

A Treasure Unseen

"A Treasure Unseen"
(formerly "Easter Pebbles")

Written by

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"A TREASURE UNSEEN"

FADE IN:

EXT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE - DAY

A simple suburban house distinguished from all the others on the street by the multitude of whirligigs and kinetic sculptures in the front lawn and on top of the mailbox.

A breeze sets the whirligigs in motion and drives a scattering of autumn leaves across the yard as a mailman drives up. When the mailman departs, the mailbox comes to life, a simple sculpture changing into a living, mechanical spider. The mailbox stretches its eight legs and grabs onto an overhead wire, lifts itself from its pedestal, and begins to quickly crawl, upside down, along the wire that is but one fiber of a large artificial web. The spider-mailbox proceeds to travel up to, and then follow around the house, to the backyard.

Strewn about the backyard are the skeletons and skins of household appliances and some unrecognizable machines that have been cannibalized for parts. In the far corner of the yard is a small, two-car garage/workshop.

A loud periodic thumping can be heard coming from the workshop as an occasional puff of smoke burps forth from its small chimney. The spider-mailbox comes up to the left of the workshop's door, lowers itself onto another pedestal, and folds up its legs to transform back to its simple form. A moment later, as if an after-thought, the spider-mailbox unfolds a single leg, knocks on the workshop door, and then closes up for good.

INT. WORKSHOP - DAY.

The loud thumping continues as a number of large, complex, homebrew machines go about their work making parts and assembling a small, mechanical, metal toy.

Over the noise of the machines, the coughing of an old man can be heard.

The assembly line stretches along two walls of the workshop. One machine, made from a truck rim, engine parts, and what might have been kitchen utensils, takes in a continuous narrow strip of sheet metal and through one clicking and popping revolution, spits out a cut and formed part. The part then rides a conveyor belt along to the next machine.

Along the walls behind the conveyor belt, between each machine, are a number of sketches, blueprints, patent certificates, and photographs.

The part continues along the conveyor and after processing by three more similarly strange machines, a completed toy, packaged and ready for sale, drops into a large cardboard box.

Each toy is labeled "Smiling Swami Soothsayer."

GIL EVERS, a thin man in his late eighties, crosses the workshop floor carrying a large chemical reference book.

GIL

Fifty percent bismuth, twenty
five percent tin, the rest
lead, hmmmmm... Perhaps a
bit of cadmium...

Gil places the book down on the edge of a large workbench just as he is gripped by a dry, hacking, coughing fit.

Next to the book is a tattered old cigar box. Within the cigar box are a dozen antique metal toy soldiers.

Gil picks up one of the soldiers and places it into a small ceramic pot that is over a low flame. A collection of other small bits of metal is added to the pot as the soldier begins to deform and melt. A thermometer registers the rising temperature of the now molten metal and upon reaching the red zone, a group of machines on the back of the workbench start to whirl and turn. The ceramic pot is lifted off the flame and brought around to a small square mold. The molten metal emits a long hiss as it is poured into the mold's gate and instantly cools.

A moment later, the two halves of the mold are pulled apart by thick hydrologic cylinders.

A dull silver disk rolls out, down a ramp, takes a turn and continues down another ramp until it is stopped at the end of a line of ten more identical disks. The disk at the front of the line is released, rolls forward and falls onto its side. With a loud thump, the disk is stamped in a large press to form a token. The token is ejected from the press and falls into a tin can half full of identical tokens.

Gil picks out a token and examines it. On one side the token is stamped "Rosa Americana" and "1722". The other side contains a simple smiley face. Gil smiles back at it before polishing the token with a small rag.

In the background a faded photograph shows a younger Gil, holding up a trophy cup, his two sons, and his grandson by his side. They are standing under a banner emblazoned with "Inventor of the Year"

GIL

(to photo)

Now we will see just how
clever you are.

Gil is again struck by an extended coughing fit.

EXT. GRAVESIDE SERVICE - DAY

Flowers and a United States flag adorn an open casket service presided over by a PRIEST and attended by NORA, a heavy set woman in her forties, and a large number of empty folding chairs. The spring flowers and chirping birds provide some natural decoration to the otherwise drab cemetery.

A dinged up sedan comes up the road and stops in front of the graveside service. STEVEN EVERS, an average height, slightly overweight, man in his mid-thirties and IAN EVERS, a thin and awkward boy of fourteen years, get out of the sedan and begin to cross the street towards the service. They are dressed for the funeral although, wrinkled and dusty from a long drive.

IAN

Dad, are you sure this is the right one?

STEVEN

According to the directions I got at the front gate.

Steven suddenly stops Ian's advance.

STEVEN

Hang on a second. Let me adjust your tie.

IAN

Daaad, what difference does it make?

STEVEN

We dress up as a sign of respect.

IAN

Who is going to feel disrespected?
(indicating the empty chairs)
Them?

STEVEN

I will. We show our respect for the departed because it is the right thing to do, not to impress others.

Steven and Ian continue to walk towards the service as the Priest continues.

PRIEST

...Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. Heavenly father we give unto you, your child, Gil...

Steven and Ian come up on the open casket and quietly stand next to it while the Priest finishes.

PRIEST

...Evers. May he rest in peace among the angels of heaven. Amen.

Steven and Ian step back and take seats across the aisle from Nora, who is weeping softly. The casket is closed and the service completed.

IAN

Where's Uncle Ed?

STEVEN

I suppose he had better things to do. Perhaps he doesn't feel comfortable at funerals.

Steven, Ian, and Nora, still slightly weeping, are walking away from the gravesite, while in the background, the Priest departs and cemetery workers fold up the chairs.

NORA

Steven Evers?

STEVEN

Yes.

NORA

I was your father's private duty nurse. I knew his puttering around in that drafty ol' workshop was going to get to him one day.

STEVEN

Maybe, but that is what he loved to do. The last thing that he would have wanted was to lie around and wait for time to catch up with him. His puttering is what kept him going these last few years.

NORA

I guess you're right. Still he could've worn a mask. Workn' 'round all that dust and vapors.

The FUNERAL DIRECTOR, a man in a dark suit, who is standing next to their car, distracts Ian.

IAN

Dad? -- Who's that?

STEVEN

I'm not sure. You stay here
while I find out.

Steven walks towards the man, leaving Ian with Nora.

NORA

You must be little Ian?

IAN

Yes ma'am.

NORA

Oh! I have heard so much
about you, from your grandpa
Gil. He told me about how
you love to build things like
he did.

Nora gives Ian a bear hug, almost smothering him in
her bosom. Ian struggles to free himself, but only
slightly.

IAN

I bet. Grandpa liked to talk
a lot.

Nora releases him, remembers something, she begins
to search in her purse.

NORA

Wait a second; your grandpa
wanted you to have this.

Nora pulls out an ornate metal, glass bead encrusted
amulet on a silver chain and gives it to Ian.

NORA

I saw him working on it one
day and I thought it was so
pretty. The next day he gave
it to me and said that I
could keep it 'til he
passed... and that then...
you should have it.

Ian looks over the amulet. In the center is a
quarter-sized circle that is divided into four

quadrants, each containing a cryptic hieroglyph-like drawing.

Surrounding this centerpiece, are twenty glass beads and around the outer rim, above each bead, is a set of one or two letters. The edge of the amulet is decorated with delicate filigree.

IAN

Why don't you keep it? I wouldn't even know what to do with it.

NORA

No. He made it for you. You should have it.

Ian looks over the amulet, turning it over and examining it from all sides.

Steven approaches the Funeral Director.

STEVEN

Can I help you with something?

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

Yes sir, I represent the cemetery and... well... there is the matter of the bill.

STEVEN

What? I thought all that was taken care of through your pre-need plan.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

Yes... Well... The problem is that the last few payments were missed.

STEVEN

Missed!? -- That's just great... What do we owe you?

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

The remainder due, including today's service is... four thousand.

STEVEN

Wow... I don't have that kind of money, I'm between jobs.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

I can send it to the estate manager's office, Mr. Pierson is it?

STEVEN

...Yes. Fine, do that. I'll handle it from there. Thanks.

FUNERAL DIRECTOR

You're welcome sir.

They part company and Steven heads for the driver's side of his car.

STEVEN

(under breath)

Ed, you tight wad!

INT. EDWARD EVERS' OFFICE - DAY

A large office with an oversized glass and stainless steel desk and furniture made with odd angles, so desperately hip that it makes you sick. On one wall is a large map of the city with several pushpin flags in it.

EDWARD, a tall and trim man in his early forties, is standing behind the desk. Edward is talking calmly, but with great relish, into a SPEAKERPHONE. HUGO a man of average height but above average strength and bulk sits across the room, reading a magazine with a confused look on his face.

SPEAKERPHONE

Yes, but... you have to understand.

EDWARD

Listen, all I understand is that last month my offer wasn't good enough for you.

SPEAKERPHONE

Since then, well... all of
the other offers have been
withdrawn for some reason.

Edward, with a devilish smile on his face, looks
across the room at Hugo.

EDWARD

Really, all of them? --
Perhaps the property isn't
even as valuable as I first
thought.

Hugo continues to be confused by what he is reading
and fails to recognize Edward's gaze.

SPEAKERPHONE

There has been one new offer,
from a New York concern,
but... Its quite a bit less
then what we bought the
property for five years ago.

Edward, annoyed by Hugo's lack of interest in the
conversation, exchanges his smile for a look of
disdain and picks up the receiver to continue the
conversation in relative private.

EDWARD

Okay, maybe I can help you
out then. Let's say... my
original offer... but we
reduce the price by ten
percent and you have only two
weeks to have the building
ready for new occupants.

SPEAKERPHONE

What?! Our leases don't
allow us to evict on such
short notice! Do you realize
how much that it will cost
us!?

Edward calmly moves the loud handset away from his
ear and again looks to Hugo for some interest in the
deal.

EDWARD

That is not my problem. This is my final offer. As I see it, you can't afford not to take it... Unless, of course, you want to go with New York's offer?

Edward is now very annoyed by Hugo, who is flipping between two pages of the magazine trying to understand them.

SPEAKERPHONE

...Fine! I will have the papers written up and sent to you this afternoon.

EDWARD

Good, it is a pleasure doing business with you. Good-bye.

Edward hangs up the phone with a loud clank that finally tears Hugo's attention away from his reading.

EDWARD

Do you know what just happened here?

HUGO

Yeah... Ahhh... You just made a deal, right boss?

Edward crosses to the map and puts in another pushpin.

EDWARD

Not just any deal! -- The deal! The one I had you make an offer on as 'A New York Concern'. This one deal nearly doubles my holdings...

Edward turns and sees that Hugo has again been distracted by his magazine.

EDWARD

Hugo!

HUGO

Yes boss?

EDWARD

Pay attention! -- What are you reading anyway?

HUGO

It's an article about the renovating and reopening of an old amusement...

Hugo is interrupted by the voice of LINDA, Edward's secretary, on the speakerphone. Edward holds up a finger to shush Hugo as he goes back to the desk.

LINDA

Mr. Evers, I have Mr. Pierson on line one.

Edward snaps up the handset.

EDWARD

Hello, Mr. Pierson...

Hugo, mouth agape, blinks at Edward who is now ignoring him. With a shrug Hugo goes back to trying to understand his magazine.

EDWARD

Yes, I see -- I'll be there in fifteen minutes.

Edward quickly hangs up the phone, grabs his coat, snaps his fingers at Hugo to follow, and they both head for the door.

INT. MR. PIERSON'S OFFICE - DAY.

The law office is decorated in classic oak and leather with barrister shelves along one wall. Steven and Ian sit in matching guest chairs next to an empty one. In front of them, seated at a large oak desk is MR. PIERSON, a bearded man in his fifties, who is shuffling papers and occasionally spinning in his chair to look at a grandfather clock in the back corner of the room.

NANCY (VIA INTERCOM)

Mr. Pierson, Edward Evers is here to see you.

MR. PIERSON

Thanks Nancy, show him in.

The office door behind Steven and Ian opens and Edward enters, followed closely by Hugo. Mr. Pierson greets them and Edward takes the empty seat, forcing Hugo to stand.

Steven and Edward exchange nasty looks.

MR. PIERSON

As you all know, we are here today for the reading of Gil Evers' last will and testament. -- "I Gil Evers, being of sound mind and body...

EDWARD

Yes, yes, we all know that part, please move on so I can get out of here.

MR. PIERSON

Yes, certainly...

(to Steven)

any objection to cutting to the chase as it were?

STEVEN

No, that's fine. Far be it for me to interfere with my dear brother's busy schedule.

Again, Steven and Edward exchange dirty looks while Mr. Pierson flips to the last few pages of the will.

MR. PIERSON

Alright, let's see... da. da. da... Right, here it is. "To my eldest son, Edward, I hereby give full ownership and rights of manufacture of all my patents. To my younger son, Steven, I hereby leave my house, its contents, and all other property owned by me at the time of my death.

(MORE)

MR. PIERSON (CONT'D)

To my only grand-son I leave
my workshop, its tools, and
other contents. May you have
as much fun building things
as I have. What little cash
I have left is to be split
between my sons." -- Well,
gentlemen, that's it.

EDWARD

What do you mean? That's it?

MR. PIERSON

I mean that there is
nothing...

A livid Edward surprises the room by bolting to his feet and leaning over the desk towards Mr. Pierson.

EDWARD

I know what you mean, but
what about my fathers'
antiques, the toy soldiers,
his gold coins?

Mr. Pierson calmly flips back and forth through the pages of the will.

MR. PIERSON

I see no reference to any of
that in here. If those items
exist and are within the
house or workshop, then they
belong to your brother, or
nephew respectively.

Mr. Pierson reaches for a box full of rolled up blueprints and project notebooks.

He places them on the desk and pushes them towards Edward.

MR. PIERSON

These are the patent drawings
and documents that your
father left you... That is
all.

Edward glares at the documents for a second before grabbing them and stuffing them into Hugo's unsuspecting arms.

Hugo struggles to keep from dropping the documents.

EDWARD

Wonderful. Where do I sign?

Mr. Pierson places the will in front of Edward pointing to where he should sign. Edward gives the will a quick scribble and walks out in disgust.

EDWARD

Great! Now I know exactly what the old fart thought of me.

Everyone watches as Edward storms out of the room followed closely by Hugo who continues to struggle to hold the documents. Ian is the only one amused by the scene.

Steven's attention returns to Mr. Pierson.

STEVEN

So what properties did my father own? I only know about the house over on maple.

MR. PIERSON

There is only one parcel left. Your father sold the bulk of his land to support his toy production. This parcel contains about a hundred wooded acres on the edge of town and it is not worth very much in this market. Neither is the house, unless you plan to live in it.

STEVEN

I can't live here. I got a job waiting for me in Victorville.

IAN

Come on dad. Victorville is a tiny, boring, town. I want to live in a real city.

STEVEN

Be that as it may son, I've got work waiting for me there.

IAN

That project won't take you long, and then what? Wouldn't there be much more work here?

STEVEN

Possibly, but this not the time or place to make that decision.

As if in agreement, Mr. Pierson places the will in front of Steven and holds out a pen for him to sign. As Steven signs, Mr. Pierson picks up a ring of keys.

MR. PIERSON

Here are the keys to the house and workshop. If you need anything else, please feel free to call.

Steven and Ian get up to leave.

STEVEN

There is one other thing. About the funeral...

MR. PIERSON

They have already called. There is just enough in your late father's cash accounts to cover it.

STEVEN

Thanks.

INT. EDWARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Edward bursts through the doors of his office with Hugo in tow, still trying to keep a hold on all the patent papers.

EDWARD

I can't believe it! After
all I did for him!

HUGO

He did give you all these
patents, boss.

EDWARD

Patents!? What am I supposed
to do with those? He was
never able to make money
selling any of his stupid
little toys! Besides...

Edward grabs one of the patent documents from Hugo and holds it up to his face.

EDWARD

...See this! Patented 1982.
Do you know what that means?
-- Of course you don't. It
means that the patent
protection has already
expired! Now anyone can make
his stupid little toys.

Edward shoves all the documents out of Hugo's arms and onto the floor. Cautiously, Hugo stands there watching Edward rant.

EDWARD

These things are worthless,
kindling, and he damn well
knew it! -- The antiques and
coin collection are
rightfully mine. -- I'm sure
they are in his workshop
somewhere. -- And you are
going to find them for me.

EXT./INT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE - DAY.

Steven and Ian are each carrying an open box into the house from Steven's overstuffed car. Ian's box contains Scrabble and other board games. BERTHA, a trim woman in her mid-thirties, and ALISON, a girl about Ian's age, that resembles her mother except that she is plus-sized, approach the men, carrying a plate of sandwiches and a bottle of soda.

BERTHA

Hello there. How's it going?

STEVEN

Good, how are you doing today?

BERTHA

Oh, you know, can't complain. We saw you from our place, across the street, and thought you might like a snack.

STEVEN

Thanks, that would be nice. Why don't you come on in?

Ian and Alison exchange shy glances and follow their respective parents into the house.

The interior of the house is a collection of styles and furniture from the last three decades.

They enter the dinette. The boys place their boxes on the floor and dust themselves off.

BERTHA

I'm Bertha and this is my daughter, Alison.

Ian and Alison exchange quick, stilted greetings.

Bertha places the plate of sandwiches onto the table and Alison follows suit with the soda. Steven goes into the kitchen and starts looking through cabinets as Ian uncovers the plate and starts eating one of the sandwiches.

STEVEN

I'm sure there are bound to be some glasses around here somewhere.

BERTHA

Have you unpacked them yet?

STEVEN

This used to be my father's place until he passed away a month ago.

BERTHA

I'm so sorry to hear that.

ALISON

We just moved here last Christmas.

STEVEN

Ah, here they are.

Steven takes four glasses from a shelf and returns to the dinette, stopping on the way to pick out some paper plates.

STEVEN

Ian, don't be rude. And here, use a plate.

Bertha and Steven each take a plate and a sandwich as Alison pours everyone some soda.

BERTHA

So, Ian, how old are you?

IAN

Fourteen.

BERTHA

That would put you in eighth grade, same as Alison, wouldn't it?

IAN

Yeah, I just finished eighth grade back in Texas.

BERTHA

Really? Well, the semester at Williams Junior High still has few of weeks to go. We're on a year-round schedule here.

STEVEN

I guess I'm going to have to look into the school situation on Monday.

IAN

What! Dad!? I've already finished junior high. You're not going to make me go back just for a couple of weeks, are you?

STEVEN

You know how I feel about education Ian.

IAN

I know, but, geez I already have nine college credits from advanced placement tests.

STEVEN

Then another couple of weeks of junior high should be easy for you.

BERTHA

And my little Alison can show you around.

Alison, who has been smittenly looking at Ian, turns to her mom with a look of shock.

ALISON

Mooooom!?

Steven and Bertha exchange mischievous smiles.

INT. SCIENCE CLASSROOM - DAY

The room is full of students with only a few chairs to spare.

The periodic table decorates one wall while homemade models of the solar system dangle from the ceiling.

The TEACHER is standing at the front of the room explaining the lesson when Ian appears in the open doorway.

TEACHER

May I help you?

IAN

Is this room 1026?

TEACHER

Yes it is. You must be Ian Evers. Come in and take a seat.

Ian enters and awkwardly looks around the room. He is relieved to spot Alison in the back of the room and takes a seat near her. Ian's seat is directly in front of NELSON, a muscle bound meathead that is a couple of years older than his classmates.

Ian waves hello to Alison and her returned smile and wave sends Alison's "in-crowd" GIRLFRIENDS into a fit of whispers and giggles.

TEACHER

Where was I? -- Yes, the Copernican theory. Who can tell me about this theory?

The Teacher looks out over a sea of students who have diverted their eyes to avoid being called upon. Ian, seeing this as well, sighs and raises his hand.

TEACHER

Yes, Mr. Evers.

IAN

The Copernican system, proposed by Nicolaus Copernicus in 1543, advanced the theories that the earth and the planets are all revolving in orbits around the sun, and that the earth is spinning from west to east at the rate of one rotation per day.

TEACHER

Correct, very goo...

IAN

While not completely accurate the Copernican system was the basis of Johannes Kepler's laws. According to Kepler's first law, the planets orbit the sun in elliptical paths, with the sun at one focus of the ellipse. The second law states, that the areas described in a planetary orbit... by the straight line joining...

Ian looks out of the corner of his eyes to see that a stunned silence has come over the room. Ian now sits with thirty pairs of amazed eyes glued to him.

TEACHER

Well... Thank you Mr. Evers. Luckily, for the rest of the class, I won't be expecting quite that much on the test.

At this, the room returns to its former level of whispered chatting and giggling.

GIRLFRIEND #1

Alison, he's such a geek.

GIRLFRIEND #2

Yeah, you didn't tell us that.

GIRLFRIEND #1

I can't believe you like him.

ALISON

I never said I liked him, my mother made me...

Ian overhears Alison but shrugs it off, turns his attention back to the Teacher and the lesson.

Nelson also overhears Alison and slugs Ian hard in the shoulder blade.

NELSON

Good answer, brainy-ack.

INT. YELLOW SCHOOL BUS - DAY

Ian sits surrounded by empty seats.

Students enter the bus and fill up all the empty seats, except the ones around Ian.

Ian stares out the window at the blur of suburbia, as the bus speeds away from the school.

EXT. YELLOW SCHOOL BUS - DAY

Ian exits the bus and begins the lonely walk down the block to his house.

As the bus of cheerful students continues down the road, Ian is engulfed by the bus's cloud of black diesel exhaust.

Alison approaches Ian from behind, as he coughs and gags.

ALISON

How's it going?

IAN

Just great. Oh, it's you.
What do you care?

ALISON

I care a lot.

IAN

Oh sure, you're just a happy
little 'care bear'.

ALISON

Ummm... I'm sorry about class
today, you know how it is.

IAN

I guess, I don't know... But
who cares, school will be out
soon anyway.

ALISON

So, you want to walk me the rest of the way home? -- I'll let you carry my books.

IAN

What! You'll 'let me'!?...
Sure, why not.

Alison hands Ian her books and skips ahead.

ALISON

Don't you just love the springtime? The flowers are in bloom and the colorful birds everywhere. -- Can I come over to your house? My mom won't get back from work for a while.

IAN

Yeah, whatever.

ALISON

Great! I'll leave my mom a note, to let her know.

INT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Ian and Alison enter as Steven is going through a box of cookware.

ALISON

Hi there Mr. Evers.

STEVEN

Hello Alison, Son. Ian, could you take the boxes on the table out to the workshop? I'm trying to get dinner started.

IAN

Okie Dokie, Dad.

Ian puts Alison's books and his pack down before going to the dinette. Alison follows in close pursuit. Steven collects a few pots and utensils and goes into the kitchen.

INT. WORKSHOP - DAY

Alison opens and holds the door while looking for a light switch, while Ian struggles to get his box into the workshop and onto the workbench.

A large shadowy figure ducks behind a far shelf.

The light comes on and Alison and Ian look around at the dusty machines, half covered with black plastic sheets, and shelves of raw materials.

ALISON

Wow, what is all this?

IAN

This was my grandfather's workshop. He was an inventor.

ALISON

Really. What did he invent?

IAN

Mostly toys. Like this one.

Ian picks up one of the soothsayer toys from the workbench.

IAN

You're supposed to ask it a question and it will give you an answer.

Ian pushes a button on each side of the toy and it pops open.

It has a small, double faced, swami head and a disk divided into several pie-shaped areas with writing on them. The swami head and the disk are set spinning by the opening of the spring loaded lid. After a moment the disk and head abruptly stop.

IAN

See how it says "Not Likely" and the swami has a frown?

ALISON

What did you ask it?

IAN

What?... I didn't ask it
anything... It's just a toy.

ALISON

Let me see it.

Alison takes the toy from Ian, thinks for a second,
and activates it again. This time it stops on
"Soon" and a smiling swami face.

ALISON

Good.

IAN

What's good?

ALISON

Oh, nothing.

Alison crosses the room, puts down the toy, and
removes the plastic from one of the tables.

ALISON

What's this?

On the table is a complex Rube Goldberg machine with
a large red 'start' button in one corner.

IAN

I don't know. It looks
interesting though.

Ian leans down to closely inspect the machine when
it suddenly lights up and starts to play music.

Ian jumps back to see Alison coyly standing to one
side, her finger on the button.

ALISON

Oops.

A steel ball rolls down a ramp and starts the series
of chain reactions a la the game 'Mouse Trap'.

Ian and Alison look on in amazement as does the
shadowy figure from his hiding place.

A number of dominos in the machine fall and start
another steel ball rolling back and forth down a
series of ramps.

The ball stops at the end of one of the ramps, the machine's lights dim as the music drones to a stop.

ALISON

What's wrong with it?

Ian begins to investigate the machine, visually following the path of the ball down the ramps. He steps back and looks around the workbench.

IAN

Something is stuck in the path of the ball. I need pliers or tweezers to get at it.

Ian takes a pair of needle nose pliers from the workbench and tries to free the obstruction.

The machine's lights flash and it sputters out a couple of notes.

ALISON

Careful, don't break it!

Ian succeeds at removing the obstruction.

IAN

Looks like paper.

Ian carefully unfolds the wad, revealing it to be a large piece of Bible paper containing, typewritten, apparently random, nonsense words.

Ian and Alison look over the paper giving the shadowy figure a chance to slip out the back door.

ALISON

It doesn't make any sense; it's just a bunch of gibberish.

IAN

Don't be so sure. My grandfather loved to make puzzles and games for us. This is probably a cipher-encoded message.

ALISON

A what what? Speak English
will ya.

IAN

Come on.

Ian grabs Alison by the wrist and leads her out of
the workshop.

Alison is shocked by Ian's rudeness but welcomes the
contact.

INT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian and Alison enter and try to quickly make their
way passed Bertha and Steven, who are in the kitchen
serving up dinner.

STEVEN

Hang on there a minute young
man. Aren't you going to say
hello?

IAN

Oh, hi.

ALISON

Hi mom.

BERTHA

What are you kids up to?

IAN

Alison and I found a puzzle
that Grandpa hid in the
workshop. We're going to go
work on it.

STEVEN

Okay, why don't you take a
plate of food with you?

Ian takes the plate in one hand, while still
concentrating on the puzzle, and heads for his room.

BERTHA

Alison, we have to be going
soon.

ALISON

Okay, in a minute mom.

Alison follows Ian into his room.

STEVEN

Are you sure you don't want
to say for dinner?

BERTHA

No thank you, we already have
plans.

INT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE/IAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Ian's room is a jumble of science models, half
unpacked boxes, and piles of clothes.

Ian enters excitedly and puts the plate of food on
top of his cluttered desk. Alison calmly follows
him in.

ALISON

What a mess.

IAN

What?... Yeah, I'm still
unpacking.

Ian quickly gathers up some of the dirty clothes,
throws them into an open box, and then begins to
search through another box.

IAN

I bet this is just a simple,
mono-alphabetic, substitution
cipher.

ALISON

Again, English please.

IAN

It means that each letter in
the message actually stands
for another letter in the
alphabet. It can be
deciphered using basic
statistics and the known
letter frequency of the
English language.

Alison begins to poke around Ian's room looking in the open boxes.

ALISON

Well, that is just sooo much clearer.

IAN

Every Tuesday Andy Orders New Razors.

ALISON

What? Who's Andy?

IAN

Nobody, it's a mnemonic.

Alison stares blankly at Ian.

IAN

Mnemonics help me remember things in the right order. Like 'King Phillip Cuts Open Five Green Snakes' biological Classification: Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Order, Family, Genus, Species.

ALISON

Oh, like 'Every Good Boy Does Fine'...

Now Ian is the one staring blankly at Alison.

ALISON

E, G, B, D, F... You know... musical notes?

IAN

Sure, I guess, I don't see much use for music.

ALISON

So, you don't know everything after all?

IAN

What?... I never claimed that.

(MORE)

IAN (CONT'D)

In any case, the most commonly used letters in English, in order, are: E, T, A, O, N, R. -- So, we count the number of times each letter appears in the message and the most common one stands for E, the next most common A, and so on. -- Now if I could just find my crypto book.

Alison pulls out the Scrabble game from one of the boxes and looks at it.

ALISON

Don't common letters like E have less point value in Scrabble?

IAN

Of course! The guy that invented Scrabble counted letters in newspaper stories to decide on the letter values.

Ian takes the Scrabble game from Alison, grabs a piece of paper from the desk, lies on the bed and starts counting the letters in the puzzle.

BERTHA (O.S.)

Alison, let's get going.

ALISON

I've got to go. Thanks for walking with me and carrying my books.

Ian waves goodbye without looking up from the puzzle.

IAN

You're welcome.

ALISON

I guess I'll see you tomorrow.

IAN

Um, sure.

Alison shoulders slump as she walks out of Ian's room.

ALISON

Coming Mother.

INT. EDWARD EVERS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Hugo sits, smiling, and repeatedly activating a soothsayer toy.

Edward enters talking on a cell phone, followed closely by Linda who is presenting him papers to sign.

EDWARD

...What do you mean you can't finish the build out! Leave that to me... I'll handle the building inspector. Just get back to work.

Edward ends the call, tosses the phone on the desk, and drops into his chair as Linda heads out of the office.

EDWARD

Linda, send a bottle of champagne to the building inspector for district seven.
-- Include a nice note too.
Dear... What's-your-face, I know you are having a busy week. Perhaps you need to take a break and enjoy some bubbly. Etcetera, etcetera.
-- That should move me to the top of his list.

Linda notes Edward's orders and leaves, giving Hugo a "tread softly" look.

Hugo gets up; still fiddling with the soothsayer toy, and cautiously approaches the desk.

HUGO

Err, Boss?

EDWARD

Yes, did you find them?

HUGO

I looked all over and didn't find any soldiers or coins.

EDWARD

They have got to be there! Are you sure you looked everywhere?

HUGO

Yeah boss, but the kid and some girl came in, so I had to sneak out the back while they was reading something.

Edward violently seizes the toy from Hugo.

EDWARD

You big oaf! I see you didn't have any trouble finding this stupid toy.

HUGO

Well there was plenty of those arou...

EDWARD

Reading!? What were they reading?

HUGO

I don't know it was some piece of paper they found in one of the machines.

EDWARD

That's it! The crazy old man must have hidden the goods and left a note for them.

Edward waves Hugo out of the office.

EDWARD

Go away. I have to think. Stay on those brats and let me know where they go.

Hugo reluctantly leaves without his toy.

Edward unwittingly activates the soothsayer toy.

EDWARD
(to himself)
I just have to think like my
father.

The soothsayer toy spins to a stop on "Difficult, at best."

Noticing this, Edward reactivates the toy.

EDWARD
(to the toy)
I'll figure this out, sooner
or later.

The toy stops on "Not likely".

EDWARD
What do you know, you useless
piece of junk!?

Edward tosses the toy into the trash activating it once again.

The toy, laying crooked in the trash can, spins to a stop. With a frown it shows "Trouble ahead".

INT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE/IAN'S ROOM - NIGHT.

Ian is laying on his bed, excitedly working on the now half completed puzzle. The plate of food sits cold and untouched where Ian left it.

Steven enters the doorway.

STEVEN
Time to go to bed son.
You've got school tomorrow.

IAN
Dad, look, I almost have
Grandpa's puzzle figured out.

Steven glances at the paper and over at the plate of food.

STEVEN

I see. That's good son. --
What this?

(indicating the
plate)

You don't like your dad's
cooking?

IAN

What? Oh, sorry about that
dad, I wasn't hungry.

Steven picks up the plate, and turns to leave.

IAN

Dad, get this, even though I
can read some of the words it
still doesn't make sense.

(reading)

"Go to a blank guarded by a
blank so blank..."

STEVEN

Sounds like a riddle, there's
more to understanding it than
just being able to read it. -
- Lights out. When I come
back I expect you to be ready
for bed.

IAN

Okay, dad.

Ian continues to work on the puzzle as Steven exits.

INT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE/KITCHEN/DINETTE - NIGHT.

Steven enters with the plate and sighs as he throws
away the food and puts the plate into a sink of
dirty dishes.

Steven goes to the dinette and picks up a letter
from the table. It is printed on IRS letterhead.

STEVEN

(to himself)

A riddle, like how I'm going
to pay these taxes without
selling off the land.

Steven tosses the letter back onto the table and turns off the lights as he heads down the hall.

INT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE/IAN'S ROOM - NIGHT.

The lights are out and Ian appears to be asleep under the covers. The puzzle and pencil sit on the corner of his desk near the bed.

The light in the hallway goes out as Steven enters Ian's doorway.

STEVEN

Good night, Ian.

Steven continues down the hall, leaving Ian's door ajar.

Ian's hand reaches up and quietly takes the puzzle and pencil from the desk.

The room is dark until the dim glow of a flashlight comes on under a tent of bed covers.

EXT. SCHOOLYARD (AFTER SCHOOL) - DAY

Alison and her friends are chatting and waiting in line to board a school bus. Ian approaches with the puzzle in hand.

IAN

Alison! I finished it.

Ian leads a hesitant Alison by the wrist away from her shocked friends.

IAN

What I mean is, I've decoded it. It's a riddle and I need some help figuring it out.

ALISON

Wait just a minute buddy. What makes you think I care about your silly riddle?

Alison looks back at her friends, who's chatting occasionally gives way to laughter as they board the bus.

IAN

I thought you wanted to help me? -- You seemed so excited about it when we found it.

ALISON

Maybe, but that was yesterday. I've lost interest in it since then.

The full school bus drives on and passes them with mocking echoes of "Alison and Ian, sitting in a tree..." in its wake.

ALISON

See that? You've made me miss my bus. Now you have to walk me home.

IAN

Oh... kay... Do you want to hear about the riddle?

ALISON

I suppose, whatever. -- Here, carry my books.

Ian absentmindedly accepts Alison's books and begins to eagerly explain how he broke the code.

Hugo, slumped in the front seat of his car, watches from a distance as Ian and Alison walk down the street.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Ian and Alison are walking down the sidewalk of a busy, tree-lined street next to a large park.

IAN

...after substituting the most common letters in the cipher-text with the most common letters in English, I had a good portion of it converted to plain-text. Then, knowing that T H, H E and I N are the most common digraphs...

Alison stops and holds out a hand to halt Ian.

ALISON

Alright, enough. What did all that "cipher-diagraphing" tell you?

IAN

Ahh... You mean deciphering?

ALISON

Whatever... What does it say!?

Ian struggles to get the riddle out from under Alison's books to read it.

IAN

"Find the place guarded by a creature so regal, with the heart of a lion and the eyes of an eagle. The place that holds the magic of the moon and makes manmade lightning each afternoon. Follow my heed and you shall see the amulet knows where my treasure be."

ALISON

Amulet?

Ian puts Alison's books down and gets the amulet out of his backpack.

IAN

I think he means this. My grandfather gave it to his nurse for safe keeping until she could give it to me.

ALISON

Wow, it's... amazingly... ugly... Although the chain is nice. Why don't you wear it?

Alison places the amulet around Ian's neck.

IAN

He made it as a clue, not as
piece of jewelry.

ALISON

Still, the gems are pretty.

IAN

I don't think they are gems,
more like glass. Look at
this...

(indicating the
amulet's center)

There are four glyphs, ah,
drawings. The first one E=M
must stand for the encoded
message. The second one is a
griffin.

ALISON

And a griffin is?

IAN

It was a mythical animal with
the head and wings of an
eagle and the body of a
lion... "the heart of a lion
and eyes of an eagle."

ALISON

I see...

IAN

You mean you understand?

ALISON

(pointing)

No, I mean I see it. Over
there.

In the distance is a bronze statue of a griffin.
The plate on the statue's base reads "David Griffin
park and observatory"

Above them, on the top of a mountain stands the dome
of the observatory.

Ian starts walking quickly towards the entrance to
the park. He puts the amulet down his shirt to stop
it from bouncing around as he walks.

IAN

Come on, it's getting dark
and that looks like a long
walk.

ALISON

Hang on.

EXT. PARK ENTRANCE - DUSK.

The griffin statue stands guard over the front gate
to the park. Just inside is a bus stop and a pay
phone.

Ian passes the entrance on his way to the payphones.
He looks back at a lagging Alison.

IAN

I should call my dad and let
him know I'm going to be
late.

Ian digs some change out of his backpack, picks up
the phone, and dials.

INT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE/KITCHEN - DUSK.

A phone rings and Steven answers it.

STEVEN

Hello. -- Sure you can check
it out. Just don't stay out
too late. -- Remember, no
staying out past eight on a
school night. -- Give me a
call if you need to be picked
up.

EXT. PARK ENTRANCE - DUSK.

An observatory shuttle bus passes Alison as she
trudges the final few yards with her arms full of
books.

ALISON

I thought you were going to
carry my books?

Alison catches up with Ian as he is hanging up the phone and thrusts her books on him.

IAN

I can fit them in my backpack. -- Why didn't I think of that earlier?

ALISON

I don't know. Why didn't you? -- Come on, we're going to miss the shuttle.

Ian and Alison walk toward the waiting bus.

ALISON

I don't get you. How can you be so smart but not think of the simplest things?

Ian and Alison board the bus and it heads up to the observatory.

INT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE - DUSK.

Steven hangs up the phone and turns toward the table.

STEVEN

That was Ian. He's going to check out the observatory at Griffin Park.

Steven takes his seat at the table across from Edward, who is sipping some coffee.

EDWARD

Hmmm... So, what do you think of my offer.

STEVEN

I don't know. I'd like some time to check out the market and maybe get it appraised.

EDWARD

Look Steven, I've been working in real estate years and for land in that area it's a very reasonable offer.

STEVEN

I'd just like some time to
think it over.

EDWARD

Okay, just don't think too
long.

EXT. OBSERVATORY - DUSK.

Hugo watches Ian and Alison enter the observatory
while parking his car.

Hugo's distracted driving causes him to run the
front end of his car up onto the side walk, nearly
hitting a pedestrian, and making a lot of noise.

Hugo struggles to wave an apology and back his car
off of the sidewalk, while at the same time trying
to get out of the seatbelt so he can follow Ian and
Alison.

INT. OBSERVATORY/LOBBY - DUSK.

The observatory is crowded with families of tourists
waiting in lines for demonstrations and looking at
exhibits.

Hugo rushes in and frantically looks around for Ian
and Alison.

Not finding them, a frustrated Hugo leaves the
building.

HUGO

(to himself)

Da boss ain't going to like
this.

Ian quickly leads Alison around the observatory
passing several science and space displays that are
in small rooms lining each hallway. They pass one
display room that has been covered by a curtain and
come to a stop in a large exhibit hall.

IAN

I don't get it.

ALISON

Don't get what?

IAN

I know how my Grandfather could have thought of an observatory "holding the magic of the moon"... But how would it "make manmade lightning"?

ALISON

I don't know, with lightning rods?

IAN

That's silly; lightning rods are used to attract lightning away from the other parts of the building by giving the electric charge an easy path to ground.

Alison drops her head and looks at Ian from the tops of her eyes. Ian clicks, DUH!

ALISON

Hello... joking.

Ian heads off in a rush back toward the front door leaving Alison to once again catch up.

EXT. OBSERVATORY/ROOF - NIGHT

A grand dome of stars against the dark sky, rises above the observatory, as if mirroring the twinkle of the house lights from the city far below.

Ian bounds up the stairs and begins searching around the roof. A weary Alison slowly climbs up the last few steps.

Alison is revived by the sight of the city far below and goes over to the railing to get a better look.

ALISON

Wow! Ian, come look at this.

Ian searches around the building for a while before joining Alison at the railing.

IAN

I give up. I don't see how
anything around here could
make lightning.

ALISON

Oh, Ian. Look around you,
isn't it gorgeous? The city
lights below us... And the
stars stretching out forever.

Alison is awed by the sight of the stars and begins
to walk around the roof looking straight up.

Ian looks up at the stars briefly before noticing
the metal tops of the observatory's domes.

IAN

Maybe there is something up
there.

Ian walks off to look around one of the domes.

Alison begins to dance in the starlight turning
slowly with her arms outstretched.

Suddenly she runs into the stone railing and
stumbles. The top of the railing gives way and she
falls forward. Doubled over the rail, Alison
screams at the hundred foot vertical drop she is
facing.

She attempts to pull herself back, but her grip on
the powdery remnants of the rail is weak.

Ian hears Alison's screams and starts to run to her.

As Ian rounds the dome, the sight of a large hand
interrupts the distant image of Alison hanging on
for dear life. The hand grabs Alison by the back of
the shirt, nearly picking her up completely, and
pulls her to safety.

Alison collapses to the floor and, panting heavily,
shuffles away from the railing until her back is up
against a wall.

Alison looks up at her savior in the half-light.

HUGO

Are you alright?

ALISON

Yes, yes, I think so...
Thank you... I don't know
what would have happened if
you hadn't of come along.

HUGO

You should really look where
you're walking.

Ian runs up to Alison and Hugo.

IAN

Are you okay? What happened?

Ian squats down beside Alison just as Hugo turns and
walks away.

IAN

Are you sure you're not hurt?

ALISON

Yeah, I'm fine. This man...

Alison looks over only to see Hugo's back quickly
heading for the stairs.

Ian looks in the same direction but only catches a
glimpse of Hugo's profile disappearing down the
steps.

IAN

Who was that? He looks
familiar.

ALISON

I don't know. He saved me
but I didn't have a chance to
get his name or even to...
to thank him.

Ian helps Alison to her feet while looking at the
empty staircase.

IAN

I think I know that guy. He
works for my uncle.

ALISON

Please, Ian, take me home
now?

IAN

But what would he be doing here? Unless he was following us...

ALISON

You think too much. Maybe he was just out looking at the stars too.

Ian and Alison come down the stairs and cross the main entrance of the observatory. A bright, flickering, blue glow is coming from the entrance along with a loud electrical buzzing. Both the light and the noise are intermittent but in sync.

IAN

What is that...

INT. OBSERVATORY - NIGHT

Ian and Alison enter the observatory and follow the noise to the closed exhibit, now only partially covered by the curtain.

In the exhibit is a large Tesla coil. The upside down cone of heavy gauge wire sits on a wooden base and is topped by a copper bowling ball.

An eccentric, Croatian, TECHNICIAN of fifty years, is half inside the wooden base adjusting the coil's circuit and grumbling curses.

IAN

Excuse me... I was wondering if you could...

The startled Technician bonks his head on the low ceiling of the base, dropping his tools.

TECHNICIAN

What in the name of Jesus, Mary and Joseph!...

The Technician backs out of the base and turns to face Ian and Alison.

TECHNICIAN

Oh, you are kiddos... What are you doing here? The observatory is closing. Go away. Can't you see I'm working?

IAN

I was just wondering, this is a Tesla coil right?

TECHNICIAN

Yes it is... So... What do you know of it?

IAN

Nikola Tesla was an American electrical engineer and inventor who discovered the principle of rotating magnetic fields, which is the basis of practically all alternating-current machinery and most modern electrical power systems used throughout the world.

TECHNICIAN

You are right, except...

The Technician bolts upright, stands at attention, and gives a Croatian military salute to the picture of Tesla on the side wall.

TECHNICIAN

...that he was born a Croatian!

The Technician walks around "presenting" the coil as he gives a fervent speech.

TECHNICIAN

In 1885 Nikola quit his job working for that idiot Edison and financed his own laboratory by selling his AC patents to Westinghouse. -- Westinghouse, what a capitalist pig!

(MORE)

TECHNICIAN (CONT'D)

He took Tesla's ideas as his own and set out to wire the entire country to draw from his power company! This was too much for Nikola who believed in free electric power for all... and so he toiled away in his laboratory for years until he created his greatest invention, this... The Tesla Coil!

Ian and Alison are stunned by the Technician's display.

ALISON

So, does this thing make lightning?

TECHNICIAN

But of course, the high frequency, high voltage built up on that sphere is released in great bolts that cross to the panels on the walls.

IAN

Is it working?

TECHNICIAN

You want to see a demonstration?... But of course, wait here a second.

The Technician returns to his work in the base of the coil. After some tool clanking and indistinct curses, he emerges with his hands full of electrical test equipment.

The Technician closes the base access panel and pats the coil.

TECHNICIAN

There you are sweet pea, be a good girl now.

The Technician exits the display area, pulls the curtain all the way open, and stands next to the coil's activation button.

TECHNICIAN

Are you ready to witness the
power and glory of that which
was born from the genius of
the greatest inventor ever? -
- TESLA!

The Technician presses the activation button; an extremely loud buzzing noise comes from the base of the coil and lightning bolts fly out in all directions from the copper sphere.

A neon tube that is shaped to spell "TESLA" lights up even though it is not connected to any wires.

Ian stands in awe of the powerful display, while a frightened Alison turns away and buries her face in Ian's chest. Alison is startled by a bright red glow beneath Ian's shirt.

Alison pushes back and stares wide-eyed at Ian's glowing chest.

ALISON

Ian, I think you're on fire.

Just as Ian looks down, the Technician releases the button. The coil goes quiet and the neon sign, as well as Ian's chest, go dark.

IAN

What are you talking about
Alison?

ALISON

I saw it! Your chest was
glowing!

Realizing what Alison is saying, Ian reaches into his shirt and brings out the amulet.

TECHNICIAN

Wasn't that glorious, let's
see it again, shall we?

The Technician presses the button again and along with the lightning and the neon sign, three of the beads on the amulet begin to glow increasingly brighter.

Ian, Alison and now the Technician stare at the amulet's beads that reach a blinding brightness.

The three glowing beads burn out with a pop and the center section of the amulet suddenly opens.

Although the Tesla coil is still producing brilliant bolts of lightning, the amulet is dark.

With the flickering of the observatory's lights, the Technician realizes that he has had the coil activated too long. He jumps away from the button.

A wisp of smoke rises from the base of the coil.

TECHNICIAN

Oh, No! My sweet pea! What
have I done!? They made me
do it!

The Technician points an accusing finger at Ian and Alison.

TECHNICIAN

You two! Get out!

Ian and Alison back away from the exhibit and walk towards the exit.

TECHNICIAN

Yes, sweet pea. I know you
are tired. Rest now.

EXT. OBSERVATORY - NIGHT

Alison quickly makes her way down the observatory steps, but Ian has stopped to examine the open amulet.

IAN

Wait... There is another
note inside the amulet.

ALISON

I couldn't care less. I just
want to get home and go to
bed. We've got a chemistry
test tomorrow you know. Come
on, the bus is going to
leave.

IAN

Yeah, okay, let me just get
the note out.

The observatory shuttle bus is about to close its
doors just as Alison and Ian catch up to it.

INT. SHUTTLE BUS - NIGHT.

The bus rocks slightly and its brakes squeal as it
slows for each of the sharp curves down the mountain
road.

Alison is sitting, slumped and exhausted, across the
isle from Ian who is concentrating on carefully
removing and unfolding the note.

IAN

Alison, listen to this, it's
another riddle.

ALISON

Yeah, yeah, whatever.

IAN

"Deep in the woods, past the
city lights, is a meadow of
flowers bold and bright. The
heart of the meadow, cold as
it may be, is where to start
the hunt you see. The table
shows clearly the path to my
gold, walk proud like a
soldier and remember all I
have told."

ALISON

There's a table in the middle
of a meadow?... Somewhere?

IAN

I don't know, but we must be
close, the third image on the
amulet is a heart... As in
"Heart of the meadow"

As the bus makes its way down the mountain road, it
passes a lighted picnic area with pay phones. Hugo
is approaching one of the pay phones when the bus
passes him.

IAN

(looking over
shoulder at
Hugo)

Isn't that the guy that
pulled you back over the
rail?

Alison jumps up from her seat and leans over Ian to
get a look out the window.

ALISON

Where?!

Ian is startled by Alison's movement, turns from the
window and right into Alison's full breasts. Ian's
eyes go wide at his view down her blouse.

IAN

Over there... he was...
walking toward... the phones.

ALISON

I wanted to thank him.

Alison notices Ian's misdirected gaze, pushes away
from the window and sits down with her arms and legs
crossed.

ALISON

At least there's one thing
you find interesting about
me.

Ian is red-faced with embarrassment and at a
complete loss for words.

Alison turns away from Ian and cracks a slight "he
does think I'm pretty" smile.

EXT. PICNIC AREA - NIGHT

The taillights of the shuttle bus fade in the
distance as Hugo picks up the pay phone and dials.

INT. EDWARD EVERS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Edward sits behind his desk with his feet up,
nervously fiddling with some rubber bands. On his

desk is a number of office toys and family pictures, one of which is of his father, Gil.

Edward's attention comes down from the ceiling and lands squarely on the picture of his father.

EDWARD

So you didn't think enough of me to leave me a dime. -- You always did like Steven more. -- Even though it was I who stayed nearby to take care of you, while he ran around the country from one job to the next, continually broke! You would send him cash whenever he needed it, while I never asked you for one red cent!

Edward stands and clumsily attempts to rapid fire the rubber bands at the photo. The rubber bands miss their mark and knock over the desk toys. At the sound of the phone ringing, Edward pauses to regain his composure before answering it.

EDWARD

Yes!... Hello... Who is this?

INTERCUT WITH:

HUGO

Boss, I followed them like you told me.

EDWARD

Let me guess, they went to Griffin park?

HUGO

Yeah -- How'd you know?

EDWARD

Never mind how I know, what did they do?

Edward looks at the picture of his father, the only item left standing on his desk.

HUGO

They looked around the observatory, looked at the stars, the city lights.

EDWARD

And did he kiss her good night?

HUGO

How's that boss?

EDWARD

I don't care how their date went! I want to know if they are any closer to finding my treasure!

HUGO

I didn't see what they did in the observatory but the boy has a funny looking medal thingy around his neck.

EDWARD

A medal?... For winning a track meet?

HUGO

No, it was more like a fancy piece of jewelry, with writing on it.

EDWARD

That must be one of the clues my crazy father left.

Edward picks up his fathers photo, stares hard at it, and then places it face down on the desk.

HUGO

You want, to get it from them?

EDWARD

Yes -- No, we wouldn't know what to do with it... No it is best to leave it to them to find the treasure for me.

HUGO

So you want me to stay on
them?

EDWARD

Yes, but first thing
tomorrow, I need you to make
another offer on some land as
the "New York Concern". Be
in my office in the morning
for the details. Goodbye.

HUGO

Alrighty, boss... Bye.

Edward hangs up the phone, straightens up the desk
toys and exits the office. The photo of his father
remains face down on the desk.

EXT. ALISON'S HOUSE/FRONT PORCH - NIGHT.

Ian and Alison walk up to the dimly lit porch.

ALISON

I had fun tonight.

IAN

Including nearly falling a
hundred feet?

ALISON

I had fun in spite of it. --
Ian, you're not going to tell
my mother about that are you?

IAN

Me!? No way! Are you
kidding? She'd never let you
out of the house with me
again.

Ian and Alison laugh at the memory of it when their
eyes meet. Ian is again at a loss for words.

ALISON

I'll need my stuff for class
tomorrow.

IAN

Yes, your beauty... I mean
your books, right. What's
wrong with me?

An embarrassed Ian leans down to open his backpack
and gives a blushing Alison her books.

The curtain-covered window, next to the door,
rustles and the porch light flashes.

Alison notices the light, straightens her stance and
offers Ian her hand.

ALISON

Well, thank you very much Mr.
Evers for a lovely evening.

Ian stands up and shakes Alison's hand.

IAN

Ahh... Okay... I guess I'll
see you in class tomorrow.

Alison goes into the house, turns to face Ian, and
closes the door.

ALISON

Count on it.

Ian stands dazed in the porch light like a deer in
the headlights of an oncoming truck.

The lights inside the house go out, followed closely
by the porch light.

Ian heads for home in a daze.

INT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Ian comes in the front door to the sight of Steven
sitting at a table full of paperwork, a calculator,
and a mile of calculator ribbon.

Steven looks up from his paperwork.

STEVEN

Ian? Are you okay?

IAN

Yeah, dad, it's just...
Alison and I...

STEVEN

Did you two have fun at the
observatory? Did they have
anything interesting?

Alison's spell is broken and Ian returns to his
usual self.

IAN

Yeah, actually they had a
Tesla Coil and it made
granddad's amulet pop open
and there was another note...

STEVEN

And you were supposed to call
if you were going to be out
after eight.

IAN

...Oh, sorry about that dad,
but Alison and I were looking
at the stars and... well...
That guy that was with Uncle
Edward at the reading of the
will?

STEVEN

You mean his assistant, Hugo?

IAN

The big guy, yeah, he was
there too. I think Uncle
Eddie is after granddad's
treasure, and he is having
Hugo follow me.

STEVEN

Wait a second, slow down,
what treasure?

IAN

The one he has been leaving
clues to. You know the
encrypted riddle... And this
one that was inside the
amulet.

Ian holds out the new riddle for Steven's inspection.

Steven reads the riddle and laughs to himself.

IAN

What's so funny?

STEVEN

One Easter, when I was about your age, your grandfather hid a bunch of plastic eggs around the yard.

IAN

Okay...

STEVEN

Some of the eggs had clues in them that lead you to an egg full of candy or an egg full of pebbles.

IAN

Alright, I don't get it.

STEVEN

The thing was, no one was allowed to have more than ten eggs. In the end we found out that the kid with the heaviest eggs got the grand prize of a whole basket of candy.

IAN

So the kid that collected pebble filled eggs actually got more candy?

STEVEN

Right. Your Granddad was trying to teach us that everything has a value and can be a treasure, even though it may be a treasure unseen. Also sometimes you have to forgo the immediate reward for a greater one in the future.

IAN

So did you win?

STEVEN

Nope. Neither did your Uncle Edward and boy did he throw a fit. Unfortunately, I don't think your uncle Ed ever learned the lesson. Heck, I didn't even fully understand it until many years later.

IAN

So what you are saying is that these riddles aren't leading to a treasure?

STEVEN

On the contrary, I'm sure they do. I just don't think the treasure is made of money.

IAN

I still want to find it though.

STEVEN

I know you do, but it's late and you have school tomorrow. Get off to bed.

Ian goes towards his room and Steven gets up to go to the kitchen for some more coffee.

Noticing the mess on the table, Ian stops and looks at some of the papers.

IAN

What's all this stuff for?

STEVEN

It's just the paperwork left over from the will, the title transfers for the house and the land. -- Don't worry about it, I'll get it all worked out.

IAN

Hmm, good night dad.

STEVEN

Good night son.

Ian goes to his room while Steven contemplates the pile of paperwork and sips his coffee.

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY.

Ian is sitting alone at a long table with the riddle and amulet in front of his tray. A notebook is on his right. In the notebook is a drawing of the amulet with the burnt out beads, a copy of the riddles, and a bunch of other notes.

Alison carries her tray of food through the crowd of tables, past Nelson and his cronies.

GIRLFRIEND #1

Alison, over here.

Alison sees her friends but continues to look around. After spotting Ian, she makes a bee line to his table.

Alison takes a seat next to Ian thus sending her Girlfriends into a fit of humphs and causing Nelson to screw up his face in anger.

ALISON

How's it going? Are you ready for the chemistry test?

Without looking up from his treasure notes, Ian acknowledges Alison with a "so-so" wave of the hand.

ALISON

What makes a gas noble anyway? Was it a king's fart?

IAN

Noble gases are a group of rare gases such as helium, neon, and argon. They are called noble because they exhibit great stability and low reaction rates. Which is why helium is safe for use in dirigibles...

ALISON

Zzzzzzzzz... Hello! I was joking? What am I going to do with you.

IAN

I can't help it if I'm smart.
-- Would you like me more if I were a stupid jock?

Nelson and his cronies have stood up and are making their way across the room to Ian's table.

ALISON

It's not that, I just think you need a little more... balance.

NELSON

I think brain-y-ack is off balance too. -- What's all this junk?

Nelson snatches the amulet and the riddles from the table.

NELSON

An ugly necklace and some kind of love poem I bet.

IAN

It's a riddle. Give it back! I need that.

NELSON

Oh, brain-y-ack needs his jewelry. Tell me brain-y-ack. Are you a sissy?

Nelson's cronies snicker. The scene has gotten the rapt attention of Alison's girlfriends and the rest of the students.

ALISON

Whatever, Nelson. Give 'em back. -- What are you going to do with a riddle anyway, you'd have to know how to read first.

More snickers from the cronies cause Nelson's "temperature" to rise.

NELSON

Well, maybe I'm still hungry.

Nelson crumples up the riddles and shoves them into his mouth.

Ian jumps up from his chair and reaches for the amulet, but is held back by Nelson's long arm.

Alison stands and stealthily covers Ian's treasure notes with her tray.

Nelson swallows with a big gulp and cracks a sinister smile towards Ian.

NELSON

Mmmm, that was good. Got any more?

IAN

Careful, You're going to break it.

NELSON

Maybe if you ask nicely.

ALISON

Cut it out. -- Nels. -- That is your real name isn't it?

The cronies burst out laughing and Nelson shoots a angry glare towards Alison.

NELSON

Only my mother gets away with calling me that.

Nelson turns his glare on Ian.

NELSON

Looks like your fat girlfriend here doesn't want to play nice.

Alison's confidence is shaken by the insult.

IAN

It just so happens that I think she is pretty just the way she is.

NELSON

Really? Now I know you're an off balance freak. -- And it just so happens I think this is an ugly piece of crap!

Nelson releases the amulet.

All those assembled watch the amulet fall to the floor, it breaks in half, the glass beads fling off it as it wobbles to a stop.

NELSON

Oops, clumsy me.

The PRINCIPAL makes his way to the scene through the thick group of student spectators. Seeing the Principal, many of the students duck out of the crowd and back to their tables.

PRINCIPAL

Alright, break it up.

Nelson releases Ian with a push and puts the right heel of his boot on the remnants of the amulet.

NELSON

Thanks for the snack brain-y-ack.

With a loud belch, Nelson turns on his heel, crushing the amulet and pushes his way through the crowd.

The Principal reaches the scene and looks down at the tangled mess of metal and crushed glass.

PRINCIPAL

(looking at Ian)

Is this yours young man?

IAN

Yes, sir.

PRINCIPAL

Well, I suggest you clean it up, lunch is over in less than five minutes.

ALISON

Don't worry sir, we'll have it cleaned up in no time.

Alison and Ian begin to pick up the pieces of the amulet.

ALISON

I feel terrible about this. I didn't think he would crush it.

IAN

It's okay, it's not your fault.

ALISON

Will you still be able to find the treasure?

IAN

Maybe, of course my dad thinks that my grandfather's "treasure" isn't money.

ALISON

So what is it? Gems, pearls?

Ian and Alison stand up. Ian puts the remains of the amulet in his backpack.

IAN

More like a valuable lesson in life or good advice.

ALISON

Really? -- How...

IAN

What! Dull? Boring? Stupid?

ALISON

I was going to say sweet.

IAN

I'm sorry. I'm just a little stressed -- Where's my notebook?

Alison lifts her tray to expose the notebook. Ian puts it into his backpack and looks back at her.

IAN

Thanks... Again.

The class bell rings, they rush to turn in their lunch trays, and get to class.

ALISON

But, didn't the last riddle say something about gold?

EXT. WESTLAKE DR./WOODED LAND - DAY.

Steven walks along the street in front of an abandoned kids amusement park full of rusted and broken down rides. On its fence is a faded "For Sale" sign.

He comes to the end of the park's fence and in front of a wooded area. A simple "No Trespassing" sign is all that marks the land.

Steven refers to a notepad and looks to either side of the land.

STEVEN

This must be it. Why in the world would Dad buy this?

Steven walks past the "No Trespassing" sign and into the woods. He finds a narrow path to follow.

Steven steps out of the woods into an overgrown meadow full of tall grass and sunflowers.

He continues to follow the path only marked by crushed grass.

He approaches a large boulder in the center of the meadow and stops to take a break.

Hugo walks out from the other side of the boulder.

HUGO

Mr. Steven Evers?

STEVEN

Yes... Hugo, isn't it?

HUGO

Yep. Hugo Anderson.

STEVEN

You work for my brother
Edward, don't you?

HUGO

Yep. He told me to meet you
out here... to convince you
to sell.

Steven realizes how seriously Edward wants the land.

STEVEN

Okay... So I'm here... What
happens now?

Hugo brings out a large plastic tube from behind his
leg.

INT. SCIENCE CLASSROOM - DAY.

Ian, Alison, and some other students come into the
room.

TEACHER

Hurry up and take your seats.

Ian and Alison take their seats as the Teacher hands
out stacks of tests to the front row.

TEACHER

You will have the entire
class time to complete the
test. Answer the problems
that you know first and come
back to do the others later.

A stack of tests is passed down Alison's row
stopping at her desk.

Alison is looking at Ian and does not notice the
tests until she is tapped on her shoulder.

GIRLFRIEND #1

Hey... Hello... Earth to
Alison.

ALISON

What. What is it?

GIRLFRIEND #1

The tests please.

ALISON

Oh yeah, sure.

Ian smiles at Alison and she to him before they both begin the test.

Ian goes through each page of the test with ease, quickly reading and marking each answer until he comes upon question sixty-nine. It reads, "What element, also called Brimstone, did alchemists regard as essential to combustion?" The available answers are "A - Sodium, B - Sulfur, C - Strontium, D - Sugar".

Ian marks "B - Sulfur" and turns the page, but hesitates. He looks at the question again and then up at the large Periodic Table on the wall.

The one and two letter chemical symbols remind him of something.

Ian quickly pulls out his treasure notebook from his pack and looks at the letters around the rim of the amulet drawing. The letter codes of the amulet, Ga, Ni, Hg, etc., are all there on the Periodic Table.

The burnt out beads are directly under S - Sulfur, Po - Polonium, and Ba - Barium.

Ian quickly jots these down in sequence "Spoba".

IAN

(to himself)

What the heck is "Spoba"?

Ian looks over to Alison, pointing to the Periodic Table and trying to show her his notebook.

IAN

(whispering)

Alison, look... The letters
from the amulet...

TEACHER

Mr. Evers! Exactly what are
you doing? This is not an
open book test.

IAN

But, I was just...

TEACHER

Kindly bring your test and
your books up here... Now.

Ian obeys, putting his notebook back in his pack and taking his test paper up to the front desk with the entire class looking on.

Ian places his test paper on the desk as the Teacher completes a form.

TEACHER

Take this with you to the
Principal's office. This
school has a zero tolerance
policy on cheating.

Ian takes the form from the Teacher and watches as she marks his test with a giant red (F).

TEACHER

I am quite disappointed with
you Ian. You have been doing
so well up until now. -- Go
on, your actions have
distracted the class for too
long already.

Ian turns to leave, exposing the Teacher's angry expression to the class. The students jolt and hastily return to working on their tests.

Alison sadly watches Ian leave the room.

Just before Ian closes the door, he signals Alison to call him later.

INT. SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY.

Behind a cluttered metal desk, sits an empty 70's style metal office chair. Half empty bookshelves and filing cabinets, covered with stacks of files, take up most of the space in the tiny office.

Ian is sitting in front of the desk with his treasure notebook in his lap scribbling notes.

This page of the notebook is headed with "SPOBA" with several anagrams of "spoba" below it.

IAN

Spoba?
Bapos?
Pabos?
Sapob?
None of these make any sense.

The Principal walks into the office and carefully makes his way around the clutter to his chair.

PRINCIPAL

We've tried your house, your father is not there or is not answering... Is there some other number where he can be reached?

IAN

Not that I know of. He has been running a lot of errands. What with the move and all.

PRINCIPAL

Well, I want to hold you until we get in touch with a parent, so you are going to have to wait out in the front office until then.

INT. SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE, WAITING AREA - DAY.

The door to the Principal's office is bordered by a line of chairs on one side and the school receptionist's desk on the other.

The Principal leads Ian out of his office and directs him to a chair, next to Nelson.

NELSON

Well, well, looks like brain-y-ack ain't so smart after all.

PRINCIPAL

That's enough out of you, Nels. It's your turn. Get in here.

Nelson gives Ian another slug on the shoulder except this time Nelson pulls the punch resulting in just a tap.

NELSON

Way to go. Next time you want to cheat, you should come talk to the expert first.

Nelson goes into the Principal's office. Ian retrieves his notebook and resumes work on the anagram.

LATER

Ian sits slumped over asleep with his notebook, now full of scratched out words, still in his lap.

The school bell rings waking Ian with a start that sends his notebook and pen tumbling to the floor.

Ian is attempting to orient himself and collect his stuff when the Principal exits his office, ready to go home.

PRINCIPAL

Mr. Evers, you're still here?

IAN

Yes sir.

PRINCIPAL

Your father hasn't called or come by?

IAN

Nope.

PRINCIPAL

Right, Okay, I shouldn't do
this but...

The Principal goes behind the receptionist's desk
and searches the neat stacks of papers for a form.

PRINCIPAL

I hate it when she is out, I
can never find anything...
Here it is.

The Principal quickly fills out the form and hands
it to Ian.

PRINCIPAL

Here, have your father sign
this and bring it back to me
on Monday.

IAN

Okay, sir.

Ian walks towards the hallway.

PRINCIPAL

Do you have a way to get
home?

IAN

I'll just walk; it's not that
far.

EXT. STREET - DAY.

Ian is slowly walking down the street towards his
house. A school bus passes him and then stops
suddenly.

Alison steps off the bus and walks hurriedly towards
Ian.

ALISON

Ian! Are you Okay?

IAN

Yeah, I'm fine.

Ian and Alison catch up to each other and stop to
talk.

ALISON

What was that all about in class today? What, are you crazy?

IAN

No. I had just realized that the table my grandfather was talking about was the Periodic Table. The letters around the amulet are elemental symbols. Here, look at this.

Ian pulls out his notebook and flips it open to the page of anagrams as they continue the walk home.

IAN

The symbols, next to the beads that burned out, are S, Po, and Ba. Which together are Spoba.

ALISON

Which means?

IAN

I don't know, I think it is an anagram. If we rearrange the letter in the right way we should get something more meaningful. See.

Alison takes the notebook and reads down the page.

ALISON

Pabso? That's funny.

IAN

Yeah, but, I have no idea what it means. The principal couldn't get a hold of my dad so I had to spend all afternoon in the office.

ALISON

Wow, how boring was that?

IAN

Very.

EXT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE - DAY.

A note taped to the front door flutters in the breeze.

Ian and Alison walk up to the door and Ian pulls the note off to read it.

IAN

"Son, I've gone to show a buyer the land. I'll be back late. Dinner is in the freezer. Love Dad."

ALISON

Land? Where?

IAN

It's out passed the landfill. On Westlake drive, next to some old run-down amusement park.

ALISON

Do you think this land has a meadow?

IAN

I don't know. But if my dad sells the land then whatever is on it gets sold too!

Ian scribbles a quick response on the note, slaps it back on the door, and walks rapidly toward the street.

IAN

We've got to stop him!

ALISON

Here we go again.

Alison follows Ian down the street.

ALISON

Can't we take a bus or something?

Ian and Alison disappear down the street just as a strong breeze kicks up, setting the whirligigs in motion, before blowing the note off of the door.

INT. EDWARD EVERS' OFFICE - DAY.

Edward is sitting behind his desk working on his electronic personal organizer when he hears a disturbance in the outer office.

A disheveled Steven bursts into Edward's office with Linda trying her best to stop him.

STEVEN

Edward!

LINDA

I'm sorry Mr. Evers, but I couldn't...

EDWARD

Don't worry about it Linda. Go on back. It appears that my dear brother has something that he wishes to speak with me about.

Relieved, Linda ducks out of the office closing the door behind her.

STEVEN

Your damn right I have something to speak to you about! -- Where do you get the nerve?

EDWARD

Calm down. Have a seat. I'm sure whatever it is that is bothering you we can work out man to man.

STEVEN

You know exactly why I'm here. You want dad's land and you'll do just about anything to get it.

EDWARD

I made you a fair offer for it. Which by the way no longer stands.

STEVEN

That's fine because I'm not going to sell it to you.

EDWARD

So... perhaps you have a better offer? -- You do know that the taxes are due by the end of the month.

STEVEN

As a matter of fact I do have another offer for the land.

EDWARD

Well, may the best offer win.

STEVEN

-- Yeah -- Tell me, what do you want the land for anyway? To pave it over and make it into an industrial area or another boring strip mall?

EDWARD

Perhaps... I don't really know yet.

STEVEN

You're just mad because you think you were short changed in the will.

The stylus in Edward's hand snaps with a loud crack!

EDWARD

Well, you're right about that! I was the one who stayed here and took care of him, while you were off chasing the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. I stayed and made something of myself while you went around penniless. Knowing that at anytime you could just call on dear old dad to bail you out. And what did he leave me? -- His useless patents for his stupid toys!

STEVEN

You just don't get it do you?
Sure he left me the house and
the land but those are just
things. -- Don't you see, his
patents, his ideas, those are
his real legacy, what he
treasured most was not
things, not money, but ideas.
He gave them all to you and
you didn't even have the
decency to attend his burial.
-- Oh, why am I wasting my
breath?

EDWARD

I don't know! You're the one
that barged into my office!

STEVEN

You know, you have made
something of yourself -- What
exactly, I don't know. But
something less... Human.

Steven leaves, slamming the door behind him.

STEVEN (O.S.)

Good-bye, forever, Edward.

EDWARD

I'll be seeing you soon
enough. When you find out
that your offer from New York
is nothing but vapor.

Edward picks up the phone and dials the outer
office.

EDWARD

Linda, get Hugo on the line.
-- Never mind, I'll go find
him myself.

Edward grabs his organizer, attempts but fails to
operate it with his fat finger, throws it on the
desk in frustration, and stomps out of the office.

EXT. WESTLAKE DR./WOODED LAND - DUSK

Ian and Alison are walking up the street passed the abandoned amusement park. The dirty old "For Sale" sign has a shiny new "Sold!" sticker across it.

ALISON

Are you sure you want to do this now? It is almost dark.

IAN

I have to stop my dad from selling the land or find the treasure before the deal goes through.

They trudge through the tall weeds and into the dark woods, calling out.

IAN

Dad...

ALISON

Mr. Evers...

Ian and Alison emerge from the woods into the meadow that is now brilliantly lit by the orange glow of the setting sun.

ALISON

Wow, look at all the beautiful flowers.

IAN

This certainly looks like a "meadow with flowers bold and bright."

ALISON

If this is it then where is it's "heart"? -- Where do we go from here?

IAN

I don't know for sure -- Let's head for that boulder.

With Ian in the lead, he and Alison hike onward through the tall flowers.

IAN

Watch your step, there are over a dozen species of snakes in this part of the country.

ALISON

Eeek!

Alison runs to catch up with Ian, grabs him by the arm, and walks along side him searching the ground.

ALISON

Why did you have to tell me that now?

IAN

Don't worry. They are mostly harmless.

ALISON

Mostly?

Ian and Alison approach the boulder still calling.

IAN

Dad! Hello!

ALISON

Anyone!

IAN

I guess he's already gone. -- We'll rest here a bit before heading back.

ALISON

Sure.

Alison sits against the sloped side of the boulder and watches the sunset while Ian takes an interest in the other side of the boulder.

ALISON

Isn't that just beautiful.

IAN

What?

ALISON

The sunset. Silly.

IAN

Yeah I suppose. Look here, this side of the rock is almost completely covered in tiny crystals.

ALISON

So?

IAN

So, it's not right, I mean most natural crystals are found in veins not sheets like this... It is almost as if the crystals were grown on the rock as it sat here... But how? More importantly, why?

A SURVEYOR, carrying a transit and chain, approaches the boulder.

SURVEYOR

Hey, you kids! What are you doing here? This is private property. You had better leave.

Ian walks out to meet the Surveyor half way.

IAN

I know, it's my dad's land. Steven Evers.

SURVEYOR

Well not any more. I've got instructions from one Mr. Anderson to survey it.

IAN

What for?

SURVEYOR

Well, I assume he is going to purchase it. That is usually why I get called out. That way he'll know what exactly he bought. -- In any case it will be dark soon. You kids better get going.

Ian walks back towards the boulder.

ALISON

What's going on?

IAN

We're too late. My dad must have already sold it. That guy is working for a Mr. Anderson. -- Come on let's just go.

ALISON

This would have been such a nice place for a picnic.

Ian and Alison reach the edge of the woods just as the last rays of sunlight are fading.

The light of a full moon is now all that illuminates the night sky.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT.

Ian and Alison are slowly making their way through the woods.

Ian, in the lead, moves branches out of the way with a newly found walking stick.

ALISON

I don't think this is the way we came in.

IAN

I've been using the shadows of the trees to guide us. I think we're okay. There's a clearing up ahead.

EXT. RIVERBED - NIGHT.

Ian exits the woods on the edge of a wide dry riverbed.

Ian stops and looks around as Alison comes up from behind.

ALISON

I don't remember crossing
this on the way in?

Ian looks back at Alison and notices that her shadow
is cast directly in front of her.

IAN

Neither do I. I don't know
what happened. I must of
gotten turned around in the
woods, shadows going every...

Alison puts a reassuring hand on Ian's shoulder and
shushes him with a finger.

ALISON

Calm down, we're fine. Lost,
cold, and hungry, but
otherwise fine.

IAN

I'm sorry. I should have
waited until tomorrow.

Alison sits down on a weather-beaten, hollow log.

ALISON

Don't worry about it. Why
don't we just stay here until
daylight and figure it out
then.

Ian puts down his backpack and sits next to Alison.

IAN

If I only had a map and a
compass.

ALISON

Why don't we make our own
map?

Alison pulls out the periodic table from Ian's
backpack and starts to draw a large "North" compass
pointer on the back of it.

IAN

That's not going to work.

ALISON

Let me finish. The moon is following the sun east to west across the sky, it is not quite ten p.m., so our moon-shadow is pointing more or less east. Here is the riverbed...

Alison draws the riverbed on the map.

ALISON

...and the log, and here you and I are. There.

Alison shows the map to Ian. On it is a smiling stick figure of him and a rounder stick figure of her, sitting on the log. They both laugh at the map.

IAN

That's cute.

ALISON

Well, thank you. See, it helped; we got a good laugh out of it. My Grand mom always says, "When all else fails, laugh. It will keep you warm when you're cold and fill your belly when you're hungry."

IAN

Still, I guess I should start a fire.

Ian gets up and starts collecting firewood.

IAN

I think there is a chocolate bar in my backpack.

Alison lunges for the pack and digs through it for the chocolate bar.

ALISON

Found it. It's a bit crushed but who cares.

Alison quickly chomps down on the chocolate bar as a coral snake slithers out of the far end of the log.

EXT./INT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE - NIGHT.

Steven comes into his driveway, parks, and heads for the door only to be met by a frantic Bertha.

BERTHA

Have you seen Alison or Ian?

STEVEN

No I haven't, I've been out all day.

BERTHA

Alison's friend told me that she got off the bus early to walk with Ian.

STEVEN

Well, the note is gone so I'm sure they are around here somewhere. Let's check inside.

BERTHA

I just hope they're okay.

Steven and Bertha enter the house and look around.

STEVEN

Ian? Are you home? -- He usually doesn't go anywhere without letting me know.

BERTHA

Maybe we should go look around the neighborhood.

STEVEN

Okay, I'll drive. -- Don't worry, Ian's got a good head on his shoulders, everything is going to be all right.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Steven and Bertha are slowly driving down a dimly lit, trashy street in the "bad" part of town.

BERTHA

You don't think Ian would
have brought my Alison out
here do you?

They pass an ally where a HOMELESS MAN warms himself
over a small trashcan fire.

STEVEN

Just being thorough.

Steven pulls over along side a HOMELESS WOMAN
pushing a grocery cart. He shows a picture of Ian
to the woman.

STEVEN

Excuse me have you seen this
boy?

The Homeless Woman looks over the picture and with a
twitch of her head her eyes widen.

HOMELESS WOMAN

Why yes... That's my Danny.
Oh my sweet Danny I haven't
seen you in a coon's age.

The Homeless Woman attempts to wrestle the picture
from Steven.

STEVEN

I'm sorry he's not your
Danny. He's my son Ian.

HOMELESS WOMAN

No! Don't! Don't take my
Danny away.

The Homeless Man pounds on the roof of Steven's car.

HOMELESS MAN

Look here! What are you
people doing to her!?

BERTHA

Ahh! Steven, let's get out
of here.

STEVEN

I'm sorry lady but he's not
your Danny.

Steven punches the gas and drives off leaving the Homeless Man spinning in the street and knocking over the Homeless Woman's cart.

The Homeless Man shakes an angry fist at the distant car before hobbling over to the Homeless Woman.

HOMELESS MAN

Did they hurt you ma'am.

The Homeless Woman looks up, her eyes full of tears.

HOMELESS WOMAN

Danny? Is that you?

HOMELESS MAN

Sure lady, whatever you say.

The Homeless Man helps put some of her things back into the cart and puts an warm arm around her.

HOMELESS WOMAN

My sweet Danny, I've missed you so.

HOMELESS MAN

Come with me ma'am. Let's go get warm.

The Homeless Man leads the Homeless Woman back to his ally and trashcan fire.

EXT. RIVERBED - NIGHT

Ian and Alison sit next to each other on the log sharing the rest of the chocolate bar and poking the fire with a stick.

ALISON

Did you really mean it when you said that you thought I was pretty?

IAN

When did I say that?

ALISON

When you were fighting with Nels... and on my porch.

IAN

Oh, that... Well... Yeah, I do think you're pretty.

ALISON

Even though, as my mother puts it, I'm big-boned?

IAN

Well... I like girls that are...

ALISON

Go on, you can say it. Fat.

IAN

Well, I prefer to call it Fluffy.

ALISON

So you actually like fa... "fluffy" over skinny? Why is that?

IAN

I don't know. Maybe it's because my Mother was a big woman. Why does a person like chocolate over vanilla? They just do, simple as that. I really don't see what the big deal is.

ALISON

I've always hated my "fluffiness". My mother used to say, "How is Prince Charming going to rescue you if he can't lift you onto the horse?"

IAN

Really, wow, sometimes parents can be so mean.

ALISON

Well, she wasn't usually that blunt but she was always dropping hints.

(MORE)

ALISON (CONT'D)

So, I used to spend hours at aerobics and I tried all sorts of diets but when we moved here... I just decided that I was meant to be round and if my mother, or anyone else for that matter, doesn't like it they can just kiss my big curvy rear end. There is plenty of space for all of them.

Ian is surprised and laughs nervously. Alison joins in laughing along with him until again their eyes meet.

Alison gives Ian an unexpected, quick, peck on the lips.

They look into each other's eyes and Ian pulls her close for longer, more passionate, albeit clumsy kiss.

Their kiss is interrupted when Ian slides backwards off the log, knocking over a rock and exposing the large coral snake.

The snake hisses at a fear-frozen Ian.

Alison, laughing, grabs the snake by the tail and flings it across the riverbed.

The snake lands with a thud across from them and slithers away.

Alison is still giggling when she turns back to see a white-faced Ian struggling to get back on the log.

ALISON

Mostly harmless... Right?

IAN

Yeah, mostly. But not that one. That was a Coral snake... as in "red touch yellow kill a fellow"

Suddenly realizing what she just did, Alison jumps into Ian's arms.

ALISON

Agggghh! Why didn't you stop me. -- Are there more of them around here?

IAN

Maybe I'd better keep watch while you get some sleep.

ALISON

How can I sleep with all these... these wild things around us?

IAN

Don't worry, I'll build up the fire and that should keep them away.

ALISON

Not yet, stay here and hold me a while first.

IAN

Okay.

Ian holds Alison close and begins to whistle a lullaby.

ALISON

I like that, that's nice. See, music can be very soothing.

IAN

I guess you're right.

They both smile as Ian continues to hold Alison and whistle the simple tune.

EXT./INT. POLICE STATION - DAWN

Steven and Bertha, tired from a night driving around searching, briskly enter the police station and go up to the counter.

STEVEN

My son is missing.

BERTHA

And my daughter.

The POLICEMAN gets up from his seat, picks out a couple of forms, and puts them on the counter.

POLICEMAN

Ages?

STEVEN

They are both fourteen.

POLICEMAN

What time where they last seen?

BERTHA

Around four yesterday afternoon.

POLICEMAN

Let me guess, they were last seen together?

STEVEN

Yes, so, what does that have to do with anything?

The Policeman takes the forms back and straightens up.

POLICEMAN

I'm sure they just went out to one of the parks to make out and then they fell asleep. They'll turn up before too long.

BERTHA

What!?! My daughter would never stay out all night without telling me. How dare...

POLICEMAN

Look lady. We get a dozen calls a night for missing teens. Most of the time they've just gone out for a night of fun. Now just go home, if they are still missing after four p.m. today, then you can file a report.

STEVEN

Come on, Bertha. Let's go home, that's where they are most likely to call first. Thank you officer.

Steven leads a sobbing Bertha out of the police station.

EXT. RIVERBED - DAWN

A few coals glow red and a trickle of smoke rises from the burnt out campfire.

Several flies are buzzing around the crumpled chocolate bar wrapper.

Alison is curled up on the ground using Ian's thigh as a pillow while he leans against the log, head back, mouth open, snoring.

A fly buzzes around Ian's gaping mouth and gets sucked in by a grinding snore. With a hack and cough Ian wakes up and trying to spit out the offending insect.

IAN

Yuck!

ALISON

What?... What's that?...
What's going on?

IAN

It's nothing, just a bug trying to commit suicide.

ALISON

Wow, I haven't slept that well in a long time.

IAN

Let's get going. I'm sure my dad is wondering where I am by now.

ALISON

Yeah, my mom is going to be really mad.

Ian and Alison gather up their stuff. Ian kicks some soil onto the fire and they start towards the woods.

IAN

Last night I was thinking that maybe the symbols aren't an anagram. But stand for something else.

ALISON

Really, last night I was thinking I want to go home and take a shower.

EXT. MEADOW - DAY

Ian and Alison exit the woods at the base of a knoll with the sun at their backs.

IAN

This is directly across the meadow from where we came in yesterday.

ALISON

All that time we were walking in a big circle?

IAN

That's what it looks like.

Ian and Alison come over the top of the knoll and are stunned at the sight in front of them. The distant boulder reflects the brilliant glow of the rising sun. Its crystal's sparkling in the shape of a giant heart.

ALISON

The heart of the meadow.

Ian has already bolted down the hill towards the glowing boulder.

IAN

Of course, the heart, it's "stone" cold. Hurry up!

EXT. MEADOW/BOULDER - DAY

Ian is looking over the boulder and reviewing his treasure notebook.

Alison comes running up to the boulder stops and doubles over trying to catch her breath.

ALISON

Okay... That's... it...
No... more... running.

IAN

Are you okay?

Alison nods and grabs the periodic table from Ian's notebook to use as a fan.

ALISON

I'll be fine in a minute.

Ian watches Alison fan herself and then looks closely at the waving periodic table.

With the sun behind the paper, the "north" compass pointer that Alison drew on the back can be seen through the page.

Ian grabs Alison's wrist and snatches the paper from her hand.

ALISON

Hey! I was using that.

IAN

Look, the symbols don't mean anything. It's their placement on the table that's important. We start with either Sulfur or Barium. Follow the grid south and west or east and north, turning at Polonium, to reach the other symbol... That's where the treasure is.

ALISON

I don't get it.

IAN

The periodic table is a map.
The grid is laid out north-
south, east-west. -- But,
where do we start? Barium or
Sulfur?

Alison looks at Ian and then looks at the boulder.

ALISON

I'd guess you'd start at
Sulfur, you know, brim-stone.

IAN

Of course!... Alison, you
are both beautiful and smart.

ALISON

Well, thank you kind sir.

IAN

Start at the boulder (Sulfur)
go three grids south, turn
and go fourteen grids west to
Barium.

ALISON

Three what? Feet, yards,
miles?

IAN

"Walk proud as a soldier or
the game you will wreck"...
It's paces. Three south and
fourteen west.

Alison looks on as Ian walks around, puts his back
to the boulder, and points towards the sun.

IAN

That's east, so I'm facing
south.

Ian marches three steps forward into the tall grass,
does a sharp right face and marches fourteen more
steps.

ALISON

That was cute. You look just
like a toy soldier in "The
Nutcracker".

IAN

I did a lot of marching in
J.R.O.T.C. -- Toy soldier...
Hmmm.

Ian begins searching the ground, pushing the
sunflowers out of the way to get a better look.

IAN

Here it is.

Ian dives down to the ground, disappearing below the
tall grass and flowers.

ALISON

Did you find it? Did you
find the treasure?

IAN

It's another crystal-covered
rock, like the boulder. Help
me dig it up.

Alison gets on her hands and knees beside Ian and
starts digging around the edge of the rock with him.

EXT. WESTLAKE DR./WOODED LAND - DAY.

Hugo is calmly leaning up against the back of his
car while Edward is ranting at him about the deal.

Steven and Bertha drive up, park, and approach the
two men.

EDWARD

What are you doing here?

STEVEN

Ian and Alison didn't come
home last night. This
morning the surveyor called
to tell me that he ran off a
couple of teenagers last
night, so I'm going to go
check if they are around here
somewhere.

Steven and Bertha head off into the woods calling
for Ian and Alison.

Edward looks at the retreating couple and then turns to Hugo.

EDWARD

Why did the surveyor call him?

HUGO

Come on Edward, let's help find the kids.

Hugo leads a reluctant Edward by the arm into the woods.

EDWARD

What are you doing?

EXT. MEADOW/BOULDER - DAY

Ian and Alison finish digging around the rock. They flip it over and expose a small, rusty, padlocked, toolbox.

Ian grabs the toolbox by the handle and wiggles it back and forth to free it from the ground.

Steven, Bertha, Hugo and Edward approach the boulder looking and calling out in every direction.

Steven is looking at the boulder in the distance when, Hrumph, Ian pops up from the grass with the dirt covered toolbox swinging over his head. A moment later Alison pops up.

STEVEN

There they are! -- Ian!

BERTHA

Alison!

ALISON

Mom!

IAN

Dad! We found it! We found grandpa's treasure!

The parties meet in the shadow of the boulder.

BERTHA

Alison, are you okay?

ALISON

Yeah mom, I'm fine. Look we found the treasure.

BERTHA

I'm just glad you two are all right.

Edward comes onto the scene and attempts to grab the toolbox from Ian but is held back by Hugo.

EDWARD

Give me that! It's mine!

IAN

No it's not! I found it!

EDWARD

Yes, but on my land.

STEVEN

How exactly do you figure that Edward.

EDWARD

Simple, you took the other offer, from the firm in New York, which is nothing but a front for my holding company. I had Hugo make the offer for my company, therefore this is my land and so is everything on it.

STEVEN

Well, you're right about me taking the other offer...

EDWARD

So hand it over.

STEVEN

But the offer wasn't from your New York Company. It was from Hugo directly.

EDWARD

What!?

STEVEN

Hugo met me out here and showed me his plans to renovate the amusement park next door. When he asked if I would be willing to turn this land into a picnic area named after dad... Well, how could I refuse?

HUGO

The Gil Evers Amusement park and picnic area. We're going to have a merry-go-round and a Ferris wheel...

EDWARD

But, you can't afford to buy this much land.

STEVEN

He doesn't have to. He's leasing it from me for the cost of taxes plus one dollar a year. Hugo ought to be able to cover that with a few weeks of concession profits.

HUGO

Near as I can figure about five weeks worth.

EDWARD

But... Then... You double crossed me... How?...

HUGO

I learned from the best Edward... You.

EDWARD

Oh, I give up! You can have your stupid amusement park and dumb ol' picnic area! I'm leaving.

Edward stomps through the grass and flowers, cursing and grumbling all the way.

STEVEN

He's always been a sore
loser.

IAN

Dad, what about the treasure?
If we could just get this
lock off.

HUGO

Allow me.

Hugo holds up a large rock.

Ian puts the toolbox down and, Wack! Hugo breaks
off the padlock with the rock.

With everyone looking on, Ian opens the toolbox. It
is full of the round, metal, smiley faced tokens and
a note.

Ian hands the note to Steven to read as he digs
around in the box hoping to find something more.

STEVEN

"Dear Ian, This treasure hunt
is my final gift to you. I
hope you had as much fun
following it as I did setting
it up. I'm sure you will
enjoy all of the rewards of
completing it. Love
Grandpa."

BERTHA

How sweet.

IAN

I suppose.

STEVEN

What's wrong? You didn't
have fun figuring out the
treasure hunt?

IAN

Yeah, I just expected...
More.

STEVEN

Come on son, let's get you
home and cleaned up.

IAN

Okay.

Ian and Steven, Alison and Bertha, and Hugo all walk
out of the meadow.

BERTHA

Did you have fun too, Alison?

ALISON

Yeah, we camped out under the
stars and we... we kissed.

BERTHA

Really? So how did you like
your first kiss?.

ALISON

Mom! Keep it down. He can
hear you.

STEVEN

Hugo, I'll call you tomorrow
to finish up the details of
the lease.

HUGO

That'll be fine Mr...
Steven. Talk to you then.

INT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY.

Steven and Bertha are cooking as Alison enters from
the hallway drying her hair.

ALISON

Thanks for letting me take a
shower Mr. Evers.

STEVEN

It's no problem, you're mom
and I are making spaghetti
and meatballs for lunch. --
From a secret Evers' family
recipe.

ALISON

Sounds good, where's Ian?

BERTHA

He's out in the workshop
still looking over the
"treasure"

ALISON

I think I'll go help him.

Bertha nudges Steven in the side and whispers something. They both giggle.

INT. WORKSHOP - DAY.

Ian has the contents of the tool box emptied out into an open space on the workbench and is inspecting one of the tokens when Alison enters.

ALISON

Haven't given up yet?

IAN

No, there is something more here... I just know it...
The last picture on the amulet was a rose and the tokens are stamped with "Rosa Americana".

Alison picks up one of the tokens and "weighs" it in her hand.

ALISON

They sure are heavy enough to be gold.

IAN

More like lead... Lead...
"Walk proud as a soldier"...
Lead toy soldiers, Rosa Americana, William Wood.

ALISON

What are you mumbling about now?

Ian scopes up a hand full of tokens and runs towards the house.

IAN

I'll explain inside, come on!

INT. GIL EVERS' HOUSE/KITCHEN - DAY.

Steven and Bertha's cooking is interrupted by Ian and Alison exploding through the back door.

IAN

Dad, there is a treasure
after all!

STEVEN

What are you talking about?

ALISON

That's what I asked him.

IAN

Right... Okay... The tokens
refer to "Rosa Americana". A
coin produced by William Wood
in 1722. Wood's metal is an
alloy of lead, tin, and --
Anyway, it melts easily.

BERTHA

I don't understand. The
tokens are made from old
coins?

IAN

No -- Just watch.

Ian grabs a slotted spoon, puts one of the tokens in it, and plunges the spoon into the pot of boiling water.

STEVEN

Ian, that's for the
spaghetti.

BERTHA

That hunk of metal is going
to make the water all grimy.

IAN

If I'm right, We'll all be
going out for lunch.

Everyone huddles around the pot to see what is happening.

STEVEN

(to Ian)

I'm beginning to think you hate my cooking.

IAN

You see, Grandpa melted down his old lead toy soldiers to make Wood's metal out of them...

They watch as the metal token begins to brighten in the hot water.

IAN

...he used the Wood's metal to hide something more valuable...

The smiley face on the token distorts, the token melts and drips out of the spoon.

IAN

...like his gold coin collection.

Ian brings the spoon up, out of the water, exposing a shinny antique gold coin.

Steven picks up the coin but it is too hot to handle so he tosses it into the air.

The "hot potato" travels around the room until Alison catches the coin with a pair of oven mitts.

They all look at the coin and laugh. Ian places a pile of tokens onto the spoon and into the boiling water to repeat the process.

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK - DAY.

The music of the merry-go-round fills the air.

Hugo, dressed in a smartly pressed uniform and a red-banded straw hat, welcomes visitors as they pass the balloon-arched park entrance.

The renovated rides and booths are staffed with smiling, uniformed attendants.

Two boys dash through the crowd, passing a life size version of the soothsayer toy.

To the delight of a teen girl, the swami head stops on a smile and showing "Things are looking up."

The boys continue zigzagging their way through the crowd, toward the Ferris wheel.

The wheel turns and takes the boys up to where they can see the adjacent meadow.

The meadow is neatly trimmed, dotted with picnics, children running, playing, and flying kites.

The heart of the meadow glows brightly.

FADE OUT.

THE END