

A DISAPPEARANCE IN PENELOPE WOODS

A screenplay by Christian Locantore

OPEN ON:

A BURNING CAMPFIRE SPARKLES IN THE DARK.

Sounds of fire crackling.

Beer bottles and other trash surround the campfire. A teddy bear lays flat in the dirt.

Laughing comes from a tent beside the fire.

INT. TENT - PENELOPE WOODS - NIGHT

A little girl, PENELOPE, 6, rummages through a backpack. She wears a pink dress with ruffles. Pristine.

On the opposite side of the tent, PENELOPE'S DAD and MOM, late twenties, are cuddling in a sleeping bag. They pass a wine bottle between each other.

PENELOPE

I can't find him, I can't find
Teddy!

The dad rolls over to face Penelope.

PENELOPE'S DAD

It's time for bed sweetie, you'll
find him in the morning.

Penelope's mom peaks over her husband's shoulder, looking at Penelope.

PENELOPE'S MOM

Why are you still in your dress?
Get changed for bed.

Tears swell in Penelope's eyes. She puts her knees up to her face.

PENELOPE

But I can't find Teddy.

PENELOPE'S DAD

You probably left him outside, you
can get it in the morning.

Penelope sobs. She tucks her head in her knees.

PENELOPE'S DAD (CONT'D)

Oh, Penelope. He'll be there in the
morning, get ready for bed.

PENELOPE

What if somebody takes him? Or an animal!

Her sobs become louder. Penelope's dad groans and rolls onto his back. The mother motions to get out of the sleeping bag. He turns to her.

PENELOPE'S DAD

Uh, no, don't get up. We can't keep giving her anything she cries for.

PENELOPE'S MOM

She'll cry about it all night.

The two look back over at Penelope. She continues to cry.

PENELOPE'S DAD

Penelope, he's probably just outside, why don't you go get him?

The mother softly hits his arm.

PENELOPE'S MOM

Really?

PENELOPE'S DAD

What? She's fine, she'll be right there. We can watch her.

Penelope sits up and crawls over to the zipper doorway.

PENELOPE

Can I, mom?

PENELOPE'S MOM

Fine, go ahead, but if you don't see him come right back. No wandering. You have 30 seconds.

Penelope smiles and quickly unzips the door.

EXT. CAMPFIRE - PENELOPE WOODS - CONTINUOUS

The flaps of the tent blow open with the wind. Penelope slowly stands out of the tent and takes a few steps forward. The flaps continue to blow, revealing the inside of the tent. Penelope's dad is seen inside the tent grabbing and kissing his wife.

Penelope takes tiny steps around the campfire, searching the ground with her eyes. Her footsteps CRACKLE beneath her.

THUD CLANK THUD. A repetitious bang rips through the stillness of the air, faintly in the distance.

Penelope looks up into the woods briefly, but then continues tip toeing around the campfire. She slowly creeps around it until spotting the teddy bear lying on the ground. The bear lays out like a starfish.

PENELOPE
Yes, gotcha!

THUD CLANK THUD. The noise grows louder.

Penelope looks out into the distance while aimlessly reaching down for the bear before finally grabbing it. She stands up, but continues staring out where the noise travels from.

Slowly, Penelope takes small steps toward the sound, creeping past the first tree before entering a heavily crowded forest. She keeps walking, slightly uphill, toward the noise, passing many trees.

PENELOPE'S MOM (V.O.)
(distanced shouting)
Penelope?

The noise is now loud BANGING. The sound is equally spaced one after the other. A rhythm.

Penelope reaches a larger aspen tree, the noise grows, echoing throughout the forest. She puts her hands out to hold herself up against the aspen tree. She leans around the tree, looking out beyond. Bright orange and yellow light shines on her face.

Penelope looks out. She gasps, then falls onto the ground making a THUD as well as CRACKLING from leaves and branches below her.

DEEP VOICE (V.O.)
Hey! Who the hell is that!

The sound of FEET CRUSHING LEAVES slowly moves toward Penelope.

Penelope pulls her face off the ground and looks up.

A dark figure, large, masked in the shadows, walks toward her dauntingly.

DEEP VOICE
Do not mov-

Penelope pushes herself up from the ground with the teddy bear still tightly grasped in her left hand, and she runs away.

DEEP VOICE (CONT'D)

Hey!

The sound of crushing leaves picks up in speed.

Teddy, the teddy bear, sways like a pendulum as Penelope runs.

PENELOPE'S MOM (V.O.)

Penelope! Penelope, where are you!

Penelope runs faster, HEAVY BREATHING and CRUNCHING is heard behind her. She slightly turns her head backward.

SLAM.

Slow footsteps approach.

DEEP VOICE

Fu-Fuck.

The air becomes silent, only wind blows. Leaves lightly crackle as footsteps slowly move away. The footsteps pick up in pace, fading in the distance.

Blood trickles down a cold, grey stone. Penelope's lays face down on the ground, her body is laid out like a star. The teddy bear is still in her left hand.

PENELOPE'S MOM (V.O.)

(Closer now)

Penelope!

The SCREAMS of a desperate mother become louder and louder.

Approaching footsteps. More leaves and branches crackle.

PENELOPE'S MOM (CONT'D)

Oh, oh god. Penelope... Penelope!

Help! Please, oh god, someone help!

Penelope!

CRIES mix with more CRACKING leaves as more footsteps approach. Penelope's mother lays folded into her knees, holding onto her daughter.

INT. CAFETERIA - ESTER ELEMENTARY - 27 YEARS LATER

White cinderblock walls suffocate a narrow room lined with laminate cafeteria tables. Children YELLING fills the air.

They run from one table to the other, the room is utter chaos.

Two LUNCH LADIES, mid fifties, sit at a round table on the edge of the cafeteria. Tired expressions wear on their faces. One picks up a newspaper from the center of the table.

NUKA, 9, a small Native Inuit boy in an oversized hoodie, runs by the round table, smiling and laughing. He dangles a sandwich from his left hand, high in the air, away from a boy who runs behind him.

JOEY, a pale boy with shaggy hair the same age as Nuka, wears jeans and a polo shirt. He runs closely behind Nuka, stretching his arm to grab at Nuka's collar.

JOEY

Get back here you little Eskimo!

The lunch lady holding the newspaper quickly slams it down and stands up.

LUNCH LADY 1

Hey! Stop it right now, you two!
Get over here.

Nuka comes to a sliding stop and turns to the lunch lady.

NUKA

It's not my fault, Mrs. A. Joey was
chasing me. I'm sorry, I'm sorry!

Tears appear in Nuka's eyes as he bombards the lunch lady with his words. Joey runs over to Nuka, snatching the sandwich out of his hand, and instantaneously takes a bite.

MRS. A

Joey! What did I just say? Get over
here, now, the both of you!

Joey mopes over to the circular table with his shoulders shrugged.

JOEY

We were just joking, Mrs. A.

NUKA

Yeah, Mrs. A, I was going to give
him my sandwich anyway.

MRS. A

I told you this already, Joey. You can not call Nuka an Eskimo. If I hear you say that again, you're going right to Principle Coffman's office.

She pauses for a breath. The two boys are about to turn around.

MRS. A (CONT'D)

Oh, and I know that the both of you know there is no running in the cafeteria, so I better not see it again.

(beat)

Do you hear me?

NUKA

Yes, Mrs. A. We're sorry,
Mrs. A.

JOEY

Yes, Mrs. A. We're sorry,
Mrs. A.

The two boys scurry back to their lunch table. Joey takes another bite out of Nuka's sandwich before Nuka snatches it back from his hand.

The LUNCH LADY, Mrs. A, sits back down. The other lunch lady shakes her head back and forth in disappointment.

LUNCH LADY 2

They're good kids, just too damn rowdy.

MRS. A

So much energy at that age, Lu. It hurts them more then helps them.

LU

What do you mean? It's good they got energy now, something would be wrong with them if not!

MRS. A

Just gets them into trouble,
'specially in this town, you know.

LU

Oh, we know. This town knows all too well. I still think about that girl who went missing on Baker's Ave all those years ago.

MRS. A

Ugh, I just couldn't imagine being the parent.

Mrs. A sinks her head into her hands. Lu reaches over to grab Mrs. A's hand. She rubs the backside of her palm.

LU
Oh, Andrea, you would never let
that happen. Come on, enough
sulking, recess is almost over.

The two lunch ladies get up from the table and begin to wave the kids in line.

Nuka and Joey line up with Mrs. A's group. Joey pushes Nuka into the boys ahead of them.

MRS. A
Joey, what did I just say to you?
Stop that, now.

JOEY
I'm only playing, Mrs. A!

MRS. A
I don't care, stop.

Joey stops for a few seconds. He then slightly pushes Nuka with his knuckles. Nuka doesn't react. He keeps facing forward and stands straight up. Joey pokes Nuka's shoulder, lightly knees his butt, blows air into his ear, but Nuka doesn't turn.

JOEY
(whispering)
Nuka. Nuka.

Nuka swipes his hand blindly behind his back, hitting Joey.

NUKA
Shut up. You're going to get us
into more trouble.

JOEY
Are you coming with Benji and I
after school?

NUKA
After school where?

Nuka peaks up at Mrs. A, who glares at the boys.

JOEY
Benji says he found something cool
in Pen-

NUKA

Shh!

JOEY

Don't tell me to shush, I'm trying
to tell you where we're going!

NUKA

She is looking right at us idi-

MRS. A

Joey and Nuka! If I have to say
your names one more time, you'll be
on lunch detention until Summer!

Mrs. A walks over to the two boys, towering over them. She
crouches down to their height.

MRS. A (CONT'D)

For the final time, do you hear me?

Neither of the boys look up at the lunch lady.

NUKA

Yes, Mrs. A. We're sorry,
Mrs. A.

JOEY

Yes, Mrs. A. We're sorry,
Mrs. A.

Mrs. A walks back to the front of the line and waves for the
children to walk ahead of her. Joey quickly leans into Nuka's
ear.

JOEY (CONT'D)

At least summer is here in a week.

Joey stands back in line and the class of children move
quietly, walking in two single file lines separated by
gender. They stop at the cafeteria doors.

Joey takes a quick peak over his shoulder at Mrs. A, who is
cleaning up milk that spilled out of another boy's backpack.

MRS. A (V.O.)

(In the distance)

See, Luther, this is why food and
drinks from the cafeteria go in the
trash when you're done with them.
Not your bag.

Joey snaps his head back in line and hurries to catch up with
Nuka who is stands up straight by the cafeteria doors.

JOEY

Like I said, we are going to Pe-

NUKA

Shut up, Joey. We can't get in trouble again!

JOEY

You're such a scaredy-cat, just meet me and Benji by the garbage bins, you hear?

Nuka, keeping his posture perfectly straight and sight locked on the cafeteria doors, subtly nods his head.

2

EXT. GARABGE - BACK OF ESTER ELEMENTARY - EVENING

2

Sounds of children yelling and screaming can be heard in the distance, coming from the front of the building. Nuka and Joey are hunched over as they come out of a back door behind the school. The outside is a small rectangle encaged by a metal fence. To the left of the door are a pair of green dumpsters, barely covering a slit in the metal fence. To the right, cardboard boxes sit stacked on each other. Beyond the fence lies a woodland of aspen trees.

Nuka quickly scans the area and then hurries toward the green dumpsters with Joey following a safe distance behind. They go behind the dumpsters and peak out from them, looking at the door they came from.

NUKA

Where's Benji at?

Nuka taps on Joey's shoulder, but his eyes stick to the door like an animal tracking its prey.

JOEY

It's Benji's plan, he has to be out here soon. Maybe he just went to the bathroom first.

BENJI, 12, wearing a loose green shirt with khaki pants, comes running out of the back door. Curly blonde hair hangs over his shoulders. He runs a few feet in front of the garbage dumpsters and stops with his back to the door.

The door nearly shuts before nimble fingers come around the edge of it. There is a pause before the door slightly creaks open then slams shut as a figure dashes out, quickly vanishing behind the stacked cardboard boxes.

With the sound of the door slamming shut, Joey peaks over the side of the dumpster.

Benji stands in the middle, anxiously glancing behind and ahead of him, checking his surroundings.

JOEY (CONT'D)
Psst, Benji. Benji!

Benji's head quickly snaps to the dumpsters and he hunches, trying to hide his lanky figure.

JOEY (CONT'D)
Over here, get behind the
dumpsters.

Benji hurries to toward the two boys. Nuka sits with his back on the dumpster and knees against his chest while Joey sits up having a resurgence of energy.

BENJI
Are you guys ready?

Benji grabs Joey's shoulders and shakes them, then looks toward Nuka.

BENJI (CONT'D)
Oh, Joey, did you tell Nuka where
we're going?

JOEY
No, he wouldn't let me. We're going
to Penelope Woods, what's the
problem.

There is a pause as Benji glances at Nuka.

NUKA
I- its fine, Benji, I've been to
Penelope before. The Aspen trees
look cool in the spring, too.

BENJI
Oh, okay, just checking.

Benji pauses and lifts his head up toward the sky, looking ahead at the Aspen trees swaying in the wind.

BENJI (CONT'D)
Yeah, they do. Alright, lets get
goin-

ROSELINE, 6, a frail little girl wearing a pink dress pops up behind Nuka.

ROSELINE
Can I come?

Nuka jumps and shouts, dashing behind Joey.

JOEY
(laughing at Nuka)
It's just Rosie-cheeks, weirdo.

BENJI
Wha- did you follow me, Roseline?
No, no, no- go home.

ROSELINE
Ohhh-kay, mom's gonna be really mad
if I tell her you left me again,
though.

BENJI
Ugh, can't you just go over
Olivia's house? What about
Jennifer.

JOEY
Yeah, Rosie-cheeks, shoo off. No
girls allowed.

Nuka laughs and comes out from behind Joey.

NUKA
You'll get tired within five
minutes anyway.

Roseline pouts and shrugs her shoulders. Benji walks up and
squats down to her face.

BENJI
I'm sorry, Roseline, but this trip
is too much for you. Maybe next
time.

Roseline looks down at the ground. Benji lifts her head and
smiles at her.

BENJI (CONT'D)
I'll tell you what, though. If you
go over your friend's house and
don't tell mom about me, I'll give
you the rest of the cookies from my
jar.

Roseline instantly looks up with a smile that stretches from
ear to ear and squeezes Benji.

ROSELINE
Really? All *three*?

Benji pulls her off and she stares at him.

BENJI

Yes, all three, but don't eat them
all at once like you did with
yours!

Roseline shakes her head yes, then skips off, back into the building.

The three boys squeeze between the slit in the fence behind the dumpsters. Their small bodies become dwarfed as they pass by the tall Aspen trees. A thick layer of yellow and orange leaves cover the sky over the boys' heads, connecting each tree to the next. The backs of their bodies get lost in between the rows of Aspen trunks as they travel deeper into the woods.

3

EXT. FIELD OF ASPEN TREES - PENELOPE WOODS - EVENING

3

The three boys walk up a narrow dirt path cut in between a thick cluster of Aspen trees. Benji and Nuka stay close together as Joey hangs off to the right. His arms hang in the air, forming a T, as he balances himself on a line where the dirt path meets grass.

Benji watches Joey in laughter while Nuka keeps his eyes straight ahead at the path, refusing to give the balancing boy any attention.

The distance ahead is covered by the trunks of Aspen trees. Green leaves from other white and black Spruces combine with the Aspens as the path stretches further up the hill.

The narrow path creates a small passageway for a beam of sunlight to come through, making it difficult to see.

Nuka puts his hands partially over his eyes to cover the blinding light and continues his focus.

BENJI

(To Joey)

Please fall and hit your head.

JOEY

What, do you see this? I'm too good.

The two boys laugh and Benji reaches behind Nuka to make a shoving motion toward Joey.

Leaves shuffle around in a bundle of bushes ahead of the boys path. Nuka slows down and aimlessly reaches for Benji as he keeps his eyes glued ahead.

Benji ignores Nuka, distracted by Joey who obnoxiously acts as if he were losing his balance.

Nuka hushes Benji's laughter and puts out his left arm to block Benji's path. Nuka puts out his other arm to stop Joey.

SLAM

Joey stumbles, face-planting into the ground, arms still out in a T-pose.

JOEY (CONT'D)
(Mumbling into the ground)
What was that for?

NUKA
Shut up, idiot. Did you guys see that bush? Something moved in that bush!

Nuka points ahead at a bush which rattles more.

Joey quickly jumps up and joins Benji and Nuka who are hunched over, squinting toward the rattling.

JOEY
(whispering)
Are you sure you saw something?

NUKA
Yes, I saw something.

JOEY
Positive?

NUKA
Yes.

JOEY
One hundred percent?

NUKA
You're stupid.

JOEY
Okay, okay. Just checking.
Sometimes you think you see things that aren't there, or its just your shadow.

Joey laughs and continues forward. Before he can get too far, Benji reaches out and grabs his arm.

BENJI
(whispering)
If he says he saw something then
maybe we should wait.

Benji reaches down and grabs a stone. He quietly stands up, stone firmly gripped in his left hand, and hurls it at the bush.

RAVENS fly out toward the boys, causing Joey to fall on his butt while the other two cover their heads.

Nuka laughs and points at Joey who is curled up in a ball on the ground.

NUKA
Whose the scaredy-cat now, *pussy*?

Joey turns his head around and looks up at Nuka, then quickly gets off the ground again.

JOEY
I'm no pussy, you're the pussy!

The two boys yell at each other as Benji walks ahead of the path. He reaches the top of the hill and becomes motionless.

BENJI
We're here!

Benji yells and puts his arms up in the air, cheering as his body disappears beyond the hill.

Nuka and Joey become quiet, look up at Benji, and then look back at each other before running off after him.

4 EXT. BASE OF WATERFALL - PENELOPE WOODS - CONTINUOUS 4

Beyond the hill lies the base of a waterfall hidden within the trees. The trees and hill encircle the base of the lake, which glistens in the light beaming from the open sky above.

From the side of the lake a distanced yelling can be heard. Leaves and bushes ruffle, then a group of birds fly off from the disturbance. At the base of the lake, leaves part and Benji comes yelling out as he jumps into the water.

Moments later, Joey and Nuka come screaming down the hill. Joey throws his shirt over his shoulders and jumps in the lake, but Nuka stops at the edge.

Benji floats on his back behind Joey who looks up at Nuka.

JOEY
Aren't you coming in?

BENJI
Waters feels great once you get
used to it.

Nuka sits on the edge of the lake and dips in his feet.

JOEY
Just jump in, thats what I did.

Benji backstrokes deeper into the lake toward the waterfall. The waterfall spits out from the top of a cliff which overlooks the forest. Darkness engulfs the space behind the waterfall and foamy white steam covers the base.

BENJI
(yelling)
I'm gonna keep swimming deeper!

Benji disappears inside the foamy white steam while Joey swims up to Nuka, who still sits on the edge of the lake.

NUKA
I don't swim much, Joey.

JOEY
Just jump in, I'm still here.
Nothings gonna happen.

Sweat mixes with water and drips down the side of Joey's head. He shakes out his shaggy hair and dips his head under the water, swimming a bit deeper into the lake.

JOEY (CONT'D)
The water feels great. Just come
jump, Nuka!

Nuka stands up and ponders over the lake, hesitating to jump in. He makes a motion as if he is about to jump, but then stops, and looks up at Joey.

NUKA
Why are we even out here? Is this
all Benji wanted to show us?

JOEY
I don't know, but who cares? Just
jump in, come swim!

NUKA

Where did he even go? I don't wanna
come in.

Joey lets out a grunt and dips his head backward into the
water, then splashes up toward Nuka.

JOEY

God, Nuka, why do you have to be
such a baby? Just jump in! It's
safe, Benji has been here before.

NUKA

I've been here before too,
(mumbling to self) and it's not,
but sure take the lead.

Nuka pulls off his shirt then jumps in beside Joey, splashing
him completely. As soon as Nuka's head resurfaces, Joey
splashes back, and the two ensue into a battle.

The sun moves behind a cloud, leaves ruffle in the wind, and
birds fly out from the branches as the boys continue their
splashing battle.

There is movement in the water near the two boys and tiny
bubbles form, but neither notice. The motion gets closer to
Nuka and the boy goes still, startled, then jumping up in
freight and yelling.

Joey immediately dives backward and his arms flail in the
air, joining Nuka's screaming.

JOEY

What is it? What is it?!

NUKA

I don't know, I can't see it!

Tears stream from Nuka's eyes as he stands up still in the
lake while Joey continues panicking.

JOEY

Was it a shark? Did it bite you?

NUKA

A shark! Oh, I knew this was a bad
idea.

(Nuka reaches down to his
legs and feel for any
bite marks)

I don't feel anything. What do you
think it was?

Joey swims up to Nuka and the two boys look around the lake, inspecting the water like detectives on the scene of a crime. Joey pauses, looks up at Nuka, and slaps him on the back of the head.

JOEY
It was probably just a fish you
idiot!

NUKA
Yeah, well how am I supposed to
know that.

Nuka splashes Joey and the two start at it again.

Suddenly, a screeching animalistic call comes from beyond the rapid waterfall pounding that pounds against the still lake.

Nuka and Joey come to a stand still and flicker looks between each other and the waterfall. Joey quickly bursts into the water and swims toward the sound.

NUKA (CONT'D)
Wait! Joey, Wait!

Nuka dives into the water and trails behind him. He reaches out for Joey's foot and yanks it, making the boy come up from the water.

JOEY
What, Nuka? We have to hurry, what
if that was Benji?

NUKA
Hello? It could be dangerous!

JOEY
Benji could be hurt!

NUKA
We could get hurt!

The shadow of a person appears in the foamy white steam and Benji comes bursting out. He spots Nuka and Joey ahead of the waterfall and swims toward them. His head bursts out in between the two boys.

BENJI
Did you guys hear th-

NUKA
Ye- Yeah! What was it?

JOEY
Are you okay, what happened?

BENJI

How am I supposed to know? I was in the cove when it happened, it sounded from deep within but it kept echoing all around me and so I couldn't tell.

Nuka and Joey look at each other with frazzled expressions.

JOEY

What cove, what are you talking about? Are you okay?

NUKA

Did you see what it was?

Benji rubs his face and lets out a sigh.

BENJI

Yes, I'm fine. I didn't see where the sound came from but I think it was an from behind the waterfall!

JOEY

Wow, what do you think it could be? Can you show us?

NUKA

It sounded like a lynx!

JOEY

Oh, they're so cool! I want one as a pet but my mom says
(in a high pitched whiny imitation)
They aren't meant to live in a house, Joey.

NUKA

Isn't your dad allergic to cats?

JOEY

Thats what he says anyway.

Benji lightly splashes the two boys to get their attention.

BENJI

Do you guys wanna see what it is or not?

JOEY

Yeah!

NUKA

Is it sa- (pauses) I guess.

The three boys head off for the waterfall, with Benji leading the pack. Their bodies fade into the rushing downpour and cloudy vapor from the waterfall.

5 EXT. COVE BEHIND WATERFALL - PENELOPE WOODS - CONTINUOUS 5

Beyond the waterfall lays a beautiful cove tucked underneath the cliff. Sparse sunlight causes tiny sparkles to glisten in the water like stars in a clear night sky. White and yellow sunflowers sprout from the cracks of the inner cliff walls. The sound of the waterfall pounding against the still lake echoes throughout the cove. Peace.

Nuka and Benji wipe away the steam from their faces while Joey pushes back his dripping hair. Nuka and Joey's jaws drop as they see the cove.

JOEY

Wow, Benji, who would've thought
this was back here!

BENJI

(In awe)
It's awesome, isn't it?

The boys swim about the cove, splashing water at each other, looking up and around at the interior cliff walls, taking in and enjoying the isolation.

NUKA

Okay, so which direction did the
noise come from?

BENJI

It sounded like it came from the
deeper backside, but it was just
all echoes.

The three boys stop swimming and look ahead to the back of the cove. Nothing but darkness and water awaits.

NUKA

Can't see a thing back there! Are
ya sure we should go?

JOEY

(fake coughing)
Pussy.

NUKA
Shut up, Joey. You just learned the
word from me.

JOEY
Did not!

BENJI
It's fine, Nuka. Probably just
water until we reach a dead end.

Benji shrugs his shoulders and start to float forward.

NUKA
(muffled)
And whatever made the noise.

JOEY
Don't come then.

Suddenly, Joey dives underwater and begins swimming further
back into the cove.

NUKA
Joey!

A large splash drenches Nuka's face. Benji is underwater too
now, going after Joey.

Joey's head pops up and he desperately gasps for air.
Panicking, his left hand splashes in the water while his
right hand holds his chest. After a few seconds, he catches
his breath and wipes away the wet hair that covers his eyes.

Nuka floats no more than fifteen feet away, pointing and
laughing at Joey.

NUKA (CONT'D)
(Hysterically laughing)
That's as far as you made it? And
you're out of breath? Ha, loser!

JOEY
It's really dark down there, I
couldn't see where I was going!

NUKA
All that talk just to be that slow?
I could beat you in a race!

Benji's body quickly bursts out of the water, yelling as he
comes up.

BENJI

Where's Joey? Where's Joey?

He wipes his eyes and frantically looks out, side to side, at the darkness that lies deep within the cove.

JOEY (V.O.)

(Yelling at Nuka)

You're so slow and chubby! I think
Rosie-cheeks could beat you in a
race, let alone me.

Benji slowly turns around and lets out a short laugh when he sees Joey.

BENJI

Oh, that's as far as you made it?

Nuka laughs and swim up towards Joey. Benji then starts swimming to the group.

JOEY

It was too dark underwater!

NUKA

Excuses, excuses.

(laughing)

Even Benji said you're slow.

BENJI

(defensively)

No I didn't, I was just surprised
to see where you were.

Benji lets out a short laugh and Joey groans in frustration then splashes his face.

JOEY

Let's just forget about it. I bet I
could beat you guys in a race,
anyways.

BENJI

No way, I am the fastest for sure.

NUKA

Yeah, Benji will crush you Joey.

JOEY

Maybe, maybe not, but I'll
definitely beat you.

NUKA
(To Joey)
Not true!
(Turning to Benji)
That's not true, Benji.

Nuka splashes Joey.

JOEY
Stop that, baby.

Nuka continues splashing, a lot more this time.

NUKA
Liar!

Benji puts out his arms to stop the two.

BENJI
Stop, stop!

The splashing ends and Benji wipes his face from the crossfire that splashed onto him.

BENJI (CONT'D)
How bout we just race to the back
wall of the cave and find out whose
faster?

NUKA
Yeah! Lets race, Joey, so I can
beat your ass.

JOEY
Okay, go!

Before anyone could react, Joey is already under the water.

Benji quickly dives in the water and swims ahead. Nuka hesitates before jumping in, following Benji.

Benji quickly passes Joey, whose head pops out from underwater to catch his breath. He continues swimming with his head above the water.

Nuka unconfidently swims behind Benji, keeping his eyes clenched shut, only following the direction of the splashes and waves that come from Benji. Nuka's legs propel him forward while one hand pinches his nose and the other paddles.

Benji's hand connects with the back cliff wall and he comes to a stop. Nuka, with his eyes still closed, bumps right into Benji.

NUKA
I did it, I did it!
(shaking Benji)
I beat Joey!

The two turn their heads and look out for Joey, who swims completely out of path. After taking an unintentional detour, he reaches the cliff wall, off to the side from the other two boys.

Joey wipes his face and looks over to Nuka and Benji.

JOEY
Why are you guys all the way over there?

BENJI
(laughing)
You didn't swim straight!

NUKA
I was just following Benji.

JOEY
Cheater! You only beat me cause you followed him.

BENJI
I still won, I beat the both of you!

NUKA
(teasing)
Ha-ha. I beat Joey, I beat Joey.

Joey moves along the wall toward Nuka and Benji. Nuka continues teasing him. Rubble and dirt fall off the scaly wall as Joey moves along it.

Just as the sound of pebbles drip into the water, a low echo can be heard coming from within the cove. The echo travels, growing louder into a deep whistle noise, similar from before. The noise echoes across the cove, once again resembling an animalistic call, starting off low and getting higher in pitch the longer it rings.

The three boys instinctually cover their ears, leaning against the cliff wall to hold themselves up. The wall vibrates from the echoes, causing more pebbles and dust to fall down. Blood runs down Benji's forearms as he presses them against the rough scaly wall. As the echoes die out, the boys uncover their ears.

Benji floats back into the water, dipping his hands to clean off the blood.

BENJI

Did you guys hear that? It came from the right side!

JOEY

Where does this cave lead?

BENJI

I'm not sure.

Benji stops and scratches his head. He does a quick look around the cave.

BENJI (CONT'D)

But what if there's secret treasure!

NUKA

Maybe we should leave, guys.

BENJI

What? Now? We're so close!

NUKA

We don't even know where this leads to!

(quieter)

And that didn't sound like something nice.

BENJI

It's probably just a bat or something small, Nuka. It's not like a bear can swim through here.

JOEY

Yeah, Nuka, or it's probably just ravens again.

(teasing)

Are you really that scared of birds?

Benji chuckles at Joey who makes mocks Nuka with fake crying noises.

The three boys swim alongside the wall, going further toward the right, where they heard the screeching noise. They unknowingly swim much deeper into the cove, with the light from it's opening getting dimmer as the boys swim further from the waterfall.

EXT. DEEPER WITHIN COVE - CONTINUOUS

Darkness surrounds the boys as they swim ahead, eventually turning a corner, revealing a small flame of light which can be seen in the distance. Only a hint of natural light sparingly creeps behind them, indicating where they first began. The sound of the waterfall pounding against the lake mixes with the sounds of water splashing from their swimming, echoing throughout the cove.

Joey stops swimming and looks up at the light in the distance.

JOEY

Do you guys see that?

Joey points up to the light. His voice travels within the cove.

NUKA

Wow. Echo, echo, echo.

Nuka's voice travels throughout the cove, repeating his words back to him over and over until it dies out.

The light in the distance starts getting larger.

BENJI

I see it, I see it! Is it a fire?

JOEY

Is it getting bigger?

Nuka becomes quiet and looks out to the light.

NUKA

(Whispering)

Is it coming towards us?

Nuka, Benji, and Joey look out to the light. A flame. It grows as the distance between the boys and the light shortens. Suddenly, the flame goes out. The cove becomes pitch black and falls silent. The boys remain still. Only the whooshing of water can be heard.

The three boys exchange confused looks at each other.

JOEY

(whispering)

What happened to the light?

NUKA

Is somebody out there?

Nuka's voice echoes throughout the cove again.

Joey and Nuka start floating forward, looking out in the distance. Benji floats in place, barely moving. The mumbles of Joey and Nuka's voices echo shortly before trickling out. The sound of water whooshing picks up in pace.

BENJI
(whispering)
Shhh! Do you hear the water? Sounds
like something is moving.

Joey and Nuka stop and look back at Benji.

NUKA
What do you me-

Nuka stops speaking as Benji stares at him, pointing.

Fingers come out of the darkness and appear around Nuka's shoulder. Before anyone can speak, another hand comes around his other shoulder and Nuka is yanked up, out of the water.

BENJI
Nuka!

Benji leaps forward and grabs Nuka's legs, holding onto him while also dragging him down to the water.

A bright flame is quickly lit over the boys heads, revealing a wooden rowboat that has crept up beside them. Four figures stand in the boat, looming over the boys. The figures each wear a rustic dark-gray mask. Red eyes are painted on the mask. Individual teeth of various shapes, sizes, and discolorations are glued onto the mask where a mouth would be, forming a smile.

Two of the figures are in the front of the boat, one grabbing Nuka as the other stands by. One stands in the back holding the lit torch. The other is in the middle of the boat, holding a large curved war horn. The figure blows the horn, blaring the same sound as before.

Joey covers his ears and dives underwater.

Benji holds tightly onto Nuka's legs. Nuka punches the figure's hands whom tries to pull him up in the boat. The figure is dragged by Benji and Nuka, stumbling over the rowboat. It's body plummets over the edge and sinks into the darkness below their feet, quickly disappearing from sight.

As soon as Nuka drops in the water, the other figure in the front immediately runs toward Benji and grabs his right arm which hangs in the air, yanking him up and swinging him over the ledge and into the boat.

Joey's body pops up from the other side of the boat and he leaps up grabbing the ledge.

JOEY
Benji, Benji!

Benji tries to get off of his back, but the figure which grabbed him before puts his foot on Benji's chest, keeping him down.

The figure blowing the horn stops and lowers it, watching Joey as he attempts to pull himself up. Before Joey can get over the boat's ledge, the figure leans down and grabs him. Joey's feet helplessly dangle over the water below.

JOEY (CONT'D)
Let me go you creep!
(Joey swings his fist down
onto the figure but makes
no impact)
Benji, run! Benji!

Benji looks up at Joey. The two boys reach for each other until Joey is hit over the head by the war horn. His body drops in the water.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. NUKA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Sunlight beams through a window covered by a thinly veiled white curtain. The light fills an apricot colored room. A bed sits in the middle of the room and a boy, Nuka, sleeps on his back.

ELISAPIE, Nuka's mother(50s), a Native Inuk woman sits by Nuka's bed on a wooden chair. She is in nursing garments. An idol rests in the woman's hands and she looks up to the ceiling, whispering softly to herself.

The sunlight hits Nuka's closed eyelids, causing them to twitch. They flicker open.

Elisapie's head snaps up as Nuka moves awake in his bed.

ELISAPIE
What were you doing out after
school playing basketball?
(MORE)

ELISAPIE (CONT'D)
Do you know how worried I was?
(beat)
Do you hear me? Wake up, Nuka.

Nuka covers the sunlight with his hand and rubs his head.

NUKA
Please stop yelling, Anaana.

ELISAPIE
Answer me, now.

NUKA
I don't know what you're talking
about! I just woke up!

Elisapie stands up and towers over Nuka. She raises her hand and is about to say something when Nuka pulls his covers over his head.

NUKA (CONT'D)
Stop, don't take me! Don't take me!

Elisapie tugs at the covers.

ELISAPIE
Stop that, Nuka. What is this
about? What is wrong?

She pulls the covers off of Nuka's head. Nuka looks up at his mother with tears in his eyes. He leans up off his back and gives her a hug.

NUKA
I don't know, I'm sorry. You scared
me.
(Nuka leans back down)
I think I just had a bad dream.

Elisapie scoots next to Nuka and leans in to kiss his forehead.

ELISAPIE
Okay, talk to me, my irniq. You had
me worried all yesterday, not
coming home after school.

Nuka looks up at his mother and wipes his eyes.

NUKA
I don't remember.

Elisapie scoffs and walks away from her son. She looks out of the window and pauses before looking back.

ELISAPIE

After everything with your sister,
how could you worry me like this?
And now you play these games.

NUKA

I'm not playing games, I can't
remember!

ELISAPIE

You don't remember Mrs. Caulstine
bringing you home to me? She said
something about you and Joey
falling asleep at basketball?

NUKA

I don't remember any of that! I
only remember being with Joey after
school.

(crying again)

I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I didn't mean
to worry you, I swear!

Elisapie leans back in to Nuka and gives him a hug.

ELISAPIE

Alright, alright, Nuka.

She pulls Nuka away from her and then holds onto his
shoulders, looking him in the eye.

ELISAPIE (CONT'D)

Just don't do that again, you need
to tell me first before you hang
out with friends, do you hear me?

NUKA

Yes, Anaana.

Elisapie stands back up and walks over to the door.

ELISAPIE

I have to leave soon for work.
Please don't make Ataata upset
today.

Elisapie exits, leaving the bedroom door open.

Nuka quickly shuffles out of bed and shuts the door. He walks
over to a closet with mirror sliding doors and stares at
himself. He is in shorts and a t-shirt. He glides his hand
over scratch marks that cover his legs.

Then, Nuka yanks the sliding doors open. He hurriedly scrambles through a pile of toys. He stops, pauses, and bends down to pick something up. A dirty, flat basketball hangs in his left hand.

INT. JOEY'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

A traditional kitchen. Wooden cabinets line the walls. A white backsplash. A window over the sink with a man and woman standing by it, deep in conversation.

THOMAS CAULSTINE, late forties, leans his butt against the sink. He is a tall man, trimmed facial hair, wearing jeans and a button up. Somewhat attractive but nothing special, typical.

JANETTE CAULSTINE, around the same age as her husband and dressed similarly, stands straight up facing Thomas. Her blonde hair is in a tight ponytail.

The two are WHISPERING.

Foot steps can be heard and Joey ENTERS. Thomas and Janette Caulstine become quiet and jump up to face their son.

JANETTE CAULSTINE

Oh, my sweet boy. Come here, come
give your momma a hug.

She puts her arms out for a hug and makes a grabbing motion with her hands.

Joey itches his eyes and trudges over to his mother. She squeezes him with her hug as his arms flail to the side.

JOEY

Is it the morning?

Joey puts his hand over his eyes and looks out of the window.

JANETTE CAULSTINE

Oh, you must have been so tired.

Janette pulls him in for another hug.

JOEY

Mom, stop. Come on, stop it.

Joey pulls himself out of his mother's embrace.

JOEY (CONT'D)

When did I go to sleep yesterday?

Thomas bends down and ruffles Joey's hair.

THOMAS CAULSTINE

You forget? You must have been in a pretty intense game with that little Indian boy your friends with. I found the two of you asleep by the basketball courts.

JOEY

What? I don't remember that.
(trailing off)
Nuka doesn't even play basket-

THOMAS CAULSTINE

You boys must've really worn yourselves out. Don't worry, Joey, you're not in trouble.

JOEY

Why would I be in trouble?

THOMAS CAULSTINE

Well, you had me and your mother worried sick looking for you. And after your friend Benji never showed home yesterday we thought you were missing too.

Janette pokes Thomas on the side.

JANETTE CAULSTINE

(whispering)
Tsk, Tom!

JOEY

Benji never went home yesterday?

Janette and Thomas Caulstine both hesitate.

THOMAS CAULSTINE

Oh, well, yeah. That's what we heard from his parents anyhow.

Janette walks around the kitchen with her head in her hand.

JANETTE CAULSTINE

It's a sad thing, sweetie. I'm sure he will be found though you don't have to worry one bit.

Tears swell up in Joey's eyes.

JOEY
Benji is missing?

He starts crying.

THOMAS CAULSTINE
Oh, stop that, Joey. Benji is the
one missing not you. We are going
to see his parents soon so you
better not cry in front of them.

Joey lowers his head and wipes his eyes.

JOEY
Sorry, I won't.

Thomas puts his arms on Joey's shoulders.

THOMAS CAULSTINE
Very good, now go get ready and be
dressed.

Joey sluggishly walks away. Heavy stomping can be heard on
the staircase.

CUT TO:

EXT. ESTER POLICE STATION - LATER

A white brick building covered in glass paneling. Brown brick
surrounds the entry way like an arch. The American flag,
accompanied by a sign that says ESTER POLICE, stands tall in
the neat front lawn.

To the left of the station, across the street, is a run down
gas station with cracked concrete riddled with weeds, chipped
paint, and rusted metal. Across the street to the right are a
few convenience stores, some closed up and their windows
covered with cardboard. An ALASKAN LIQUOR is the busiest lot
of them all.

INT. ESTER POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

The inside of the station is painted light gray with wood
finishings. Two large wooden desk are in the front center of
the room. An OLD MAN sits behind one of the desks. By the
entrance of the station is a seating area.

In one corner of the seating area, THERESA And BENJAMIN HALL
sit next to each other, both casually dressed. Neither are
looking or touching one another.

Benjamin Hall reads a magazine from the coffee table while Theresa Hall stares off in the distance.

On the other corner a middle aged white man, ALAN WALKER, sits wearing dirtied jeans and a white t-shirt. Alan is not too tall, but he slouches in the chair making him seem shorter than he is. Next to him is another, fairly younger, white man in an ALASKAN STATE TROOPER uniform.

ALASKAN STATE TROOPER
You really had to shoot their dog,
Allen? Because it wandered into
your house?

ALAN WALKER
What don't you understand? They are
white trash these people. They pick
up animals off the street and have
too many to know what to do with
them. You got a cigarette?

ALASKAN STATE TROOPER
Wha- Yeah, here.

The trooper pulls out a cart of cigarettes from his back pocket and hands one to Allen. Allen lights it and smokes.

ALAN WALKER
This ain't the first time one of
their animals came onto my
property.
(coughing)
They're fightin' dogs and I ain't
taking no risk with a fightin' dog.

ALASKAN STATE TROOPER
Did you make a report of this
happening before?

ALAN WALKER
No I didn't make no damn report. I
told them if one of their animals
came onto my property one more damn
time I was gonna shoot it. And
thats exactly what I fucking did. I
shot it.

The officer lets out a groan and shakes his head in his palm.

The OLD MAN sitting at the front desk stands up and waves at Theresa and Benjamin.

OLD MAN

Mr. And Mrs. Hall, Terry's ready
for ya.

Theresa hurriedly gets up and rushes over to the glass door behind the two desks. Benjamin takes his time getting up from his seat and trails behind Theresa.

INT. OFFICE - ESTER POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

A wooden meeting table lies in the middle of a narrow room with one large window on the far side of the wall, away from the room's entrance. Whiteboards cover the walls.

TERRY JOHNSON, a middle aged white man, sits at the table. He has dark black hair and clean white teeth. He looks rather fit for his age. His badge rests on his belt. His belt buckle is mountains with ALASKA engraved on it.

Next to him is a younger Indigenous woman in her late twenties, SANNA OHAITUK. She wears a navy blue button down shirt tucked into light jeans. A badge is clipped onto her shirt pocket. Her hair rests on her shoulders.

Theresa Hall bursts through the door and Benjamin comes trailing behind. Terry and Sanna stand up and shake Theresa's hand.

TERRY JOHNSON

Very sorry to hear that your boy's
gone missing, Theresa.

SANNA OHAITUK

You have my condolences, Mr. and
Mrs. Hall.

THERESA HALL

Condolences? For what? My boy is
missing he is not dead.

SANNA OHAITUK

Right, of course Mrs. Hall. I'm
sorry I didn't mean it tha-

THERESA HALL

Who is this, Terry?

TERRY JOHNSON

This is Sanna Ohaituk, she is a
terrifically smart trooper down
from Fairbanks. As you can see the
station is low on hands, she's come
up to offer some help.

Benjamin lets out a chuckle to himself.

TERRY JOHNSON (CONT'D)
Something funny, Ben?

BENJAMIN HALL
Need extra hands for what? Come on,
Terry, Alan Walker's weekly stunt
is too much for you to keep up
with?

TERRY JOHNSON
The list of unfinished cases in
this town is too much for us,
Benjamin. This state has the
highest rate of missing persons
cases, we do not want your son to
end up on that list.

BENJAMIN HALL
My boy ain't missing, kids like
mine don't go missing. He'll show
up.

SANNA OHAITUK
Kids like yours? Like Penelope
Mercer? On all accounts, I thought
she was a wonderful, innocent
little girl, Mr. Hall.

BENJAMIN HALL
That was a terrible tragedy that
this town is forced to bear every
fucking day because we decided to
give a name to that forest. It is a
tragedy because it happened once,
my boy will not end up the same.

Sanna leans further across the table.

SANNA OHAITUK
Oh, so you mean kids like Ahnah
Kunuk, then?

BENJAMIN HALL
I didn't say that.

TERRY JOHNSON
Alright, alright, let's stay on
track here. Has anyone called you
with anything? Anyone spot your boy
at all after school?

THERESA HALL
No, Terry, isn't that your job?
Shouldn't they be calling here?

Terry sits down and sighs. He motions his hand at the chairs.

TERRY JOHNSON
Please, sit. Everyone sit.

A brief pause as everyone gets situated in their seats.

TERRY JOHNSON (CONT'D)
These cases, Theresa, they can be
difficult and long. You know this
just as well as we do, especially
so living in this town.

THERESA HALL
(abrasively)
So, what do we do about that,
Terry? How do we make sure my child
does not end up that way?

SANNA OHAITUK
If I may-

THERESA HALL
Yes, of course, speak.

SANNA OHAITUK
Well, your husband may be right
about your son not being missing.
Most missing persons cases,
especially with children, the child
runs off. Whether he is upset,
stressed, scared, any reasons. Did
Benji seem upset to you at all? Was
there a recent argument?

Theresa turns her head and gives Benjamin a glare.

TERRY JOHNSON
Did you get in a fight recently
with your son, Ben?

THERESA HALL
Oh, when isn't he fighting with our
son.

BENJAMIN HALL
We don't fight. I'm toughening him
up. Theresa's turned him into a
mommies boy and I don't want my son
being a wimp.

TERRY JOHNSON

Did you say something that could have triggered a response which would cause him to run off?

BENJAMIN HALL

No, what? You trying to say this is my fault? I hadn't said anything to him that he hasn't heard a thousand times before.

Sanna looks away and shakes her head. She writes down notes then looks back up at Ben.

BENJAMIN HALL (CONT'D)

What're you shaking your head at? If my boy ran away because I said a few words then he can stay out there. Maybe the wilderness oughta toughen him up.

Theresa quickly snaps toward Benjamin. She grabs his ear and starts yanking on it.

THERESA HALL

You listen here you mother fucker; if anything happens to my child and I find out its because of you I will kill you with my bare hands and feed your ass to the wolves.

BENJAMIN HALL

Oh, I'm sure of it.

Theresa lets go of Benjamin and he lets out a chuckle.

SANNA OHAITUK

This isn't a laughing matter, Mr. Hall.

THERESA HALL

No, it's fucking not.

BENJAMIN HALL

What the hell is this? I didn't do shit to my kid and he is missing because you don't know how to do your damn job.

TERRY JOHNSON

Alright, listen! We're gonna organize a search party for Benji tonight.

(MORE)

TERRY JOHNSON (CONT'D)

We don't have the resources here at the station to quickly search this town, so this is our best option.

THERESA HALL

How will people find out by tonight?

TERRY JOHNSON

Call everyone you know in this town, tell them to call everyone they know. We'll do the same. Word will get out.

BENJAMIN HALL

That sounds like a fine idea. Its about time you start pulling your weight. If thats it, then we should leave you to it.

Benjamin stands up and heads for the door. Theresa doesn't move.

BENJAMIN HALL (CONT'D)

Let's go, Theresa.

TERRY JOHNSON

(Speaking softly)

Go on, Tessa. We'll call you in a bit with more details.

Theresa stands up and thanks the two officers. She quickly walks by Benjamin, refusing to look at him, and walks out the door.

EXT. NUKA'S HOME - DAY

Multiple identical wooden houses form a cluster on the land, each spaciouly laid out from one another. There is one main road which goes throughout the neighborhood. A few people are out of their homes. Some tend to plants, others are moving around different items like fishing and hunting equipment. A boy can be seen coming down the main road on a bike.

INT. NUKA'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Nuka's father, ATUAT, mid 50s, a little over 6 foot, stands over the stove. He has a scar across his eyebrow and another along his neck. His hair is jet black and cut fairly short, same with his facial hair which is cleanly trimmed. All the windows in the kitchen are open.

Nuka moves around the kitchen setting the table while his father stands in one place.

A KNOCK at the door.

ATUAT
Go get that, it's probably your
Akka and Aja.

Nuka walks out of the kitchen to the door and opens it.

Joey stands in the doorway leaning against his bike. He jumps up.

JOEY
Nuka!

Nuka turns to his dad.

NUKA
It's just Joey, can I go talk to
him?

Atuat waves him off and Nuka walks outside, shutting the door behind.

EXT. OUTSIDE NUKA'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Nuka gives Joey a sly shove.

NUKA
What're you doing here, Joey?

JOEY
Have you heard about Benji?

NUKA
What about him?

JOEY
He never went home yesterday!

NUKA
Okay, and? What about us? Where
were we yesterday? I woke up not
even realizing it was the next day!

Nuka grabs Joey's shoulders and shakes him back and forth.

JOEY
Stop it, Nuka! I don't know what
happened either!

Nuka lets Joey go.

JOEY (CONT'D)
 Didn't you hear me? Benji's
 missing!

NUKA
 What do you mean he's missing? You
 only said he didn't go home. He's
 probably just off on one of his
 adventures.

JOEY
 He still hasn't showed up! His
 parents don't even know where he
 is. They're even having a search
 party for him tonight at the
 school!

NUKA
 Oh, sorry.

Nuka stands awkwardly, shifting in his feet.

JOEY
 It's okay, yesterday was weird.

NUKA
 My mom said your mom said she found
 us playing basketball, but we don't
 even play and my ball is flat!

JOEY
 That's what I said to my dad!
 You're terrible at basketball!

NUKA
 No I'm not!

Nuka playfully shoves Joey again.

The two boys become quiet.

JOEY
 What do you think we were doing?

Another pause.

NUKA
 Maybe we just hit our heads while
 playing and fell asleep?

JOEY

Maybe. I don't know.

(beat)

Anyway, everyone's gonna be down by the school by 6:30 if you wanna come look for Benji. I have to get back home before though.

NUKA

Okay, maybe. I'll ask my parents.

Joey hops on his bike and attempts the first hurdle of peddling, struggling to get his balance. He does after a few seconds, then waves back at Nuka before biking off.

Nuka turns back to enter his house. The door opens.

INT. NUKA'S HOME - LATER

The front door opens as a middle-aged INUIT COUPLE walk out, only a bit older than Nuka's father.

Atuat is smiling as he holds the door open for the two. Nuka stands by smiling and waving.

NUKA

Bye Akka, bye Aja.

AKKA

Take care.

AJA

Bye, Nuka! Be good for you're anaana and ataata.

Atuat and Nuka's Aja both laugh a bit before he waves her goodbye and closes the door.

As the door shuts, he takes a breath, then turns to Nuka.

ATUAT

What is it, Nuka? They left, go on, tell me what you kept bugging me about.

NUKA

Oh... It-it was about Benji. When Joey came over he told me that Benji never went home yesterday. His parents say he's missing!

ATUAT

Oh, well I am sorry to hear that about your friend, hopefully he returns home.

Atuat goes to sit on an older, but still in fine condition, leather armchair. He puts up his feet and just as his eyes close-

NUKA

They are having a search party for him and said the whole town is going. Me, you, and anaana can go help look for him!

Nuka smiles and walks up to his father. His eyes stay closed.

ATUAT

Nuka, no.

Nuka stops moving.

NUKA

What? Why not?

Atuat's eyes open and he faces Nuka.

ATUAT

Because I am tired and your anaana will be home from work soon, who will also be very tired.

Nuka becomes quiet and he walks over to sit on a couch opposite of the armchair.

NUKA

Joey and his parents are going, could I go with them?

ATUAT

Nuka, I said no.

NUKA

But ataata, why! Benji is missing I need to help!

ATUAT

No, what you need to do is listen to me what I speak. You will not be going out late at night alone and that is that.

NUKA

But I'll be with Joey's fam-

ATUAT

Nuka, enough!

Just as the room falls quiet, the front door clicks and swings open. Elisapie ENTERS.

ELISAPIE

What is all the yelling about?

Atuat leans up in his chair then glares at Nuka. Nuka looks up back at him.

ATUAT

Go on, Nuka. Tell your anaana.

NUKA

It's about Benji! Joey said he is missing and there is a search party in town tonight! We have to go, anaana, please we have to help find him!

Elisapie scoffs and looks over to Atuat who shrugs then puts his feet up again and leans his head back on the cushioned chair.

ELISAPIE

A search party for a boy who hasn't even been missing a day? I don't think so, you will stay home.

NUKA

But, anaana!

ELISAPIE

That's enough, Nuka.

Nuka cries and storms off. A loud BANG is heard then POUNDING feet.

INT. NUKA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door swings open and Nuka storms through, SLAMMING the door behind him. Nuka throws books off a shelf, kicks a wooden chair to the ground, and he yanks out his neatly tucked bedsheets.

ELISAPIE (V.O.)

Nuka! What is all that noise?!

Loud footsteps are heard approaching.

Nuka's door swings open again.

ELISAPIE

What are you doing in here!

Nuka runs to his closet and slides the doors shut. Elisapie yanks at the doors, but they don't budge.

ELISAPIE (CONT'D)
Nuka, you better let go of this
door right now.
(Beat)
Now, Nuka!

Nuka continues to hold the sliding doors shut.

Elisapie pulls harder at the door. SNAP. The door breaks off one of it's hinges and hangs open. She grabs Nuka's arms and pulls him out of the closet.

Nuka falls to the ground and tears stream out of his eyes like a river breaking free from it's dam.

ELISAPIE (CONT'D)
Get up, come here.

Nuka shakes his head and stays rolled up in his knees, still sobbing.

Elisapie squats down to his level.

ELISAPIE (CONT'D)
Oh, my irniq, why must we fight
again?

Elisapie goes to hug Nuka, but he pushes away.

ELISAPIE (CONT'D)
What is the problem, Nuka?

NUKA
Benji is missing and you and ataata
don't even care!

Elisapie lets out a short chuckle.

NUKA (CONT'D)
See, you're laughing! It's not
funny, he is missing!

Elisapie pulls on Nuka's arm and brings him to his bed.

ELISAPIE
Stop this, now, Nuka. You are not
going out late at night to search
for him. The boy has barely been
missing a day, he is fine, boys
like Benji don't go missing in this
town.

NUKA

What about Ahnah! You would've wanted people to help find her but you won't even help find Benji!

Elisapie slaps Nuka across the face.

ELISAPIE

Do not speak to me about my Ahnah, you have no idea what you are talking about.

Nuka sobs again.

ELISAPIE (CONT'D)

Stop the crying. Look at me.

She wipes the tears from Nuka's eyes and pulls his chin up to look at her.

ELISAPIE (CONT'D)

My Ahnah was missing for a week. Do you think this town organized a search party for her?

Nuka sits quietly, his eyes still watery. Elisapie stands up and walks away from her son.

ELISAPIE (CONT'D)

I had to wait a whole week just for the police to even look into it. They just kept telling me that it was a domestic issue. That me and your ataata had to find her as it must have been our fault she ran off.

NUKA

Why did she run off?

Elisapie snaps back toward Nuka. She rejoins him on the bed.

ELISAPIE

She did not run off. My Ahnah would have never ran off like that. She was taken from us, do you hear me, Nuka? She was taken!

There is a long pause. Nuka looks up at his mother, confused. Tears begin to build up in her eyes. She sits back with Nuka and holds his cheeks.

ELISAPIE (CONT'D)

You are too young to know, so hear me now and remember this forever: This town--this world--does not care for people who look like us. Our people have been treated like a piece of gum stuck to the bottom of their newly shined shoes. They've been scraping and scraping for centuries, trying to get rid of us, but we would not leave. They have killed us, they took our lands, and when that wasn't enough they started taking our children.

(beat)

Do you remember you're arnavik from Montana?

Nuka nods and wipes tears from his eyes.

ELISAPIE (CONT'D)

When we were just children, almost the same age as you, two men from the government came to our home. They said that there were reports of your arnavik being mistreated... abused. It was all lies. They took her from us and needed an excuse to do so. They took her away and gave her to another family. For over fifteen years we waited in pain, suffering at the thought of what could have possibly happened to her, until she finally returned but a completely different person. Now, they have taken my Ahnah, but this time forever. I will not have them take you too.

NUKA

Who is they?

ELISAPIE

The greedy white men in this country who know nothing but to take.

NUKA

Do you think they have Benji and Ahnah?

Elisapie grabs Nuka's hand.

ELISAPIE

Oh, Nuka. I could only hope. I fear
her spirit has long left this
planet.

Nuka wipes his eyes clear as tears build up in Elisapie's. He
looks down, his shoulders slump.

ELISAPIE (CONT'D)

Oh, it's okay, my irniq. We have
come to accept this, do not dwell
on it now. Her spirit is long gone,
somewhere far off and much better
than this wretched place.

(beat)

But this is why it is important you
listen to your ataata and I. If we
were to los- we will never lose
you, do you hear me, Nuka? As long
as you listen to us, then we won't
lose you too.

Elisapie holds Nuka tight. Tears swell in her eyes but Nuka's
face is surprisingly dry. Instead, he clenches his fist,
drilling hard into his palms.

NUKA

But that's not fair. They take her
from us, and we do nothing?

Elisapie grabs Nuka's hand and takes it out of the tense
grip. Once opened, she intertwines his hand with his.

ELISAPIE

I never said it was, but it is the
way, so learn it young before it is
too late.

Elisapie kisses Nuka on the forehead and exits.

Nuka stays sitting on the edge of his bed with his fists
clenched again.

INT. NUKA'S BEDROOM - LATER

WIND HOWLING from a warm evening's breeze.

There is the shape of a body under Nuka's bedsheets, pulled
over his head.

A wooden decoration hangs from the door, swaying back and
forth from the breeze coming in through the open window.

A soft KNOCK at the door. It CREAKS open.

ELISAPIE (V.O.)
(whispering)
Is he asleep already?

Atuat's face pops through a creak in the door.

ATUAT
Seems so, you worn him out.

He looks over at the closet door which hangs off it's hinge.

ATUAT (CONT'D)
(to self)
What a mess.

ELISAPIE (V.O.)
Come on, close the door.

Atuat slowly and softly closes the door, twisting the handle before it shuts so it doesn't make any noise.

The blinds shift with the breeze, slightly giving way to a window screen on the ground, peaking out of sight.

EXT. ESTER ELEMENTARY - EVENING

A wide one story brick building. Paneled windows, equally spaced from one another, line each side of the walls. A traditional, rural school.

The school's parking lot is in the front of the building. Clusters of people populate the area. Some hold flashlights, some only brought themselves, and others brought enough for a camping trip.

Smiles and laughter come from some groups, while others shift awkwardly in their feet waiting for instruction.

Terry Johnson and Sanna Ohaituk walk together through the groups of people.

SANNA OHAITUK
Does he have a sleeping bag?

Sanna nudges Terry and motions to a man with a camping backpack larger than his own torso.

TERRY JOHNSON
Not much going on in these peoples lives, Sanna. This'll be the highlight of their year!

Sanna gives Terry an annoyed side eye.

TERRY JOHNSON (CONT'D)
Oh, you know what I mean. I'm not
saying it's a good thing but-

SANNA OHAITUK
Searching for a missing child
shouldn't be their highlight,
Terry.

TERRY JOHNSON
Yeah, well, for some it is.

Terry turns away from Sanna, catching Theresa Hall's eyes. She stands by the curb with her daughter, Roseline, making quick small talk with people who walk by. She looks back and forth between Terry, her daughter, and the random townsfolk, until finally waving someone away and B-lining to the pair.

TERRY JOHNSON (CONT'D)
(mutters)
Oh, boy.

THERESA HALL
Hello, Terry. Sanna.

SANNA OHAITUK
Hi, who here is this?

Sanna crouches down and waves to Roseline, whom hides behind her mother's leg, clutching onto it.

Theresa nudges Roseline, pushing her off her leg.

THERESA HALL
Don't be shy, Rosie. Go on,
introduce yourself to the nice
lady.

Roseline lets go of her mother's leg and stands independently by her self. She pats down the ruffles of her vivacious pink dress. Her posture is perfectly straight and her arms dangle by her side.

ROSELINE
Hi, I'm Roseline and I am ready to
find my brother!

Sanna smiles from the cuteness and Terry lets out a slight chuckle. Theresa hits him softly, scolding him.

SANNA OHAITUK

Wow, look at you! With you on my team, we'll find your brother in no time.

Sanna stays crouched and makes small talk with Roseline, asking her simple questions. Terry inches toward Theresa.

TERRY JOHNSON

Where's Ben at?

THERESA HALL

Don't even bring up his name right now.

TERRY JOHNSON

Stop, he really didn't come?

THERESA HALL

Didn't you hear him earlier, Terry?
(mocking tone)
"My son's not missing, I would never let my boy go missing!"
Stupid motherfucker...

TERRY JOHNSON

What a piece of shit.

Theresa gives him a look, a playful scolding look, but ultimately agreeing. Sanna stands back up and joins the two.

THERESA HALL

So, whats the plan?

TERRY JOHNSON

If your son did just run off, then there's a high chance he is hiding somewhere safe in town. He ain't in the school, already had a few troopers check there and other more obvious options. We need to hit everywhere else now. Stores where he can provide himself, the local marts, abandoned buildi-

ROSELINE

Are we going to be looking in Penelope?

Terry becomes silent, stunned. He looks over at Theresa who is doesn't say anything, standing arms crossed watching Terry.

TERRY JOHNSON

Maybe, maybe. We have high hopes
your brother is in town though so
we shouldn't have to.

THERESA HALL

I tried telling her, but she's
convinced he went to Penelope.
Something about him and his friends
going there, but I don't know, you
really think my boy would go there?

TERRY JOHNSON

Does he know it's history?

THERESA HALL

He's twelve, Terry, and he's on the
internet all the time; of course he
knows it's history.

TERRY JOHNSON

Then that should be enough to scare
anyone away, especially a child. I
doubt he's gone in there.

ROSELINE

But mom! Mom, I told you, he did!
Benji, Nuka, and Joey!

TERRY JOHNSON

Nuka? The Kunuk's boy? No, there's
no way. He of all children in this
town know not to go in those woods.

Sanna becomes alert at hearing Ahnah's last name.

THERESA HALL

I know, I know, Terry. That's what
I keep telling her, but she's
insistent.

ROSELINE

Mommy, I swear! I saw them!

THERESA HALL

I know, sweetie. But maybe you just
thought wrong?

(stern)

It doesn't matter, anyway. We're
finding him tonight. No matter
what.

TERRY JOHNSON

Yes, of course we are. He is being found tonight. We'll catch up with you later, we need to head to the front and get this thing started.

Theresa nods and takes Roseline's hand, walking off to the side.

SANNA OHAITUK

We're not searching Penelope, Terry? What the fucks the point of this then?

TERRY JOHNSON

Will you relax, Sanna. Take a look around, will ya? Look at all these families. If I were to say we're searching Penelope, they walk out.

SANNA OHAITUK

Ahnah Kunuk's younger brother is also involved in this?

TERRY JOHNSON

Just the missing boy's friend, I wouldn't really say involved.

SANNA OHAITUK

And they think he went into Penelope? Come on, Terry, you're turning a blind eye.

TERRY JOHNSON

My hands are tied, Sanna. No one wants to go into those woods, and there is no way in hell they will let their children. Besides, hopefully we won't even have to consider that and he's just hiding in new Walmart.

SANNA OHAITUK

Oh no, not the new Walmart, that place is massive! If that's the case, we'll never find him.

The two laugh, trying to lighten the mood, while they make their way to the front of the school.

They reach the front of the crowd where a the same trooper from earlier is talking to Allen Walker, again. A rifle hangs off Allen's shoulder.

Terry walks up to the two.

TERRY JOHNSON

Allen, give it a break will ya, at least for now. I mean, a child's missing for God's sake.

Allen opens his mouth, but Terry walks away.

ALLEN WALKER

(shouting from behind)

I'm fuckin' here to help, jackass!

Sanna gives Terry a confused look and he shrugs back. They both stand front and center of the crowd, who has somewhat started to face them.

The state trooper hands Terry a megaphone.

Terry turns it on and raises it to his face.

TERRY JOHNSON

Hello, hello. Hi everyone, thank you all for coming out tonight and helping the Hall family find their boy, Benji.

Theresa and Penelope stand off to the side, a few near them turn to her. She shyly waves.

There is some commotion on the other side of the crowd. Terry's voice fades into a V.O. Sharp whispers can be heard in the crowd. There is more commotion and people shuffling. The whispers becomes more distinct—Joey... Joey... Joey, *where are you.*

A tall man whom pokes out of the crowd turns around. It is Thomas Caulstine, and he is with his wife and son. He looks out into the crowd.

THOMAS CAULSTINE

Joey, I think your friend is calling out for you.

Thomas nudges Joey and points out in the crowd, right at Nuka.

NUKA

Hi, Mr. Caulstine!

Nuka pushes through the crowd and gets to them.

JOEY

You made it! Where are your parents?

NUKA

Oh, they're working late tonight. Is it okay if I stay with you, Mr. and Mrs. Caulstine?

JANETTE CAULSTINE

Oh, of course, sweetheart. That's so nice of you to still come out and search for your friend.

Janette and Thomas turn back around to hear Terry's instructions.

TERRY JOHNSON (V.O.)

We'll split into four major groups. Group one will be with Sanna and I. We will check the commercial areas of town. The rest of you will check the residential. People in the back should search Bakers Ave to Reading Road...

People start shuffling throughout the crowd as Terry speaks, breaking off into separate groups.

As people move around, the Caulstine's and Nuka find themselves near the front, a few yards from Terry and Sanna, as well as the Hall's.

Joey taps Nuka.

JOEY

Hey, look, Rosie-cheeks is over there.

Joey waves his hand. Roseline tugs at her mom and the two start walking over.

Janette waves at Theresa as she walks over. Thomas whispers something in Janette's ear quickly.

THERESA HALL

Hey Jen, Thomas. Nice to see you again and thank you for coming out.

JANETTE CAULSTINE

Oh, of course! No reason to thank us. And besides, these boys won't rest until they find Benji!

The two let out short laughs.

THOMAS CAULSTINE
Mhm, ain't that right kids?

JOEY
You bet! We'll find him, Mrs. Hall,
you can count on us.

NUKA
Yeah! And Benji is really smart he
is always doing adventures on his
own, I'm sure he is just fine!

THERESA HALL
Adventures? What do you mean?

ROSELINE
I told you, mommy, Benji likes
going into the forest!

JOEY
Well, Benji just likes to do
explore and have fun after school.
Like when it starts to get hot, he
would always take me to Chena
River.

JANETTE CAULSTINE
Chena River? You would go swimming
in there?!

JOEY
Only the calm parts, mom. We never
went anywhere dangerous!

THERESA HALL
Did he ever go in Penelope Woods?

ROSELINE
Yes, mommy! Benji, Joey, and Nuka
all went to Penelope! I saw them!

THOMAS CAULSTINE
Okay, okay, that's enough everyone.
We should be searching for him
instead of speculating.

THERESA HALL
Thomas, my daughter has been saying
the same thing all day. If your
child knows anything about my
Benji, I need to know.

Joey and Nuka exchange nervous glances.

NUKA

We-

JANETTE CAULSTINE

They couldn't have been in Penelope, I found these two boys asleep by the basketball courts yesterday.

NUKA

Yeah, I don't even remember going into Penelope, Mrs. Hall.

Theresa breaks into tears.

THERESA HALL

I'm sorry, I'm sorry. I didn't mean anything, I just really could use any information on my boy right now.

Janette pulls Theresa in for a hug.

JANETTE CAULSTINE

Oh, I would be the exact same way if my boy went missing. You have nothing to apologize for. You should stick with us tonight, and the boys can keep Roseline company.

Theresa wipes her tears and separates from Janette. She shakes her head in agreeance.

THERESA HALL

Thank you, Jen, really. You've been a comfort to us this whole day.

Terry Johnson starts waving his group in.

TERRY JOHNSON

Alright, people, let's get this thing started. I assure you, we will find Benji Hall by the end of the night.

The group of six walk together toward Terry. Janette holds Theresa by her side while Thomas marches ahead to Terry and the children linger behind.

EXT. EMPTY ROAD - ESTER - LATER

A wide street void of any cars. People walk about the road, far ahead and behind, on the sides of the street, in and around buildings that surround the area.

The sounds of people yelling BENJI fill the air. Rays from flashlights circle around the area like strobe lights at a concert.

Janette and Thomas Caulstine walk with Theresa while their children straggle a bit behind.

Nuka, Joey, and Roseline are mid conversation.

ROSELINE

I swear! You, Benji, and Nuka were out by the garbage behind the school! You were about to go out of the fence where all the big orange trees are, then Benji told me to leave.

NUKA

She has no reason to lie, Joey.

JOEY

But why would our parents lie? I mean, I know we don't play basketball, so why lie?

NUKA

I don't know? Maybe thats just where they found us. I don't think they meant to lie.

JOEY

What if we were just out by those trees? Benji does really like their leaves. As soon as Spring came that's all he would talk about.

ROSELINE

(sternly)

Benji said you guys were going out into Penelope and that it was no adventure for a little girl like me!

Nuka and Joey stop walking and look at each other. Roseline stops a head of them and turns back, glaring at each of them.

JOEY

Hey, I believe you Rosie-cheeks, I just can't figure out why we won't remember?

NUKA

Yeah, Roseline, he isn't lying either! We really don't remember!

ROSELINE

Well, we're wasting time here. My mom doesn't believe that Benji would go out into Penelope.

NUKA

Then let's just go look for him ourselves!

JOEY

Alone? In Penelope Woods? At night?! No way! Your parents would never let us, anyway.

The three huff and puff, each looking defeated.

Janette and Theresa both turn back simultaneously, looking for the children.

JANETTE CAULSTINE

Come on, kids, keep up! You can walk and talk!

The three children start following their parents again.

Terry and Sanna walk back toward the parents.

TERRY JOHNSON

We'll round back to the school soon. Doesn't seem like the kid came out this way. With all these people searching, shouting his name, if he was here someone would've found him.

THERESA HALL

Oh, god. Where is he Terry? Where is my boy?

Terry rubs her arm, consoling her.

TERRY JOHNSON

You can't panic, Tessa, we'll find him. The night is young.

SANNA OHAITUK

We have three other groups
searching too.

THOMAS CAULSTINE

Has anyone called in saying
anything? Any leads?

Terry shakes his head towards Thomas. Theresa breaks into
sobs. Janette holds her.

Terry and Sanna separate off to the side.

SANNA OHAITUK

(whispering)

Come on, Terry. We both know this
is pointless. We should be
searching the outskirts of town,
the woods, Penelope.

TERRY JOHNSON

No one is going to willingly search
Penelope. I'll try to get everyone
to start moving into the outer
parts of town but there is no way I
can organize a search party in
Penelope.

The two shuffle closer in, back to the parents. Theresa leans
off of Janette and wipes her eyes again, stuffing another
tissue in her pockets.

SANNA OHAITUK

We think it would be good to start
searching the outer perimeters of
town. As each group starts to
finish searching their designated
areas, we'll send out instructions
for everyone to start expanding
outward.

JANETTE CAULSTINE

Is that safe? I mean, going out of
town at night?

TERRY JOHNSON

We are all in groups and there's a
lot of us, it'll be fine. Worst
thing that's out there is a bear,
and they'll steer clear of all the
noise.

JANETTE CAULSTINE

Okay, well, maybe we should take our children home? I don't know if I want Joey being out this late.

THERESA HALL

Oh, could you take Rosie with you too? I could come by later tonight to pick her up.

JANETTE CAULSTINE

Theresa, of course, do not worry about it. I'll have all three sleep over, you can come by in the morning.

THERESA HALL

Thank you, again, Jen. For everything you have done.

JANETTE CAULSTINE

Don't mention it.

Janette waves them goodbye and then walks back to the children.

JANETTE CAULSTINE (CONT'D)

Hey, guys, it's getting late so how about you all come back home with me? I'll make some snacks and we can watch a movie before bed?

JOEY

But, mom, we haven't found Benji yet!

JANETTE CAULSTINE

Oh, I know sweetie, but it's getting late. Everyone will still be out here searching for him. By time morning comes, Benji will be home.

ROSELINE

I want to stay with my mommy and search for Benji!

JANETTE CAULSTINE

I know, I know, but she wants you to come home with me. Your mom is a very strong woman, she'll be okay.

Nuka stays silent. His hands are folded into his chest, his face looks angry. Janette taps his elbow.

JANETTE CAULSTINE (CONT'D)
What's wrong, Nuka? Do you want me
to take you home?

NUKA
I want to stay searching for Benji.

JANETTE CAULSTINE
Okay everyone. I know you all want
to stay but it is getting late and
it's just not safe for you to be
her-

NUKA
I don't think they will find him. I
want to stay so we can find Benji.

ROSELINE
Yeah, what Nuka said!

Janette stands up straight now, looking down on the children.

JANETTE CAULSTINE
Okay, that's enough. You are all
coming home with me and that's that.
We are the parents here, you will
listen to us.

Janette grabs Joey and Roseline's hands. Nuka unwillingly
follows.

JANETTE CAULSTINE (CONT'D)
We're going to walk back to school
first and get in my car, okay?

Neither of the children say anything, only subtle nods.

EXT. ESTER ELEMENTARY - CONTINUOUS

Janette and the three children are walking toward a silver
minivan. Janette is talking on the phone, walking behind the
children, as they continue ahead.

JANETTE CAULSTINE (V.O.)
Yup, you wouldn't believe the
attitude these children were giving
me. Kids these days think they're
the boss. They have no respect,
completely different from how we
grew up.

Nuka and Joey's hands are folded as they walk ahead. Roseline
stomps her feet with each step.

ROSELINE
This isn't fair!

JOEY
It never is. I hate being a kid!

ROSELINE
Why do we have to listen to adults?

Nuka clenches his fist, he looks as if he is about to cry.

ROSELINE (CONT'D)
What's wrong, Nuka?

NUKA
Lets not listen to them.

JOEY
What?

NUKA
We don't have to listen to adults.
Let's just go into Penelope!
(beat)
They aren't going to find Benji.

Tears swell in Roseline's eyes. Joey kicks Nuka.

JOEY
Dude!

NUKA
What? I'm just telling the truth.
They never found my sister! They're
not even looking in the right spot
for Benji! They don't care about
us.

The three become quiet.

ROSELINE
Okay, lets go.

JOEY
WHAT?! Guys! This is crazy and my
mom is right there, she'll see us!

The minivan ahead of them beeps, the lights flash.

JANETTE CAULSTINE
Get in the car, kids. I'll be in
after this call.

NUKA

This is our chance to go!

JOEY

My mom is going to be so worried.
We can't just leave!

ROSELINE

Stop being a baby, Joey. Nuka's right! We are the only ones who know where he is and they won't listen. We have to find him!

JANETTE CAULSTINE

(yelling)

Kids, now! Get in the car.

The children walk to the car. The door slides open.

NUKA

Get in and follow my lead.

All three children enter and then Nuka slides the door shut. Janette hovers a few yards away.

On the other side of the car, the other door slowly slides open a slither. Nuka squeezes through and jumps out. He holds the door from sliding anymore, then Roseline comes out.

NUKA (CONT'D)

Let's go, Joey!

JOEY

Hold up. I'm writing my mom a note.

ROSELINE

What, why?

JOEY

I don't want her to be worried!

NUKA

Okay, just hurry.

Joey jumps out of the car and then Nuka slowly slides the door closed, not making any noise.

The three quickly run to a nearby tree and go behind it.

NUKA (CONT'D)

Let's run around the building, then no one will see us and we can go to where Roseline saw us yesterday.

Roseline and Joey nod their heads, then the three run to the school. Their bodies disappear behind the building.

EXT. GARABGE AREA BEHIND SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS