
what if I fall?

LIBBY
Just come down after me, I'll make
sure you're okay, if you fall, you'll
land on me.

CHARLIE
Okay I'll go first, then Kate, then
Libby, then you Megan, got it?

LIBBY
Yep.

Kate struggles, Libby pushes her towards the window, and she
climbs down behind Charlie.

EXT. STEWART HOUSE -- NIGHT

CHARLIE
Alright let's go.

KATE

Where are you taking me? If you don't tell me, I'm going to scream.

Libby grabs Kate by the shoulders.

LIBBY

Don't you dare! Now keep quiet, and follow us. Will's missing and it's your fault. So you're going to help us find him. Capishe?

KATE

And how is it my fault?

MEGAN

Oh stop trying to act so innocent, and move it!

Charlie and Libby exchange amused glances at Megan's rare outburst.

They drag the reluctant Kate into the night.

INT. MORGANS MARKET -- NIGHT

Jean paces the kitchen. Matthew stirs two steaming mugs of hot cocoa.

MATTHEW

You're going to wear that linoleum out if you don't stop pacing. Come sit here by me and have some cocoa. It'll make you feel better.

JEAN

Nothing's going to make me feel better until we find Will. How can I sit and drink cocoa, when I can't stop thinking about him being out there all alone? Why do they have to wait until morning? We need to be doing something now.

MATTHEW

Hush now. It's going to be alright. We'll go at first light. I'm going to call some of the men in town right now. They'll be here in the morning and we'll have that little guy home by sundown, I promise.

He takes Jean by the shoulders and holds her at arms length, forcing her to look him in the eye.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

We'll find him, you're going to have to trust me okay?

JEAN

Okay.

EXT. WOODS -- NIGHT

FLICKERING flashlights. The girl's traipse through the woods.

KATE

(whining)

I'm not going one step further.

CHARLIE

You are if you don't want to be left here alone.

MEGAN

I'm scared. What if we see a snake?

KATE

I hate snakes, and I hate being out here in the wilderness. It's dirty and yukky.

LIBBY

Oh there's more than snakes up here, there's all kinds of critters just waiting for a tasty little treat like you.

(beat)

Wanna hear a joke? These two guys were camping when a bear came along. One of them grabbed his running shoes. His friend said "You can't outrun that bear" and the other guy said. I don't have to outrun him, I just have to outrun you.

CHARLIE

That's a good one Libby.

KATE

Just you wait Liberty Stansfield, when my Grandpa finds out what you've done, you'll be sorry.

LIBBY

I doubt your Grandpa will even realize you're missing, Katharine Taylor.

MEGAN

Stop it Libby, that's enough.

Kate shoots Megan a grateful look.

EXT. MORGAN'S MARKET -- SUNRISE

A group of men gather in front of the market.

MATTHEW

I want to thank you all for coming here this morning. Our goal is to find Will and bring him home. He can't have gone far, so let's keep the search to a couple of miles in each direction.

ED

I'll take the road by the creek ...

His voice trails off. The creek is full, and a boy is missing.

JIM

I'll come with you, I've got horses we can use back at the farm.

MATTHEW

Make sure you have your radios turned on. I want to know the minute anyone finds anything.

The men go their separate ways.

INT. STANSFIELD FARM -- KITCHEN -- MORNING -- AN HOUR LATER

Tom enters the kitchen and puts a basket of eggs on the table.

TOM

Hey Mom, is Libby awake yet? The chicken's haven't been fed, and Daisy's ready to burst.

ALICE

I bet she overslept again. Go on up there will you Tom? Tell her it's getting late.

Tom KNOCKS on Libby's door.

TOM
Libby wake up.

He KNOCKS again. Opening the door, he walks to the bed and shakes her.

TOM (CONT'D)
Libby, get up you lazy little

He pulls back the covers, to see her pillows neatly arranged.

TOM (CONT'D)
(calling downstairs)
She's not up here mom.

INT. DAVIS HOME -- MORNING

Jack reads the newspaper. The kitchen clock CHIMES seven.

He calls upstairs.

JACK
Time to get up sleepy head.

He returns to his paper. Silence.

JACK (CONT'D)
Okay young lady, no more slumber for
you.

Jack yanks the bedspread back. The pillows fall to the floor.

A letter flutters to the carpet.

INT. STEWART HOUSE. MORNING -- MOMENTS LATER

Eggs and bacon SIZZLE in a pan.

MILDRED
Kate come along dear, your breakfast's
almost ready.

Mildred steps on to the porch to retrieve the newspaper.

She sees the ladder at Kate's window. Panic.

EXT. MORGAN'S MARKET -- MORNING

Mildred bursts into the market.

MILDRED
Someone's taken my granddaughter.

Jean's pale face, even paler.

JEAN
What?

MILDRED
I went to get the newspaper ... there
was a ladder by the window, her bed
... empty Jack ENTERS, followed
closely by Alice and Tom.

JACK
My daughter's missing too.

ALICE
Libby's gone, her bed's not been
slept in.

OFFICER EDWARDS
(agitated)
Alright now everyone calm down, I'll
need to get information from all of
you
(radioing)
I'm going to need more help here,
we've got three more missing children.

Jean stands in the doorway. Charlie's LETTER in her hand.

JEAN
Make that four children, Charlie's
gone too.

JACK
(re- the letter)
What's that?

JEAN
It's from Charlie, they've all gone
looking for Will.

MILDRED
What about Kate?

JEAN
Yes, she's with them.

ALICE
Oh my goodness.

Tom slips out of Morgans Market.

EXT. WOODS -- MORNING

The girls huddle side by side in their sleeping bags.

KATE
I'm cold.

LIBBY
(mimicking)
I'm cold, I'm tired, I'm hungry.

CHARLIE
Stop fighting and let's get a fire going. Then we can make some breakfast. I've got some beans and ... I even remembered a can opener.

MEGAN
Good for you Charlie.

KATE
Beans? You expect me to eat beans?

MEGAN
(ignoring Kate)
What do you have Libby?

LIBBY
I've got bread, cheese, crackers and some leftover meatloaf my mom made.

Kate pulls a face.

CHARLIE
Sounds delicious.

Kate sits on a rock outside the group.

INT. STANSFIELD FARM -- LATER

Tom reaches for the telephone.

TOM
Hello, Larry I need your help, grab some gear and meet me at my house in
(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)
a half hour. Call Alex and Peter and
ask them to come too.

LARRY
What ... ? Who is this?

TOM
Wake up Larry.

LARRY
(sleepy)
I don't want any.

TOM
Larry, wake up! Libby and her friends
went looking for Will. They took
Kate with them. I want to go find
them, so get over here quick, do you
understand?

LARRY
(waking up)
Okay ... sure. I'll be right there.

TOM
Make sure you bring supplies and a
change of clothes.

LARRY
Gotcha.

INT. LARRY'S BEDROOM. -- MOMENTS LATER

Larry calls Alex and Peter. Then he stuffs gear into his
backpack.

A sleepy Bobby watches from the doorway.

BOBBY
Whaddya doing Larry?

LARRY
Nothing, now beat it, I'm in a hurry.

BOBBY
Where ya goin'? Why are you packing
all that stuff?

LARRY
BEAT IT!

BOBBY
I'm gonna tell Mom.

Larry grabs Bobby by the shirt, drags him into the bedroom,
And dumps him on the bed. He kneels down in front of him.

LARRY
If you say one word to mom, I'll
knock your little block off. Got it?

Bobby's unfazed.

BOBBY
If you don't tell me where you're
goin'. I'll tell that cute girl you've
got a crush on her.

Larry runs his fingers through his hair, in frustration.

LARRY
Okay, okay, listen to me. You know
Will is missing, right? Well Libby
and her friends went looking for
him. So now we're going to go look
for them.

BOBBY
(sarcastically)
Then who's gonna go looking for you?

LARRY
Go back to bed, wise guy.

BOBBY
I wanna come too.

LARRY
No, no way.

Bobby starts towards the door.

BOBBY
Mom!

Larry grabs him by his collar.

LARRY
Shut up you little tattletale. I'm
going, and you're staying here got
it? If you keep your mouth shut.
I'll give you a dollar.

BOBBY
Aww do I hafta?

LARRY
Yea you hafta. Now do we have a deal?

Larry and Bobby shake hands. Larry continues packing.

BOBBY
I know where Will is.

LARRY
Oh sure you do, and my name's Babe Ruth. Go back to bed.

EXT. STANSFIELD FARM -- LATER

Four large backpacks bulging with supplies.

TOM
Okay, let's get going.

LARRY
How'd you find out Kate's missing too?

TOM
Me and mom went to the market early this morning. Mrs. Stewart was in there crying. They went looking for Will, Charlie left a note.

LARRY
I don't get it, those girls hate Kate, why would they take her with them?

TOM
Beats me.

INT. MORGAN'S MARKET - AFTERNOON

The parents sit around the table.

MILDRED
I can't believe they did this.

JEAN
It doesn't surprise me. Charlie's so impulsive, and she's very protective of her brother.

ALICE
Well, I'm proud of them.

MILDRED
You are?

ALICE
Yes, I am. There was a problem, and they decided to do something about it.

MILDRED
You're right, I suppose, I guess sometimes we underestimate our children.

JACK
Well I underestimated Megan. I found out she's been writing to her mother behind my back. I discovered a stash of letters in her nightstand.
(beat)
She must have spent her days watching for the mailman. I can't believe she'd hide it from me.

He shakes his head in disbelief

EXT. WOODS -- MORNING

A steep hill looms ahead.

MEGAN
I'm tired, can we rest for a few minutes?

KATE
Yea me too, I've got a blister.

CHARLIE
(to Megan)
Okay, you've got five minutes. I want to get to the lake before noon.

MEGAN
Ah, it feels so good to sit down. My feet are killing me.

She takes off her shoes, and begins to massage her feet.

LIBBY

Ugh. Put your shoes back on, you'll kill the wildlife.

MEGAN

(sticking out her tongue)

So rude.

KATE

What makes you think he's at the lake anyway?

Charlie glares at Kate. It's none of her business.

LIBBY

Because Will and his dad went there on a fishing trip last year.

MEGAN

Yea, and a couple of days later, Will came home alone. He walked into the store, just like that.

KATE

(flippant)

Yes I know, so what happened to your Dad?

CHARLIE

How would I know? I wasn't there, was I? No one knows what happened, no one ever found him.

Turning the knife. Kate continues.

KATE

Will knows.

CHARLIE

No he doesn't. If he knew what happened to him, he would have told me.

KATE

Maybe he's hiding it from you too, did you ever think of that? Maybe he's got a secret, that he doesn't want even you to know about.

CHARLIE

That's crazy, he would tell us if he could.

KATE

Well I think he knows something, and it'd be better for everyone if he'd just tell, instead of keeping it inside.

CHARLIE

Don't you think I know that? We've taken him to so many doctors and none of them could help him talk about it. He wants to tell us what happened, but he just can't.

KATE

He'd tell you if he really wanted to.

CHARLIE

You're wrong ... Will trusts me ...

KATE

If he did, he'd tell you what happened.

CHARLIE

I don't want to talk about it anymore, so be quiet!

KATE

The truth hurts doesn't it?

LIBBY

The truth is, you taunted Will and he got scared and ran off.

KATE

I didn't think he'd run away.

LIBBY

You're right, you didn't think and now he's lost up here. If anything happens to him, it'll be your fault.

KATE

Don't blame me, it was Sarah, she thought it up, honest.

LIBBY

Stow it Kate, we don't want to hear your sob story. And don't expect us to believe you tried to stop it.

KATE

It's true, I did try.

CHARLIE

You don't even have the courage to admit it. Not only are you a liar, you're a coward too.

KATE

I'm not lying, and I'm not a coward. Why won't you believe me, you're so stubborn, you're just like

CHARLIE

Just like who? Your Grandpa? Yea I guess so, he can't stand the sight of you either.

Kate rushes towards Charlie, claws extended. She STUMBLES and falls hard.

KATE

Oh. Ouch, my arm, my arm.

LIBBY

Don't be such a crybaby, get up.

KATE

It really hurts, I can't move it.

LIBBY

Gee Katie, then I guess we'll just have to leave you here while we go on ahead. I'll drop these little pieces of meatloaf on the ground, so we can find you on our way back.

Charlie catches on.

CHARLIE

Come on now, you know the bears will smell that meatloaf and come looking for it. They'll gobble it up piece by piece, until they find our scrumptious little Kate.

Kate changes her tune. Vulnerable now.

KATE

Don't leave me here, I'm scared of
the dark ... please.

CHARLIE

How do you think Will feels? He's
out here all alone, and it's your
fault. Stop thinking about yourself
for once.

KATE

I can't stay here by myself.

CHARLIE

Then stop whining and let's go.

MEGAN

Stop it, you're both being really
cruel.

CHARLIE

Whose side are you on?

MEGAN

I'm on your side, but it's not going
to solve anything by being so mean.
What's the matter with you Charlie?
You're acting like a different person,
and I don't think I like the new
Charlie very much.

Charlie stung by Megan's scolding, lashes back.

CHARLIE

Fine, you can stay here with Miss
bawl baby if you like, I'm going
ahead to find Will.

LIBBY

Wait Charlie.

The sound of SNAPPING twigs and she's gone.

EXT. WOODS -- MORNING

Dappled sunlight dances on two HORSES.

JIM

Better give these horses a rest.

They dismount. Jim hands Ed some beef jerky. He takes a swig from his canteen.

JIM (CONT'D)

It's ridiculous what kids get up to these days. My father would have skinned me alive if I'd pulled a stunt like this.

Jim chews thoughtfully on a piece of beef jerky.

ED

Well times have changed since we were kids.

JIM

They sure have, when I was a boy, all I did was work the farm. It never crossed my mind there could be something better out there. But Tom and Libby, they know exactly what they want out of life.

ED

Kids nowadays think they know it all. I planned for Emily to go to college and have a better life than I did, I had so many dreams for her. Then she came and told me she was getting married. I was so angry, I told her I never wanted to see her again. But I dunno, maybe she was right

Jim takes another swig from his canteen.

JIM

Yea, who knows? I got mad at Tom the other day because he skipped out on his chores to go to a practice. I went to the baseball field and hauled him home. He hasn't spoken to me since.

ED

Talk to him Jim, don't let things come between you. I never got a chance with Emily, she died thinking I didn't love her.

Jim shifts slightly, uncomfortable with Ed's heartache.

JIM

I'm sure she knew Ed. I'm sure she knew.

INT. OLD CABIN -- MORNING

Will sits at a table, reading a book. A shadowy figure crosses into view. Will looks up and smiles.

EXT. WOODS -- MORNING

PETER

Okay wait up you guys. I'm out of breath.

LARRY

Oh come on stop your whining.

PETER

I'm too tired to whine.

TOM

Gee guys, we've only been hiking for an hour.

A TWIG SNAPS.

ALEX

Listen. Did you hear something.

Silence.

LARRY

I can't hear anything, except Peter grunting and groaning.

Peter smacks Larry hard on the back

LARRY (CONT'D)

Hey, I was just kidding.

ALEX

Well I'm serious, I heard something over there.

PETER

I think I did too.

LARRY

You guys are all

ALL
Unbelievable?

LARRY
Real cute.

Behind a tree. Someone silently watching.

INT. MORGAN'S MARKET -- LATE MORNING

Officer Edwards scribbles on a piece of paper.

ALICE
(whispering)
It's a good thing our men are out there. He hasn't got a clue.

JEAN
You're right, look at him. He must have wiped his forehead a hundred times since he got here.

JACK
I'm going home, I've got some calls to make. Let me know when the men come back, I want to go search with them.

MILDRED
Alright, but I'm sure they'll have those kids home by sundown. Ed knows every part of that lake, if they're up there, he'll find them.

JACK
I just need to be alone for a while to sort things out.

Mildred gives Jack a brief hug.

MILDRED
We'll call you.

ALICE
He's taking that pretty hard, but a girl Megan's age, needs her mother.
(beat)
I worry about what'll happen if I'm not here to help raise the kids.

(MORE)

ALICE (CONT'D)

Jim's so busy with the farm, I don't know how he'll manage. He doesn't understand them the way I do.

(beat)

Tom can't think of anything but baseball, and Libby's set her heart on being a pianist. She even has a piano picked out at Randolphs Music Store. She walks by there every day just to look at it.

MILDRED

Bless her heart.

(beat)

Our Kate's had such a time since she lost her parents. She misses her mother so much. I was hoping she'd settle in here, but she's so unhappy. She wrote a story about her them for that writing competition. I think it helped her to put her feelings down on paper.

JEAN

Charlie wrote a story too. She thinks if she wins the prize money, we'll get Will to speak again. I haven't the heart to tell her the doctors said there's nothing more they can do.

ALICE

Well I guess they all have their eye on that money. Libby wants that piano, and that's the only way we'll ever be able to afford it.

JEAN

To our children, bless their hearts and their dreams.

They clink their cups of hot cocoa together in a toast.

MILDRED

Yes bless 'em, but just wait till we get them home.

JEAN

Exactly.

EXT. WOODS -- AFTERNOON

Jim talks on the radio.

JIM
Yes, I understand. Right, will do.

ED
What's going on?

Jim motions for him to be quiet.

JIM
Alright, over and out.

ED
Well?

JIM
That was Officer Edwards. Charlie Morgan and some of her friends went out looking for Will.

ED
Which friends?

JIM
Well, my Libby's one of em, Megan Davis and ...

ED
And?

JIM
Kate went with them too. Now don't worry Ed. We're going back to town to regroup, and widen the search.

EXT. WOODS -- AFTERNOON

Charlie stomps through the woods. A red object catches her eye.

Will's baseball cap.

EXT. WOODS -- CONTINUOUS

Charlie returns to the girls.

CHARLIE
I found Will's cap.

MEGAN.
Then he can't be far.

KATE
And he could be miles away, I bet he
dropped that last night.

LIBBY
Oh stop being so pessimistic Kate.
Don't you want us to find him?

KATE
Yes of course I do, but I'm tired
and my arm hurts and I want to go
home.

CHARLIE
You'd better pray we find him soon,
or I'm going to do something I might
be sorry for.
(beat)
Or maybe I won't be sorry for it.

MEGAN
Does it hurt really bad, Kate?

KATE
Yes, but I'll manage, I don't want
to stay here alone.

CHARLIE
Just try and keep up, okay?

EXT. MORGAN'S MARKET -- AFTERNOON

The men assemble outside the store.

OFFICER EDWARDS
The first thing we need to do is sit
down and figure out a plan of action.

ED
A plan of action? I don't think you
get it. Five kids are missing and
it's going to be dark soon. I want
them home before then.

OFFICER EDWARDS
I've called for more men to come in
from Salt Lake. They should be here
in about an hour.

MATTHEW

You go ahead and wait, I'm not going to sit here watching the sun go down.

ED

Amen.

JIM

Okay, lets split into groups of four, and get out there.

OFFICER EDWARDS

(stammering)

Well that's all well and good, but I think you should wait until the other policemen arrive.

MATTHEW

In this town we're like family, these kids belong to all of us. Like I said, we're heading out. You just wait here with the women.

Officer Edwards wipes his forehead and disappears back into the market.

EXT. MORGAN'S MARKET -- CONTINUOUS

Ed takes Mildred aside.

ED

Now don't you worry, we'll find them.

MILDRED

I know you will dear. You go out there and bring them home. I'll be here waiting.

ED

(gruffly)

Mil, I've been an old fool.

MILDRED

That's all forgotten, don't worry, it's going to be alright. What matters now is finding those children.

ED

Hear me out, Mildred. You were right, I've kept that pain festering inside

(MORE)

ED (CONT'D)

me for years, and what good has it done me? I lost Emily, and now I'm going to lose Kate.

(beat)

I do care about her, you know that don't you?

MILDRED

Yes I know.

He kisses her on the forehead.

MILDRED (CONT'D)

You take care of yourself. You're not a young man anymore.

ED

You're right honey, but I'm a sight better than that policeman in there.

He blows her a kiss.

MILDRED

I'll be waiting for you.

EXT. WOODS -- AFTERNOON

Tom and Larry sit on a rock. Peter and Alex gripe.

PETER

I'm tired and hungry, don't you think we should turn back?

ALEX

Yea, I bet they found them already, and we're up here looking around for nothing.

TOM

How do you know that? That policeman is probably still sitting there scratching his head. I'm not going back. You guys can chicken out if you want.

LARRY

I'm not going back either.

Peter and Alex exchange glances.

PETER

Well I'm going home. It's going to be dark soon and my parents will kill me if I'm not home in time for supper.

LARRY

You mean you'll kill yourself if you're not home for supper.

PETER

Knock it off, Larry.

ALEX

Peter's right, I'm going back too.

Tom sighs. Grabbing his backpack he gets up to leave.

TOM

Okay go, but let our folks know we're up here okay? That's the least you can do.

PETER

Okay, sure you're not mad?

LARRY

Nah, you just go on home now, and have your yummy little supper.

PETER

The only reason you're not turning back is you want to rescue Kate.

LARRY

At least I'm not quitting and running home to mama.

TOM

Come on Larry, forget them.

Alex and Peter pick up their gear and head home.

INT. OLD CABIN. -- AFTERNOON.

On a shelf, an abundance of CHILDREN'S BOOKS. By the window POTTED PLANTS in various stages of growth. Will sits at the table reading with an OLD MAN. The man speaks in a strange sing song voice.

EXT. WOODS -- AFTERNOON

Tom and Larry reach the north side of the lake.

TOM
Hey Larry, hand me your binoculars.

LARRY
Can you see anything?

TOM
Nope, nothing yet.

He opens his pack.

TOM (CONT'D)
You hungry?

LARRY
I'm starving, I bet those guys are home right now eating their supper.

TOM
At least they won't be grounded for the rest of the summer. But who cares? Dad won't let me play baseball anymore.

LARRY
Gee, just cause you didn't paint a fence? Wow, your dad is unbelievable.

TOM
Yea, I know.

A MUFFLED SOUND behind a tree stops the conversation.

LARRY
(whispering)
Did you hear that.

TOM
(softly)
Yes, something's moving over there.

LARRY
(softer)
Maybe it's a squirrel.

TOM
 Yea right ... a squirrel, good one
 Larry ... shhhh.

Tom motions for him to keep talking.

LARRY
 So Tom, what about those Yankees?
 Think they're gonna make the series
 this year?

Tom tiptoes to the tree, to find Bobby shivering and covered
 in mud. He drags him out from behind the tree.

LARRY (CONT'D)
 Unbelievable. What are you doing
 here? Didn't we shake on it? Didn't
 I tell you to stay home. I'm gonna
 brain you!

BOBBY
 (Whimpering)
 I wanted to be with you guys, don't
 be mad at me Larry.

LARRY
 Now why should I be mad? Let's see,
 you were told to stay home, but you
 followed us. I told you not to tell
 Mom, but now she's gonna know we're
 gone, cause I bet you left a trail a
 mile wide. And ... what happened,
 did you take a mud bath before you
 left?

BOBBY
 No, I was following you, but Peter
 and Alex came back down the trail,
 so I tried to hide real quick, and I
 fell down a hill into the creek.

LARRY
 It figures.

TOM
 Now what are we gonna do?

LARRY
 I dunno, we can't go back now. We'll
 just have to take him with us.

Bobby smiles.

LARRY (CONT'D)

You'd better wipe that smile off your face Bobby, When Mom and Dad find out, we're both in big trouble.

TOM

Okay, calm down. Did you bring anything with you? A change of clothes? Any food?

BOBBY

No, I was trying to hurry up, so I could keep up with you guys.

LARRY

Unbelievable. Well, you're just gonna have to wear some of my clothes,

BOBBY

Aww, do I hafta?

Larry starts towards Bobby. Tom steps between them.

TOM

Okay, you two knock it off. Get him some dry clothes out of your pack, and let's keep going.

LARRY

I'm gonna get you later.

EXT. WOODS -- AFTERNOON

The girls approach a dilapidated bridge which spans a fast moving creek.

MEGAN

The bridge's broken, Charlie.

CHARLIE

I see that.

KATE

Oh this is perfect, you mean you dragged me all this way and now we're stuck?.

CHARLIE

We're fine, we'll just, well, we'll just take a little detour that's all. Don't worry, I know what I'm doing.

KATE

Sure looks like it.

MEGAN

We'd better go back and find another way, that bridge isn't safe.

LIBBY

You're right, it does look terribly dangerous.

(beat)

So, I'll go first.

Libby jumps onto the bridge.

CHARLIE

Wait Libby, don't. We'll have to find another way around the creek.

LIBBY

Don't worry, it'll be okay, you'll see.

As Libby walks across, part of the bridge gives way.

LIBBY (CONT'D)

Help, I'm gonna fall in.

MEGAN

(dithering)

We never should have come. I knew it, we never should have come.

CHARLIE

It's okay Megan, it's gonna be okay.

Charlie rushes to the bridge.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Hold on.

LIBBY

Hurry.

CHARLIE

I am, I am.

Lying flat on the bridge she grabs hold of Libby's shirt.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Give me your hand I'll pull you up.

LIBBY

I can't.

CHARLIE

Yes you can, just hold on. Remember our motto? We are the music makers, and we are the dreamers of dreams. That means we never give up, and we never give in.

LIBBY

Okay, okay, I'll try.

Libby reaches out and grabs Charlie's hand.

LIBBY (CONT'D)

I'm slipping ... don't let go of me.

Frustrated, Charlie yells at the two girls, who stand frozen with fear.

CHARLIE

I can't do this by myself. You've got to help me, she's too heavy.

KATE

But what can I do? I can barely move my arm.

CHARLIE

Oh stop being such a baby and get over here!

Megan dithers on the edge of the creek.

MEGAN

I'm scared.

CHARLIE

We're all scared Megan.

MEGAN

Okay, I'll try but ...

CHARLIE
Hurry, I can't hold her much longer,

LIBBY
Charlie, please. Don't let go of me.

CHARLIE
I won't let go, I promise. Just hold on to my hand. Think about that piano in Randolphs store and how much you want it. Imagine how great it will be when you can finally play it.

Kate and Megan reach Libby. Megan hangs on to the bridge terrified. Kate grabs Libby with her good hand.

KATE
I've got you, just hold on.

After a lot of struggling they pull Libby back on to the bridge.

LIBBY
I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I shouldn't have been so dumb.

CHARLIE
Don't worry, it's okay now.

LIBBY
Let's turn back, I want to go home. Charlie can we go home please?

Charlie turns away, saddened by Libby's pleas, torn between going home, or continuing.

KATE
(resolutely)
No, we're not turning back! We'll build a fire and get dried out. Then we'll keep looking for Will, we're not giving up until we find him.

Charlie smiles at Kate.

CHARLIE
She's right Libby, we can't give up now.

INT. MORGAN'S MARKET -- DUSK

JEAN

Have you had heard any news?

OFFICER EDWARDS

No Ma'am. My men are doing all they can. I'll let you know the minute I hear anything.

ALICE

They've been searching all day, why haven't they found anything?

MILDRED

There's a lot of ground to cover, and we don't know which direction they went.

JEAN

I feel so helpless.

(beat)

Would it be alright if I said a prayer?

MILDRED

Of course.

The women gather in a corner.

JEAN

Dear Lord, please watch over and take care of our children. Keep them safe until help comes. Bless them with courage and wisdom. Bless those that are searching that they will find them soon. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

MILDRED

Amen.

ALICE

Amen.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WOODS -- EVENING

KATE

Amen.

The girls finish a prayer of their own.

KATE (CONT'D)

My Mom and Dad told me to pray,
whenever I'm in trouble and need
help. I said a lot of prayers when
....

LIBBY

When what?

KATE

You all know my mom and dad died in
a car accident, right?

MEGAN

Yea, Mrs. Strong told the class about
it, before you came to school.

Kate hesitates.

CHARLIE

It's okay, we're all Sisters now.

KATE

Thanks Charlie,
(beat)
We were driving home from a concert.
It was raining and the road was dark,
I was singing in the back seat, we
were having such a great time. Then
a deer jumped in front of the car. I
saw it first, and I screamed for my
Dad to look out.

Kate, lost in her reverie, stares at the campfire.

KATE (CONT'D)

He lost control of the car. If only
I hadn't screamed. It felt like
everything was in slow motion, there
was the sound of broken glass, I
think I heard my mom scream my name.
I must have passed out or something,
cause the next thing I remember was
waking up inside the car.

LIBBY

And what happened to your Mom and
Dad?

KATE

They were still in the car, I shook them, but they wouldn't wake up.

(crying)

They wouldn't wake up. It was my scream, it startled him, I know it.

CHARLIE

You don't know that for sure.

KATE

It was my fault.

CHARLIE

No, it was an accident, it wasn't anybody's fault. It was just a stupid accident.

MEGAN

I would have been so scared, all alone in the dark.

KATE

It was so dark, and it took a long time for help to come. That's why I'm so scared of the dark, and why I didn't want you to leave me behind.

CHARLIE

We wouldn't really have left you,

LIBBY

No, we wouldn't have.

CHARLIE

I prayed real hard that they'd find my dad, and that he'd come home safe. But he never did.

KATE

Yea ... I prayed my parents would be okay. But they died. Why didn't He answer us?

CHARLIE

I know He answers prayers, but sometimes it's not the answer you want. That's the hard part, that sometimes it's not what we want.

KATE
I'm don't know if I believe that

CHARLIE
You will one day.

MEGAN
I miss my mom too.

KATE
Where is she?

MEGAN
She lives in New York.

LIBBY
(to Kate)
But she's been writing to her secretly
for the past year.

KATE
Are you serious? Your dad doesn't
know about it?

MEGAN
Nope, and now she wants me to go
visit, but he'd never let me.

CHARLIE
Maybe he would, people can change.

KATE
And sometimes they don't.

The girls huddle close together for warmth.

LIBBY
Now that Kate's going to be a Secret
Sister, let's initiate her into the
club by telling some ghost stories.

MEGAN
No, it's too dark and spooky up here
as it is. If you do, I'll stick my
fingers in my ears.

They tease Megan by making loud spooky WAILING noises.

EXT. WOODS -- A HALF MILE AWAY

The boys sit around their own campfire.

LARRY
Did you hear something?

BOBBY
Yea, it sounded like a ghost.

LARRY
Yea sure, there are ghosts in these woods.

TOM
No, really, I heard something.

The sound of the girls antics in the distance.

TOM (CONT'D)
See? Sounds like something wailing.

BOBBY
What'd I tell ya?

Larry grabs Bobby and rubs his knuckles on his head.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Ow Larry, whaddya do that for?

TOM
It must be the girls. Grab the flashlights and stamp out the fire.

BOBBY
Are you sure? It sounded like ghosts to me.

LARRY
Unbelievable. You're such a dope, read my lips. There's no such things as ghosts.

The boys close their campsite and set off in the direction of the sounds.

EXT. WOODS -- EVENING -- MOMENTS LATER

As the girls sit around the campfire telling stories, an OLD MAN watches.

EXT. CRYSTAL LAKE. EVENING.

Ed slumps over in his saddle.

MATTHEW

Ed, you okay? Ed?

Matthew takes hold of Ed's horse's reins, and dismounts.

JACK

Ed, Ed, Can you hear me?

Jim reaches for his radio.

JIM

We've got a man down, we're at the south end of Crystal lake. We're going to need an ambulance. It looks like a heart attack.

EXT. WOODS -- NIGHT

The boys quietly creep towards the girls campfire.

TOM

They're over there.

BOBBY

But are you sure it's not ... ?

LARRY

(between his teeth)
Just one more word, Bobby!

BOBBY

Okay, okay, okay. Gee

EXT. WOODS -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

Megan continues to plug her ears.

CHARLIE

She looks so comical. Poor thing, she's always afraid of her own shadow.

LIBBY

Well leave her like that for a minute, I've got a great story I want to tell you.

The boys APPROACH the campfire.

LARRY

Well, hello, hello, hello.

The girls SCREAM. Megan's oblivious.

LIBBY

Tom, what are you doing here? You about scared us all to death.

TOM

We're looking for you and your friends you dope.

LARRY

Yea, half the town is out looking for you.

LIBBY

We came looking for Will, he's missing.

TOM

Yes, I know, everyone's looking for him too. So you haven't found anything either?

MEGAN

Charlie found his hat about a mile down the road.

LARRY

We walked all around the south side of the lake, and didn't see a thing. Don't worry, now we're here you don't need to be afraid anymore.

KATE

We managed quite well before you got here, and we'll manage just fine when you leave.

LARRY

I'm sorry, I didn't mean it that way.

KATE

Well exactly what way did you mean it?

A SQUEAK behind them.

MEGAN

Huh, what?

CHARLIE
(sarcastically)
Don't be afraid Megan. These dashing
young men have come to rescue us,
and take us safely back to our
village. There is nothing more to
fear, all is well.

TOM
That's not funny.

LARRY
Is this all the thanks we get for
coming to find you?

KATE
What did you expect Larry?

LARRY
(to himself)
She remembered my name. Unbelievable.

Bobby walks over to the middle of the kids.

BOBBY
Okay now I've got something to say,
so listen up.

All eyes on the little boy with the muddy face.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
If you follow me, I can take you to
Will.

LARRY
Unbelievable. What are you talking
about?

BOBBY
Be quiet and listen.

Completely stunned, the kids sit around the fire and pay
attention to Bobby.

EXT. CRYSTAL LAKE -- NIGHT

Flashing lights of an ambulance. Ed is loaded in. The siren
WAILS through the night.

INT. MORGAN'S MARKET -- NIGHT

OFFICER EDWARDS

Mrs. Stewart, may I talk to you for a moment?

MILDRED

Is everything alright?

OFFICER EDWARDS

I'd like a word with you over here, if you don't mind.

Jean puts her arm around Mildred.

JEAN

You can say what you have to say, right here.

MILDRED

Has something happened to Ed?

OFFICER EDWARDS

I'm sorry Ma'am, There was some kind of trouble up in the woods, and he's been taken to University hospital.

MILDRED

Is he going to be alright? What happened?

OFFICER EDWARDS

All they told me is that he fell ill up by the lake.

JEAN

Come on Mildred we'll take my car. Don't worry, Ed's a fighter, he's going to be fine.

Mildred and Jean exit the store. Alice watches the tail lights of the car as it pulls away.

EXT. WOODS -- NIGHT

A shadow emerges from behind a tree. The girls SCREAM. Tom steps between the shadow and the kids. An OLD MAN illuminated by the campfire.

He covers his ears, the kids SCREAMS bother him.

OLD MAN
 (fearful)
 Don't scream, shhh, shhh

TOM
 What do you want? Who are you?

BOBBY
 It's Eli.

LARRY
 (whispering)
 Huh? ... Unbelievable.

BOBBY
 You're Eli.

ELI
 Yes sir. Yes sir.

Eli rocks his body. He flaps his right hand as he begins to speak.

ELI (CONT'D)
 Will's asleep. He's okay. He's okay now. Eli found him, he was sad.

CHARLIE
 Where is he? Tell me where you took him please.

ELI
 (smiling)
 Eli can take you. Will's asleep, Shhh. Follow Eli. Follow Eli.

MEGAN
 I'm

KATE
 (kindly)
 I know, I know, you're scared. Don't worry just stay by me okay?

MEGAN
 Thanks.

LARRY
 If you girls are scared, I can protect you.

KATE
Give it up Larry.

LARRY
Okay, but if you change your mind,
I'm right behind you.

BOBBY
See I was gonna tell you, but no one
ever listens to

LARRY
Oh put a cork in it, Bobby.

ELI
Follow Eli.

TOM
Who is this guy Bobby?

BOBBY
Okay you all know that Will was lost
in the woods last year?

LARRY
(sarcastically)
Really? I never knew that.

TOM
Larry, shhh.

LARRY
Okay, okay.

BOBBY
I asked Will what happened, I told
him to write it down, and I promised
I wouldn't tell anyone.

LARRY
And he told you?

BOBBY
Yea, he wrote that he and his Dad
were fishing. Will fell in the lake,
and his Dad tried to save him.

KATE
But what happened to his dad?

BOBBY

He doesn't know, he just remembers waking up in Eli's cabin.

LARRY

So he has no idea what happened to his dad?

BOBBY

No.

LIBBY

But how did he found his way home.

BOBBY

Eli took him to the edge of the woods. He made him swear never to say a word.

TOM

Why?

BOBBY

I dunno, maybe Eli was afraid someone would come up here and find him.

LIBBY

But who is he?

BOBBY

Will knows who he is, but he wouldn't tell me. I tried to tell you Larry, but you wouldn't listen.

LARRY

Get over here, Bobby.

BOBBY

Aw do I hafta?

Bobby walks reluctantly over to Larry.

LARRY

I'm sorry, kid. I should have listened. From now on, I promise, I'm gonna listen to you, okay?

Larry ruffles Bobby's hair.

BOBBY

Unbelievable.

They follow the girls and Eli as they come to an old cabin.

ELI

Eli's lives here. You can come in,
but don't tell. Yes sir, you have to
promise or you can't come in. Promise
promise.

KIDS

We promise.

CHARLIE

Eli we won't tell anyone. Can I see
my brother please?

Eli hesitates.

ELI

You gotta put your hand up and say,
I swear, say it, say it now. I swear.

The kids solemnly raise their right hands.

KIDS

We swear.

Satisfied, he opens the door. Will sleeps on a bed in the
corner of the room. Beside him a copy of the book, 'Charlie
and the Chocolate Factory'.

On a shelf, a row of children's books. A nightstand holds
two framed pictures. By the window, a plethora of potted
plants.

CHARLIE

(in awe)

What's going on here? These books,
they're mine.

(to Eli)

Where did you get them? And why do
you have a photograph of our family?

She picks up the sepia photograph and studies it.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

And ... this one ... this is my
Grandma and Grandpa Morgan.

Charlie approaches Eli, bewildered.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Who are you?

Will begins to stir.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Will, are you okay?

She reaches into her backpack.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Here, I brought Billy.

Will hugs the bear and looks around the room, still half asleep.

ELI

Will's okay, he's okay. Eli took care of him. He was sad. Will was sad. Yes sir.

CHARLIE

Yes, Eli, I know he was sad. Someone scared him. But we have to go home now. My mom wants us back home. Will you come with us?

Eli rocks back and forth.

ELI

(extremely agitated)

No, Eli stays here, Eli stays here. Eli lives here. Yes sir. Eli stays here.

The kids back away unsure of what to do. Megan steps forward.

MEGAN

It's alright Eli, we won't let anyone hurt you. Take my hand, don't be afraid. We're going home and you can come too.

Megan takes Eli's hand, he accepts.

KATE

Megan, that was really brave of you.

MEGAN

Thanks Kate, somehow I'm not afraid anymore. Let's all go home.

EXT. EDGE OF WOODS -- NIGHT -- LATER

Four POLICEMEN hike along the trail. The kids and Eli approach. The police draw their GUNS.

POLICEMAN

(to Eli)

Stop right there. Step away from those kids.

CHARLIE

Please ... Put the guns down, he's our friend.

The policemen advance towards them.

POLICEMAN

(to Eli)

I said, step away from the kids with your hands up.

Eli freezes, he rocks his body back and forth violently.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)

You kids come over here.

He raises his gun in Eli's direction. Eli calls to Will.

ELI

Help, Eli. Help Eli, Will, help Eli.

The police edge closer, GUNS raised. Will rushes to Eli's side. A voice PIERCING the night.

WILL

No. Please, leave him alone, leave my Uncle Eli alone. He won't hurt you. He's my friend.

CHARLIE

Will ... you spoke, you spoke.

ELI

You did it, you did it, you did it.

The police advance on Eli. Tom steps between them.

TOM

Don't come any closer. We're all going home, and Eli's coming with us.

Larry stands beside Tom.

LARRY

That's right, so back off. Just radio our parents and tell them we're walking home.

The remainder of the kids surround Eli and Will.

The police allow them to pass. One reaches for his radio.

POLICEMAN

We've found them, they're coming down Main Street. They're okay.

INT. MORGAN'S MARKET -- NIGHT -- LATER

A reunion.

MILDRED

Your Grandpa and I were so worried about you my dear.

KATE

(looking around)

Where is he? It doesn't look like he was that worried, he's not even here.

MILDRED

Kate, your Grandpa's in the hospital, he was out searching for you, and he had a mild heart attack.

KATE

I want to see him.

MILDRED

Not right now dear, he's worn out.

KATE

He's going to be alright though, isn't he Grandma?

MILDRED

The doctors said with lots of rest, he should be good as new in a few weeks. We can see him in the morning. Now let's go on home, it's been a long day.

She reaches for Kate's hand. Kate winces.

KATE

Ouch.

MILDRED

What happened to your arm?

KATE

I fell, it's just a bit sore that's all.

MILDRED

I think it's more than a bit sore, it looks like it's broken.

Megan and Jack sit in a corner of the store.

MEGAN

It was so scary up there Dad, I kept praying you'd find us.

JACK

We searched around that whole lake, I was worried sick.

(beat)

Megan I found the letters.

MEGAN

Oh.

JACK

Why didn't you tell me?

MEGAN

I wanted to, but I knew you'd be angry. I know how much you and mom hate each other.

JACK

We don't hate each other, Megan. Not any more.

MEGAN

You don't?

(beat)

Mom asked me to visit her this summer, and I want to go. Would that be okay?

JACK

I'll think about it.

MEGAN
Really?

JACK
Yes really.

INT. STANSFIELD LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT -- LATER

JIM
I can't believe you two, how could
you scare your mother and me like
that?

LIBBY
It was my fault Dad.

TOM
I'll deal with you later. Tom, come
with me out to the barn.

ALICE
Don't be too hard on him Jim.

LIBBY
Dad, it was all my fault, please.

INT. STANSFIELD BARN -- CONTINUOUS

JIM
You know Tom, I brought you out here
to

(beat)
I brought you out here to apologize.
I'm sorry, son. I had no idea how
important this baseball thing is to
you.

TOM
Dad I

JIM
Let me finish, apologizing doesn't
come easy for me. I've been hard on
you kids, and too wrapped up with
this farm. Things are going to change
around here. And tomorrow I'm going
to call Matthew and ask him to put
you back on the team.

TOM
Thanks Dad, I promise I'll keep up
with my chores, I won't let you down
again.

JIM
I know you won't son. But you have
to promise me one more thing.

TOM
Name it.

JIM
That you'll put up with an old man,
cheering from the bleachers.

Jim grabs for his son, and hugs him.

TOM
You got a deal Dad, you holler all
you want.

Jim walks towards the barn door.

TOM (CONT'D)
Dad?

JIM
Yes son?

TOM
I love you.

TWO WEEKS LATER.

INT. JACKSON JR. HIGH AUDITORIUM -- NIGHT

MRS. STRONG
Thank you all for coming this evening.
I thought it would be a grand idea
to hold this assembly to announce
the winners of the writing
competition. Take your seats please.

A crowded auditorium. The Secret Sisters sit side by side.

On Kate's right arm a plaster cast decorated with their
signatures.

MRS. STRONG (CONT'D)

There were so many wonderful entries in the competition. The judges told me they had a difficult time choosing the winners. So congratulations to all those who entered, and now without further ado, let's get on with it.

(beat)

The third prize goes to Libby Stansfield.

CHARLIE

I didn't know you entered.

LIBBY

I decided to at the last minute. I wanted the piano so much. I know you wanted to win, but I did too. Don't be mad at me Charlie.

CHARLIE

I'm not mad, go on up there and get your prize.

Libby walks to the podium to receive her award.

MRS. EVANS

The second prize goes to Laura Simpson.

Kate GRUMBLES under her breath.

KATE

Can you believe it? That little sneak. She wrote that story two days before the deadline.

Kate shoots an insincere smile at Laura, as she makes her way to the podium.

MRS. STRONG

And now, without further ado, we will announce the grand prize winner.

(beat)

And the prize goes to Miss Katharine Taylor.

KATE

(stunned)

Oh no, Charlie, I didn't think I'd win. You should have won, you're a much better writer than I am.

CHARLIE

(bitterly)

If that's true then why are they calling your name?

The audience chant..

LARRY

Go Kate. Go Kate.

CHARLIE

You'd just better go.

KATE

But ... I'm sorry Charlie.

Kate walks to the podium and takes the microphone. Charlie escapes. She collided with Matthew as she dashes out.

MATTHEW

Charlie where are you going?

Kate waits for the audience to quiet down. She looks down at Charlie's empty seat, and glances around the auditorium.

KATE

Thank you everyone.

(beat)

But, I shouldn't really be up here. When I decided to enter this competition, I did it because I wanted to beat someone else out of the prize. That person is now my best friend, and I wish she were up here instead of me.

She looks around the room, searching for Charlie, but she's gone.

KATE (CONT'D)

My story is about two special people, my mom and dad. Writing about them made me remember so many things we shared. I miss them so much, But I

(MORE)

KATE (CONT'D)
know they'll never be far away,
because if you love someone, they
can always be right here in your
heart.

The auditorium erupts with APPLAUSE.

INT. JACKSON JR. HIGH SCHOOL -- AUDITORIUM -- MOMENTS LATER

Larry bumps into Kate, who is searching for Charlie.

LARRY
Congratulations Kate, so what are
you gonna do with all that money?

KATE
I know exactly what I'm going to do
with it, Larry Evans, but I'm not
telling you, because it's none of
your business. And I'm in a hurry,
so excuse me.

LARRY
(crushed again)
Okay, well maybe I'll see you at
Sarah's party tomorrow night.

KATE
I'm not going, I'm not one of the
cool girls anymore.

LARRY
(stuttering)
Yes you are, I mean, I don't know
what I mean, but anyway, I'm not
going either. I just remembered I
have some chores to do.

Tom walks over to pat Larry on the back.

TOM
He was only going to the party because
he thought you'd be there.

LARRY
Thanks a lot Tom, you're a real pal.

KATE
Is that true?

LARRY
No it's not

TOM
Yes it is.

LARRY
Okay, so what if it is?

KATE
Oh Larry, that's so sweet.

She bestows a little peck on his cheek.

He watches her exit the auditorium. He rubs his cheek, dazed.

LARRY
(softly)
Unbelievable.

INT. SECRET SISTER CLUB -- NIGHT

Charlie rips up her manuscripts, sobbing with frustration.

A KNOCK.

CHARLIE
Please, go away and leave me alone.

Another KNOCK, more insistent.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I said go away.

Matthew opens the door and stands in the doorway.

MATTHEW
I'm not going anywhere until we've
had a talk.

CHARLIE
I just want to be left alone.

MATTHEW
I know you're feeling terrible right
now.

CHARLIE
Oh, you think?

MATTHEW
That's not like you, Charlie.

CHARLIE
I'm sorry Mr. Henderson.

MATTHEW
Don't you think it's time you started
calling me Matthew?
(beat)
Your mom told me how hard you worked
on your story and I know how much
this meant to you.

CHARLIE
(crying)
I don't get it. I didn't even get
third place. And Libby doesn't even
want to be a writer, she wants to
be a musician. It's not fair. It's
not fair.

MATTHEW
I know, I know.

CHARLIE
And Kate only entered the competition
so she could beat me. I'm so
humiliated!

MATTHEW
Why?

CHARLIE
Because everyone in school knows I
want to be a writer, and now they
all know I'm no good.

MATTHEW
Now hold on, what makes you think
you're no good?

CHARLIE
Well, because I didn't win.

MATTHEW
Tell me something Charlie, why do
you write?

CHARLIE

I write because I love it, I write because I have a million stories inside my head, I write because it makes me feel good.

MATTHEW

Then that's what you need to do, just keep telling your stories, and don't let anything stop you.

CHARLIE

But ...

MATTHEW

Now, no more excuses, I didn't think you were a quitter, you're not are you?

CHARLIE

No, I'm not, and I guess you're right, I mean, even Jo didn't get her first stories published did she?

MATTHEW

Right, so you just have to keep trying, and one day you'll get that first story published I promise.

(beat)

Now, are you ready to go back and congratulate your friends?

CHARLIE

Will you come with me? ... Matthew.

Matthew opens the door, and makes a sweeping gesture.

MATTHEW

Your carriage awaits, my lady.

INT. MORGAN'S MARKET -- NEXT DAY -- AFTERNOON

A clean shaven, well groomed Eli stocks the shelves.

MATTHEW

I can't believe they put him away in that cabin, all these years.

JEAN

Me either, Ed told me he and Eli used to play together when they were kids. Eli didn't go to school, Grandma Morgan taught him to read and write. He was sixteen when Will was born. They told Ed's folks, they wanted a new start with a normal son.

MATTHEW

Did Ed know about the cabin?

JEAN

No, he figured they'd sent him out of state somewhere. You know, like a special school. When Grandpa Morgan died last March, Eli must've learned to fend for himself.

MATTHEW

Eli, can we talk to you for a minute?

ELI

Eli's working.

JEAN

It's alright Eli, come and take a break for a minute.

ELI

Okay, yes sir. Can I have a candy bar?

JEAN

Sure, just one though okay?

MATTHEW

Eli, can you tell me what happened to your brother?

Eli begins to rock.

JEAN

It's alright, there's nothing to be afraid of. We just want to know what happened. I need to know, Eli.

ELI

Eli was scared.

JEAN
Did you see what happened?

ELI
Eli saw, Eli saw. Yes sir.

FLASHBACK

EXT. CRYSTAL LAKE -- DAY

Father and son knee deep in the lake fishing. Will cavorts in the water.

WILL MORGAN SR.
Hey son, you'll scare all the fish if you keep that up.

WILL
Sorry Dad.

WILL MORGAN SR.
I'm going to get more bait. You behave now, you hear?

WILL
Sure Dad, but I'm gonna catch the first fish. Just watch this.

He reaches the shore, and looks back to see young Will tugging on the line. It pulls him under the water.

WILL (CONT'D)
Daddy. Help me.

WILL MORGAN SR
I'm coming

Will sinks beneath the surface. Will Sr. dives continuously.

From the shore Eli watches. He rocks back and forth. Then SCREAMING loudly as if to give himself courage he hurtles himself into the water.

WILL MORGAN SR.
Please help me, my boy's under the water.

Eli dives.

Minutes later. Eli surfaces with Will Jr. He drags him to the shore.

He lays him down carefully and turns back to the lake, but it's perfectly still.

BACK TO SCENE

Eli rocks back and forth.

JEAN
You did what you could, Eli.

ELI
He was Eli's brother.

JEAN
I know, I know. I'm so sorry. But I'm glad you told me. It's been hard on all of us, not knowing what happened, and not having a place to take flowers, and say goodbye.

Eli jumps to his feet.

ELI
Follow Eli. Yes sir. Follow Eli.

MATTHEW
What is it Eli?

ELI
Follow Eli.

Eli runs out of the market to the car.

ELI (CONT'D)
Drive, Drive okay?

Jean calls to Charlie and Will, who are sitting on a bench outside the store.

JEAN
Charlie, Will, get in the car now.

CHARLIE
What's wrong?

JEAN
I don't know, just get in.

They pile into the car. Eli sits in the back seat rocking excitedly.

ELI
Drive, Okay? Drive. Yes sir. Drive.

The car peels out onto Main Street in the direction of Crystal Lake.

EXT. WOODS -- AFTERNOON -- CONTINUOUS

Eli drags Jean, the others follow. Eli chuckles with excitement.

ELI
Hurry Charlie, Hurry Will. Come on.
Hurry. Okay?

JEAN
Where are you taking us? Do you want
to go home? Is that it? You want to
go back to your cabin?

Eli takes Jean by the hand, pulling her further into the woods. They come to -- A crudely erected stone wall surrounding a large garden.

It's landscaped perfectly, with beautiful flowers and rocks. In the middle of the garden. A headstone, etched with childlike scrawl. 'My brother'.

CHARLIE
I can't believe this.

JEAN
Eli, did you build this garden?

ELI
Yes Eli did it. Eli did it.

WILL
(to himself)
That's why you wanted me to bring
you the seed packets, so you could
create this garden for my Dad?

CHARLIE
Oh Eli. It's beautiful.

JEAN
You must have spent hours working on
it.

ELI

(proud)
Yes sir.

CHARLIE

(to Will)
Did you know about this Will? Did you know what happened to Dad?

WILL

No, I didn't, I promise. I just used to meet him at the edge of the woods, and take him seeds and books and stuff.

(beat)

Eli told me never to tell anyone where the cabin was. He said Grandpa Morgan would be very angry, I didn't tell him Grandpa passed away, I didn't want to make him feel sad.

CHARLIE

You're really something special, Will Morgan Jr.

WILL

No, it's Eli who's something special

CHARLIE

Yes.

WILL

And now Eli can live with us, right mom?

JEAN

Well ... would you like that Eli?

ELI

You want Eli to come live at your house?

CHARLIE/WILL/JEAN

(in unison)

Yes sir!

INT. STEWART HOME -- ED'S BEDROOM -- SUNRISE

Kate KNOCKS.

ED
Come in.

KATE
Hi Grandpa.

ED
Hello dear, you're up bright and
early today.

KATE
Isn't it a beautiful day Grandpa?
(beat)
I got up early because I want to
give you something. Please don't be
upset.

ED
Now why would I get upset? I love
getting presents.

KATE
I'm not sure you'll like this one.

ED
Alright then, let's make a little
bargain.

KATE
(unsure)
Okay.

Ed turns and reaches under his pillow.

ED
I'll give you this present and then
you can give me mine.

Ed hands Kate a package.

KATE
For me? What is it?

ED
Open it, and see for yourself.

Kate opens the package carefully. A sculpture of a family.
Emily, Joseph and Kate.

KATE
 Oh Grandpa, it's beautiful, I love
 it. Thank you Grandpa, thank you so
 much.

She hugs him.

KATE (CONT'D)
 Now your turn. I'll be right back.

She dashes out of the room. She hesitates as she returns.

KATE (CONT'D)
 Close your eyes.

She places a pile of envelopes in her Grandpa's hands. On
 each one, the words, 'Return to Sender', in red ink.

ED
 Oh no.

KATE
 Don't be mad Grandpa, I saved them
 for you.

ED
 I'm not angry, I'm ... I'm afraid to
 open them.

KATE
 Please Grandpa, she loved you so
 much. I know she'd have wanted you
 to have them.

Kate reaches over and kisses him on the forehead.

KATE (CONT'D)
 It's alright, she forgave you a long
 time ago.

Ed takes a letter and opens it.

EMILY (V.O.)
 Dear Dad, I love you so much, and I
 know in my heart you love me too. I
 wish you could see your beautiful
 granddaughter, she's looks just like
 you Dad. How's Mom? ... I miss you.

EXT. STANSFIELD FARM -- DAY -- AN HOUR LATER.

Libby works in the barn. Classical music reverberates.

KATE
Hey Libby where are you?

LIBBY
Over here.

The girls approach the stall. Libby milks Daisy.

KATE
Oh that has got to be the most
disgusting thing I've seen in all my
life.

Libby points a teat at her, she screams.

KATE (CONT'D)
Don't you dare!

CHARLIE
Is Tom awake?

LIBBY
Yea he's gathering the eggs. He's
rushing to get his work done before
the game this afternoon.

MEGAN
(teasing)
And why do you care if Tom's awake?

CHARLIE
I just wanted to say thanks, that's
all.

A large truck rolls up the driveway. It's the Randolph Music Store delivery truck. The men open the back and begin to unload a piano.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Libby, come over here, you aren't
going to believe this.

Libby hurries to the barn entrance.

LIBBY
Wait, Mr Randolph, there must be
some mistake, we didn't order a piano.

MR. RANDOLPH

(smiling)

This is the Stansfield Farm isn't it?

LIBBY

Yes it is, but

CHARLIE

May I see the packing slip?

MR. RANDOLPH

Certainly young lady.

CHARLIE

Libby, it's got your name on it, read it for yourself.

Libby reads the packing slip, then dashes to the house.

LIBBY

Mom, Dad, hurry, come and see what's outside. You won't believe it.

MEGAN

I wonder who sent it.

KATE

(shrugging)

I don't know.

Kate winks at Mr. Randolph.

KATE (CONT'D)

But now she really can be a music maker.

EXT. BALLPARK -- AFTERNOON

TOM

Hey Charlie, can I talk to you for a minute?

Charlie blushes and jumps down from the bleachers. Megan and Kate nudge each other.

Tom and Charlie walk over to the dugout.

TOM (CONT'D)

(shyly)

Hi.

CHARLIE

Hi.

An awkward silence.

TOM

Glad you could come to the game.

CHARLIE

I wouldn't miss it. I hope you win.

TOM

Oh we will.

CHARLIE

You're very confident this afternoon.

TOM

Well, I always play to win.

CHARLIE

(shyly)

Tom?

TOM

Yes.

CHARLIE

Thank you for coming to find us.

Tom grins.

TOM

I think we all kind of found each other,

(beat)

Don't you?

CHARLIE

Yes, I guess we did.

TOM

We're going to get ice cream after the game. Do you want to come?

CHARLIE

You mean ... with you?

TOM

Yes with me.

CHARLIE
Okay, I'd like that.

TOM
Cool, bye Charlie.

CHARLIE
See ya, Tom.

EXT. BALLPARK -- DAY

The game begins.

CHARLIE (V.O.)
Everyone has a dream.

Various shots of the game and the spectators.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Some dreams are magical.

CU ON ELI.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Some dreams really do come true.

CU ON WILL AND BOBBY CHATTING AS THEY GATHER UP BATS.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Some dreams are like flowers, they
take time to bloom.

CU ON KATE WAVING TO ED AND MILDRED.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SECRET SISTER CLUB -- NIGHT

Charlie sits at her desk.

CHARLIE
My dream can wait ... until tomorrow.

She reaches for a sheet of paper and writes the title of her
new story.

FINDING LOUISA

FADE OUT: