

CHUCKY

Pilot by

Don Mancini

9.3.19

UCP
DAVID KIRSCHNER PRODUCTIONS
EAT THE CAT

CHUCKY
Pilot - 9.3.19

*

TEASER

INT. MID-CENTURY HOME - NIGHT

We open in someone's POV... But it's not just *anyone's* POV. This one is ominously familiar: just two feet off the ground, MOVING with stealth through the cozy rooms of a mid-century suburban home... As we realize: *Holy shit, this is Chucky... We are Chucky... And we're after someone...*

We creep through an open door into a BEDROOM, quietly stalking up behind a YOUNG WOMAN as she sits at a mirror, brushing her hair, completely unaware of our lurking presence...

Then we SMASH CUT TO:

CHUCKY'S EYES, CLICKING OPEN.

The sudden SILENCE is deafening.

Cinematic convention tells us that what we just saw in the previous scene was a dream. *Chucky's dream. A doll's dream.* (And this TV series will, for the first time in the franchise, use Chucky's DREAMS and NIGHTMARES as a stylized way of exploring his secrets.)

Now we PULL BACK from CHUCKY'S EYES to reveal our location...

EXT. SUBURBAN YARD SALE - DAY

Chucky is sitting, frozen, on a TABLE amidst the knick-knacks and bric-a-brac of a SUBURBAN YARD SALE in NEW ROCHELLE, NEW YORK.

Among the well-heeled bargain-hunters is someone who doesn't belong -- a shy, artsy, working-class boy named JAKE WEBBER (14). We'll learn more about him as the story proceeds, but we can sense immediately that this isn't a kid who smiles much. He's definitely had some pain in his young life. But as soon as he lays eyes on Chucky, he's enthralled. This doll is just what he's been looking for.

He goes to the owner of the house, MRS. JOLLY (50s).

MRS. JOLLY
Hi, Jake. Twenty bucks for that
sound fair?

JAKE
Twenty bucks?

MRS. JOLLY
 Mom paid a couple hundred like just
 a month ago.

JAKE
 To who?

MRS. JOLLY
 I think she got it from a collector
 on-line. You into vintage?

JAKE
 No, I'm into retro.

MRS. JOLLY
 Oh... What's the difference?

JAKE
 About ten bucks.

MRS. JOLLY
 (smiling)
 Fair enough.
 (takes a ten from Jake)
 I hope you enjoy it as much as my
 mother did.

Then CAMERA MOVES TO REVEAL, on the HOUSE in the BACKGROUND,
 an UPSTAIRS BEDROOM which obviously suffered a bad fire
 recently. A tarp covers a big hole in a section of charred
 roof.

Mrs. Jolly looks up at the burned-out room. Shakes her head
 sadly.

MRS. JOLLY (CONT'D)
 It's all been fairly surreal.

JAKE
 I'm sorry.

MRS. JOLLY
 I'm sure your father tells you this
 all the time, and I know there are
 pressures at your age to be cool
 and fit in and try new things...
 But just don't smoke, Jake. Ever.
 'Cause one way or another, it's
 gonna kill you.

Jake nods, awkward.

MRS. JOLLY (CONT'D)
 Sorry... Hey, how are you doing?

JAKE
 Fine.

MRS. JOLLY
 Yeah? I've been thinking about you.

Jake, shy, says nothing.

MRS. JOLLY (CONT'D)
 Jake, I know what you're going through. Obviously. So if you ever need someone to talk to...

JAKE
 Thanks, Mrs. Jolly.

We don't know yet exactly what Mrs. Jolly is referring to. But she can tell she's already said too much.

MRS. JOLLY
 Tell your Dad I said hello.

Jake puts his ear buds in, clicks his phone, and heads off carrying his prize -- Chucky.

EXT. NEW ROCHELLE STREETS - DAY

Jake is trudging home through a WELL-TO-DO NEIGHBORHOOD, the sight of this weird kid toting a red-headed, two-foot doll drawing stares from passersby. Jake ignores them; he has his earbuds in as he watches something on his phone.

In V.O., we hear what Jake's listening to, the confident VOICE of another TEEN BOY filling Jake's head while seemingly narrating the scenery, starting with Jake passing a SIGN which reads: WELCOME TO NEW ROCHELLE -- *Defendit Numerous*.

DEVON (V.O.)
"Defendit numerous"... "Safety in numbers." A rallying cry for community that links us to our neighbors. But what happens when we feel *out-numbered*? When the community itself poses a danger, and our neighbors become the enemy?

A pair of teen BULLIES stare derisively at 14-year-old Jake toting his doll. One of them throws a rock, hitting Jake in the arm. Jake takes it all in stride. This is his life.

DEVON (V.O.)

Here in New Rochelle, we like to
pride ourselves on our diversity.
But did you know we actually have
one of the biggest income
disparities in the country?

Jake now enters a distinctly WORKING CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD filled with more modest houses, including his own. A COP CAR goes screeching by, SIREN wailing. Devon's words continue to seem spot-on:

DEVON (V.O.)

Something's in the air, an ill wind
that feels like it could blow away
the most vulnerable among us... But
what else could we expect when our
lives have been disrupted by a
vicious, foul-mouthed, red-haired
agent of chaos, who's set us all
against one another by preying on
our deepest fears?

Jake and Chucky amble by a house with a SIGN proudly displayed in the front yard: TRUMP 2020.

DEVON (V.O.)

So what do we do? How can we fight
back? Do we even stand a chance
against an enemy who disguises
himself as our friend?

As Jake approaches his own MODEST HOUSE, we get a glimpse of what he's watching on his phone: A YOUTUBE VIDEO featuring a good-looking Latino kid, holding forth for his own camera. This is DEVON (14), and we'll be seeing more of him. For now, as Jake heads into his house:

DEVON (V.O.)

This is Dev, your social justice
warlord, keeping it real.

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jake enters to find nobody home but his HUSKY.

JAKE

Hello?

No answer. Jake gives the dog a fond scratch behind the ears.

JAKE (CONT'D)

How you doing, Binxie?

Binxie is immediately curious about the doll, SNIFFING and PAWING at it. Meanwhile we're on edge, because *neither the dog nor Jake has any idea how much danger they're in*. Jake carries the doll upstairs...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - JAKE'S ROOM - DAY

Jake enters with Chucky in tow, the dog trailing in at his feet. Now we learn more about Jake from his room: It's a mess, with paint and tools and glue and spare DOLL PARTS all over the place. Apparently Jake is some sort of artist.

We see a framed PHOTO of a 10-year-old Jake smiling with a lovely woman in her 30s -- Jake's DEAD MOM, we gather -- both happily covered in paint. Evidently Mom was an artist, too, and an obvious influence on Jake. Like mother, like son.

Then we see an impressive SCULPTURE-IN-PROGRESS, made entirely of parts from OLD TOYS AND DOLLS -- vintage Cabbage Patch Kids, Barbies, action figures. Everything ingeniously modified, with heads swapped, and limbs rearranged. A Buddha-like figure, with multiple outstretched hands reaching out in supplication. It's bizarre, as whimsical as it is disturbing, equal parts Dr. Seuss and David Lynch. The precociously sophisticated expression of someone forced to grow up fast, but fiercely guarding some last shred of childhood innocence.

Now we know why Jake's so excited about Chucky: He's going to use him in the sculpture. *But first he's got to take the doll apart.*

So he lays Chucky on a work table... and immediately starts TRYING TO PRY HIS HEAD OFF. We're thinking: *Don't do that, you'll piss him off!* The head won't budge. Jake pries at it even harder. It still won't budge.

Jake pauses, releasing the doll. Looking at it. Thinking.

Then he turns, opening a drawer, and pulls out A POCKET KNIFE.

His back now to Chucky, Jake flips open the knife's sharp blade.

JAKE

Now let's see what you're really made of.

What Jake doesn't see, behind him, is CHUCKY'S HAND furtively reaching for a SCREWDRIVER on the table...

CLOSE ON CHUCKY'S SMILING FACE -- suddenly springing to mechanical life:

CHUCKY
(Good Guy doll voice)
Hi, I'm Chucky! Wanna play?

CLOSE ON JAKE -- Startled, he spins around...

CLOSE ON THE DOG -- GROWLING hatefully...

CUT TO TITLE:

CHUCKY

ACT ONE

EXT. JAKE'S HOUSE - DAY

JAKE'S DAD (late 30s) comes driving up in his Honda Civic, just home from work. Tie loosened, jacket draped carelessly over his shoulder. He's a familiar product of America right now: Frustrated, overworked, overwhelmed, and underpaid. A struggling single parent, still grieving the recent death of his wife.

As he heads into the house, lugging a brief case, we're worried what's happening to Jake up in his room...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dad enters to pregnant silence.

DAD
Jake?

No response. Dad makes his way up the stairs...

Only to suddenly hear JAKE SCREAM.

Rushing to Jake's room, Dad flings the door open...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - JAKE'S ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

...where he finds Jake smarting from a BLOODY BITE WOUND on his hand.

DAD
What happened?

JAKE

Binx.

The dog is huddling in fear underneath the bed.

DAD

What did you do to him?

JAKE

Nothing. I just tried to get him away from Chucky. He's never been like that before.

DAD

Who's Chucky?

Chucky is still lying innocently on the table as before. Jake takes his knife and taps the blade on Chucky's forehead -- causing the doll's face to whir to mechanical life as he chirps:

CHUCKY

(Good Guy doll voice)

Hi, I'm Chucky! And I'm your friend 'til the end! Hidey-ho, ha-ha-ha!

JAKE

Scared the hell out of Binxie. I think I can use his batteries to power some Christmas lights, maybe string 'em over the whole piece.

He points at the doll sculpture. Then he pulls a Band-Aid out of a drawer and starts wrapping it around his scratched finger.

JAKE (CONT'D)

(re: the sculpture)

What do you think?

DAD

It's getting big.

JAKE

But is it getting good?

DAD

You know I'm no art critic.

JAKE

I'm not asking for a review, Dad. I just want your opinion.

DAD

It's cool, Jake. But I still think you're spending too much time on it. It wouldn't hurt you to get out of this room once in a while. Maybe ask a girl out to a movie. Or just see a friend.

JAKE

Friends come and go, in my experience. But the work lasts forever.

DAD

So does student debt. You do realize it's basically impossible to make a living as an artist.

JAKE

Mom did.

DAD

That wasn't a living. It was a lifestyle. And it certainly didn't pay the bills. *I* did.

Jake is quietly hurt by this lack of support, and even more by the casual lack of respect for his dead mom.

DAD (CONT'D)

(looking at Mom's photo)

You know, I think you look more like her every day.

It's a double-barreled comment. Half tribute, half resentment.

DAD (CONT'D)

Speaking of which, I looked into that art camp. I don't think it's gonna work out.

JAKE

Why not?

DAD

It's a thousand bucks, Jake. Sorry, maybe next year. Besides, you don't want to be away from me all summer?

Jake smiles dutifully. Dad heads out, pausing at the door.

DAD (CONT'D)

Did you remember to take your pill today?

JAKE

Not yet.

DAD

Take it. You're gonna need it. We're at Defcon 1 tonight.

JAKE

How come?

DAD

Your cousin's coming over for dinner, remember?

Jake groans, pulls a PILL out of his pocket, and swallows it desperately.

Meanwhile, Chucky remains lying innocently on the table.

JAKE

Hey, where's my screwdriver?

The SCREWDRIVER, which had been lying near Chucky, is now gone...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jake and his Dad are eating take-out pizza at their modest kitchen table, along with their guests UNCLE LOGAN (40), Dad's more successful brother; AUNT BREE (30s), Logan's expensively maintained wife, a busy fundraiser and chronic volunteer at the kids' school; and their good-looking son ERIC (14), Jake's dreaded cousin. Eric is everything Jake is not: popular, well-adjusted, cool. This perfect-looking family is a constant thorn in Dad's side.

BREE

(eager to say something nice)

Isn't this fun? I can't remember the last time we just sent out for pizza.

LOGAN

Ever since the remodel, we can't get her out of the kitchen. She took one look at the Wolf range, and poof. Now she lives in there.

BREE

Actually, the convection oven makes a fabulous pizza. We'll have to have you guys over.

DAD

Yeah, well, we love pizza, don't we, Jake?

JAKE

I guess.

LOGAN

(to Dad)

So you hear about that promotion yet?

DAD

Yeah, no, unfortunately they decided to bring in someone from L.A.

LOGAN

I'm sorry.

BREE

I despise L.A.

DAD

Me, too. I mean, I've never been there. But I despise it on principle.

Logan and Bree laugh. Dad drains his beer, then goes to the fridge to grab another. Logan and Bree share a concerned look about Dad's drinking. Jake takes note of their concern with his own concern.

LOGAN

You know, I think I could throw some business your way.

DAD

Thanks, I'm fine.

LOGAN

There's no shame in getting a little help now and then.

DAD

Who's ashamed?

LOGAN

You're my brother. You'd do the same for me.

DAD

Come on, Logan, when have you ever needed any help?

Jake squirms at the tension between the brothers. Bree deftly changes the subject:

BREE

So Eric has some news.

ERIC

(protesting)

Mom.

BREE

Sorry. He's too modest.
(pauses for silent drum roll)
Guess who made Eagle Scout.

DAD

That's great, Eric.
Congratulations.

LOGAN

And he's starting jiu-jitsu this summer with his old man.

ERIC

But I have baseball this summer.
And I'm painting city hall with the Scouts, remember?

LOGAN

You need another extra-curricular.
Harvard's gonna want at least three.

(off Eric's uncertainty:)

Come on, buddy. If anyone can juggle it, you can.

ERIC

(not happy)

Thanks.

(so he turns to Jake)

You know, Jake, the Scouts are taking gays now. You should definitely come check it out.

BREE
(chastising)
Eric.

ERIC
What? It's true.

JAKE
So what does that mean, exactly?
"Eagle Scout?" Did you, like, sell
the most cookies?

Dad nods at Jake: *Nice one.*

ERIC
No. While you were up in your room
playing with dolls, I organized a
whole book drive for the homeless.

JAKE
Because keeping up with Harry
Potter is the most pressing issue
facing the homeless.

BREE
So Jake, how's the sculpture
coming? Can we see it yet?

JAKE
Soon.

LOGAN
Where do you get the dolls?

JAKE
(enthused, finally)
Everywhere... Thrift shops, yard
sales, E-bay, trash cans... Andy
Warhol said: Just because
something's been thrown away, that
doesn't make it garbage.

ERIC
Hey, wasn't Warhol gay, too?

BREE
Eric, stop it.

ERIC
What? It's the 21st century. It's
cool to be gay now -- *right, Jake?*

BREE
It's a non-issue.

LOGAN

It's like being left-handed. Or
vegan. Or --

Suddenly Dad drops his beer; it SHATTERS on the floor,
violently commanding everyone's attention. Hard to know if it
was an accident or not.

DAD

Will you all just give it a goddamn
rest? He's thirteen years old. He
doesn't know *what* he is yet.

JAKE

Fourteen.

Dad doesn't seem to know Jake much at all. Awkward.

BREE

Excuse me. Where's your powder
room?

DAD

We don't have one. We have a
bathroom. And it's at the top of
the stairs. Where it's always been.

Bree crumple-smiles apologetically, and heads off...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Bree crests the STAIRS, arriving on the upstairs landing. She
goes into the nearby bathroom, closing the door...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Bree pulls out her CELL PHONE, intending to make a secret
call. But then she notices a VENT through which she can
clearly hear CONVERSATION coming from the kitchen. She's
going to need more privacy. So she heads back out of the
bathroom...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Bree now slips into JAKE'S ROOM, where we last saw Chucky...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - JAKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Bree enters, closing the door. Glancing at the doll
sculpture, she shakes her head in disapproval.

Then she pulls out her CELL PHONE, making a secret call...

Meanwhile, CAMERA MOVES to the work table.. and we notice that CHUCKY IS NO LONGER LYING THERE...

CAMERA CONTINUES MOVING to the CLOSET DOOR... as a quiet THUMP emanates from within.

Bree, unaware, says quietly into her phone:

BREE
Hey, it's me... No, I only have a
minute, I'm with my family.

Then, from the closet, another THUMP; Bree hears this one, reacting with puzzled curiosity. She continues staring at the closet door, waiting...

Another THUMP. Bree whispers into the phone:

BREE (CONT'D)
Hold on a second.

Like the proverbial cat, she reaches for the closet door... While the sculpture's myriad doll faces seem to be watching her impassively... Bree opens the door...

Revealing the innocent-looking CHUCKY DOLL inside...

Then Binx the DOG suddenly comes bounding out with a SNARL, diving for cover under the bed. (The implication to us being: Chucky was doing bad things to the pup in the closet.)

BREE (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Sorry. For a second I thought
somebody was in here.

We're thinking: *Somebody is!*

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

CAMERA is fixed on the closed DOOR to Jake's room, as we wait in SUSPENSE for sounds of violence inside... and wait, and wait...

Suddenly the DOOR BURSTS OPEN LOUDLY, and Bree emerges unharmed, switching off her phone as she exits into the hallway. Heading towards the stairs, she rounds a corner...

And walks right into Dad, just standing there, maybe spying on her. Bree gasps.

Dad gestures at the adjacent bathroom, from which Bree manifestly did not exit.

DAD
 Couldn't you find the powder room?

Bree has her phone in her hand. She quickly slips it in her pocket. Her mind is racing. *Did he eavesdrop on her call?*

BREE
 I... I just couldn't resist taking a peek at the sculpture. Jake is so talented.

DAD
 You think so? Personally, I don't see it.

BREE
 No?

Dad's sudden appearance here, and his critical attitude regarding his son, delivered with a drunk's mean edge, leaves Bree taken aback, even spooked.

BREE (CONT'D)
 I'm gonna go back downstairs.

DAD
 Right behind you.

He follows her down the stairs like a stalker.

EXT. JAKE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

MINUTES LATER, Logan, Bree, and Eric go driving off, their fancy SUV a marked contrast to Dad's old Honda Civic.

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

CHUCKY'S POV -- *Peering stealthily out from Jake's room, spying on Jake across the hall as he's helping his drunk Dad get into bed... A common occurrence, we gather... They remain unaware of our presence...*

DAD
 Did you feed Binxie?

JAKE
 I will.

Jake goes hurrying down the stairs, as our gaze remains fixed on drunk Dad alone in his room across the hall... Then, we begin to slowly ADVANCE across the hall towards Dad...

EXT. JAKE'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT

The back door opens and Jake emerges with a bowl of dog food. He calls out into the darkness:

JAKE
Binxie?... Here, Binx!

But there's no sign of the dog. Jake leaves the bowl on the patio and goes back inside...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

WITH JAKE as he comes back up the stairs... Pausing in front of Dad's room, the door now CLOSED. Jake of course thinks nothing of it. He heads into...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jake starts brushing his teeth, while we're worried about what might be happening with Chucky and Dad off-screen...

Then -- *CRASH! CRASH!* The violent sounds of glass or something shattering, coming from Jake's room... Jake takes off like a bolt...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - JAKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jake comes racing in to find his Dad wielding a baseball bat, drunkenly SMASHING THE DOLL SCULPTURE to smithereens! Jake is horrified.

JAKE
Dad! Stop!

But Dad doesn't stop. He goes on swinging, ignoring Jake, delivering blow after blow to the sculpture, reducing it to scattered doll parts, leaving the room with a macabre resemblance to a battlefield, with eyes randomly staring up from the rubble, and tiny hands frozen in gnarled desperation.

Jake is left trembling and teary-eyed. He can't believe what his Dad has done.

DAD
 I don't want to see any more dolls,
 Jake. Ever.
 (dropping the bat)
 Good-night.

He staggers out of the room, leaving Jake to survey the damage helplessly.

But then, Jake notices CHUCKY'S RED-SNEAKERED FOOT, sticking out from under the bed.

Kneeling down, Jake pulls Chucky out from under the bed. The one doll that somehow miraculously escaped Dad's rampage.

And then Jake notices a tiny spot of BLOOD under the bed. *What the fuck?* He looks at Chucky, confused.

We of course note that the dog is nowhere to be seen.

ACT TWO

INT. MID-CENTURY HOME - NIGHT (CHUCKY'S DREAM)

WE'RE BACK IN CHUCKY'S POV -- Spying on the oblivious young woman brushing her hair... Once again, we begin STALKING up behind her...

But this time, the dream goes FURTHER... And as we quietly move in for the kill...

At the last moment, the woman TURNS TO US...

Then we SMASH CUT TO:

CHUCKY'S EYES CLICKING OPEN.

Waking from his DREAM. We PULL BACK FROM CHUCKY'S EYES to remind everyone of his location...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - JAKE'S ROOM - DAY

It's the next morning. Chucky is now sitting propped up on the work table, presumably set there by Jake at some point. Jake is in the BACKGROUND, sitting at his lap top. (Jake didn't see Chucky's eyes click open, and even if he had, the mechanical-looking action would not have fazed him.)

We see what Jake is looking at on his lap top: An E-BAY PAGE, where several identical GOOD GUY DOLLS are FOR SALE. One for \$500. Another for \$750. Another for \$1000.

JAKE

Holy shit.

Jake shuts his lap top, then grabs a plastic trash bag filled with the doll debris from the night before. He heads out of the room...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Jake carries the trash bag into the kitchen, where Dad is doing some cleaning up of his own, pouring all the remaining beer down the sink, and tossing the bottles into the TRASH bin. Jake points out to his Dad re: the bottle:

JAKE

Those go in recycling.

Dad smiles. He starts transferring the beer bottles into the recycling container. An awkward silence between them. Finally:

DAD

Jake, I'm gonna start going to meetings again. Starting today. This morning.

Not exactly an apology, but the closest Jake is going to get.

DAD (CONT'D)

You know, maybe you should think about going back to painting. Your Mom always thought you showed a lot of promise.

Jake shrugs, non-committal. As Dad is about to head out the door with the recycling:

DAD (CONT'D)

Want a ride to school?

JAKE

No thanks, I'm gonna walk.

DAD

Okay, I'll see you tonight. Chinese okay?

JAKE

(nods)
Pork fried rice.

DAD

You got it.

Dad leaves.

EXT. JAKE'S HOUSE - DAY

Minutes later, Jake is peering out the window, watching as Dad goes driving off. Once the coast is clear, Jake emerges from the house, carrying Chucky.

EXT. NEW ROCHELLE STREETS - DAY

Jake's walking to school, the weird kid and his doll once again drawing stares from passersby. And once again Jake has his ear buds in as he watches another video with Devon on his phone. As Jake trudges past the well-kept suburban homes, Devon's VOICE seems to narrate:

DEVON (V.O.)

Violent crime in New Rochelle is on the rise... You'd never know it from all the rose beds... But behind the friendly exterior, sometimes monsters are living inside.

Words that might apply to Jake's home, and equally to Chucky himself.

EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY

Minutes later, Jake has paused outside the school while a stream of babbling kids is flowing inside.

Jake, ear buds still in place, is intently watching DEVON HIMSELF, unaware, as he goes strolling by, the very picture of a middle-school maverick.

DEVON (V.O.)

This is Dev, your social justice warrior, keeping it real.

Jake is still watching as Devon suddenly huddles with... Eric, Jake's dick cousin.

Devon and Eric high-five each other. Then they shake hands with the sort of elaborate ritual that confirms them as bros. They go strolling into the school together, presumably chatting about girls; Jake can't quite hear them from his berg of social exile. Jake is left mystified: *Devon's keeping it real with Eric?*

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

The hallway is bustling with chatting students before class. Overhead, a BANNER proclaims the upcoming TALENT SHOW. Jake is desperately trying to stuff Chucky into his locker, but the doll won't fit; the locker's too narrow.

JAKE

Shit.

A CUTE GAY BOY approaches Jake.

CUTE GAY BOY

(nervous)

Jake. Hey. Awesome Good Guy. I'm into vintage, too.

JAKE

He's retro.

CUTE GAY BOY

Oh. Okay. Um... Look, can I ask you a question?

JAKE

Sure.

Cute Gay Boy is clearly working up the nerve for something big. Jake is flattered.

CUTE GAY BOY

This is really awkward... But, um...

(clears his throat)

I was wondering... if... like, maybe... you could introduce me to your cousin.

JAKE

Eric.

CUTE GAY BOY

Yeah.

Turns out Eric is standing right next to Jake; their lockers are adjacent. (They have the same last name.) Eric tells Cute Gay Boy:

ERIC

I get that a lot. I'm flattered. Really. But it's not my thing.

Then beautiful LEXY (14) approaches, kissing Eric possessively. They're dating. Lexy's the self-described white Meghan Markle of New Rochelle.

CUTE GAY BOY

Oh. I didn't know.

LEXY

Yeah. Since cotillion. Don't you follow my Insta?

Cute Gay Boy slinks away, disappointed, promptly forgetting Jake's existence. The story of Jake's life.

ERIC

New bed buddy, Jake? What's his name?

JAKE

(into Chucky's face)
What's your name?

The doll responds interactively:

CHUCKY

(Good Guy doll voice)
Hi! I'm Chucky! Wanna play?

LEXY

Oh my God. That's adorable.

Pulling out her cell phone, she frames a pic of Jake and Chucky. Again, Jake can't help feeling flattered by the attentions of a Cool Kid.

LEXY (CONT'D)

Say "cheese."

JAKE

Chucky cheese.

Click.

LEXY

You're not tearing *him* apart, I hope.

JAKE

Anything for art, right?

LEXY

You can't!

JAKE
No, actually I'm going to sell him.

LEXY
You're selling your stuff now?
Jake. I didn't realize it'd gotten
that bad.

JAKE
(embarrassed)
No...

LEXY
(too loud)
I mean, do you need to borrow any
money?

JAKE
No.

LEXY
Seriously, it's no problem.
(turning to Eric)
Right?

ERIC
You know I don't carry cash on me.

LEXY
You can Venmo.

Others in the vicinity are starting to rubberneck at this little scene, much to Jake's escalating embarrassment.

JAKE
I'm fine.

LEXY
Being financially disadvantaged is
nothing to be ashamed of, Jake.

JAKE
I'm not.

Unbeknownst to Jake, DEVON has been observing the whole scene from a distance.

The BELL RINGS. Everyone starts rushing off to class.

LEXY
Well, see you later.

JAKE
See you in class.

WITH LEXY AND ERIC as they amble down the hallway:

ERIC
Why did you take his picture?

LEXY
I just had the most amazing idea
ever.

ERIC
Maybe you should give the guy a
break.

LEXY
Don't go soft on me, babe.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - BIOLOGY CLASS - DAY

A DIAGRAM OF A FROG'S HEART AND CARDIOVASCULAR SYSTEM on a
POSTER at the front of the class...

CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal the students -- including Lexy,
Eric, and Devon -- at work tables, wearing surgical masks.
They are DISSECTING FROGS.

The teacher, MISS FAIRCHILD (20s), who can't quite believe
she ended up teaching middle school with degrees in biology
and education from Yale, is walking around the room.

MISS FAIRCHILD
E.B. White said that explaining a
joke is like dissecting a frog: You
understand it better, but
unfortunately the frog dies in the
process.

Now she approaches Jake, who's sidelined alone at his own
table, ignored by the rest of the class. The Chucky doll is
sitting atop the table beside him and his frog.

Jake stares at his frog, scalpel in hand, frozen with
anxiety.

MISS FAIRCHILD (CONT'D)
Jake, you okay?

JAKE
I don't think I can do this.

MISS FAIRCHILD
Do you have a religious conflict?

JAKE

No, I just... I'm sorry, I can't
stand the sight of blood.

An intimidating jock at a nearby table, OLIVER, sneers at
Jake.

OLIVER

Pussy.

MISS FAIRCHILD

Oliver, mind your fucking business.

(then to Jake:)

You can do this. Just make a
vertical incision down the length
of the abdomen, like I showed you.

She ambles away, leaving Jake to the ugly task at hand.

MISS FAIRCHILD (CONT'D)

Sometimes the heart will go on
beating for a few moments after
death.

Jake looks down at his frog lying there on its back in a
stainless-steel tray, legs pinned to a white cloth. Wincing,
Jake slowly brings the scalpel toward the frog's abdomen...

And then he forces himself to make the slightest CUT into
green flesh...

Shockingly RED BLOOD starts to ooze out of the frog...

Horrified, Jake quickly puts the scalpel down and spins AWAY
FROM THE TABLE, gagging...

CLOSE ON JAKE'S FACE as he hyperventilates, the SOUND OF HIS
PANICKY HEARTBEAT filling his, and our, ears... His back is
to the table...

CLOSE ON CHUCKY'S FROZEN FACE, wide blue eyes staring...

CLOSE ON THE SHARP SCALPEL lying right there on the table...

CLOSE ON JAKE'S FACE as he gradually catches his breath,
composing himself, his HEARTBEAT slowing back to normal.

He's okay now. He turns back to the table...

And sees that his FROG IS NOW A BLOODY, EVISCERATED MESS, the
scalpel's blade stuck in the frog's still-beating heart.

Jake is aghast, watching in horror as the frog's heart slowly STOPS BEATING. Miss Fairchild comes ambling back; she looks at Jake's now torn-up frog, truly disturbed by the carnage. *

MISS FAIRCHILD (CONT'D) *
No, Jake...No, that's... not right. *

JAKE *
No... *

Suspicious, Jake looks over at an oblivious Oliver, who's busy chortling at something on his phone. Lexy stifles a giggle. *

Oliver *must* be the frog-killer; it's the only logical explanation. *

JAKE (CONT'D) *
I didn't-- *

But now more kids are giggling, and whispering rabidly about whatever they're looking at on their phones, punctuated by telling glances in Jake's direction. *

Their behavior is all too familiar to Jake, whose Spidey sense begins to tingle in panicked anticipation of some social debacle. *

MISS FAIRCHILD *
(to Oliver) *
What's going on? *

OLIVER *
Lexy's new Go-Fund-Me. *

Miss Fairchild grabs Oliver's phone. Jake checks his own phone. Both of them see... *

A NEW "GO FUND ME" PAGE -- Featuring the PHOTO of Jake and Chucky that Lexy snapped in the hallway, along with the HEADLINE:

FIGHT POVERTY! HELP JAKE AND CHUCKY!

More LAUGHTER at Jake's expense. Oliver tosses a quarter in Jake's direction.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Here you go, Webber. Don't spend it all in one place.

Miss Fairchild simmers with anger. Jake, mortified, wishes he could disappear. We can only imagine what Chucky's thinking.

The BELL RINGS, signaling the end of class. The kids start gathering their things and dispersing.

Jake tries to bolt, but it's cumbersome managing both his book bag and Chucky; he accidentally drops the doll on the floor, calling even more attention to himself in the process.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
Don't forget your boy toy.

JAKE
Miss Fairchild, could you maybe keep this in here 'til I sell it? It won't fit in my locker.

MISS FAIRCHILD
Why don't you just keep it at--

She stops. Jake's obvious distress gives her an impulse to just *help* this poor kid.

MISS FAIRCHILD (CONT'D)
No problem.

JAKE
Thanks.

He hands her the doll and hurries out. Lexy is right behind him.

MISS FAIRCHILD
Just a moment, Lexy, I'd like a word.

Lexy has no choice but to linger reluctantly. Miss Fairchild closes the door. Now it's just the two of them left alone in the classroom. Three if you count Chucky. *And you should.*

MISS FAIRCHILD (CONT'D)
Have a seat.

Lexy sits. Miss Fairchild sets Chucky down on an adjacent table.

MISS FAIRCHILD (CONT'D)
Lexy, I want you to take the page down. Right now.

LEXY
But Miss Fairchild, I've already raised seventy-five dollars. I'm just trying to help a fellow student who's in need.

*

MISS FAIRCHILD
Lexy, you're not very funny.

LEXY
Poverty's no laughing matter.

MISS FAIRCHILD
What did Jake Webber ever do to you, anyway?

LEXY
Nothing.

MISS FAIRCHILD
You know, I was a lot like you when I was your age: Entitled. Arrogant. And secretly terrified.

LEXY
Oh, really? And what is it I'm supposedly so afraid of?

MISS FAIRCHILD
The creeping realization that real life is going to be a lot more challenging than middle school... And that no matter how pretty, or popular, or important you might think you are right now, in the end nobody gets everything they want in life.

Her little speech is part accusation, part self-confession.

LEXY
Don't worry about me, Miss Fairchild. I'm pretty sure I'm not going to end up teaching eighth grade biology.

*
*
*
*

A quick flash of pain in Miss Fairchild's eyes, which Lexy savors like a sip of Coke on a hot summer day. Miss Fairchild starts writing out a detention slip.

MISS FAIRCHILD
Take the page down, Lexy. And report for detention right after school.

LEXY
I'm raising money for charity. Not only am I not doing anything wrong, what I'm doing is admirable.

(MORE)

LEXY (CONT'D)
 And if you try to stop me, or
 penalize me in any way, my parents
 will sue the school.

Miss Fairchild is taken aback by Lexy's brazen threat.

LEXY (CONT'D)
 Can I go now? I have to get to
 rehearsal. I'm hosting the talent
 show.

*
 *

MISS FAIRCHILD
 Of course you are.

She goes to the door, opens it, turns back to Lexy.

MISS FAIRCHILD (CONT'D)
 I think Mr. McVey should be part of
 this conversation. You can repeat
 your threat to him.

LEXY
 Happy to. He and my Dad are golfing
 buddies.

MISS FAIRCHILD
 Wait here.

She heads off, closing the door, leaving Lexy alone with
 Chucky... in a room full of SCALPELS and dissected frogs...

*

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - DAY

Jake is sitting alone at an otherwise empty table, eating his
 Sloppy Joe in exile on the outskirts of the bustling
 cafeteria. He's watching another of DEVON'S VIDEOS on his
 phone.

Then Devon approaches in real life, carrying his lunch tray.

DEVON
 Okay if I sit here?

Jake yanks out his ear buds, clumsily hiding his phone before
 Devon can see what he's watching.

JAKE
 Yup.

Devon sits across from Jake. Jake's not entirely sure he
 isn't dreaming. They eat silently for an awkward moment.
 Then:

DEVON
What are you watching?

JAKE
Nothing.

DEVON
You're watching *something*. Every day I see you over here, totally wrapped up in whatever it is.

JAKE
Sabrina.

DEVON
Oh. I've never seen it. It's good?

JAKE
Sort of a guilty pleasure.

DEVON
What's it about?

JAKE
Um, it's surprisingly deep, actually. They juggle themes like religion, politics, feminism and the patriarchy... Ultimately though it's about corruption. And witchcraft.

DEVON
What about corruption?

JAKE
You know, how it can be so easy to sell out your values, just to be part of the crowd.

He looks at all the tables crowded with chatting, laughing friends.

DEVON
I'll check it out.

JAKE
Coolio.

Jake turns away from Devon, making a self-disgusted face at his misguided use of "Coolio."

DEVON

Speaking of selling out, I'm in the talent show tomorrow. You should come.

*

Jake's mind is racing: *Is Devon actually flirting with me?*

JAKE

I'll check it out.

DEVON

Coolio.

Jake can't hold back a smile.

DEVON (CONT'D)

Anyway, listen... I wanted to ask you something... Man, this is kind of awkward...

JAKE

What?

DEVON

Well, first of all... I know you watch my videos.

JAKE

That's not a question.

DEVON

I mean, I know you were watching one just now. I saw.

JAKE

(blushing)
Okay.

DEVON

I was wondering... if maybe...

Jake can barely hide his happiness. This is shaping up to be a dream come true.

DEVON (CONT'D)

Well, I was wondering if you might be interested... in being on my Youtube show.

*

*

JAKE

Huh.

DEVON

I want to do a whole series on bullying, Jake. It's a huge problem. And not just here at New Rochelle. But we have Lexy, Oliver...

JAKE

Eric.

DEVON

No. Eric's a good guy.

JAKE

He's my cousin. Believe me, he's not a good guy.

DEVON

It's Lexy. I don't know *what* he sees in her. But Jake, you could--

Jake gets up, insulted.

JAKE

Hey. Do I look like the poster boy for losers to you?

DEVON

No! I just thought--

JAKE

I'm not interested. I gotta go.

He gets up and heads off, leaving Devon confused and alone.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - BIOLOGY CLASS - DAY

Back to Lexy and Chucky, still alone in the otherwise deserted classroom. The incongruous emptiness and silence of the room -- along with the scalpels and dissected frogs -- lend a distinctly creepy atmosphere, the rays of sunlight slanting through the blinds are pure film noir.

Lexy, whiling away the time, is looking at the Go Fund Me page on her phone. She chuckles, pleased with herself.

Then she looks at Chucky atop the neighboring table, the inert doll staring innocently with his fixed smile. Lexy shakes her head in derision at the silly doll, and by implication at Jake, as well.

Bored, she glances around the room. She casually raises her arm and sniffs her pit, making a revolted face in response.

Reaching into her bag, she pulls out a deodorant stick, and refreshes her pits. Then she picks her nose. Ah, the things people do when they think no one's watching.

Then Lexy's gaze falls on Miss Fairchild's desk, which directly faces Lexy several feet away.

On top of the teacher's desk, Lexy spots a single sheet of paper that stands out from the rest of the clutter.

Curious -- nosy, really -- Lexy stands, putting her phone down on her desk. Then she approaches the teacher's desk, her back now to Chucky... *

Leaning over the desk, looking at the sheet of paper that's caught her interest, Lexy now can see something TYPED across the top of the page: POP QUIZ. Followed by a list of questions and answers. *

Oh, this is too good. Lexy can't resist this opportunity. She reflexively glances over her shoulder to make absolutely sure the coast is clear... *

And she sees Chucky, still sitting frozen on his table -- but is something different now? Lexy can't be sure. We may not be sure, either. But the eagle-eyed viewer (and second-time viewer) will notice that whereas previously Chucky's right hand was raised, now it's his left hand that's raised. *

But Lexy shrugs it off, banishing the fleeting feeling of unease, as one does.

Turning back to Miss Fairchild's desk, she picks up the test and starts looking at it. *

Then Lexy turns around, looking for her phone... but it's gone. *

Then Lexy is shocked to see that Chucky is no longer on the table. Instead, though still completely inanimate, the doll is now standing right in front the closed classroom door, seemingly blocking Lexy's escape. How did he get there? *

Lexy's eyes go wide with fear...

ACT THREE

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - BIOLOGY CLASS - DAY *

Back to the face-off: Lexy staring in confusion and growing fear at the *seemingly* inanimate doll blocking the classroom door.

Then, to Lexy's horror -- Chucky sloooooowly seems to begin advancing toward her...

But it's just the DOOR behind him, pushing him forward as the door is swung open from the other side...

It's Miss Fairchild, along with the ever-skeptical school principal, MR. MCVEY (40s).

Lexy, obviously frightened, tries to go rushing past them.

MISS FAIRCHILD

Lexy, what is it?

Lexy doesn't know what to say. She's confused, embarrassed, and still afraid.

LEXY

Nothing. I have to go. I have rehearsal.

MISS FAIRCHILD

Not so fast. I'd like you to tell Mr. McVey what you told me.

LEXY

I'll take the page down. I have to go.

(pausing at the door)

Oh, I think I lost my phone.

(a fearful glance at the doll)

Keep an eye out for it?

She goes hurrying out...

OUT IN THE HALLWAY

Eric comes rushing up to Lexy as she's hurrying down the hall.

ERIC

What's wrong?

LEXY

I gotta stop smoking so much weed before class.

BACK IN THE CLASSROOM

With Miss Fairchild and Mr. McVey.

*
*
*
*
*
*

*

MR. MCVEY

That was easier than it should've been. Make sure she takes it down.

MISS FAIRCHILD

I'll check it during my break.

MR. MCVEY

How's Jake?

MISS FAIRCHILD

Keeping a brave face, as usual. He's a tough kid.

MR. MCVEY

But for how long? That girl's a menace, Cathy. She reminds me of you when you were here.

MISS FAIRCHILD

Yeah, I hate her, too.

MR. MCVEY

Okay, let me know.

He leaves. Miss Fairchild picks up the doll, carrying him over to a CABINET. Opening the cabinet, she stuffs Chucky inside. Then she closes and PADLOCKS the cabinet door.

INSIDE THE CABINET

CHUCKY'S POV -- Enveloped in the DARKNESS OF THE CABINET, our increasingly impatient BREATHING filling our ears as we peer out through the narrow SLAT between the cabinet doors: We can just make out Miss Fairchild heading away.

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jake and his Dad at the table, eating Chinese food out of cartons for dinner. Dad pours himself another cup of coffee. The takeaway here: *Dad isn't drinking*. They eat in awkward silence until:

DAD

I have some news.

JAKE

What's up?

DAD

I signed you up for jiu-jitsu. Starting in June.

(MORE)

DAD (CONT'D)

You can get your yellow belt by the end of the summer.

JAKE

Huh.

DAD

It'll be good for you. We can do it together.

JAKE

You think that's such a good idea?

DAD

What do you mean?

JAKE

(challenging)

I mean, are you sure we can really afford it?

A tense moment as Dad realizes that not only Jake has called his bluff, he has rejected Dad's proffered olive branch.

DAD

You're right. Forget it. I need that new transmission for the car anyway.

He abruptly gets up from the table, takes his plate to the sink.

DAD (CONT'D)

Better go do your homework.

Jake glances over at the dog's food dish: it's full.

JAKE

Hey, have you seen Binx today?

DAD

No.

JAKE

That's weird.

He heads out of the kitchen.

EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - NIGHT

The sprawling institutional building looking deserted, even haunted at night.

Then, a shrill ALARM begins to blare from the building, piercing the peaceful night. In response, dogs start BARKING in the distance. Something has happened. Something is wrong.

A COP CAR evidently on patrol in the area comes driving up to the school, in no apparent hurry. Two uniformed cops get out of the car: Latinx DETECTIVE LOPEZ (30s), the driver and cool-and-collected top dog of this particular pair; and his partner OFFICER LAWTON (20s), a puppy dog eager for action. Wielding flashlights that slice through the darkness, they approach the main entrance:

LAWTON
Haven't been here since I graduated. Seems so much smaller than I remember.

LOPEZ
You guys actually graduated from middle school? Like with a ceremony and everything?

LAWTON
Yeah. Didn't you?

LOPEZ
Hell, no. In Mexico, they thought a big blowout would take away from *high school* graduation, and make people think eighth grade is a sufficient level of education, and drop out.
(then, playfully:)
You *did* get a GED, didn't you, Lawton?

LAWTON
Screw you, Lopez.

LOPEZ
Detective Lopez.

Reaching the main door, they see that it's been FORCED OPEN, a dangling, industrial-strength CHAIN LOCK having been SEVERED.

LAWTON
Great. Another break-in. Neighborhood association's gonna want more patrol cars.

LOPEZ
Wait a minute. Check it out.

He shines his flashlight on the severed chain lock: It's hanging from a doorknob on the INSIDE of the door. *

LOPEZ (CONT'D) *

They didn't break in. They broke out.

The cops look at one another, confused. This being a horror story, you can bet we'll be seeing these two again.

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - JAKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jake is sitting at his lap top, checking his E-Bay ad for Chucky. In Jake's in-box, there is a message waiting from 9:07 AM earlier that day, not long after Jake left for school. The message reads: VERY INTERESTED. CAN WE TALK?

Yawning, Jake types his cell phone number in the allotted space. Then he closes his lap top. Ready for bed.

Three seconds later, his CELL PHONE RINGS. Kinda creepy. Even creepier: UNKNOWN CALLER. Jake answers hesitantly:

JAKE

Hello?

YOUNG MAN (OVER PHONE)

Yes. I'm calling about the doll.

JAKE

That was fast.

YOUNG MAN (OVER PHONE)

What condition is he in?

JAKE

Well, it's good, really good. Mint, actually.

YOUNG MAN (OVER PHONE)

Is he there with you now?

JAKE

Well, no. I sort of have it in storage.

YOUNG MAN (OVER PHONE)

Is his name Chucky?

JAKE

(taken aback)

Yeah, as a matter of fact, it is. How did you know?

YOUNG MAN (OVER PHONE)
Listen to me carefully. I know this
is going to sound strange. But has
anything... *weird* happened lately?
I mean with Chucky.

JAKE
Well, this conversation has been
pretty weird.

YOUNG MAN (OVER PHONE)
Be very careful with that doll. Do
you understand?

JAKE
What?

YOUNG MAN (OVER PHONE)
Have you checked his batteries?

JAKE
What are you talking about?

YOUNG MAN (OVER PHONE)
Wait. Hold on for a second.
(then, calling to someone
OFF SCREEN)
Hello? Is someone there?

Then -- CLICK. The call's been severed abruptly.

JAKE
Hello?

Talk about weird. Jake shrugs, hangs up the phone. Then,
curious, he turns back to his lap top and starts typing...

We see what comes up now on his screen: a NATIONAL ENQUIRER
headline that reads "COINCIDENCE? DOLL PRESENT AT MULTIPLE
CRIME SCENES," above several old crime scene PHOTOS, all
showing a GOOD GUY DOLL sitting inconspicuously on the
margins.

Jake starts typing again. Then something new comes up on the
screen: a CHICAGO TIMES headline from 1988 that reads "SERIAL
KILLER CHARLES LEE RAY SHOT DEAD IN CHICAGO TOY STORE," above
a PHOTO of CHARLES LEE RAY himself (BRAD DOURIF), lying
dead... right beside a GOOD GUY DOLL.

Jake closes his lap top, spooked. He won't be getting much
sleep tonight.

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

The next morning. Jake comes rushing in, scrambling to get ready for school. Dad is pouring himself another cup of coffee. He looks like hell, in an all-too-familiar way. Jake scrutinizes his father, concerned.

JAKE

Dad, are you okay?

DAD

Yeah. I was up late with a report.

Jake, suspicious, secretly scrutinizes his Dad's every move as he goes about gathering his things for work.

Then Jake unzips his book bag... and inside he finds, bizarrely, AN EMPTY WHISKEY BOTTLE.

Jake instantly knows what it means: Dad is drinking again. He broke his promise. But the question is: *Who put the bottle in the book bag? Did Dad do it himself in a drunken stupor?*

Jake, steeling his courage, approaches his Dad.

JAKE

Dad, we need to talk.

DAD

I agree.

Dad reaches behind a counter... and pulls out the Chucky doll! Jake is shocked. *Where the fuck did he come from?*

DAD (CONT'D)

(annoyed)

I thought we got rid of this.

JAKE

I'm working on it.

Tossing the doll on a chair, Dad heads out the door without saying good-bye.

Jake stares at Chucky with growing concern. Then, grabbing the doll, Jake turns him over. He lifts his shirt... revealing the closed BATTERY COMPARTMENT.

Jake takes a deep breath, then opens the compartment door... revealing TWO NEW BATTERIES INSIDE. Jake exhales, relieved -- sort of?

JAKE (CONT'D)
 (ironically)
 Well, that explains it.

Then, Jake has an idea: He TAKES OUT THE BATTERIES.

He closes the compartment door. And sits Chucky down on the kitchen table.

Then, grabbing a sharp KITCHEN KNIFE, Jake reaches out and lightly taps Chucky's face with the edge of the blade, just like he did at the top of Act 1 to prompt the doll to speak. If Jake's worst suspicions are true, he's ready to defend himself with the knife. Clever of him.

No response from the doll. Jake taps again. Nothing.

Then, very carefully, Jake leans in close to Chucky's face...

JAKE (CONT'D)
 What's your name?

Just like he did to prompt the doll at school. But Chucky keeps mum. Jake sighs, relieved.

But then Chucky's eyes move almost imperceptibly.

Jake stares at the doll's face. Jake is thinking: *Did I just see that?*

Then -- he has another idea. Grabbing the doll, he races out of the house.

EXT. YARD SALE HOUSE - DAY

Jake, toting Chucky, is apparently taking a detour on the way to school. He presses the DOORBELL. While he waits, he glances up at the TARP covering the fire-gutted bedroom on the second floor. The tarp flutters in the wind, as if in distress. Finally Mrs Jolly opens the door.

MRS. JOLLY
 (joking re: the doll)
 Sorry, Jake. No refunds.

JAKE
 Hi, Mrs. Jolly.

MRS. JOLLY
 I was hoping I might see you again.

JAKE

Oh. Yeah. It's nice to see you,
too. But I just had a question
about the doll.

MRS. JOLLY

Oh. Come on in.

INT. YARD SALE HOUSE - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Jake steps inside with Chucky.

MRS. JOLLY

How can I help?

JAKE

I was just wondering if you knew
anything else about it. I was
hoping to track down the last
owner.

MRS. JOLLY

I could check my mom's contact
list.

JAKE

That would be awesome. Thank you.

Mrs. Jolly goes to a COMPUTER in an adjacent sitting room.
She switches it on. As she peers at the screen, scrolling
through data:

MRS. JOLLY

You know, Jake, grief is like a
cancer. Believe me, I know. It's
not good to keep it bottled up
inside.

JAKE

No, it's not.

MRS. JOLLY

Are you seeing anyone? You know,
who you can talk to?

JAKE

I was for a while. But we ran
through our deductible.

MRS. JOLLY

(peering at the computer)
Here it is.

She writes the number on a slip of paper, then hands it to Jake.

JAKE

I better go. I'm gonna be late for school. Thanks again, Mrs. Jolly.

MRS. JOLLY

You take care, Jake.

He hurries out.

EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY

Jake, now loitering outside school with Chucky as the other kids head inside, pulls out his phone and calls the number given to him by Mrs. Jolly.

BREATHY WOMAN (OVER PHONE)

Hell-ohhhhhhh.

It's certainly not the Young Man from the previous night's weird phone call. Instead, fans will instantly recognize the breathy voice as that of TIFFANY -- THE BRIDE OF CHUCKY (JENNIFER TILLY). For the uninitiated, the woman's identity will remain a tantalizing mystery for now.

Jake cautiously tells her:

JAKE

Mrs. Jolly's mom is dead. I have the doll now.

BREATHY WOMAN (OVER PHONE)

Good luck.

CLICK. She HANGS UP. Spooking the hell out of Jake.

Now carrying Chucky at arm's length like a rattlesnake, Jake heads into the school.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - ART CLASS - DAY

Jake carefully lays Chucky on a work table. His classmates are busy at other tables, ignoring him as usual.

Jake pulls out his pocket knife. Slowly, he brings the blade to Chucky's side. He takes a deep breath.

And suddenly STICKS THE BLADE RIGHT THROUGH CHUCKY'S STRIPED T-SHIRT AND INTO HIS LATEX SKIN.

Nothing happens. No response from Chucky. Seems he's just a doll, after all.

But then, slowly -- BLOOD begins to ooze out from Chucky's wound onto the table...

Jake gasps softly. He glances around at his busy classmates, totally oblivious as the very fabric of reality is getting ripped out from under them.

Why isn't Chucky defending himself? Presumably because he's vulnerable in public.

Jake gathers the doll up in his arms, and hurries out of the room.

EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - REAR OF BUILDING - DAY

Jake does what any sane person would do at this point: He goes to one of the big TRASH BINS behind the school, tosses Chucky in, and slams the lid shut.

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM - DAY

LATER THAT DAY. The house is packed to the rafters as THE TALENT SHOW is in progress.

ON STAGE - Devon, backed by a small band, is rocking the joint and demonstrating his "outsider cool" bona fides with his performance of "Bohemian Rhapsody":

DEVON

"So you think you can stone me and
spit in my eye?
So you think you can love me and
leave me to die?
Oh, baby, can't do this to me,
baby,
Just gotta get out, just gotta get
right outta here..."

IN THE AUDIENCE, we see DEVON'S proud MOM (30s) sitting with her beaming husband: DETECTIVE LOPEZ, in uniform, whom we met a few scenes back. That's right: Detective Lopez is Devon's father.

Elsewhere, we see Bree and Logan, sitting with Eric, and Miss Fairchild sitting with Mr. McVey, the principal. Plus we glimpse a few new characters whom we'll get to know as the series progresses: LEXY'S MOM & DAD (30s) and her adorable little sister CAROLINE (6).

Jake is sitting inconspicuously on the aisle near the back of the auditorium. He's in a sort of daze, mentally preoccupied with the bizarre events surrounding Chucky. Not paying attention to Devon's performance...

Which a disappointed Devon clocks even as he's singing. He segues into the heartfelt finish:

DEVON (CONT'D)
 "Nothing really matters,
 Anyone can see,
 Nothing really matters,
 Nothing really matters to me."

The crowd APPLAUDS. Devon takes a bow. Lexy, the show's host, now takes the stage holding a microphone.

LEXY
 That was the Rami Malek of New Rochelle -- Devon Lopez, everyone!

DEVON
 (heading off stage)
 I'm Mexican, not Egyptian. But thanks!

LEXY
 You're so welcome.

Climbing down off the stage, Lexy heads into the audience, mingling with the crowd like a night club singer. She approaches Devon's parents.

LEXY (CONT'D)
 Look, it's Devon's folks.
 (to Devon's Mom)
 Mrs. Lopez, you must be so proud.

DEVON'S MOM
 We are.

Then Lexy turns to face Jake sitting on the other side of the aisle. She's clearly up to something.

LEXY
 Enjoying the show, Jake?

JAKE
 Uh-huh.

LEXY
 What did you think of Devon?

JAKE
 (hesitates, suspicious)
 He was good.

LEXY
 Just "good?" Come on, Jake, don't
 be shy. Now's your chance to tell
 him what you really think.

Jake is paralyzed with embarrassment... which elicits some
 mean-spirited laughter, and rude kissing sounds, from the
 crowd. Exactly what Lexy was hoping for. Backstage, Devon is
 simmering with anger. Then Lexy turns to Devon's folks.

LEXY (CONT'D)
 You guys know Jake?

The Lopeses wave awkwardly at Jake, who wants to die. More
 laughter at Jake's expense from the crowd. Miss Fairchild,
 boiling with anger at Lexy, is about to intervene when...

We hear A FAMILIAR CHILDISH, SINGSONG VOICE, suddenly
 heckling Lexy:

VOICE
 Hey Lexy! *Lexy!*

The VOICE is coming from directly behind Jake. Everyone turns
 around to see who the heckler is...

Seated directly behind Jake -- it's THE CHUCKY DOLL, sitting
 there frozen, the mouth NOT moving.

CHUCKY
 (Good Guy voice
 throughout)
 Why don't you pick on someone your
 own size!

Jake's eyes go wide. *Holy shit. Chucky has returned from the
 trash bin.*

Confused murmuring from the crowd. Lexy too is thoroughly
 confused, and pissed that she's losing control of the
 situation.

Jake is stunned: *Now he knows without a doubt that Chucky's
 alive.*

CHUCKY (CONT'D)
 Little help here, Jake?

Going with the flow -- *Chucky's* flow -- Jake gets to his
 feet, then gingerly picks up the doll.

Chucky's mouth is right next to Jake's ear; Jake seems to be listening to secret instructions.

Then Jake shyly starts carrying Chucky toward the stage. Lexy follows them, eyeing the doll warily, remembering their recent run-in.

LEXY
What's going on?

Up on the stage, Jake holds Chucky so that he's facing the crowd, keeping one hand on the doll's back. Chucky begins to speak (still in his chirpy voice), his mouth now flapping mechanically. It doesn't look supernatural. It just looks like an awesome VENTRILLOQUISM ACT:

CHUCKY
Hi, I'm Chucky! And I'm your friend
'til the end!
(his head swivels toward
Jake)
You get that now, right?

JAKE
(nodding, scared)
I get it.

Jake has no choice but to play along as Chucky's straight man. The crowd watches in perplexed silence.

CHUCKY
Now I said *friend*, Jake. Nothing
more.

A single titter from the crowd.

CHUCKY (CONT'D)
Not that there's anything wrong
with that!

Crickets. The crowd doesn't know what to make of this awkward spectacle, but the prospect of witnessing a social train wreck-in-progress has their collective attention.

CHUCKY (CONT'D)
Hey, look what I found.

Chucky reaches into his own pocket -- the audience is very impressed by Jake's expert "ventriloquism" -- pulling out Lexy's i-PHONE.

LEXY
My phone!

CHUCKY
 (scrolling through pics)
 Lots of pics of Eric... Lots of
 pics of Oliver, too... Oops, guess
 that was a secret.

A scandalized "Ooooooooooh" from the audience. Eric stares
 daggers at an embarrassed Oliver across the room.

LEXY
 Jake, stop it.

JAKE
 I'm not--

CHUCKY
 We all have our secrets. I know *I*
 sure do.
 (then, creepily swiveling
 his head to face Bree)
 Right, Bree?

In the audience, Logan looks at Bree quizzically. Bree smiles
 uncomfortably.

Mr. McVey is about to shoot to his feet to put a stop to all
 this -- but Miss Fairchild stops him with a hand to his
 wrist. She *wants* Jake to have this opportunity for revenge.

On stage, Chucky proceeds to give the bully a taste of her
 own medicine:

CHUCKY (CONT'D)
 (looking at the phone)
 Here's Lexy's search history...
 (beat)
 Apparently she's bulimia-curious...
 (giggles from the crowd)
 She's into Fortnite porn...
 (more giggles)
 And look what she keeps Googling...

He shows the phone to Jake, who dutifully reads:

JAKE
 "Does my cat really love me?"

Big burst of laughter from the crowd.

CHUCKY
 Adorable.

In the audience, we see that Caroline (Lexy's little sister)
 seems particularly enraptured by Chucky.

LEXY
 (re: the phone)
 Give it to me!

CHUCKY
 (looking at the phone)
 She also seems super-interested in
 marijuana strains.
 (laughter)
 I mean for anxiety. Not for fun.
 Never.

Raucous laughter now. Lexy grabs the phone and hurries off
 stage, mortified.

CHUCKY (CONT'D)
 (to the audience)
 It's contagious, isn't it? Laughing
 at people. Well, guess what,
 dipshits? Now the joke's on you.

More laughter at Chucky's profanity. Now Principal McVey
 comes hurrying up on stage, grabbing Jake's arm, putting a
 stop to his scandalous act.

MR. MCVEY
 Okay, fun's over. Let's go.

CHUCKY
 You're all a bunch of fuckin'
 assholes. I'm outta here.

Mic drop. Mr. McVey marches Jake (carrying Chucky) off stage,
 as the students in the audience all CHEER the school's new
 hero.

ACT FOUR

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jake enters quietly with Chucky in tow. He's oddly calm,
 considering what just happened at the talent show, and
 considering the ticking supernatural bomb that he knows he's
 carrying under his arm.

He finds Dad on the couch, watching TV, beer in hand. Already
 drunk. And angry.

DAD
 Your teacher called. You proud of
 yourself?

JAKE

I'm not sorry, if that's what you mean.

DAD

You're not sorry? You got *suspended*.

JAKE

It wasn't my fault.

Dad gets up, towering threateningly over his son. Jake faces his Dad with newfound defiance, *perhaps emboldened by his silent knowledge that Chucky is alive*.

DAD

You insulted your friends and family in front of the entire school.

JAKE

They deserved it. And they're not my friends.

DAD

They used to be. You used to have lots of friends. What happened to you, Jake?

(re: the doll)

Doesn't it bother you everyone thinks you're so fucking weird?

JAKE

You don't care they think I'm weird. You just care they know I'm a fag.

Dad lashes out. BACKHANDS Jake across the face. Giving him a BLOODY NOSE. The sudden violence is shocking.

DAD

If you ever say that again, I'll kill you.

Chucky just stares mutely in Jake's arms, a silent witness to Dad's assault -- and his threat. We can only imagine what he's thinking.

Jake refuses to cry. He remains surprisingly calm.

JAKE

It should have been you in that car, instead of Mom.

DAD
Go to your room.

Jake starts for the stairs with Chucky -- but Dad SNATCHES THE DOLL out of his hands.

DAD (CONT'D)
Give me that!

He roughly throws Chucky on the floor.

JAKE
(alarmed)
No, he's gonna--

Dad cuts him off with a raised fist.

DAD
Get out of my sight!

Jake, frightened, stares at his Dad for a moment.

Then he looks at Chucky on the floor.

Then back to Dad and his raised fist.

Jake goes racing up the stairs...

Leaving Dad behind in the living room with Chucky...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - JAKE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jake enters, closing the door, sequestering himself. He switches on the TV. Cranks the volume. Trying to drown out the outside world...

LIVING ROOM (CONTINUOUS)

Dad heads unsteadily into the adjacent KITCHEN, leaving Chucky behind on the living room floor. Dad grabs another beer from the refrigerator.

When he returns to the living room -- CHUCKY IS GONE. Dad doesn't notice...

CHUCKY'S STEALTHY POV - Spying on Dad from behind a chair...

JAKE'S ROOM (CONTINUOUS)

Jake's staring at a sitcom on the TV, his nervous expression at odds with the innocuous LAUGH TRACK.

Then -- BZZZZZZZ! THE ELECTRICITY GOES OUT, plunging the room into darkness and silence.

Jake silently gulps. He goes to his door. LOCKS IT.

Then he climbs into bed, pulling the covers up to his chin, waiting with creeping dread for what he knows is going to happen downstairs...

LIVING ROOM (CONTINUOUS)

Dad spots a TINY FIGURE go skittering by in the dark, spooky BACKGROUND.

DAD
(to the Figure)
I told you to go to your room!

Annoyed, he heads off in drunken pursuit of what he *thinks* is Jake...

DAD (CONT'D)
This isn't funny, Jake.

The TINY SKITTERING FIGURE leads Dad on a fool's chase, from LIVING ROOM to KITCHEN and BACK AGAIN, a full circuit...

Back in the LIVING ROOM, Dad sees that the DOOR TO THE GARAGE is now AJAR...

DAD (CONT'D)
You're a little old for hide-and-
seek.

Opening the door, he heads through into...

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - GARAGE - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Dad comes staggering into the spooky garage, following the scampering FIGURE...

DAD
Jake?

It's a shadowy maze of cardboard boxes and long-forgotten bric-a-brac, everything draped in cobwebs. The figure remains frustratingly elusive amid the clutter.

DAD (CONT'D)
Boy, are you gonna get it.

He peers into the darkness for his quarry.

Then he spots, across the shadowy garage, a WATER SPIGOT slowly dripping DROPS OF WATER onto the cement floor, with Gothic insistence... DRIP... DRIP... DRIP...

DAD (CONT'D)
God damn it, Jake.

He goes stomping angrily across the garage to shut off the spigot...

And it's at this point that we notice, if we hadn't already, that Dad has been BAREFOOT this whole time...

And he STEPS into a PUDDLE OF WATER directly underneath the dripping spigot...

Then, from the shadows, a WIRE suddenly comes whiplashing out into the PUDDLE...

Then CHUCKY'S HAND throws a MECHANICAL SWITCH...

BZZZZZZ!...

BACK TO JAKE'S ROOM - (CONTINUOUS)

THE LIGHTS BEGIN STROBING on Jake's horrified face.

With morbid, irresistible curiosity, Jake climbs out of bed, opens his door, and heads out into the HALLWAY...

STAIRCASE/LIVING ROOM (CONTINUOUS)

Jake comes creeping down the STAIRCASE to the LIVING ROOM, as the LIGHTS continue to STROBE...

JAKE
Dad?

Spotting the CELLAR DOOR ajar, Jake swallows his mounting fear, and continues his search...

THE GARAGE (CONTINUOUS)

Jake slowly comes into the spooky garage, the STROBING LIGHTS showing the way...

To the ghastly sight of his DAD GETTING ELECTROCUTED, the STROBING LIGHTS making a nightmarish STOP-MOTION spectacle of Dad's rigid, twitching body dancing spastically in the puddle, his face contorted in agony.

Jake, horrified, watches helplessly...

While in a shadowy corner, we can just make out Chucky's silhouette, and his bright blue eyes shining out of the darkness.

ACT FIVE

INT. JAKE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

LATER. The house is now crawling with cops and the usual forensic experts in the wake of Dad's death. Jake, dazed with shock, is sitting in the living room with Detective Lopez and his partner Lawton. Jake's cheeks are damp with recent tears. *

Chucky is sitting innocently in another chair, an afterthought someone evidently dropped there. *

Jake watches in mute horror as uniformed Paramedics carry Dad's BODY-BAGGED corpse through the room and out the front door.

LOPEZ

Jake, I'm Detective Lopez. I think you're in the same class as my son. *

JAKE

Devon. *

LOPEZ

That's right. Look, Jake, your Uncle's on his way over. He's gonna take you to stay at his place tonight. You sure you don't want to talk to the grief counselor? *

JAKE

No, thanks. *

LOPEZ

Okay. I just have a couple more questions, if you're up to it. *

Jake nods.

LOPEZ (CONT'D)

Did you know there was a break-in at your school last night? *

JAKE

No.

LOPEZ

No real harm done. God knows I did worse in my day. Funny thing is, the only thing missing was a doll.

*

Everyone turns to glance at Chucky. Jake says nothing.

DETECTIVE LAWTON

Your teacher told us it belonged to you, Jake.

*

*

*

LOPEZ

I actually caught your act at school today. You were incredible.

*

*

*

JAKE

(improvising)

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have lied. I never did anything like that before.

LOPEZ

Don't worry. You're not in any trouble. I'm just trying to get something straight: You broke into your school, in the middle of the night, just to get your doll back?

*

Jake nods weakly.

LOPEZ (CONT'D)

Why?

*

JAKE

I needed him to practice. For the talent show.

Lopez nods, as if Jake's story makes perfect sense.

*

Then Uncle Logan comes in, visibly upset, escorted by another cop. Logan rushes to Jake and embraces him. Jake clutches his uncle tightly, in desperate need of some adult reassurance and comfort.

Then Jake looks at Logan. All he can think to say is:

JAKE (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

LOGAN

It was an accident, Jake. It wasn't your fault.

Lopez is watching Jake closely.

*

LOGAN (CONT'D)
 (still to Jake)
 Are you okay?

Jake nods. Logan turns to the cops.

LOGAN (CONT'D)
 What happened?

DETECTIVE LAWTON
 Fuse blew. Looks like your brother
 went to fix it, and...

Logan takes in the horrific implications. Then:

LOGAN
 Was he drinking?

DETECTIVE LAWTON
 Looks like it, yes.

Logan sighs sadly. To him, all of this seems like an inevitable fate for his ne'er-do-well brother.

LOGAN
 (exhausted, to Lopez) *
 Is it all right if we go now?

LOPEZ *
 Of course.
 (then, as if an
 afterthought:)
 Oh, Jake. How'd you hurt your nose?

JAKE
 (quickly)
 I fell.

LOPEZ *
 Oh. Okay.
 (to Logan)
 We have your numbers, just in case?
 (Logan nods)
 Thank you, Mr. Webber. Thanks,
 Jake. I'm very sorry for your loss.

LOGAN
 (to Jake)
 Let's go.

Jake grabs a little suit case. Logan walks him to the door, a comforting hand on the boy's shoulder.

Lopez can't help noticing that Jake grabs Chucky on his way out the door. Once they're gone, Lawton turns to Lopez. *

DETECTIVE LAWTON
So what are we calling it? *

LOPEZ
Death by misadventure. For now. *

INT. ERIC'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Logan leads Jake into the house, toting his suitcase in one hand, and Chucky in the other. Jake can't help being agog at the luxurious McMansion, a far cry from his previous modest home.

Aunt Bree and cousin Eric have been waiting for them. Bree has obviously been crying. She greets Jake with a compassionate hug.

BREE
You're going to stay here with us from now on.

JAKE
Thank you.

LOGAN
Why don't you show Jake to his room?

BREE
Come on.

She takes Jake's suitcase. Then Eric watches as his Mom leads Jake -- and Chucky -- up the sweeping staircase.

Eric is quietly adjusting to the fact that from now on, he's going to be living under the same roof as his weirdo cousin.

ERIC
(under his breath)
Shit.

INT. ERIC'S HOUSE - GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

Bree leads Jake into the room, switching on a lamp. She sets his suit case on the bed. Jake places Chucky in a chair. Eric stares at the wall-mounted plasma TV screen.

BREE

So make yourself at home. We have every channel. Bathroom's right through there. Wifi password's "eagle scout," all upper case.

Just like that, Jake's living circumstances have improved 100%. All it took was one "accidental" electrocution.

BREE (CONT'D)

Anything else you need?

JAKE

I'm okay.

BREE

I want you to know that we're here for you, Jake. All of us. You're not alone.

JAKE

Thanks, Aunt Bree.

She goes to the door. Pausing, she turns back to Jake.

BREE

(awkward)

Jake, what did you mean today? At the talent show? You know, about me having a secret?

JAKE

(riffing)

I was just trying to be funny. I didn't mean anything by it. I'm sorry.

She nods, having no choice but to accept his explanation for now. But of course she's secretly worrying: *What the hell does this kid know about me?*

She heads out, disappearing downstairs, leaving Jake alone... with Chucky.

Jake marvels for a moment at his posh new digs, then turns to Chucky. He whispers urgently to the doll:

JAKE (CONT'D)

Okay, talk to me.

Chucky remains in mechanical "Good Guy" mode, chirping in his chipper recorded voice:

CHUCKY
Hey! Wanna play?

JAKE
No, I want to talk to *you*. The *real*
you.

CHUCKY
(still mechanical)
I like to be hugged!

JAKE
Talk to me, damn it!

CHUCKY
(still mechanical)
Hi! I'm Chucky...

As the doll continues his well-known sentence, his VOICE slides creepily down the tonal scale, like a recording from hell...

CHUCKY (CONT'D)
...and I'm your friend 'til the
end...

Jake watches, horrified yet amazed, as CHUCKY COMES TO FULL SUPERNATURAL LIFE for the first time, his previously placid face now twisting with malicious glee, and by the time he reaches the end of his sentence, he's speaking in the murderously harsh, adult male VOICE of CHARLES LEE RAY (BRAD DOURIF):

CHUCKY (CONT'D)
Hidey-fucking-ho.

JAKE
I can't believe it. I can't believe
you actually did it.

CHUCKY
We did it, Jake.

JAKE
I didn't want him dead!

CHUCKY
What did you think I was gonna do?
Pee on him? He got what he
deserved.

Jake, wrestling with his own guilt, muses about his Dad:

JAKE

He wasn't always like that. When I was little, he was really cool.

CHUCKY

I know an asshole when I see one.

JAKE

After my Mom died, he just couldn't deal.

CHUCKY

Oh, I thought we were talking about the dog.

*

Jake stares at Chucky, frightened yet fascinated.

JAKE

You really are Charles Lee Ray.

CHUCKY

I'm your friend, Jake. 'Til the fucking end.

JAKE

The end of *what*?

Chucky smiles enigmatically. Then, from his pocket, he pulls out his trademark BUTCHER KNIFE.

CHUCKY

Now who's next?

INT. ERIC'S HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

Looking into Jake's bedroom, as Jake slowly closes the door on our view of this forbidden conversation, just like the end of *The Godfather*.

FADE TO BLACK.

Then SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MID-CENTURY HOME - NIGHT (CHUCKY'S DREAM)

WE'RE BACK IN CHUCKY'S POV -- Spying on the oblivious young woman brushing her hair... Once again, we begin STALKING up behind her... Once again we quietly move in for the kill, and at the last moment, the woman TURNS TO US...

But this time, the dream goes even FURTHER... As the woman surprises us by *not* screaming... Instead, she smiles in delight, exclaiming:

WOMAN

Charles!

Then we scramble up into her lap, and look at ourself in the MIRROR, seeing... NOT a killer doll, but just a smiling, normal-looking LITTLE BOY (6)...

This is CHARLES LEE RAY circa 1960. His innocent smile implicitly promising fans the answers to questions they've been asking about Chucky's origins for 30 years.

END OF PILOT EPISODE