

THE LUNCHROOM

Episode 5x16

"Secret Origins"
PART I

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FADE IN:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - LUNCHROOM - DAY

WILL, JOEL, BRIAN, BROCK, CASEY, REICTHER, and ELLEN sit around their normal table. A homemade cake which reads "Congradulations Casey!" lays in front of them.

ELLEN

All right, Casey. Dig in.

Ellen serves him a piece.

CASEY

This feels weird. I mean, congratulating someone for not dying?

BRIAN

I've not died plenty of times before and you fuckers have never made me cake.

WILL

That's because we're making Casey feel like he's back home.

JOEL

This is home for him?
(to Casey)
You poor bastard.

Ellen hands everyone a piece. Reichter immediately starts stuffing his face.

REICTHER

(mouth full)
So...delicious...

BROCK

I think I might get diabetes.

REICTHER

(pure bliss)
Totally worth it. I want to be shrunk down so I can live in this cake.

ELLEN

(re: cake writing)
Did you guys spell congratulations wrong?

(CONTINUED)

WILL

What? No we didn't - well, um.
Maybe.

BRIAN

(examines the writing)
Con-grad-u-lations. No, that's
right.

ELLEN

You sure?

CASEY

Isn't there an extra "t" somewhere
in there?

WILL

Guys, we're about to be High School
graduates. We should be able to
spell this word.

Long pause.

ELLEN

Google it.

Everyone reaches for their phones. As The Gang look at their
devices they quickly become distracted by a large crowd of
students forming around a nearby bulletin board.

JOEL

Whoa. What's going on?

BRIAN

I bet someone posted those photos
of Megan Crowley again.

REICTHER

You'd think after the third time
you would *stop* taking nude photos
of yourself.

BROCK

It's probably just another shitty
sports trophy or something.

WILL

Let's check it out.

They get up and approach the crowd. Attempts to get to the
front prove futile for our heroes.

(CONTINUED)

JOEL

Man, we're never going to get to the front.

CASEY.

Never fear! Casey's weird hole is here.

Casey peels off a neck bandage to reveal a small but gross looking trach hole.

CASEY

(screaming)

Hey who wants to see my trach hole from surgery! If I gargle, I can make it wiggle a bit!

Casey's act clears a path. The Gang slink to the front to see -

The large bulletin board as been converted into a giant collage. In giant bold letters it reads "Goodbye Seniors" which is surrounded by various pictures (baby, elementary school, modern) of students.

REICTHER

Holy crap -- what a waste of a collage.

BROCK

But it's basically a tribute to us.

REICTHER

It's about damn time!

BRIAN

Where did they get these pictures?

A CHEERLEADER appears.

CHEERLEADER

We've been secretly collecting them from everybody's families. Your mom gave us a ton, Brian.

She points out a photo of a naked baby Brian. Other nearby CHEERLEADERS laugh.

BRIAN

Hey! I'll have you know my bottom is still that smooth.

(CONTINUED)

REICTHER
(under breath)
A bit bigger though...

ELLEN
Aww, look at that one.

Ellen points to one of a young Will dressed as Batman. The Gang laughs.

WILL
You guys are just jealous that I
was secretly Batman as a child.

They look over more and more of the photos before something catches Ellen's eye.

ELLEN
Wait, what the hell is going on in
this one?

Ellen motions toward a picture.

INSERT PHOTO -

A slightly younger version of The Gang are huddled around a police officer. Everyone (including the cop) are giving a thumbs up.

BACK TO SCENE

The Gang each share a "knowing glance".

WILL
That's the time we finally got Brad
Holt.

SMASH CUT TO:

OPENING CREDIT SEQUENCE

Marvin Gaye's "Ain't That Peculiar" plays over the opening credits.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. ECONOMICS CLASS - LATER

Ellen sits in the back row of a lightly populated class room. She scribbles in a notebook. A few rows ahead of her sits BRAD HOLT, the ultimate jock. Handsome, muscles on muscles, and decked out in a letterman jacket, Brad Holt has a cool confidence like no other.

He's inched his desk next to a CUTE CHEERLEADER and openly flirts, whispering in her ear while she giggles.

ELLEN
(under breath/confused)
Brad Holt...and my boyfriend?

She scribbles something down.

CLOSE UP ON NOTEBOOK - Ellen has made a list titled "Brad Holt" with various words like "drugs?" "prank?" "revenge?" written on it.

The bell rings.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDY HALL - LATER

Will, Reicther, Brock, and Casey sit at a table near the back. Will has his nose in a math book while the others are still eating cake and playing on their Nintendo DS's.

WILL
What did you guys get for problem
3?

BROCK
Damn you, Casey! You didn't tell me
you had a Lugia!

CASEY
Ha! That's what you get for only
using grass types you dumb-dumb.

WILL
(annoyed)
Are you still playing fucking
Pokemon? I thought we were going to
finish our trig homework.

REICTHER
Can't talk. Trying to catch 'em
all.

(CONTINUED)

WILL

You do this every time!

REICTHER

Oh I'm sorry, Will. I'm sorry that I want to be the very best...like no one ever was.

WILL

(under breath)

Not this shit again.

REICTHER, BROCK, CASEY

(singing)

To catch them is my real test, to train them is my cause!

WILL

(angry)

I really hate that fucking song.

Ellen runs up to the table and sits down.

ELLEN

Okay Will. I have some theories about Brad.

She reaches into her backpack and pulls out her notebook.

ELLEN (CONT'D)

First one, you guys planted drugs on him and made it look like he did it!

BROCK

Uh, what's she talking about?

WILL

The picture of us with the cops. The bell rang before I could tell her the story.

ELLEN

Will, you know that I hate-slash-love mysteries!

BROCK

(looks at phone)

Is that why you sent me 20 text messages that say "tell me happened or else" which for some reason is followed by smiley emoticons?

(CONTINUED)

ELLEN

There's really not much in the way of "threatening" emoticons, Brock.

WILL

Look it's no big mystery. We used to hang out with Brad Holt, some shit went down, and now we don't.

ELLEN

That Brad Holt?

Ellen motions across the room: Brad Holt is stuffing pencils into his mouth while a FRIEND films with a phone.

REICTHER

(outraged)

William Augustus Cooper --

WILL

(overlapping)

Not my middle name.

REICTHER

-- you can't just shrug off the guy that brought us all together.

ELLEN

Brought you together? Oh man, is Brad like part of your origin story or something?

WILL

(grimaces)

Technically yes. But we don't need to -

BROCK

(overlapping)

Not just Will's, all of ours. I mean he's the reason I met them.

WILL

Okay, it's true but the story isn't that -

REICTHER

(overlapping)

I never would have met any of these fools if it weren't for Brad.

Will gives up and slumps back in his chair.

(CONTINUED)

ELLEN

How the hell have I never heard about this?

WILL

It's really not that fascinating.

ELLEN

You're telling me that meathead over there, who thought there was an East Korea, use to hang out with you guys?

WILL

(pained)

Believe it or not, he use to be one of my - one of our closest friends.

FADE TO:

INT. PLAYGROUND - DAY (KINDERGARTEN)

Tiny, young versions of Will, Joel, Brian, and Brad play by the monkey bars. Each one has a Power Rangers Morpher in their hand. Brad jumps to the top of the bars.

JOEL

What do you see, ranger?

BRAD

Lord Zedd has sent some Putties down and made them look like Josh McAllister and his friends.

BRIAN

Putties!? I did not see that coming.

WILL

The rest of the playground is in trouble!

The four look over toward RICHARD (the wheelchair student) who plays with some action figures.

WILL

Ahem.

RICHARD

(sighs)

I'm not playing.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN
Just be cool and say the line
Richard!

RICHARD
Fine. If you'll leave me alone.
(does Alpha Five impression)
Ay ay ay! Rangers, you need to save
them.

BRAD
Alpha's right! It's morphin' time!

They throw the morphers in front of their face and scream -

WILL
Mastodon!

JOEL
Triceratops!

BRIAN
Tyrannosaurus!

BRAD
Dragonzord!

Nothing happens.

JOEL
It didn't work again.

RICHARD
(sarcastic)
Maybe you said it in the wrong
order.

BRIAN
I'm getting real sick of your
negative attitude, Alpha Five!

BRAD
Doesn't matter. We don't need the
uniforms. Let's go!

They run off.

RICHARD
(muttering)
You couldn't be a TellyTubby if you
tried, you butthole.

CUT TO:

INT. PLAYGROUND - BASKETBALL COURT - DAY (KINDERGARTEN)

JOSH MCALLISTER and friends are shooting hoops. The Gang run over and form a straight line.

BRAD
You're not taking over Angel Grove
today, Lord Zedd!

JOSH
(confused)
...What?

WILL
Attack!

The Gang begin to kick and punch the air around the confused yet scared basketball players.

JOSH
Stop it!

WILL
You can never defeat the Power
Rangers!

Will kicks a little too hard and nails Josh right in the gut. He falls to his knees, claspng his stomach. Josh lets out a scream of pain while his eyes begin to water.

WILL
Uh-oh.

CUT TO:

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - LATER (KINDERGARTEN)

Our "heroes" sit on a bench outside of the PRINCIPAL'S office. Will and Brian sulk. Joel quietly sobs.

BRAD
Man this is bullcrap! How come we
can't play Power Rangers but the
first graders were allowed to play
Dunston Checks In?

WILL
Is someone like the monkey and then
someone else is George Constanza?

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

I don't even think they know.

JOEL

(crying)

I can't believe Mr. Cranston took away my Morpher! I waited all year to get that for my birthday!

BRAD

He may have got the Morpher but -

Brad pulls out four power coins from his pocket. The Gang is elated.

JOEL

You are like, the most awesome person right now.

PRINCIPAL CRANSTON pops his head out from his office.

CRANSTON

Boys...follow me.

The Gang reluctantly get up and follow him.

CUT TO:

INT. WILL'S ROOM - NIGHT (KINDERGARTEN)

A sad Will sits on his bed. His room is barren. He pulls a phone hidden under his pillow and dials.

BRAD (O.S.)

Hello.

WILL

Hey it's Will.

(We cut between Will and Brad in his room)

BRAD

Will? How are you calling me? The way you're mom was screaming I really thought she was going to kill you.

WILL

She might as well have. They took the TV away, my toys, my comics. Anything resembling fun.

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

Ouch.

WILL

How about you?

BRAD

I'm with my dad this week. He's so busy with work he hasn't even punished me yet.

WILL

Man being a kid of divorce sounds awesome.

BRAD

(Disheartened)

...it's not.

A familiar theme starts to play off screen.

WILL

Did *The Simpsons* just come on? Oh god! I'm missing *The Simpsons*!

BRAD

Want me to describe it to you?

WILL

You're a lifesaver dude!

BRAD

Okay. Mr. Burns and Smithers are at the park and they're trying to get rid of the nuclear waste.

WILL

The monorail episode! I love that one!

Brad continues to describe while Will listens, enthralled.

FADE TO:

INT. STUDY HALL - PRESENT

ELLEN

Brad Holt was into Power Rangers?! I always imagine he just had a football glued to his hand his whole life.

(CONTINUED)

WILL

Brad used to hate sports. More so than us.

ELLEN

I call shenanigans on you sir!

WILL

It's true. He used to to be into the same stuff we were. I shit you not, that guy had every Weird Al song memorized by heart.

REICTHER

Will, I think you're forgetting an important part of the story: *me*.

WILL

Dude, you didn't even go here!

REICTHER

Just because me, Casey, and Brock didn't live here then, doesn't mean we shouldn't be included too.

CASEY

We have origin stories too!

WILL

(under breath)

That don't really have any bearing on the rest of the story.

ELLEN

I thought you guys always went here. You guys used to go to different schools?

CASEY

(to Will)

See that Will? *Someone* wants to hear about our origins.

WILL

(annoyed)

Oy vey.

REICTHER

A long time ago, I lived in a desolate wasteland known as Richmond, Indiana...

FADE TO:

INT. SCHOOL - DAY (KINDERGARTEN)

Title Card: "Richmond, Indiana"

A fifty something year old teacher, MS. JONES, is leading the principal, EDDIE SPANGLER, down the hall.

JONES

(visibly shaken)

Normally, I can handle things like this but...well to be quite honest the other teachers and I are terrified of him.

SPANGLER

He's only a child, Ms. Jones.

JONES

Yeah and that's what they said about Damien from *The Omen*. Look how that turned out.

They reach a door and head outside to -

EXT. SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND - CONTINUOUS (KINDERGARTEN)

Jones and Spangler walk out and see a large crowd of kids around the monkey bars. On top stands an adolescent REICTHER. Other kids attempt to climb up but Reichter quickly pushes them off, all the while laughing like a supervillain.

REICTHER

(slightly demented)

I am the master of the monkey bars!

The Teachers are visibly scared, frozen in place.

SPANGLER

Um...This is really more for the student teacher to handle.

JONES

You know, you're right. John!

A very, very young JOHN PARKER pops up. He's a 22, long hair, enthusiastic.

PARKER

You rang?

(CONTINUED)

JONES

We need you to bring down that student.

Parker notices Reichter as he kicks another poor kid off the top.

PARKER

(scared)

Uh...okay.

Parker gulps and heads over.

CUT TO:

EXT. JAPANESE SCHOOL - DAY (KINDERGARTEN)

Title Card: "Tokyo, Japan"

Dozens of tiny Japanese kindergartners make their way into a posh, newly designed elementary school. Off to the far side, JOHN and JANICE JENNINGS walk a young Casey towards the building.

JANICE

Now son, this is the only school we can afford.

CASEY

But I don't understand them.

JANICE

That's because they're speaking a different language called Japanese.

CASEY

But I don't know Japanese.

JOHN

That's alright. I convinced the teachers you're a mute. See you at three son.

John pushes Casey forward who nervously walks towards the building.

JANICE

We can't keep doing this, John.

JOHN

Telling people Casey's mute?

(CONTINUED)

JANICE
Living in fucking Japan!

JOHN
Hey, I go where the job takes me.

JANICE
Do you really want this for your family?

JOHN
No, not really. But what am I going to do?

JANICE
What about that job your dad offered you?

JOHN
The truck driver thing? I don't know about that.

Casey finds a group of children. He bows to them.

CASEY
(yelling)
I'M MUTE!

Janice gives John a disgruntled look.

JOHN
Maybe I'll give it a shot.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND (KINDERGARTEN)

Title Card: "Charleston, South Carolina"

A group of small children are hanging around the slides. A young Brock approaches them while a young black child, BLAKE, steps forward and blocks him from using the slide.

BLAKE
What do you want Brock?

BROCK
I just wanted to use the slide.

BLAKE
Well you can't! Erica said you wanted to blow up the school. You're weird!

(CONTINUED)

BROCK
So? Wouldn't you be happy?

BLAKE
Well, yeah...but you're still weird!

GIRL #1
I heard you beat up Kyle Frost because he wouldn't help you.

BROCK
(scoffs)
The little punk backed out. Said we'd never be able to get enough explosives.

GIRL #2
God, you're so weird!

GIRL #1
Weirdo!

BLAKE
Weirdo!

The kids start to chant "weirdo". Brock suddenly lunges at Blake and rapidly thumps his back. The kids gasp and scatter away.

BROCK
(struggles for the word)
You...you...you asshole!

A TEACHER comes and pulls Brock off of Blake. Brock tries to break free but the Teacher is too strong.

BROCK
Let go!

TEACHER
You're going to the office young man.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY (KINDERGARTEN)

The Principal, MS. MEDFORD, sits across from Brock.

(CONTINUED)

MEDFORD

Mr. Friedberg has informed me that
you were beating up Blake and
called him an -
(clears throat)
- asshole.

BROCK

But he is!

MEDFORD

That doesn't mean you can call him
that. I worry that you may be
showing signs of being prejudiced.

BROCK

What? I don't know what you're
talking about! What does
"prejudiced" mean?

MEDFORD

It means you don't like black
people!

BROCK

Oh! That's what it means? I'm not
prejudiced!

MEDFORD

Are you sure?

BROCK

Yeah. I just don't like him. He's
mean.

MEDFORD

Well it still stands that you
mistreated somebody so I'm going to
have punish you. You're going to
have to attend special counseling
for the next few months.

Brock groans.

MEDFORD

Which is held every Saturday
morning.

Brock groans even louder.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDY HALL - PRESENT

ELLEN

Wow.

(turns to Casey)

You lived in Japan?

CASEY

(in Japanese)

Please forgive my slow son.

REICTHER

Pfft. Who cares about Japan. What about me and Brock? Aren't you shocked to learn about our roots?

ELLEN

You were a terror and Brock a social outcast. Not a big surprise.

BROCK

I prefer social vagabond. Sounds classier and less sad.

ELLEN

I'm still trying to come to terms with the Brad Holt stuff.

Will has zoned out and began to despondently gaze over at Brad's table. Brad plays on his phone, completely unaware of Will's existence.

BROCK

(annoyed)

Even in our own stories it's all about Brad Holt.

ELLEN

How long before he ditched you guys for his more stimulating life of throwing and catching things?

WILL

Longer than you think.

(turns back to the table)

We were friends all through elementary school.

CUT TO:

(BEGIN SONG: "RADIO FREE EUROPE" - R.E.M.)

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

(CONTINUED)

A) INT. CLASSROOM - FIRST GRADE - Brad, Will, and Joel sit at a table covered with Pokemon cards. Brian runs up and proudly holds a Charizard card above his head. The others flip out.

B) INT. CLASSROOM - SECOND GRADE - Reichter carves something in a wooden desk. A Teacher appears and pulls him away. She examines the writing. Her jaw hits the floor.

C) INT. BRAD'S ROOM - THIRD GRADE - Will and Brad are captivated by a dirty movie on TV. They share a "holy shit" look.

D) INT - CAFETERIA - FOURTH GRADE - Brock eats by himself. A JOCK runs up and chucks a handful of spaghetti into Brock's face. Everyone begins to laugh. Brock fights back the tears.

E) INT - HALLWAY - FOURTH GRADE - The cafeteria bully lays on the floor. Brock is repeatedly kicking him in the stomach.

F) INT - BRIAN'S ROOM - FIFTH GRADE - Brad and Brian play video games. They shout at each other. They eat candy and drink soda. They relish each other's company.

G) INT - SCIENCE ROOM - FIFTH GRADE - Empty but flooded with water. Science teacher enters and loses his mind. Reichter stands by a sink in back. A devilish smile on his face.

H) INT - GYM - SIXTH GRADE - Will and Joel sit on the bleachers, Brad a few rows ahead. Brad laughs it up with some football players. Will and Joel are bothered at the sight.

I) INT - SCHOOL - SIXTH GRADE - BROCK is sitting in a classroom filled with kids. BLAKE is a couple seats away.

TEACHER

What is the area of this rectangle?

BROCK

24 feet squared.

TEACHER

Good Brock.

BLAKE

Wow, you're so smart BOOGERY
BOOGERY Brock!

Class breaks out laughing. Brock blushes and tears start to swell up.

(CONTINUED)

TEACHER

Quiet, quiet now. Blake, what is the answer to this question.

BLAKE

Hmm...I dunno, how about you ask boogery boogery Brock!

TEACHER

Yes, Brock, how about you...

Teacher starts to giggle, then breaks out laughing. Brock, who can't stand it anymore, bolts out of the room sobbing.

J) INT - BRIAN'S HOUSE - SIXTH GRADE - Will, Brian, and Joel sit on the couch.

BRIAN

I don't think he's coming.

WILL

He will.

JOEL

It's been four hours.

WILL

(sighs)

Where is he?

K) INT - SHAKE - SHOP - Brad hangs out with jocks and cheerleaders. He looks at the clock. He seems too distracted to enjoy himself.

END OF MONTAGE

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTERVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY (7TH GRADE)

Title card: "7th Grade"

The front lawn is covered with countless impressionable youths ready to start the new year.

An old rusty truck pulls up.

CUT TO:

INT. TRUCK - DAY (7TH GRADE)

WILLIAM REICTHER drives while Reichter stuffs something into his backpack.

REICTHER

Are you sure about this dad?
Something about this school seems
too "clean". I don't see why I
couldn't stay in Richmond.

WILLIAM

Now son, we've been over this.
Expelled means you can never go
back there.

REICTHER

Couldn't I go to a different school
though? This one is just so boring
and wholesome looking.

WILLIAM

I'm sure you'll change that.
(opens door)
Have a nice day.

Reichter is about to hop out but William stops him.

WILLIAM

Wait! Hand them to me.

Reichter reluctantly reaches into his pockets and pulls out a couple of lighters.

WILLIAM

And the explosives!

Reichter pulls out some fireworks from his backpack and hands them over. Sadder than ever before, Reichter leaves the truck.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTERVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS (7TH GRADE)

Reichter hops out and walks toward the school. Just as his dad pulls away, a MINIVAN parks in the same spot.

CUT TO:

INT. MINIVAN - CONTINUOUS (7TH GRADE)

Lois lingers at the wheel, unsure of what to say. Brock sulks in the passenger seat.

LOIS
(awkwardly)
So...do you have money for lunch?

BROCK
(sadden)
Yeah.

Beat.

LOIS
You're going to do great here
Brock.

BROCK
(annoyed)
As long as I'm not myself, right?

LOIS
I didn't say that.

BROCK
"Don't be weird, Brock. They'll
pick on you again, Brock".

LOIS
I just don't want to see you like
that again. It breaks my heart to
see my son get treated like that.
You don't have to change who you
are, just, maybe explore other
sides of yourself.

BROCK
Like how?

LOIS
Maybe join a sports team.

BROCK
Ugh.

Brock gets out of car.

LOIS
See you after school.

CUT TO:

INT. LUNCHROOM - CAFETERIA - MINUTES LATER (7TH GRADE)

Classes have yet to start. The cafeteria is swarming with first-year students getting ready for their first days. Some look over their schedules. Some consult with others. Some look ready to wet themselves.

Brock and Reichter enter and take a hard look around at this madhouse before exchanging a brief, awkward glance at each other. They slink off in different directions.

A table near the front sit Will, Joel, and Brian who calmly share a box of pop-tarts before their day begins.

JOEL
(reading schedule)
Man I got Mr. McGinnis for Algebra.

BRIAN
Eww, that guy is a weirdo.

WILL
I heard Amy Miles sister caught him
"doing it".

JOEL
Doing what?

WILL
I dunno but her tone made it sound
disgusting.

A group of trendy jocks stroll past their table when Will notices Brad is among them.

WILL
Brad, over here!

Brad quickly jaunts over. The jocks keep walking.

WILL
We saved you a seat.

BRAD
(motions towards the jocks)
Actually I'm going to sit with them
today.

BRIAN
What? Why? They're jocks.

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

So?

BRIAN

So...we hate jocks.

BRAD

Brian, they're not that bad.
They're actually pretty cool.

One of the jocks sneaks up behind Will and out of nowhere dumps baby powder on Will's head. The jocks laugh. Will fumes. Brad doesn't seem sure on how to react.

The jocks take off. Brad takes a few reluctant steps in their direction.

BRAD

I'm so sorry guys.

Brad runs off and catches up with them.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDY HALL - PRESENT

ELLEN

So you guys stopped being friends
with Brad?

WILL

Kind of. He stopped hanging out
with Brian and Joel.

BROCK

He still thought Will was cool.

REICTHER

Wow. Just imagine how terrible your
life would have been if you had
those friends: parties, girls, the
undying respect of the entire
school.

ELLEN

So why aren't you sitting with them
now? You slumming it?

WILL

Uh...It didn't work out so much.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY (7TH GRADE)

Will, Brad, and a handful of jocks hang around the bleachers. One of the jocks casually tosses a football to Will -

JOCK #1
Smear the queer!

Everyone tackles Will. Battered, he staggers back up.

WILL
(in pain)
Hey, I have a suggestion. Wouldn't it be fun if we tackled someone else for a change?

JOCK #2
Nope.
(throws ball to Will)
Smear the queer!

They tackle him again. From the top of the bleachers, a baffled Brian and Joel look on as their friend continues to get pummeled.

BRIAN
(re: Will)
What an idiot.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY (7TH GRADE)

At the hallway bulletin board stands Brock. He gazes, he studies, he searches the board.

BROCK
(to himself)
Let's see here...

Beat. Nothing.

BROCK
(to himself)
Ugh...this all looks...just awful.

Finally something catches his eye: a bright pink sheet for Track tryouts. He inspects the sheet for a long while before letting out the most pained sigh of his life.

(CONTINUED)

BROCK
(to himself)
Be normal for mom. Be normal for
mom.

He hesitates for a moment before peeling off one of the paper tabs with tryout times. He walks away, mulling over the idea. He passes Will, battered and bruised, who rummages through his locker.

Brian slinks up behind him.

BRIAN
Why do you still hang out with him?

WILL
Hey! There's lots of reasons.

BRIAN
Name three.

WILL
Number one: his family goes to the movies every weekend and they take me with them.

Beat.

WILL
His mom buys name brand soda.

Beat.

WILL
I'm blanking on the last one. Look, we've been friends since kindergarten. We can't just abandon him.

BRIAN
Abandon *him*? Have you noticed that it's been months since he's sat with us at lunch. And when was the last time he came by for one of our *Super Smash Bros.* nights?

WILL
He has his reasons. I'm sure he's just busy.

BRIAN
Busy hanging out with the preps and the jocks.

(CONTINUED)

Will slams his locker.

WILL

Okay look. Just because he hangs out with some other people besides us, doesn't mean he's changed. It's still the same Brad we used to play power rangers with. Sure, I hate jocks just as much as you but we can't just throw away our friendship with him now that he's friends with a couple.

BRIAN

Will, you know what I'm getting at. Brad has completely chan -

WILL

(overlapping)

Screw this. I'm suppose to meet Brad to do homework.

Will walks off.

CUT TO:

INT. BRAD'S ROOM - LATER (7TH GRADE)

Will and Brad sit on floor surrounded by piles of snack food, empty soda cans, and heavy science books. Brad mindlessly throws a ball against the wall while Will scribbles something down.

WILL

True or False: Three body cells form when a cell divides.

BRAD

Uh...True?

Will flips a few pages into a nearby book.

WILL

Oh shit. This set of questions doesn't have the answers in the back.

BRAD

What?! Man, Mr. Stanford is an asshole. How dare he make us have to look for the answer.

(CONTINUED)

WILL

I guess we can use our notes.

BRAD

In theory we could. But that would require one of us to take notes.

They giggle.

BRAD

Don't worry about it. I'll just copy off Annie Gates tomorrow. You can copy off me before class.

WILL

Sweet. Speaking of Annie, did you hear about her party?

BRAD

Hear about? Check this out.

Brad pulls out an invitation from his dresser and hands it to Will.

BRAD

She invited me.

WILL

(shocked)

Get the fuck out of here!

BRAD

I'm dead serious man. You know that girl that sits behind me in math? She said that Annie *likes* me.

WILL

Like like?

BRAD

(nods)

I was one of the first she invited. Annie even told me that her parents might leave for an hour or two, to go to the movies or something.

WILL

No parents?!

BRAD

And she giggled when she told me. Which means something.

(CONTINUED)

WILL
They're the ones with that giant
ass pool right?

Brad nods, suggestive smile on his face.

WILL
That sounds awesome! But my parents
would freak if they found out her
parents were gone.

Brad's demeanor quickly changes. Something is troubling him.

BRAD
Actually, Will, um -

WILL
Or I could just tell them I'm
spending the night here.

BRAD
Will, um, you don't have to do
that. Annie invited me...

WILL
Yeah? So?

Awkward beat.

BRAD
...But not you.

WILL
(crushed)
I'm...I'm not invited?

BRAD
Yeah.

WILL
But why?

Brad tries to say something but nothing comes out.

BRAD
(shrugs)
I'm not sure man.

WILL
Well you could get me in!

BRAD
(uneasy)
Me. I dunno --

WILL
No, it could totally work. If she likes you she'll totally let you bring someone to the party.

BRAD
I don't think I can do that Will.

WILL
Oh c'mon man. If anyone can smooth talk Annie it's you.

BRAD
No it's not that, I just --

WILL
Trust me. If you think this will fuck up things with Annie, I promise that -

BRAD
(overlapping)
Annie doesn't want you there Will.

Will is crushed even more.

WILL
But you said...

BRAD
I was trying not to make things awkward.
(sarcastic)
Mission accomplished.

WILL
Does Annie hate me?

BRAD
No. She just thinks you're...

Brad trails off. He can't finish.

BRAD
She thinks you're a loser. And she didn't want you at her party.

Will is left speechless. After an almost unbearable amount of awkward silence -

(CONTINUED)

BRAD

I mean she's not wrong Will.

WILL

What the fuck are you talking about?!

BRAD

I mean you still hang out with Brian Vandele for God's sake.

WILL

What's wrong with Brian?

BRAD

He's weird man. I mean he beat up Frankie Marks so bad that he had to get stitches.

WILL

He's not weird!

BRAD

He's *really* weird Will. And I don't want people to think I'm weird because they see me with you two.

Will loses it.

WILL

Wait a minute. Who is it that doesn't want me at this party? Annie...or you?

Long pause. Nothing more needs to be said.

WILL

Sorry that I make you look bad.

Will collects his things and leaves. Brad doesn't stop him.

CUT TO:

INT. TRACK FIELD - DAY (7TH GRADE)

The track team warms up. Some lightly jog around the track but most stand in the field doing stretches. In the corner, by himself, is Brock in full track uniform.

Two other team members start doing warm ups in front of him.

(CONTINUED)

TRACK PLAYER #1

I'm telling you Nike are the best shoes around.

TRACK PLAYER #2

No way man! Adidas are where it's at!

TRACK PLAYER #1

Let's get an outside opinion. Brock, what do you think?

BROCK

I dunno. They're shoes. Does it really matter?

TRACK PLAYER #2

It totally matters!

TRACK PLAYER #1

It matters like you totally wouldn't believe!

BROCK

(under breath)

Be normal for mom. Be normal for mom.

(out loud)

...Pumas?

TRACK PLAYER #2

(mind blown)

Pumas! I didn't even think about those!

TRACK PLAYER #1

Nice call on the Pumas, Warner.

The Track Player raises his hand for a high five. Brock, irritated beyond belief but half-heartedly faking enthusiasm, relents and gives him five.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - TEEN CENTER - SAME DAY (7TH GRADE)

A few students hang around in this dank, poorly lit, lobby like section around of the school. A few vending machines and a broke water fountain are the only stand out features.

In one corner sits Reichter by himself. He doodles in his notebook while snacking on some M&M's.

(CONTINUED)

REICTHER

(to himself)

Wait a minute. M&M's actually melt
in your hands? Everything I know is
a lie.

A PREPPY COUPLE approach him.

PREP BOY

Move, weirdo. We want to sit there.

REICTHER

I'm sorry but the
"being-mean-to-me" quota has been
filled for the day. You'll have to
save your witty insults for another
day.

PREP GIRL

Just move already.

REICTHER

I can't. That's what happens when
you flood the "unnecessary rudeness"
economy. Don't you pay attention in
class?

Prep Boy reaches and starts to move Reichter's bag. Reichter
instantly hops to his feet and hisses like a feral animal.
The Preps step back.

PREP BOY

Screw this.

PREP GIRL

Freak!

REICTHER

Well, this freak got the seat you
wanted. Point, Reichter.

Reichter settles back in his spot.

Will comes out of the nearby bathroom and advances toward
the outdated soda vending machine. He starts to put some
quarters in, a group of jocks that include Brad, sneak up on
him.

JOCK #1

Grab him!

(CONTINUED)

The Jocks quickly grab Will and throw him to the ground. Two jocks keep him pinned down by his arms. The leader stands above him holding a water bottle filled with a mysterious liquid.

JOCK LEADER

Think you can make fun of my boy
and get away with it?

Will shoots a look of betrayal at Brad who can't even look him in the eyes.

JOCK LEADER

Well you fucking can't.

Will struggles to stand. No luck. The leader unscrews the bottle.

JOCK LEADER

By the way, did you get one of the
burgers from the cafeteria? They're
pretty good. Here have a taste.

He pours a sticky, gross looking liquid on Will's face -
hamburger grease.

WILL

Motherfuckers!

JOCK LEADER

Hey! We let it cool down. We're not
going to pour *hot* grease on you.
We're not monsters.

The leader empties the bottles.

JOCK LEADER

Do it Brad.

Brad pulls out a bottle of baby powder from his bag. He
unscrews the the lid.

WILL

No! Brad don't do it!

Brad hesitates.

JOCK LEADER

Do it.

JOCK #2

Do it already Brad!

For the longest minute Brad holds off before caving in and dumping the entire bottle on Will's face.

The jocks erupt in laughter.

JOCK LEADER
What a fucking nerd!

JOCK #3
Let's get out of here before
Stevens sees us.

They run - laughing the whole way. Brad forces a smile. Will lays on the ground coughing up powder, trying to shake it out of his hair.

REICTHER
Whoa. Wouldn't want to be that guy.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - COMPUTER CLASS - SAME DAY (7TH GRADE)

Brock slinks into a classroom with several rows of computers. He searches for a spot before settling into the back corner next to a distracted Brian.

MR. SEARCY addresses the class from his desk.

MR. SEARCY
All right ladies and gentlemen, I want you to get with the person next to you. Time for another group project.

Groans all around. Brock turns to see Brian frantically typing away.

BROCK
Hi. I'm Brock War -

BRIAN
(overlapping)
Brock, I'm Brian and I want to tell you that I am the world's shittiest partner. Sorry in advance.

BROCK
Oh. Okay. At least your honest.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

Just thought I'd put everything out
on front street for you.

BROCK

(intrigued)

What are you doing?

BRIAN

Normally, I take this valuable time
that we should be using for work
and instead play *Age of Empires*.

Brock peps up.

BRIAN

But I think they're on to me. They
put some kind of block on these
computers. Shit.

BROCK

I can help with that.

BRIAN

Yeah, good luck with that. These
things are impossible to get by.

Brock takes his keyboard and hits some buttons. Happy noise.

BROCK

Ta-da.

BRIAN

How'd you do that?

BROCK

I've been playing around with
Proxys on my home computer and I
discovered -

BRIAN

(overlapping)

You lost me at "I've".

Brian loads up the game while Brock goes back to his own
business.

BRIAN

Hey do you want to play?

BROCK

Me?

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN

Yeah. I've pretty much installed the game on all these computers, you know just in case of emergency.

BROCK

What about the project?

BRIAN

(yelling)

Mr. Searcy, when is this due?

MR. SEARCY (O.S.)

A week from now.

BRIAN

Sounds like we always have tomorrow.

Brock smiles and starts up the game.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - SAME DAY (7TH GRADE)

Will is at his locker, still shaking out the baby powder from his hair. Just a few lockers down stands the beautiful ANNIE GATES and her homely friend EVE.

The jocks walk by with Brad in tow. Their leader elbows Will into his locker.

JOCK LEADER

(sarcastic)

Oops.

They laugh and walk away. Brad hides his disdain.

ANNIE

Oh my God! I think Brad was making eyes at me.

EVE

Well, what do you expect after the two of you -- you know -- at your party.

They giggle. Will rolls his eyes.

ANNIE

(to Will)

Hey, aren't you Brad's friend?

(CONTINUED)

WILL

Use to be.

ANNIE

Does he ever, like, mention me?

WILL

Sometimes. Why?

ANNIE

I'm just curious. I'm thinking about going out with him.

EVE

You barely know him!

ANNIE

Shut up! I'll learn along the way.

WILL

(gets idea)

You know I've know Brad most of my life. I could tell everything you wanted to know about Brad.

ANNIE

Really?

WILL

Sure! Come to think about it, has Brad ever told you about the noodle incident?

ANNIE

(confused)

The noodle incident?

WILL

Yeah. I hope you don't have a weak stomach.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - SAME DAY (7TH GRADE)

Brock and Brian leave computer class.

BROCK

I have played this game a million times and I've died a million times. But never have I lost to an army of just Elephants.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN
I think it was Ghandi who said
"When in doubt, crush your enemies
with 300 Elephants."

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - LUNCHROOM - SAME DAY (7TH GRADE)

Brian and Brock enter the cramped lunchroom.

BRIAN
You want to sit with me and my
friends?

BROCK
Actually, I usually sit with those
guys.

Brock motions toward the table of runners who are still in
track outfits.

BRIAN
Whoa. Are you on the track team?

BROCK
Yeah.

BRIAN
I've never met a jock who played
Age of Empires. Or could use a
computer really.

BROCK
I'm not a jock. I'm on track
because my mom wanted me to do
something "normal" when we moved
here.

One of the runners motions for Brock to come over.

TRACK PLAYER #1
Hey Brock! You're missing it!
Connor thinks that Adidas makes the
best running shoes.

The table explodes in laughter. Brian gives Brock a look.

BRIAN
Well if you ever get tired of being
normal, I usually sit over there.

(CONTINUED)

Brian leaves. Brock inches toward the runner table before reluctantly sitting down. He stares back at Brian's table. Then the runner table.

TRACK PLAYER #1
Hey Warner, check it out -

The runners all show off their wrists which have little black, watch like devices on them.

TRACK PLAYER #1
Coach Davis wants us to wear these step counter things on our wrists.

TRACK PLAYER #2
Ten thousand steps *before* practice?
Fucking hardass.

TRACK PLAYER #1
Coach Johnson has no idea how many steps I take a day. I take "steps" in the shower -
(makes jacking off motion)
- "steps" in my bedroom.

Brock sighs and takes more wistful looks at Brian's table.

TRACK PLAYER #3
You took "steps" in the bathroom of Dairy Queen that one time.

TRACK PLAYER #1
Prove it asshole. I never took "steps" at the Dairy Queen.

TRACK PLAYER #3
Did so.

TRACK PLAYER #1
No I didn't!
(beat)
...It was at Arby's.

An explosion of laughter. Brock stands up.

BROCK
(frustrated)
Nope. I'm done.

Brock walks over and sits with Brian leaving runners confused and stunned.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - SAME DAY (7TH GRADE)

Will strolls down the science wing with his face glued to a text book. Brad appears at the other, out of breath, anger in his eyes.

BRAD
(furious)
You!

WILL
(sarcastic)
Oh hey Brad. Did you have nice chat with Annie?

BRAD
What the fuck did you tell her! She won't even speak to me anymore!

WILL
All kinds of crazy shit. I even told her that thing you wanted to do when we went camping last year.

BRAD
(aghast)
You told her that!? Why would you do that!

WILL
You let them pour fucking grease in my face!

BRAD
It wasn't hot grease!

WILL
What fucking difference does it make! You did nothing to stop it! You just stood there and let them do it. Then you fucking dump baby powder on me like the spineless, little jock shit you are!

BRAD
I'm going to beat your fucking ass!

WILL
I can take you!

Three other jocks appear behind Brad.

(CONTINUED)

WILL
Uh...I can maybe take the guy on
the far end.

They charge at him causing Will to bolt in the opposite
direction.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - LUNCHROOM - SAME DAY (7TH GRADE)

Brian, Joel, and Brock sit around eating.

BRIAN
You know Joel here use to be a jock
too. What was it you played again?
Cricket? Badminton?

JOEL
Fuck you! Hockey's coming back!

BRIAN
Doesn't something have to popular
for it to come back?

Joel grabs some loose cheetos and starts to stab him.

BRIAN
Not the Cheetos! They're like
little daggers of cheese!

JOEL
(to Brock)
You want to shit on hockey too?

BROCK
Dude, I'm on the track team. I
can't say anything.

Joel laughs. Will comes running in.

WILL
(out of breath)
Who feels like running with me?

JOEL
Good running or bad running?

BRIAN
Isn't all running bad?

Brad and his buddies burst the other side entrance. The scan
the room.

(CONTINUED)

BRIAN
Dammit Will, what did you do!

WILL
If we survive the beating, I'll
tell ya.

The Gang hop up and quickly dash of the lunchroom. Brad and his cronies are not far behind.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL - TEEN CENTER - SAME DAY (7TH GRADE)

Reichter is in his little corner. He reaches into his pocket.

REICTHER
Aww, man.

Blue dust covers his hand and and trickles out of his pocket.

REICTHER
My fun dip ripped open! This is the
worst thing to happen to anyone
ever.

As he wipes the dust off, The Gang burst through the entrance.

BROCK
(out of breath)
Who are we running from?

JOEL
(out of breath)
Brad Holt.

BROCK
(out of breath)
And why are we running?

BRIAN
(out of breath)
Good question. Why are we running,
Will?

They try to go through the other entrance but the doors are locked.

(CONTINUED)

WILL

Oh shit! I may have spread some lies and half truths to a girl he liked.

JOEL

Oh my God. Was it...the noodle incident?

Brian gasps.

WILL

...Yeah.

BRIAN

We took a blood oath that we would never speak of that again!

WILL

I only told the Brad parts.

Brad and his friends enter. Instead of instantly grabbing them, Brad slowly advances. He takes his time. He enjoys the moment.

BRAD

Joel and Brian. Here to get your ass kicked too?

BRIAN

Get fucked meathead. I could kick your ass in first grade, I can do it now.

Brad's buddies start to wrestle with Joel, Brian, and Brock. Brad steps forward and punches Will as hard as he can in the nose. Will collapses. Brad sits on his chest and pummels him. All seems lost until -

BAM! Out of nowhere Reichther has sneaked behind Brad and smacked him with a metal thermos. Brad falls over, clutching his head. Brad's friend lets go of Brock and grabs Reichther by the collar.

FRIEND #1

Piece of shit!

REICTHER

FUN DIP!

Reichter reaches into his pocket and throws a small pile of fun dip into the friend's eye.

(CONTINUED)

FRIEND #1
It burns! IT BURNS!

Reichter pushes him down. Joel and Brian get the upper hand and push the others off. Reichter grabs his thermos and starts to beat Brad with it.

BRAD
Get off me freak!

Brad pushes him away. Brad and his friends back off.

BRAD
Fucking losers.

They run away. Brian and Joel help Will up. Blood runs down his face.

BRIAN
Oh fuck. You okay, Will?

WILL
(feels nose)
Just a little blood.
(to Reichter)
Thanks.

REICTHER
You're welcome.
(confused)
You guys aren't...scared of me?

JOEL
You helped us big time. Why would we be scared?

BRIAN
Dude, do you just have fun dip in your pocket?

REICTHER
(embarrassed)
...Yeah.

BRIAN
That's awesome!

Reichter lights up.

REICTHER
I'm Reichter.

WILL
Reichter what?

REICTHER
Just Reichter.

WILL
I'm Will. This is Joel, Brian,
and...I'm sorry I don't think we've
met.

BROCK
Brock Warner. Are you guys always
getting chased and beat up by
jocks?

They laugh.

WILL
Only on Thursdays. Better wash this
blood off.

The guys begin to leave while Reichter stays behind --
uncertain of what to do, not sure if he belongs.

BRIAN
(to Reichter)
We're probably going to hang around
the halls til the bell rings. Wanna
come with?

REICTHER
(ecstatic)
Definitely.

Reichter gathers his things and catches up with the group.

WILL
(wiping blood away)
Hey you think the nurse will let me
go home because of this?

BRIAN
Shit, yeah, she probably will.
(beat)
Hey give me some of your nose blood
I wanna go home too.

WILL
No! It's my noseblood!

BRIAN
Goddamnit quit being stingy! I want
some noseblood, too!

They continue to joke around before turning a corner and
disappearing. We hang on the moment before -

FADE TO:

INT. STUDY HALL - PRESENT

(BEGIN SONG: "Letter Never Sent" - R.E.M.)

The bell rings. The guys get their things and start to
leave. An annoyed Ellen is still glued to her chair.

ELLEN
Aww! I didn't get to hear the part
about the photo.

WILL
When last period rolls around I'll
tell you.

ELLEN
Ugh! I can't wait another two
hours.

REICTHER
Who cares. You heard the best part
-- the part about me. The rest is
just nothing but disappointment and
severe lack of Reichter.

They head off to their next class.

CUT TO:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HOME EC - MINUTES LATER

Ellen sits at a small table by herself. Everyone is getting
prepared for class while she just day dreams. CATHY MATTHEWS
takes a seat next to her.

CATHY
Hey what's up?

ELLEN
Nothing. Will's being a stupid jerk
and not telling me the rest of a
story.

(CONTINUED)

CATHY
Really? What about?

ELLEN
Brad -
(trails off)
- Holt

Ellen is about to speak but stops. She sees something. An opening. An opportunity.

CATHY
(confused)
Brad Holt?

ELLEN
Cathy, I think I'm going to sit
somewhere else today.

CATHY
(confused)
Why are you acting so weird?

Ellen gets up and heads toward the other end of the classroom. At table by himself, sits Brad Holt.

ELLEN
Hey Brad. Mind if sit here?

TO BE CONTINUED...

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE