



Scripts.com

Wonderstruck

By Brian Selznick

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(child panting)

(wolf barks)

-(wolf snarling)

-(frightened gasp)

(growls)

-(gasps)

-(barks)

(grunts)

MALE VOICE (echoing):

Ben.

Ben.

(wolf snarling)

-Ben!

-(gasps)

Ben!

(gasps)

What?

What?

What's the matter, huh?

Can't you hear me?

-Are you deaf?

-Stop it, Robbie.

WOMAN:

Go to sleep, boys.

Sorry, Mom.

Sorry, Aunt Jenny.

Shut up.

Hey, guess what.

We forgot a present.

(sighs)

WOMAN:

What's that?

Constellations.

Catch.

Ca... Oh...

(sighs):

in a museum.

Why do you always look so sad,

Benjamin Wilson?

BEN:

Hmm. Neat.

It's like the one
we saw on the trail.

Thanks, Mom.

Sure, handsome.

So?

Yes?

Was my dad an astronomer?

(mom sighs)

Maybe that's why I like
outer space so much.

Makes sense.

Happy birthday,

Mr. 12-Year-Old.

Don't stay up too long.

(sighs)

(door shuts)

(TV news plays low)

("Space Oddity" by David Bowie
starts to play)

Mom?

(sighs)

Mom!

Geez... God, you scared me.

What are you doing out of bed?

Why won't you ever
talk about him?

Other kids know their dads.

Not now, Ben.

Go back to bed.

It's what I wished for,
you know?

When I blew out the candles.

Another time, okay?

When it's the right time.

It's never the right time.

What does this mean?

What, Ben?

This quote.

"We are all in the gutter,
but some of us are
looking at the stars."

You said it the night

we saw the shooting stars,
and now it's on your wall.
Well, what do you think
it means?

That's what you always say.

BEN (whispering):

"We are all in the gutter,
but some of us are
looking at the stars."

(no audio)

(boat knocking)

("Space Oddity"

playing in distance)

("Space Oddity" getting louder)

Mom.

Are you...?

("Space Oddity" fading up)

(flashlight drops)

-Ben!

-Janet?

What are you doing here?

-No, what are you doing here?

-(sighs)

This isn't your house.

Those aren't your clothes.

I shouldn't have
turned the light on.

-Benji, I...

-You smoke?!

No. I-I mean...

God, please don't tell my
parents, they're gonna kill me.

I don't understand.

You're wearing my mom's
clothes!

Oh, my gosh, I'm so sorry.

I-I just...

I needed somewhere.

This was supposed to be
my secret place, I just need...

-I can't look at you like that.

-(record screeches off)

JANET:

Oh, gosh.

A-Are you okay?

Yes, I'm fine.

Sorry.

Are your parents
gonna sell this house?

I heard them
talking about it.

Why can't I just move back in?

-It's my house.

-I know.

And Robbie's kind of a pest.

If I knew where my dad was,
I could just...

Are you still having
those nightmares?

-Not...

-(thunder rumbles)

Sometimes.

Come on, we should...

We should go home, probably.

-I am home.

-I know, but...

BEN:

You go.

I just want to stay here
a little longer.

That's, that's really not
a good idea.

There's supposed to be storms.

I won't tell your parents.

What?

That you were smoking.

Just let me stay
a little longer.

You really won't tell?

Seriously.

Yeah, I swear.

Oh, my God, then I completely
owe you a favor, Benji.

For real.

We all miss her, you know.

(sighs)

Don't stay too long. Okay?

(organ playing)

(thunder rumbling,

leaves rustling)

(thunder crashing

in distance)

(murmurs)

-(thunderclap)

-(gasps)

(soft groans)

(blackout zip)

Oh. Oh, no, no, no, no.

(grunts)

Uhh!

(sighs)

("Evening Star"

by Fripp and Eno playing)

"A curator's job

is an important one,

"for it is the curator

who decides

what belongs in the museum."

"In a way,

anyone who collects things

in the privacy of his own home

is a curator."

"But how did

the very first curators

"store their collections?

"They were kept

in pieces of furniture

"called Cabinets of Wonder.

"Eventually, some collections

grew beyond the confines

"of a single cabinet

and took over entire rooms.

See figure nine."

Oh, my God.

"Danny."

(no audio)

(quietly):

Danny.

Danny.

"Kincaid Books.
West 81st Street,
New York, New York."

(thunder rumbling)

Uh, K...

L...

5...

0...

1...

8...

...9.

(high-pitched ringing)

(crackling, buzzing)

(overlapping music,

sound effects)

(organ playing)

(organ crescendos)

(muffled):

I'm not getting anything.

(inaudible sound)

(muffled):

Where am I?

What's wrong?

Hello?

(no audio)

(inaudible sound)

I can't talk!

I can't... I can't talk!

(no audio)

(no audio)

(blinds open)

(indistinct chatter,

monitor beeping)

(exhales)

(no audio)

"Sorry" is unacceptable,
and you need to get the police

on the phone right now

and they need

to be coming here!

And you have security

that you can call

-that can close the doors!

-MAN:

(inaudible sound)

(air whistling)

ANNOUNCER:

of bus 23 for Detroit.

Buffalo and Albany

at Gate 4 on the lower level.

4:

(indistinct chatter)

ANNOUNCER:

attention, please.

Northeast transit buses...

(inaudible sound)

(no audio)

(bus terminal sounds rising)

(indistinct chatter)

(city traffic sounds)

(all sounds stop)

("All the Way Down"

by Esther Phillips playing)

Out on the street

The summer heat

Boys playing games

Changing their names

Pulling tricks

Getting their kicks

All the way down

Let it ride

Trying everything now

Got to check it out

Trying everything now,

got to check it out

Somebody said,

you want a blow?

Hmm, why not?

I ain't got no place to go

Meeting the stars

In funky bars

Shiny cars

and backdoor lots
Trying to hike
For any other type of ride
All the way down.
(city sounds and chatter)

WOMAN:

I'll catch up with you later!
Hey! Stop!
Give that back!
(groans)
Hey, taxi!
(Ben groans)
(indistinct shouting
and chatter)
(no audio)
(no audio)
(no audio)
("Sunrise" by Norman Whitfield
playing)
(water spraying)

-BOY:

go through, go through.
(laughter)

BOY:

What you looking at?
(whoops)
(inaudible sound)
(muffled siren rising)
(sounds cut back)
-Ahh!
-Watch it.
Sorry.
If you're looking
for the bookstore,
it moved around the corner.

-MAN:

-A few blocks down.
-On 74th.
-Vamos, Jamie.
Llego tarde.

-I was just telling him.

-Come on.

Hey.

(man and Jamie
speaking Spanish)

(no audio)

(city sounds)

Wait. Espera.

Okay.

Ahora.

(laughs)

Okay, Jamie. Entonces...

3:

Okay?

-S, Papa.

-No se meta en problemas.

-I don't want another call
from security. -Okay.

(exhales)

JAMIE:

Hey, kid!

(shoes squeak)

Hey, that's mine.

(Jamie laughs)

(shoes squeak)

(camera shutter clicks)

(panting)

(panting)

(panting)

(laughs)

(moans)

(panting)

(laughs)

(indistinct chatter)

"This meteorite fell to Earth

"thousands of years ago.

"It was brought

to the museum in 1902.

"All meteorites begin

their journeys to Earth

as shooting stars,

burning across the night sky."

(no audio)
(indistinct chatter)
(no audio)

WOMAN:

Mm-hmm, and look.
This is, like, the outside.
(indistinct voices overlapping)
In the nighttime.
(no audio)
(panting)

(echoing):

Anyway...
I thought you would like
this one over here.
This one here.
Since you have it on your...
Over here.
(Ben panting, gasping)
(wolves howling)
Oh, my...
What's going on?
(breathing unsteadily)
Are you... are you okay?
What's happening?
Are you sick?
Why did you stop here,
in front of this?

JAMIE:

Shh.
I thought you liked wolves.
You dropped it in the rotunda.
I can't hear you.
Why?
Because I'm deaf.
Really?
Oh.
That's... I thought
you were ignoring me
when I was calling for you,
and you didn't answer.
-Makes sense now.

-Here.

Oh.

(slowly):

I didn't know you were deaf.

Me... Jamie.

BEN:

Jamie.

I'm Ben.

Shh.

I learned it in school.

I don't know sign language.

Why?

I've only been deaf for...

Actually, it just happened.

How?

(Ben sighs)

-Lightning.

-Lightning?

I thought lightning kills you.

Oh.

Lightning... kills you.

BEN:

Not always.

(sighs)

Being hit by lightning?

Uh-uh.

Oh. Not...

Sometimes.

Mostly it's just quiet.

JAMIE:

See that lady over there?

BEN:

What?

JAMIE:

It's so weird.

You... runaway?

Mm-hmm.

-From where?

-What?

Where... are you from?

(sighs)

(Jamie laughing)

Really?

(Ben chuckles)

(Polaroid camera whirring)

(no audio)

JAMIE:

Shh.

(boys panting)

JAMIE:

Up here.

Shh.

(indistinct chatter)

(indistinct chatter)

(Jamie laughing)

BEN:

Huh.

What is this place?

My secret room.

My secret... room.

-BEN:

-JAMIE:

You can stay here.

This can be...

your hideout.

Thanks.

JAMIE:

So...

-why run...

-BEN (reading):

-...away?

-"...run away?"

Oh.

BEN:

Um...

My mom.

Oh.

Yeah.

Sorry.

(Ben sighs)

What about your dad?

That's who I came here to find.

Are your parents... divorced?

No.

Mine are.

Hmm. Oh.

You know, I thought
he might be here, but...

Oh.

I tried to tell you before.

Kincaid's...

isn't clo...

What?

...open now.

(scoffs):

Yeah, obviously.

Hey, I didn't know
you were deaf.

I didn't know you were
looking for your father.

Otherwise, I wouldn't have...

What are you saying?

Write it down.

Yeah. Sorry.

So, I still don't understand
how you... got here alone.

My cousin Janet helped me.

She owed me a favor,
so she brought my bag
and some things,

with some money
from my mother's
rainy-day fund.

So she... knows
where you are?

No.

No one knows where I am.

I do.
(both chuckle)
(stomach growling)
Oh...
I'm starving.
Oh.
(unzips backpack)
Ta-da!
There you go.
Thank you.

- "A. "

- "A. "

- "B. "

- "B. "

"C. "

- "D. "

- "D. "

"E. "

"F. "

- "F. "

-Mm-hmm.

"G. "

- "G. "

-Mm-hmm.

Mm... "H. "

"I. "

"J. "

BEN:

"J. "

JAMIE:

Mm...

"U. "

Um... "V. "

BEN:

"V. " "W"?

JAMIE:

"W. "

"X. "

"Y. "

"Z. "

Mm-hmm.

Good.

Oh!

I almost forgot.

BEN:

Huh.

JAMIE:

Hmm. Remember her?

BEN:

Mm.

JAMIE:

My mom. Mi madre.

She works a lot.

We live in...

Queens.

BEN:

Queens?

-Mm-hmm.

-You don't live in New York?

Queens is in New York.

BEN:

What?

-Forget it.

-Oh.

And this.

JAMIE:

Whoa.

BEN:

I found it in my mom's room.

It's from here.

Except a long time ago.

It's where I found

the bookmark from Kincaid's.

It's why I'm here.

(Ben yawning)

Hey, you okay?

Sorry, I'm just really tired.
Well, take a nap.

BEN:

Okay.
(Jamie grunting)

JAMIE:

Hmm?
(giggles)
-Ooh.
-(laughs)
-Um, I'll be back later.
-Thanks, Jamie.
(laughs softly)
(no audio)
(no audio)

JAMIE:

Ben!
-Ben!
-Ow.

JAMIE:

Come on, I told my father
-I was staying over
at a friend's house... -What?
-so we have the whole museum to
ourselves! -I can't hear you.
Follow me, come on, come on!
(sighs)
(chuckles)
(footsteps approaching)
(Ben gasps)

(whispering):

Shh. Come on.
("Evening Star"
by Fripp and Eno playing)

JAMIE:

Wow.
(chuckles)
Hey, look.

-See? -Hmm.

The light goes through.

(Jamie laughs)

BEN:

Neat.

Look at this.

Look.

(Jamie chuckles)

JAMIE:

This is cool. Ha.

Wow.

(blowing)

(chuckles)

-(whispering):

-Hmm?

Check this out.

Hey, little guy.

JAMIE (whispers loudly):

Ben.

-Huh?

-Ben.

Come on.

Let's go.

Jamie, what is all this stuff?

Shh.

Secrets.

Come on.

(no audio)

-BEN:

BEN:

-Hmm?

-Open it up.

-The wolves.

-Whoa.

JAMIE:

That is so cool.

BEN:

"February '65."
That's the year
before I was born.

JAMIE:

Whoa.

BEN:

Whoa.

Yeah. Wow.

-Aurora.

-Nice.

Hmm.

Look at this one.

(Ben breathing heavily)

What? What is it?

It's my house.

"Miss Elaine Wilson."

That's my mom.

"Dear Miss Wilson,

"I will be spending

a few months in Gunflint Lake,

"researching a new diorama

for the museum.

"As the town librarian,

"I hope you can help me

with this research.

"Please contact me

at the address above.

"Thank you very much,

Daniel Lobel."

Daniel Lobel.

This has to be my dad.

Your father,

maybe he still remembers him.

You have to ask him

in the morning.

Yeah. Yeah, I will.

BEN:

"I've... never... shown...

"anyone... the museum...

...before."

Hmm.

-Hmm.
-But I like it here.
I don't have a room
at my dad's place.
Oh, hold on.
I think you'll like this.
("Fox on the Run"
by The Sweet begins)
Oh.
I forgot.
It's okay, keep it on.
My mom had one like this.
I can feel the vibrations.

SINGER:

I...
Don't want to know your name
'Cause you don't look the same
-"F."
-The way you did
-"R."
-Before
-"I."
-Okay, okay
-Hmm. -You think you got
a pretty face
"E."
"N."
Mm...
"D." "Friend." Cool.

SINGER:

You looked all right before
(Jamie sings high-pitched note)
-(humming along to song)
-Fox on the run
You scream
And everybody comes a-running
-(humming along)
-Take a run and hide...
(no audio)
(pigeons cooing quietly)
Ahh!
(yells)

(coughing)

Ben, Ben.

-(gasps)

-Ben.

-(groaning)

-Wake up!

-(grunts)

-Come on.

Come on.

-What?

-Look.

BEN:

It's the same.

We're in

the Cabinet of Wonders.

How did this happen?

Why did my father

have this book?

Why was there a picture

of my house

in that file?

What's going on?

What?

What?

The bookstore? It's gone.

"I tried to tell you.

"It just moved.

"I didn't know...

you were deaf yet."

What do you mean?

You knew I was trying

to find my father.

That's why I went to Kincaid's

in the first place.

Why would you wait until now?

(voice breaking): Because

I don't have any friends.

What?

What?!

"I wanted...

"to show...

you stuff."

"I wanted to show you stuff"?

What does that mean?

-I was afraid

if you found your father -What?

-he would take you away.

-I can't hear you.

-And if you didn't find him,

-I don't understand!

you'd just go back

to Gunflint Lake.

I was going to tell you.

You were going to tell me?

Yes, I swear.

How long were you going

to take?

I'm sorry, okay?

Please.

Just...

(breathing heavily)

Yeah.

Well, if you wanted

to be my friend,

you would've helped me

find my father.

But... I'm helping you.

I'm helping you!

I'm helping you now!

(running footsteps)

(door opens, closes)

(whimpers)

(no audio)

(street chatter)

("My Blue Heaven"

by Gene Austin plays)

I turn to the right

(bell jingles)

A little white light

Will lead you to my...

Blue heaven.

-MAN:

-Hello?

(inaudible sound)

(muffled dog barking)

(muffled dog growling)

-(sounds cut back)

-MAN:

she's a little high-strung
first thing in the morning.

(chuckles)

-You're scaring off
the customers! -(dog barks)

(exhales)

("Also Sprach Zarathustra"
by Deodato playing)

(phone rings)

Hello, Kincaid's.

Yes, of course.

We have lots of Dickens.

Oh, yes, we have four or five
copies, I believe.

Yup.

Um, yeah.

We're open till 5:00.

Ask for me. Walter.

(hangs up phone)

(dog barks)

(gasps)

WALTER:

I-I didn't see you there.

Are you...

Did-did I wake you?

You can't hear?

I don't know sign language.

-You can hear?

-Yes.

But she's deaf?

Yes.

I had an accident.

Recently.

That's why I can't hear.

You s-s... you scared us.

Are you okay?

-Yeah.

-Yeah.

Thanks.

I, uh, I just fell asleep

for a second.
(gasps softly)
How do you know my name?
Did you know her?
(whimpers softly)
I came here
trying to find my father.

(quietly):

He's looking for his father.
Who are you?
How do you know my name?
I saw you
at-at the wolf diorama
in the museum.
What is going on?
Tell me!
(sniffles)
Where?
Come.
(bell jingles)
(indistinct conversations)
(thunder)
(gasping lightly)
BEN (whispering):
Whoa.
Wow.
What is this?
Where are we?
(Ben chuckles lightly)
"I need you to be patient with
this story and read it slowly.
"I've worked in the Queens
Museum of Art for 15 years now,
"but the story
I need to tell you
"begins a long time
before that.
"When I was
a little girl in 1927,
"I came to New York
for the very first time.
"It was my brother, Walter,
who finally rescued me.

"I found him at
the Museum of Natural History,
"where he was working.
"I begged him to help me,
"to get me away
from my mother and father.
"I wanted to stay in New York.
I, I wanted to learn things."
"The first thing Walter did
"was help me find a school
for deaf children.
I didn't even know
such a school existed."
"My parents divorced
when I was young.
It was a big scandal back then
because my mother was famous."
"It was there at school
I met my Bill,
"who was training
to be a printer.
"We married and, before
we knew it, had a baby boy.
"Times as they were,
"everyone worried about us
raising a hearing child,
"but our boy managed to handle
his lack of deafness
just fine."
"Soon after I'd married,
Walter helped me get a job
at the museum
in the Exhibitions Department."
"I'd always loved making
models, so it suited me well."
"I worked there for many years
alongside my son."
"But soon
planning began
for the 1964 World's Fair."
MAN (on television):
The Unisphere
would have to withstand
the ever-changing forces

of nature,
as well as its own
enormous weight.

BEN:

"One of the attractions
"was going to be the panorama,
"a scale model of the
entire city of New York,
"the largest architectural
model ever built.

"It was an opportunity
I couldn't pass up,
"so I left the Museum
of Natural History
"to work on the panorama
in Queens.

"Sadly, my Bill had
passed away by then,
"so it was just my son and me.
"When the world's fair ended,
the panorama was so popular,
"they decided to keep it open.
"But they needed someone
to maintain the model,
so they hired me for the job."

"Around that time,
our son was appointed
"the lead designer
for a new diorama
"at the Museum
of Natural History,
"the youngest person
ever to have that honor.

"But you already
know this part.
The job would send him up
to Gunflint Lake."

Your son...

is Danny?

You're my grandmother.

Where is he?

I came all the way
from Minnesota to find him.

Where is he?

"The librarian he'd contacted
to help him with his research
"happened to own a small cabin,
and he rented it from her."

DANNY:

Miss Wilson, is that you?
Am I in the right place?

ELAINE:

You are indeed, Mr. Lobel.
The cabin is right over there.

DANNY (chuckles):

It's Danny.

-Whoa!

-(Elaine laughs)

DANNY:

I don't trust it.

ELAINE:

it's not gonna break.

-It's two feet thick.

-(Danny laughs)

-Don't you trust me?

-I'm not sure right now.

DANNY:

the research is going well.
Very helpful staff,
especially this librarian."

BEN:

"Eventually, he completed
"the diorama of the wolves.

"I still go to visit it
whenever I can.

It's the only one
he got to make."

"Your dad was ill, Ben.

"He had a heart condition,
the same one his father had.

"It kept him out of the war,

"but a few years after
he returned from Gunflint Lake,
his heart..."

(sighs)

(Ben crying)

(sniffles)

"This panorama is not just
a model of New York City.
It's also the story
of your father's life."

"When I took the job,
"I thought it would be fun
to secretly personalize
the panorama."

"I hid little mementos
from your father's life
inside the buildings."

(gasps)

MAN:

We're gonna miss him.
There's nobody like him.
So, to Danny.

-MAN 2:

-MAN 3:

BEN:

at Danny's funeral
"except for two people,
"a woman and a little boy.
"She introduced herself,
"and I recognized her name
from Danny's letters.

"She told me she'd
brought her son earlier
and showed him the diorama
Danny had made."

(wolves howling)

(sighs)

I don't remember any of this.
That's why I dreamed of them.
The wolves.

I saw them.
(rising rumble)
(massive thunderclap)
(electricity fizzles)
(pen drops)
What happened?
-Help.
-Come.
(camera flash pops)
(camera flash pops)
(camera flash pops)
(camera flash pops)
(Polaroid camera whirring)
(Jamie chuckles)
Jamie?
Wait, how did you get here?
I followed you.
Wait.
I don't understand.
-What?
-She's the lady from...
Oh, she...
(siren wailing)

NEWSMAN:

radio red alert news report.
A major power blackout
has hit New York City
and surrounding communities.

NEWSMAN 2:

there are individuals
directing traffic
at the intersection.
Uh, I-I assume many of them
are policemen.
Uh, some of them...
(distant voices and unrest)
(sirens wailing, voices fading)
(sirens wailing)
(indistinct chatter)
(distant shouting)
(distant sirens)
(fire truck honking)

Oh.

My...

Friend.

("Also Sprach Zarathustra"
by Deodato playing)

(song ends)

("Space Oddity" by The Langley
Schools Music Project playing)

Ground Control to Major Tom

Ground Control to Major Tom

Take your protein pills

And put your helmet on

-Ten, nine, eight

-Ground Control to Major Tom

Seven, six

-Commencing countdown,
engines on -Five, four

Three, two

-Check ignition

-One

-And may God's love go
with you -Liftoff

Ground Control to Major Tom

You've really made the grade

And the papers want to know

Whose shirts you wear

Now it's time

to leave the capsule

If you dare

Ground Control to Major Tom

Your circuit's dead,

there's something wrong

Can you hear us, Major Tom?

Can you hear us,

Major Tom?

Can you hear us, Major Tom?

Can you hear?

Am I floating in a tin can

Far above the moon

Planet Earth is blue

And there's nothing I can do

Though I'm past

a hundred thousand miles

I'm feeling very still

And I think my spaceship knows
Which way to go
Tell my wife
I love her very much
She knows
Ground Control to Major Tom
Your circuit's dead,
there's something wrong
Can you hear us, Major Tom?
Can you hear us,
Major Tom?
Can you hear us, Major Tom?
Can you hear?