

PHREAKS

written by
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Phreakers, n. -

"People who hack into telephone networks, typically to make free long-distance calls, or to surveil others' calls."

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - 1985 - DAY

Painfully suburban, in a 50s-style development. Wood panels everywhere. A PAPERBOY, oak trees overhanging; CHILDREN jump rope. Pull in on one such house with a REMOVALIST VAN parked out front. MOVERS carry boxes inside.

JENNA (14), full of attitude, runs from the house angrily. An unseen MALE VOICE shouts after her.

MALE VOICE (O.S)

Jenna! Get back here and help us!

Jenna flips the bird at the house and runs into the street.

EXT. MAIN STREET - 1985 - DAY

1980's retail Americana. Jenna passes a shopfront with a banner: a jack-o-lantern saying "One Week 'Til Halloween!".

Ahead, two teenage boys - PATRICK and HANNIGAN, both 14 - stand in a phone booth listening to a call, giggling mischievously. Jenna approaches. They lock eyes with her.

HANNIGAN

Can we help you?

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - 1985 - DAY

Jenna walks down the street with Patrick and Hannigan. The boys are awkward around her.

JENNA

You'll need to explain it again.

PATRICK

Okay, so --

HANNIGAN

-- so --

PATRICK

-- all phones dial just by tones, okay? When you dial, you're just making the exact right tone to trick the lines into connecting.

JENNA

Right.

HANNIGAN

So, by making the exact right tones into the receiver, you can call anyone for free. Long distance.

JENNA

So...free phone calls...that's it?

PATRICK

Yeah.

JENNA

Right.

A beat.

HANNIGAN

And...well...there's other stuff too.

(then)

I promise - it's awesome!

Jenna smiles, bemused.

PATRICK

So...you like it here so far?

JENNA

Yes, my first hour in this town has been *truly* thrilling.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - 1985 - DAY

Patrick, Hannigan and Jenna sit around a rotary telephone plugged in by Patrick's bed. Hannigan holds a Blue Box, (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue_box) a small electronic device, up to the receiver.

PATRICK

Alright...

He presses a button into the blue box and it emits sounds similar to a rotary tone. Patrick and Hannigan grin.

Over the phone, a PHONE CALL IN PROGRESS between a man and woman is audible.

MALE CALLER (V.O)

And what are you doing *now*?

FEMALE CALLER (V.O)
I'm waving it about.

MALE CALLER (V.O)
The stump?

FEMALE CALLER (V.O)
Mhm.

MALE CALLER (V.O)
Rub the stump on me, baby. I love
your stump.

FEMALE CALLER (V.O)
Mmm, babe, I'm rubbing it.

Patrick and Hannigan LAUGH riotously. Jenna smiles, confused.

PATRICK
(hanging up)
Those two are always talking dirty.

JENNA
Was that someone's phone call?

HANNIGAN
Yeah. Told you.
(Jenna is silent)
Wanna try it?

JENNA
Um...

PATRICK
Here. What's your favourite
country?

JENNA
Uh...the North Pole.

PATRICK
Be serious.

JENNA
It's a real place. In Greenland.

Hannigan refers to a typewritten glossary for 'Greenland'. He presses a button on the blue box. It emits another dial tone into the receiver. The phone dials; Hannigan gestures for Jenna to pick up the receiver. She does, listens to it connect. A male VOICE (mundane, flat-toned) is heard --

VOICE (V.O)
Jennifer?

Jenna is silent for a beat, confused.

JENNA

...yes?

VOICE (V.O)

I'm so excited you're listening,
Jennifer.

(Jenna looks to the boys)
I wanted to tell the news. I wanted
to tell you *the news*. You wanna
hear the news, don't you?

Hannigan and Patrick eye Jenna, curious what she is hearing.

VOICE (V.O) (CONT'D)

Well, the news is this, the news is
this: the news is, Jennifer, that
in one week's time, at midnight,
I'm gonna show you the place that
we all go to. The place they make
our *bones*. I'll call you and take
you to the place, okay? I'll call
you and I'll take you --

Jenna hangs up, disturbed.

PATRICK

What happened?

JENNA

It was...nothing. I couldn't
understand them, wasn't English.

HANNIGAN

Well...duh.

Jenna stands.

PATRICK

Where are you going?

JENNA

Home. I should go home.

HANNIGAN

Okay.

(looks at Patrick)
So...would you wanna come with us
to the fair next week?

JENNA

The fair?

PATRICK

The Halloween fair. It's lame, but,
y'know. Better than nothing.

JENNA

Alright...

PATRICK

Awesome. Meet us here?

Jenna nods. She turns to leave and walks to the door.

She looks back: Patrick and Hannigan have started a new call,
already giggling.

INT. JENNA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - 1985 - NIGHT

Jenna relaxes on the couch, alone, illuminated only by the
T.V's screen. Shadows cast across the house.

A cheesy VARIETY SHOW is screening on the T.V. The smarmy
HOST sings in front of a banner that reads: "Three Days 'Till
Halloween, Kids!".

Jenna turns to look into the kitchen. A landline photo is
hung on the wall. It almost looks ominous in the darkness.

She continues to stare at it, waiting for it to ring.

INT. DISCOUNT STORE - 1985 - DAY

Jenna grabs a white hockey mask off the shelf.

AT THE REGISTER - SOON AFTER

She presents the hockey mask to the CASHIER, who is ancient.

CASHIER

You play hockey?

Jenna stares at the cashier.

JENNA

No? It's a Halloween costume.

CASHIER

"Hockey goalie" is a Halloween
costume...?

JENNA

Yeah...sure.

EXT. MAIN STREET - 1985 - DAY

Jenna exits the store onto the street.

She approaches the same phone booth as days earlier. It's empty this time.

As she passes by it, it starts to RING. She looks around. No one.

Tentatively, she enters the phone booth and answers it.

JENNA

Hello?

VOICE (V.O)

I'm just so excited I can hardly stand it, Jennifer. I can't wait for you to see this place. It's where they make the bones, Jennifer!

JENNA

Please, stop. Please.

VOICE (V.O)

Stop? Why would I stop?

JENNA

I don't want to see it. Please.

A beat.

VOICE (V.O)

I'll need you to introduce me to someone new. Someone in your stead.

Jenna nods.

EXT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - 1985 - NIGHT

Jenna approaches the house quietly, in the dead of night. She walks along the side of the house, searching for a window she recognises.

INT. PATRICK'S BEDROOM - 1985 - NIGHT

Patrick sleeps soundly, snoring. Jenna quietly climbs in through the window.

Jenna creeps to his bedside...grabs his typewritten glossary and the blue box.

Patrick stirs...still deep in sleep. Jenna reads from the typewritten glossary and plays the blue box into the phone receiver. She leaves the receiver off the hook next to the sleeping Patrick.

She exits through the window quickly.

EXT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - 1985 - THE NEXT DAY

Hannigan, in a complicated DnD costume, and Jenna wearing the hockey mask, approach the house. TRICK OR TREATERS pass by on the street.

HANNIGAN
Hey. Freddy. Nice.

JENNA
Oh, no. I'm just a hockey player.

Hannigan laughs. They reach the front door and ring the bell.

Beat. No response. Hannigan rings the bell again.

HANNIGAN
Weird. I was with him yesterday.

Hannigan knocks loudly. Jenna looks nervous.

HANNIGAN (CONT'D)
Patrick?

No response.

EXT. FAIRGROUNDS - 1985 - NIGHT

Hannigan and Jenna enter together with the CROWD.

HANNIGAN
It's just weird, it's kind of a tradition to go to the fair? He'd normally call.

JENNA
I'm sure he'll turn up.

Jenna anxiously eyes the crowd around them. Passer-by suddenly seem ominous, threatening.

JENNA (CONT'D)
Let's go over there.

LATER - NIGHT

Jenna and Hannigan walk through a quiet area, eating funnel cake. They laugh at something, at ease.

Hannigan grabs Jenna's hand. She smiles.

CARNIVAL STALLS - LATER

Jenna and Hannigan walk through a row of HAWKERS in front of their tacky market stalls.

HANNIGAN

Hey, I'm gonna find a bathroom. Be a sec?

Jenna nods as he walks off. Jenna looks around and strolls.

She passes by a gaudy FORTUNE TELLER in front of a tent. The fortune teller is dressed like every fortune teller.

FORTUNE TELLER

My girl, can I interest you?

Jenna shakes her head.

FORTUNE TELLER (CONT'D)

Don't want you want to know what's going to happen?

JENNA

No.

FORTUNE TELLER

You're not excited to see it?

Jenna suddenly turns to the fortune teller, suspicious.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - 1985 - NIGHT

Jenna and Hannigan walk home, still holding hands.

HANNIGAN

I'm down Maple.

JENNA

Alright. Goodnight.

HANNIGAN

I had a good time.

JENNA

Me too.

HANNIGAN

Tell me if you see Patrick?

Jenna nods. She smiles and waves. Hannigan walks away.

LATER

Jenna walks home alone. She watches as a NEIGHBOR stands outside their house, taking down Halloween decorations.

She keeps walking, wrapping herself tighter in her jacket. Her breath his visible.

She looks around again, sensing something. This part of the street is deserted, quiet, and dark. A few house lights visible.

Jenna picks up the pace.

In the distance, a vague trilling sound is audible. It's unclear at first.

It's a phone ringing, in a house somewhere in the street. Jenna stops in her tracks.

Then ANOTHER phone ringing. And another. The calls get closer and closer, as if each successive house has another ringing phone.

Every single house now contains a ringing phone. She panics.

No one's answering, because the calls are for her.

CUT TO BLACK