

FEATURE TREATMENT: *EIGHT YEARS*

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LOGLINE:

Having endured great pains to forget his past, a naval machinist returns home when his mother's body is discovered eight years after her disappearance and is obsessed with incarcerating her killer while balancing fatherhood.

OVERVIEW:

“EIGHT YEARS” is a true-crime drama about a young naval machinist who strives to keep his family together while seeking the incarceration of his mother’s killer. In 1980, HAROLD HARMON reluctantly returns to his home in Georgia after his mother’s disappearance in 1972 is registered as a murder. Amid putting his mother’s killer behind bars, the childhood trauma he made great efforts in suppressing becomes unearthed and steadily eats away at his marriage, career, and fatherly responsibilities. Harold institutes a form of control over his life and unknowingly ventures through a rites-of-passage like a psychodynamic therapy treatment. This process allows one to become aware of their anxieties through a pursuit of temporary distractions alluding comfort. However, in the pursuit of true reconciliation, one must surrender to an infected wound which can only be healed by being severed. When Harold realizes his efforts of changing his world are useless, he reconciles with his family and finds peace in the unlikeliest of places... at home. Though his pursuit of justice over his mother’s abduction, rape, mutilation, murder, and disposal is admirable, Harold learns he, like his mother, has become a ghost in his son’s eyes and is forced to reevaluate what is truly important in life. Tonally, the film is a collage of genres such as suspense, romance, and a hint of adventure. The world of “Eight Years” is demonstrated through hyper impressionism, operates with symbolic visuals, and is full of heart.

CHARACTER SET-UP:

MORVEN, GEORGIA, 1972: HAROLD (13) hunts for quail with his dog near the house. His mother, HELEN (35) cleans the kitchen as his TWO SISTERS ready themselves for school. His father, JERRY (37), rushes out to work with only time for a sip of coffee and a kiss from his wife. Before they are allowed on the school bus, Helen requires a hug from her children. Thinking he’s too old for this, Harold doesn’t hug his mother. Helen works at Winkler Outdoor Advertising in VALDOSTA with worry of being once again sexually harassed by her boss, KENNY (21). Today however is different. Kenny is out of town. However, when he finds out Helen is alone in the office, Kenny makes an unannounced visit. He makes a lustful pass at her which turns into a physical altercation. The monster within him strangles Helen to death and conducts an act upon her, which will derail everyone in the Harmon house for years... especially Harold... the one who will spend a lifetime wishing he hugged his mother.

STORY:

Opening Scene:

HAROLD HARMON (26), a mountain of a man with shaking fists, sweats through his suit as he peers at KENNY WINKLER (34), a fat man wearing an expensive suit sitting at the defense desk. JUDGE, “Mr. Harmon, how old were you when your mother disappeared?” Harold is glued to Kenny. “Mr. Harmon?” We draw extremely close to Harold’s eyes... “...Harold?”

We pull back from the eyes of HAROLD (13), a country boy laying in the dirt with his German Shepard, Rosie, aiming down the barrel of a .22.

SUPER: 1972

HELEN HARMON (35), a lovely woman wearing a green dress calls out Harold’s name while standing on the front porch of the Harmon house.

Act 1:

Lunch bags sit on the countertop. Helen cleans the kitchen and declares her children have ten minutes left before leaving for school. She writes a list of chores on a scrap piece of paper. POLLY (10) rushes in with her bookbag ready to go with her kitten in hand. LISA (15) runs to the bathroom in a towel and makeup. JERRY (37), their prison guard of a father sees Lisa, kisses Polly, and tells her to never grow up. He kisses Helen before leaving for work. She reminds him it’s Thursday. Helen must work late and needs Jerry to pick up Lisa from cheer practice. It bothers Jerry that his wife has to work alone in the office with Kenny, a creep of a boss, but it’s temporary. Soon they will have better jobs, live in a better town, and live in a better house.

Helen at the wheel of a 1968 Montego informs her children that “Family is all you have in this crazy world.” At the bus stop, Helen hugs Polly and calls Harold back as he nears the school bus. Helen has outstretched arms. Harold denies her to avoid embarrassment from his buddies.

After dropping Lisa off at the high school, an ELDERLY WOMAN (80s) sweeps the front porch of her decrepit house across the street from the Winkler Outdoor Advertising building. Helen parks as WREN (69) and MAYNARD (68), two blue-collar employees load a large wooden toolbox which reads ‘Winkler Outdoor Advertising’ into the bed of a GMC work truck. Helen enters her office, opens the pocket window, and shares polite small talk with Wren as she slides a red dotted gas pump key after disconnecting it from a key ring in her purse. “Another day all by your lonesome, Mrs. Harmon?” She doesn’t understand Wren’s comment. Foxy, the boss and his son, Kenny are out in Atlanta on a business trip and won’t be back till tomorrow. Helen hides her smile. Wren gasses up the work truck, returns the pump key to Helen who then weaves it back onto the ring and inserts it back in her purse as the two men drive off.

Helen pulls out a partially filled application... Flashback: She fills in the application while her lady friends get their nails painted red and hair done in a singlewide beauty shop trailer. The ladies learn money is tight in the Harmon house, but Jerry is doing the best he can which is why Helen is trying to apply for a better job herself. This leads to the discovery that she has been sexually harassed by Kenny. She hasn’t told anyone out of fear of losing her job... not even her husband. A rumor of Kenny floats about him hanging out at the morgue and having his way with a female cadaver. End of Flashback... Helen finishes the application.

Meanwhile in Atlanta, KENNY WINKLER (21), a country boy in a suit, urinates under a blank billboard. His father, FOXY WINKLER (65), an older country boy in a suit waits in the driver’s seat of a 1971 Oldsmobile. An OFFICER calls Kenny’s attention, but then apologizes when he

recognizes Kenny. Traveling down the road, Foxy wants to head home, but Kenny tells him to make a pitstop. He needs to set his future father-in-law, Oscar, straight. Jane, his fiancée has daddy issues and won't have sex if her father doesn't show up tonight at their wedding reception. Kenny hates that Oscar is still alive. Foxy jokes and says they could kill him, "Just put him in one of our toolboxes and bury it." Soon after, OSCAR (50s) greets the Winkler boys but is clearly intimidated. Kenny cuts to the chase about him making an appearance as he cleans his nails with a pocketknife. Oscar's schedule frees up. Heading back home, Foxy talks about past lovers. Kenny recalls that today is Thursday. He drops Foxy off at home, jumps in his 1972 Plymouth GTO and hightails it to the office.

Kenny sneaks into the building through the loading dock where other toolboxes are found, snakes through the storage room where old posters, ropes, and sign-building materials are stored and finds Helen filing paperwork in her office. Kenny grabs and drags her into the storage room... she struggles and tries to fight back but it's no use. The bus drops Harold and Polly off at their house. No one is home... This is normal. Harold runs off into the field with Rosie as Polly gets onto him for not helping her with the chores.

Kenny swivels naked in an office chair covered in sweat. He makes a phone call. The Oldsmobile pulls up beside Helen's Montego. Foxy finds Helen's body twisted, mangled, and bruised on the floor with the rope knotted around her neck. Foxy goes off at Kenny for ruining the family business. Kenny asks for help from his father to avoid that from happening. They put her in the Oldsmobile's trunk. Foxy writes a list for Kenny, drives off and waves at Jerry in his truck on the way to pick up Lisa from cheer practice. Kenny scratches 'police' off the list and sees the name, 'Jerry' next. He picks up the phone. Along the road, Foxy makes a turn down a dirt road where a blank billboard is found and looks out at the surrounding woods. Jerry picks up the phone in the kitchen while preparing dinner.

Step 2, Kenny needs to fill up the work truck and burn the list. Jerry enters and catches Kenny digging in Helen's purse. "The GTO's tank is low... Helen and his father are the only people who have a pump key... and she's nowhere to be found." Jerry finds the ring of keys. Kenny points out that it's the one with the red dot. Jerry gives the keyring to Kenny with the GMC truck key and gas pump key attached who then slides it into his pants pocket... LIEUTENANT BASSET (35) arrives on scene as per Kenny's previous call – He filed a missing person report. Jerry says Helen is not missing, "What woman would leave her purse behind?" Basset collects two men's alibis and conducts a half-assed inspection of the building. He declares it clean. Helen simply left town... most likely with another man, which was quoted by the elderly woman across the street. Outraged, Jerry combats this. Kenny tries to calm him down and hears the keys hit the floor. There's a hole in Kenny's pant pocket due to his knife.

Jerry's truck pulls up to the house. He looks at the purse on the passenger seat, reaches for it, but instead reaches below the seat for a small whiskey bottle. Thunder rolls in. Kenny burns the list as Foxy pulls up with Wren and Maynard in the backseat of the Oldsmobile. Harold, Lisa, and Polly grapple with what their father just told them about their mother's disappearance with yelling, tears, and confusion. Lighting rolls through the clouds. Kenny and his employees are later found tired, wet, and covered in mud as they load up in the work truck. Kenny is the only one covered in blood. The GMC truck key can't be found. Wren mentions it could be in the hole and Maynard hotwires the truck so they can drive out of the woods. Foxy follows right behind.

Harold wakes up early finding Polly asleep in Jerry's arms as they reside in the recliner. The house is quiet. Harold notices his mother's chore list. He recites it as he waters the twig looking pine trees along the property line. Memory hit of he and his mother planting them... He tends the flower garden near the shed. Memory hit of his mother planting them with Polly... He picks tomatoes, takes out the trash and the last item requires the wring of the old rooster's neck. Harold aims with his .22 at the bird... Memory hit, Jerry laughs as the rooster chases Helen. He puts down the gun. Jerry struggles to cook. Everything is burnt. Polly is grateful and says the morning prayer. Harold looks at his food and says that he's not hungry. Jerry takes his plate, gives it to the dog and steps out onto the porch. Lisa slides her plate in between them to share.

SUPER: One Week After Disappearance

Harold does all the chores, but still can't to shoot the bird. GRANDMA HARMON (60s) makes breakfast. Harold picks at his food and is told he will get sick if he doesn't eat. Polly feeds her kitten, Lisa does her makeup, and Jerry rushes out of the house. Throughout the day, Grandma shows Harold how to do laundry, make coffee and cook eggs, but the topic of Helen never comes up. Grandma wrings the rooster for dinner.

Harold goes through the motions at school. During gym, a SENIOR FOOTBALL PLAYER pulls Harold over to spot him on the bench. As soon as the senior is done, Harold asks if he can try. Harold squeezes his arms as he follows Polly off the bus. The driveway is packed. Their entire FAMILY fills the small house with an abundance of food. Jerry sits in his recliner and stares at the phone amongst the chaos of COUSINS, AUNTS, and UNCLES sharing theories of what happened to Helen. Harold goes to his room. Polly wonders if she can sleep with him tonight.

The following day, Harold drags boards out of the shed. Polly plays in the flower garden. Harold screams at her to get out. Polly cries and Jerry grabs Harold. Soon after, the POLICE sit with Harold and Polly... Jerry is out on the porch. The kids are asked about their mother's behavior, their father's treatment of Helen and other details. SEARCH PARTIES cover every dirt road, field, and dumpster. Amongst several MEN, Jerry and Harold search the woods with Rosie on a leash who has Helen's scent from the purse. Foxy and Kenny are much further ahead than the rest. Rosie barks, Jerry tells Harold to let her loose and she runs past Kenny. Foxy sees the dog stop and dig. He tells his son to take care of it. Jerry along with the rest discover Rosie attacking Kenny. Jerry pulls the dog off. Foxy threatens to press charges if Jerry doesn't shoot the dog. Harold begs for his father not to, but he has no choice. That night, Harold puts the last shovel of dirt over Rosie's grave in the flower garden.

SUPER: Year 3 After Disappearance

Outside the shed, HAROLD (16), 6'2 and 215 pounds, finishes his set while lying on the homemade bench after reciting his mother's chore list. FRANK (16), Harold's buddy, spots. Frank shares his excitement about the weeklong football camp in Quitman. Harold simply wants out of Morven. The pine trees have grown. Helen's Montego is replaced by a 1970 VW Beetle and the furniture in the house has changed. Harold puts his head under the kitchen sink and turns on the water. He sees an empty whiskey bottle. BETTY (39) comes out of Jerry's room in her pajamas. Flashback: Lisa presents an ultimatum to Jerry after Betty moves in; If Betty is here, Lisa won't be... End of Flashback. POLLY (13) steps into the kitchen seeing Betty making frozen waffles again for breakfast. Harold nears the door for a run. Betty stops him, hands over a few bucks – to earn his affection. That night, Frank sits in his 1975 Charger RT at a gas station.

Harold exits with beer. They drive through a neighborhood and finish the case. Harold shares his anger regarding his father dating Betty, the lack of police work done on his mother's disappearance and him being locked in this town. He leans out of the passenger window and pings a road sign with an empty bottle. TEENAGERS hangout in the parking lot of the Burger Barn. Frank parks near the front door. MAXINE (16), the new girl in town walks by and glances at Harold. Frank is clearly enamored. Finishing his bench set, Harold enters the house dripping wet and shirtless. Betty cleans, which is rarely the case, and Jerry enters the living room wearing a dress shirt. Enter Maxine with a southern belle accent, cut-off jeans and a tank top. She sits across from Harold during family lunch. Jerry goes at the food while Polly prays. Maxine slides her foot up Harold's leg as Betty tells everyone about Maxine's stay with them for the summer.

Maxine finds Harold pulling his dirt bike from the shed and asks for a ride. They travel through the woods and stops at a river. Maxine undresses, runs into the water, and asks if he knows what a 'summer fling' is... Harold lies awake in bed reciting the chore list. Maxine enters. Harold confesses about being a virgin and she turns off the lights. The sun rises, the bench outside is unused and the pine trees need water. Harold studies Maxine's face. She wakes up and hurdles out of the room. Harold falls back to sleep. Montage: Harold marks the days off a calendar with 'football camp' listed at the end of July. During the day, he trains and at night, Harold makes love to Maxine. End of Montage. Their last night... Harold lies consumed in thought... he recites the chore list. Maxine gifts him her bracelet and starts the night.

At the bus stop, Harold steps out of the truck with a stuffed gym bag. Jerry sees off his son with a handshake and sees the bracelet. HIGHSCHOOL BOYS file off the bus and are grilled by COACH GRIDDLE. The FIRST-STRING PLAYERS heckle them as they travel through a series of drills, tackles, and plays. Harold is dubbed, "Momma's Boy". Harold stops to catch his breath during a run. RUSTY (17) puts Harold under his arm to keep running. A BOY lying on the ground and is cut. The gym floor is filled with boys dead asleep on their duffle bags. The lights pop on and the First-String set up a game on the field; Bear-caught. You face off a monster MIDDLE LINEBACKER and if you're pushed off a wide board, you go home. One boy after another is sent home. Harold squares off. Linebacker calls Harold by his nickname and pushes the Middle Linebacker off the board. Jerry picks up Harold at the end of tryouts. Harold has made the team. All Jerry tells Harold is that Maxine has moved to Florida. Harold rides his dirt bike and sits by the river. He recites the chore list and tosses her bracelet in the water.

On Friday night, Harold plays tight end and presents a diploma to Jerry. He gives his son a nod and turns back to the TV. Harold says he was accepted into Georgia Tech. Jerry takes a swig of beer. Harold asks for financial help. Jerry doesn't have any money. His son states the amount of money spent on booze could've done something... a physical fight occurs between father and son which Harold wins. Jerry tells Harold to get out. Harold, "It should've been you who left us instead of mom!" Harold leaves and Jerry cries.

Act 2:

A reflection of Harold is seen in a navy poster as he waits in a recruitment office. Harold tells the CHIEF PETTY OFFICER he wants to be an engineer and learns he will see the world... At the bus stop, Polly hugs Harold and says a prayer. It begins to rain. Harold nears the bus and sees himself as a 13-year-old boy with his arms stretched out.

SUPER: Year 7 After Disappearance

HAROLD (20) runs along the snow-covered Greenbelt of Idaho. A cheap 1979 car in the driveway of his apartment is parked next to a 1970s Dodge SUV. MARGIE (20) wearing a mini skirt exits the house and tramples through the snow. Harold wraps his jacket around her and enters the animal house. STONER (20) works out a thermodynamics problem in a fog of smoke on the wall with a marker. He needs help. Harold writes the answer on the wall and heads for the shower. CHARLIE (18) enters, heads for the fridge, and asks who drank all the beer. Later that night, the truck tanks through the snow. Inside the bar, COWBOYS, and DAISY DUKE look-alikes dance. Charlie orders a round, Stoner plays pool, and Harold finds a seat. Margie returns Harold's jacket and introduces SHEILA (20). She him to the dance floor. Stoner gets hit with a bottle, Charlie jumps in, and Harold excuses himself. The brawl of three against six takes place outside in the cold. Sheila gives Harold a napkin.

Hiking along the Blackfoot Reservoir, Charlie leads the group as Margie helps Sheila up the hill. Tagging behind are Stoner and Harold. Margie's German Shepard takes a liking to him. Snow falls from tree branches, birds fly over, and greenery can be seen on the mountains. Five miles toward the mouth of the river, later, the trail turns windy as it narrows up a mountain. Harold removes his goggles and shirt to cool off. Sheila likes what she sees. They arrive at the mouth of the river, pitch tents, and build a fire. Harold and Sheila make love in the tent. That morning, Harold suffers from snow blindness and needs to return home. Descending the mountain was out of the question. So, they walk across the lake still thick with ice. Twenty feet can only be seen in front of them. The ice cracks like thunder and water flows over their boots. It rises to their ankles and Sheila leaves the group when the shore is seen. They make a run for it. On shore, Margie asks about her dog. Harold looks back and hears it struggling. He runs into the water and returns with it in his arms. Everyone wraps Harold in their jackets before he passes out.

Harold wakes up in his bed with Stoner at his bedside. He has official orders and tells Sheila he will be out at sea for the next six months. She gives him the address of her father's house in Valdosta. She's moving back home to take care of her mother. She wants Harold to write.

On the gangway, Harold stands in awe of the USS Nimitz; a twenty-story high and quarter of a mile long metal boat as a few hundred men pass by nearing their new home. He walks through the maze of hallways to find his living quarters. ROB (24), a helicopter pilot gives the rundown of the ship. The speaker announces news regarding the Iranian hostage crisis and how POTUS Carter has a plan of action. Naval forces are dispatched to the Indian Ocean.

Letter to Sheila – Harold outlines his experience on the Nimitz. On deck, harsh head winds blow him backwards. Sunbathing along the equator gave him second-degree burns and he was a victim of the 'blue-balls' practical joke... The airlift lands and Harold is given mail. In a letter from Lisa, Harold learns it has been seven years since his mother's disappearance and in legal terms, Helen is proclaimed dead. Lisa is building a memorial for Helen and wants Harold to write the epitaph. He works in the reactor room and overhears a Bob Dylan song. He finds the words for his mother's epitaph: "May you always be courageous, stand up right, and be strong. Forever young." Letter to Sheila: Harold will be coming home due to the memorial service and would like to see her... Suddenly, the Nimitz changes course. Rob says all communication has ceased. Extreme pressure is put on Harold to maintain the reactors in a perfect running condition. His actions directly influence the movements of the Nimitz which are critical to a successful positioning of a proper launch site. If he makes one mistake, the ship will be in the line of fire. He recites the chore list as Rob launches off the top deck. Later, the men in the mess hall cheer

as it is made known that the naval operations were declared flawless. However, as Harold searches for Rob, it's learned POTUS Carter has called off the mission... Due to sand entering the aircraft navigation equipment, several helicopters took off too hastily and resulted in a collision with a C-130 airplane. The names of the deceased are listed. Rob is one of them.

The airlift returns. Men gather like a mob. It's like Christmas as men tear open letters. Harold pumps iron in the gym and is tossed a bundle of letters. The top letter is from Lisa. Thousands of civilians applaud the Nimitz' return home. SAILORS are lost into the sea of people. Kids jump onto their dads, girlfriends lock lips with their boyfriends, and parents embrace their sons, but Harold attends his mother's memorial service with LISA (22) and POLLY (17). In the driveway of the Harmon house Lisa remains in the driver's seat as Polly heads to the house. She tells Harold, their father married Betty. Harold walks to the pine trees, finding them taller than he remembered. Harold sees himself as 13-years-old down the field peering back at him with his arms by his sides. Harold meets with Sheila. She slaps him and follows it with a kiss. They sit and talk for what seems like a lifetime. Harold learns of Sheila's mother passing, and though she loves her father, she wants to get out of Valdosta.

SUPER: Year 8 After Disappearance

Two FARMER BROTHERS drive a tractor along a field of recently cut down trees. As old roots are pulled up, the tractor hits something and gets stuck. They cut the engine and see look at what they're stuck on. They spot a large wooden box just breaking the surface. They wipe the dirt off the lid to read, "Winkler Outdoor Advertising ". There's a loose board. One of them lifts it, looks inside and the farmer runs across the field towards his house in the distance.

VALDOSTA POLICE rope off the area. DETECTIVE STARNES (40s) interviews the farmer brothers as LIEUTENANT SPARKS (40s) watches the box being lifted out of the ground. Starnes wants everything taken to the lab for fingerprints and a dental record test conducted. He nears the hole and sees something. He puts on a glove, climbs into the hole and picks up a key ring with two keys attached to it; a GMC truck key and the other has a red nail polish dot on it. KENNY (29) arrives and nears the scene. He is stopped by police from entering. Starnes and Sparks take note of who he is and learn the farmer called him. They found the owner of the box.

A FORENSICS SPECIALIST pulls out the mangled green dress and sets it beside a skeleton. Starnes enters. The specialist states it is a concealed murder of at least eight years, "Due to the decomposition rate... we can't find any fingerprints." However, here are some of her findings:

The skeleton is a female as per the bone structure and married. A wedding ring is found.

Flashback: Helen is dragged into the storage room by Kenny and finds a moment to fight back. She gets the upper hand and goes for the door. End of Flashback.

She has a fractured jaw and a few broken ribs, but the victim was most likely strangled to death by the rope found around her neck. Flashback: Kenny grabs Helen, brings her to the ground and kicks her chest. He pulls her up by the hair, unbuckles his belt to proceed and she bites. Kenny reacts, punches her across her face and grabs a nearby piece of rope. End of Flashback.

This murder was probably the killer's first... it was unplanned due to the dismemberment of the legs. The specialist demonstrates a premeditated killer would have brought a large blade to get a quick clean cut. However, when you look at the leg bone, you find they both have been twisted

off at the kneecap. Flashback: Foxy throws up off the loading dock as Kenny, covered in blood, twists off Helen's leg sticking out of the box. End of Flashback.

"The killer planned to rape, but not murder... things escalated." Starnes, "You think he raped her?" The specialist brings to attention the bra and the lack of panties. As well, the dress. "It's cut along the side. He was careful to not make things messy... We're dealing with an illogical thinking person in the height of emotion... it was probably cut with a readily accessible blade... like a pocketknife." Flashback: Helen squirms as she dies. Kenny looks at her body, pulls out his pocketknife, slits her green dress off and has his way with her limp body. End of Flashback.

Starnes looks at the key with the red dot beside the truck key. Sparks enters with the dental records. They have a match. A missing person of 1972... her name is Helen Harmon. Her file reads that she was an employee of Winkler Advertising which is now owned and operated by Kenny Winkler who three months after Helen's disappearance, reported the box she was found in, missing. Starnes reads the "Winkler" name on the box, takes the keyring with the red nail polish dotted key, and tells Sparks to meet him at the car. He makes a call.

A spotlight is turned on to light up the field at night. Starnes and Sparks wait near the hole. Sparks asks how Starnes thinks the keys got under the box... Jerry's old pickup truck comes down the dirt road. Sparks meets JERRY (45) and escorts him halfway to the hole. Sparks asks Jerry to tell him the story... Once Jerry tells him about the keys hitting the ground, Sparks allows Jerry to come near the hole. He asks Jerry about the purse... Jerry hands it over as Starnes pulls out several keys. He instructs Jerry to see if he recognizes any of them. He spots one, turns it over and sees the red dot. He falls to the dirt.

HAROLD (21) works in the nuclear reactor room of the Nimitz. A CO-WORKER enters and tells him Sheila is on the phone. Harold isn't very excited about his wife calling. Harold on the phone gets frustrated but is told to come home. Harold pulls up in a 1980 Mustang to find Sheila outside waiting for him with several suitcases. Harold makes a sarcastic joke of her finally leaving him, but instead of an argument, she hugs Harold. She tells him the news.

In the middle of the afternoon, Harold barges into his father's house. Betty tries to calm him down, but Harold isn't interested in household welcomes. He wants to be taken to the field, but he must wait for his father to take him after he gets off work. Harold does an assortment of chores and when he goes to water the pine trees, Jerry pulls up. They arrive to the field and Harold slides into the hole. He grabs a handful of dirt and squeezes it as he recites the chore list.

The following morning, Betty wakes Harold on the couch. She tells him breakfast is ready, but he isn't hungry. Sheila is still in bed which frustrates Harold. While pumping gas into the Mustang, Sheila takes a pregnancy test... Harold sees himself as a 13-year-old kid standing in the rain and doesn't notice the gas overflowing. Sheila calls his attention to it. An argument ensues which ends after Sheila tells him the news. Whereas Harold is thrilled, Sheila doesn't want a baby. Harold convinces her to have it. Back in their apartment, Harold checks his mail and finds a collection of letters, newspaper articles, and old photos of Helen sent to him by the people of Georgia who heard the horrible news. Sheila, super pregnant, suggests he should build a scrapbook. Harold does so and at the end, washes his hands. Ink and blood rinse off his hands.

SUPER: Year 9 After Disappearance

Starnes and Sparks study a collection of photos and newspaper clippings on a corkboard of 1972 Winkler employees. They have a plan to conduct interrogations but need a warrant. Sparks makes a comment about the level of patience wearing thin with the Harmons.

On the Nimitz, the CHIEF PETTY OFFICER makes his way to the reactor room and finds Harold rebuilding an air compressor. He tells Harold he has a ship-to-shore message on the ham radio. Harold learns he has a baby boy. He's launched from the Nimitz on the mail plane and enters the hospital room with a teddy bear. He kisses Sheila to wake her up. She hugs his neck and says she named their boy, "Scott." Harold heads to the door to see his son but is called back. Sheila states she isn't ready to have the responsibility of being a mother...

A cop cruiser is parked outside the Winkler Building. Starnes and Sparks investigate after being let in by Kenny who offers coffee. Sparks interviews Kenny about the day Helen Harmon disappeared. He shares his side of the story. Foxy died a few years back, as did Jane, his first wife... or at least that's how the divorce felt. They take note of the rope holding together a few signs in the storage room with newly installed carpet. They meet the WOMAN working in Helen's old office who's simply happy to have a job. She's clearly playing a role. Starnes stands in the middle of the loading dock and walks towards a box like the one Helen was found in. Kenny asks what he was looking for as he removes his pocketknife from his pocket and cleans his nails. This is all the proof Starnes needs to emotionally convict the man. "Do you ever get holes in your pockets from that thing?" An EMPLOYEE asks for the pump key to fill up a work truck. Kenny pulls out a collection of keys from the same pocket and walks to the pump. Starnes asks the employee about the process of filling up the truck. Kenny has the only key. "His old man didn't want any blacks using it for their cars." Sparks asks what type of truck it is and is told all of them are GMC. Kenny leaves and returns to learn Starnes finds his business clean. Kenny back in his office watches the men drive off. He can finally breathe. He enters the office of the woman while unzipping his pants... Later that night, Kenny drives home. Across the street near the abandoned house, Starnes' car pulls out. He and Sparks walk to the pump. Sparks turns on his flashlight and finds the rusty padlock. Starnes inserts the key with the red dot and the latch unhinges. Starnes tells Sparks they need to look at all the employees with access back in 1972.

Another deployment aboard the Nimitz. In the crowd stands Sheila holding their newborn... Starnes and Sparks go through each piece of evidence and write a new investigation list... Mail comes in on the Nimitz. Harold is sent Valdosta newspapers clippings covering the investigation, but nothing is from Sheila – a dental record comparison was conducted to determine Helen's remains... Several F-14 air squadrons performed flight operations above the battle group. Two Libyan fighter bomber jets attacked them. "All hands, man your battle stations!" ... Sparks covers Wren's interrogation - Wren gives them the name, "Maynard!" ... The jets blast through the air and continue the dogfight. An F-14 shoots down both enemy jets!... Starnes covers Maynard's interrogation... Harold sorts through his stack of mail of investigation reminders, but not one is from Sheila. He beats a metal bench with a sledgehammer... Maynard confesses he hotwired the truck... Harold opens a letter from Jerry... Maynard confesses that he and Wren were paid to bury the box. A DRUNK MAN jumps Harold... Harold gets out of the man's hold and beats him to a pulp... Wren confesses Kenny and Foxy orchestrated disposal of Helen's remains... someone pulls Harold off the drunk man.

Harold sits in a chapel near the pier, handcuffed with bloody hands while reciting the chore list. A CHAPLAIN says that the drunk man confessed to starting the whole thing. Harold is given

back his letter. "You need to read this." Letter from Jerry: Sheila is not fit to be a mother. She practically deserted Scott. He wouldn't stop crying. The sitter she hired to look after him, while she was out doing God knows what with whomever was with, took Scott to the hospital. Jerry suspects Sheila of cheating. Scott lives with him and Betty now. Sheila lives with her father. If he didn't check up on them when he did, Scott would have been dead before his first birthday due to dehydration. Come home now. The chaplain sends Harold on the next flight home.

Jerry feeds his grandson. Betty rushes into the living room to turn on the TV. Kenny is escorted out of the Winkler building in handcuffs by Sparks. Starnes is interviewed... Kenny is arrested for the murder of Helen. He is bound for trial after a preliminary hearing. Betty tells Jerry it's over. Jerry ignores her as he tends to Scott.

ATTORNEY Clay Lee BARKER and his defense team go over several files with Kenny in the courtroom. Starnes and Spark wait patiently alongside DISTRICT ATTORNEY COLLIER. The room is full of Harmon family members and friends. All rise for JUDGE JOHNSON. Harold makes his way through the courthouse and finds Betty sitting outside with Scott. She tells him to keep his son away from Sheila; he rushes into the courtroom. He sees Polly sitting on the front row. Walking along the aisle, he sees the back of Kenny's head. Everyone turns to notice Harold. Judge tells Harold to take a seat. Barker gives the jury his opening remarks regarding Kenny as innocent and then Collier proceeds with his opening remarks portraying Kenny as guilty. Judge adjourns court to recommence tomorrow morning. As everyone exits Kenny stands, turns towards Harold and smiles. Harold visits his mother's memorial turned grave which reads, "Forever young." He sees himself as a 13-year-old down the way.

Harold finds Scott asleep. Sheila is at her father's. She wants Scott to stay with her, but that's a no-go for Harold. Sheila has also decided she isn't going to have anything to do with the trial. She's incredibly self-centered. Jerry says, "She's the mother of your son, Harold." As Harold pulls up to the courtroom the following day, he and the family get bombarded by reporters while everyone in the town tries to get into the courthouse. Collier calls Lisa to the stand for she was the last one to see Helen alive. Flashback of being dropped off at school. The dress is brought out on a mannequin. Lisa confirms the dress through her tears. Barker cross examines and then Jerry is called as a witness. He brings up the key falling out of Kenny's pocket. Flashback of key falling down Kenny's pant leg. Barker doesn't cross examine. A montage of other people such as Helen's other close friends get angry, cry, and some point fingers at Kenny while on the stand. An OLDER JANE resides on the stand and gives a character reference of Kenny by outlining her marriage. OLDER OSCAR does the same. Collier brings in a AAA LOCK SPECIALIST to authenticate the keys found in the hole. A story of discovery involving the hole in the pants caused by the pocketknife, padlock, gas pump, and GMC showcase Kenny as the murderer.

It rains as Harold pulls up to a gym. He takes off his ring and exits the car. He pumps iron and meets a BEAUTIFUL FEMALE BODYBUILDER who offers to spot him. She offers to buy a drink... a moment of hesitation on Harold's part, but he says no thank you. Harold gets back in the car and stares at his wedding ring on the dash.

A WEATHERMAN on the stand speaks about the rain and how it would have affected the burial. If it wasn't raining, they probably would have taken more time to dig deeper. If Helen was buried six inches deeper, the tractor would have never unearthed the box. Statements are heard from both the prosecution and the defense as Collier goes over the evidence that Barker disputes. Wren is called to the stand. He tells the story of burying the box with Maynard, Foxy,

and Kenny. Maynard is cross examined as well as we see flashbacks of the event. Time for Kenny and his testimony... Collier riles him when asked about the evidence and events. Kenny sticks to his rehearsed story, but the jury sees Kenny's true side as he picks at his fingernails. Final statements. Barker says to the jury this is not an airtight conviction. Collier pushes the jury's emotional buttons. Judge announces it will be several hours before they reach a verdict.

During the recess, Harold walks the floor at a dealership looking at the cars. A SALESMAN extends his apologies... Everyone knows who he is at this point. Harold just needs a hitch installed on his mustang to carry a U-Haul. The salesman asks, "What are you going to do if Kenny is found innocent?" Harold runs out of the dealership. Harold pulls up at the courthouse and finds the parking lot full. Everyone from all over has come to hear the verdict. He pushes through the crowd, runs through the courthouse, and opens the door... Kenny is guilty with three appeals allowed. Hands are shaken, hugs are given, and tears of joy are shed.

SUPER: Year 10 After Disappearance

The Nimitz is tied off at a navy pier a few miles down from Harold and Shelia's apartment. Harold sits in his recliner fidgeting with his wedding ring as he stares aimlessly at Scott playing with toys. Sheila all dolled up nears the door. She confirms Harold's deployment is in the next few days and exits to meet up with her friends... yet again.

On the Nimitz, Harold looks out and doesn't see Sheila or Scott as the ship sails off. Later, DAVE (20s), a new friend, congratulates Harold about his win against Kenny, but notices a dark cloud over Harold. A visit to the ship's counselor is recommended, but Harold doesn't go. If his name is found on a psychiatric evaluation, it will prevent him from keeping his security clearance. Harold doesn't know how to deal with his depression, so he gives one-word answers. Overall, Harold decides that after his six-year contract is up, he's getting the hell out of the navy.

Christmas time, the ship is ported at the naval base in Naples, Italy. Harold sits alone at the bar throwing back one shot after another as Dave square dances. A YOUNG WOMAN pulls Harold to dance with her. He does and finds at the end of it she kisses him. He exits the bar and finds himself on the beach. He watches the waves crash and he walks right into them. Harold wakes up on the sand and hears a Harley Davidson motorcycle racing by. Harold walks back into the bar for water. A BIKER sees Harold eyeballing him. Harold tells the biker a story about his dad and a Harley. Biker tells Harold he can rent one from the dealership down the way.

Harold walks through the Harley dealership and finds a Sportster. He rides through Livorno to Pisa. Wind rushes through his hair and the road never ends. He finds a spot and watches the river. He hears the laughter of a kid, turns, and sees a mother hugging her son. Harold takes off his wedding ring, tosses it in the water and cranks up his bike to go back to the pier.

Harold completes his checklist below deck, gets a signoff by his DEPARTMENT HEAD, is asked, "Is there anything we can do to keep you in the navy?" Harold shook his hand goodbye and walks off the bridge one last time. The Nimitz docks and Harold doesn't see his family in the crowd. Hails a taxi and heads to the apartment. His mustang is in the driveway, but the apartment is empty. Harold heads over to his next-door neighbor to learn where his family is but finds Scott. DELORES (60s), his neighbor, finds herself in an awkward situation realizing what's really going on... Sheila is out seeing a friend. Harold jumps in the car and searches all the places he would think Sheila would be. He sits in his car, ruffles his hair, and gets an idea.

Harold goes up to the RECEPTIONIST and asks if Sheila Harmon is in. “No, but Sheila (Maiden name) is in room 209.” Harold nears the door with his heart pounding, smells marijuana and calmly knocks on the door. He covers up the peep hole and hears a guy’s voice ask who it is... “Room service.” A tiny argument is heard behind the door and the door opens to present DERRICK (30) and Sheila wrapped in a blanket. Harold breaks David’s nose with his fist and pulls Sheila out into the hall. Closes the door on Derrick, trapping him in the room.

At the apartment, Scott hugs his mother and walks toward Harold as he puts the last of his things in the mustang. Sheila cries as they drive off. Scott cries, too. Later, Scott is content as he eats a happy meal. Harold asks Scott if he would like to live with grandpa and grandma Betty for a bit. Scott loves that idea. Harold needs to go to Mississippi. “Everything will be okay.” Harold trades his mustang in for a truck, drops Scott off to his parents, drives to Mississippi, and checks into a hotel. Call Jerry. Betty plays with Scott. Harold tells him about the job and how it’s a good fit, but he really hopes the Georgia Power Company gives him a call first so he can be closer to home. Jerry, “Make it work, kid... also, Kenny’s first appeal out of three was denied.”

During a tour of the Grand Gulf nuclear facility in Mississippi by BOB he meets several workers such as HAMBONE, and SKILLET HEAD and is offered the job. Harold accepts, but it’s rotating shifts and must figure out his living situation as a single father. He finds a drab, but doable apartment in Vicksburg. Harold drops Scott off to the BABYSITTER and heads off to class with twenty other young men.

Harold pulls up late at night, picks up Scott who is fast asleep and finds his apartment flooded. Harold takes Scott back to the truck to sleep while he cranks out an all-nighter to fix the problem. His LANDLORD comes in to help by giving Harold a bucket. Harold leaves Scott with a babysitter and goes to class. When he comes home late at night, Harold finds everything is taken out of the apartment. Landlord trashed everything and charged Harold for the damage. Harold takes Scott and heads to a trailer park. In a single-wide mobile home, Harold cooks dinner for him and Scott who’s playing all around the small space.

Scott’s third birthday is celebrated with the whole Harmon family in Georgia. Harold takes a nap on the couch. Jerry covers him up. When he wakes, Jerry has him sit on the porch with him. Jerry questions Harold as a father. Harold explains his living situation, his seven-day rotation, eight-hour work shifts into the peak hours of the morning which isn’t conducive to Scott’s health and the babysitter is getting tired of him knocking on her door at 5am. Harold didn’t know what he was thinking of taking this job as a single parent. Jerry has an idea.

At the airport, Lisa and GORGE DE EDUARDO, her husband, take Scott back home to Guatemala City until Harold figures out his job and gets into a more stable environment. Harold hates to leave his son, but he says goodbye. That night Jerry expresses his worry about Scott. Harold is told he has disappeared from his son’s life like his mother. Jerry says he should have been a better father to his children and advises Harold to not repeat his mistake. RUSTY (25) runs into Harold later that night and sets him up on a surprise date with his cousin, ANNE (24). There’s an immediate attraction. They talk, they dance, and she kisses Harold.

Back in the operations department, Harold receives a call from Jerry informing him of Kenny’s second appeal being denied... There’s still one more to go and with that Anne called to invite him for a second date when he’s back in Georgia. Harold smiles and asks Jerry for a favor.

Act 3:

Harold makes a long-distance call. Lisa watches Scott playing hide and seek with other kids as she learns Harold wants Scott back. Nearing Christmas Eve in the plant, Harold clocks out and flies down the highway toward Morven. The old dirt peach road is now titled, 'Peach Rd.'

Scott, now three-years-old, runs out of the Harmon house when Harold pulls up. Harold hugs his son and doesn't let go. Scott asks why his dad is crying in Spanish. Harold laughs. Later in the day, Harold and Scott pick up Anne and her daughter, LOUISE (5) for their second date... a day trip to Marietta. The kids are in the back playing as Anne sits upfront beside Harold. It's as if this was the place she had always been. They have a picnic at Stone Mountain Park, hike along the old American Indian trails and though the venture ends with the kids asleep in the back seat... for Anne and Harold it just begun. Anne tucked the kids into bed, Harold pours two glasses of wine, and they converse on the couch. Their conversation winds up finished in the bedroom.

SUPER: Year 13 After Disappearance

Harold and Anne stand together along the pine trees as the PREACHER commences the vows. Jerry is Harold's best man. Scott holds the rings and LOUISA scatters flower peddles. Christmas Eve in Harold's new house, the phone rings. It's Jerry. Kenny's third and final appeal is approved. Having determined that Kenny's convictions are invalid, it is hereby ordered that he is to be released immediately. Kenny walks out of prison. Anne brings Harold a cup of hot chocolate as he puts together Scott's and Louise's bicycles. He tells her his stomach has been acting up. Harold says he contacted the Attorney General's office in Atlanta. Anne says Kenny won't ruin their first Christmas as a family.

They unwrap gifts. The kids lose their minds when they see their new bikes. Harold gives Anne a necklace and she gives him a new set of weights. Scott gives Harold his gift. Harold finds that it is a framed picture of the entire family drawn by Scott. Scott explains who everyone is in the photo and at the top Grandma Helen is in heaven. As Scott and Louise test out their new bikes, Harold throws up in the bathroom.

Harold uses his new dumbbells in the garage while watching a CBS program, "60 Minutes" about Kenny's return to the Valdosta community. Harold drops the weights and runs to the bathroom. The phone rings. Harold talks to the Attorney General's office. HILLAR tells Harold about the process to ensure Kenny's incarceration. It's going to take some time. He drops the phone and rushes to his original destination. Anne rushes in. A DOCTOR informs Harold he has an ulcer and needs to make life as stress free as possible. Harold stares at the phone. Anne hands him an ad about a weightlifting competition at their local gym. Harold thinks it's stupid, but Anne encourages him to go. Throughout the week, Harold trains. The phone rings. Anne answers it and simply says Harold is busy.

Day of the event. A crowd of people watch the competitors prep. Harold is fit but stands out amongst the other professional bodybuilders. A BODYBUILDER steps, lifts 500 pounds and sets a record. He nudges Harold out of his way. Harold steps up, asks the staff to set the bar to 525, and snatches it. The coach blows his whistle, Harold drops the bar, and Harold wins. His family rushes down to hug him and the body builder shakes his hand.

Harold stairs on the phone. Anne brings him a work-study program through his company. This allows anyone in the plant operations to obtain their BS degree at no cost to the employee.

Taking the classes means not focusing on the trial. Anne says she trusts him to make the right decision... A professor explains a model diagram on the projector to a class. Harold enters, interrupting the class and takes a seat. The professor continues.

SUPER: Year 15 After Disappearance

Harold studies heat transfer as his kids play in the backyard. Anne watches the news. The phone rings. Harold answers finding Hillar asking him to rally up as many family members to attend the hearing as possible. Harold looks at Anne and says he will call him back. She makes him promise whatever the outcome of the hearing, he will move on. Harold calls Lisa – she can't make it. He calls Polly – it's a no-go. Harold dials a number and hangs up. Dials another number and hangs up. "It's just me squaring off against Kenny."

Outside of the Atlanta courthouse, Harold and Anne are escorted by Hillar to the second-row seat adjacent to a podium near the middle of the aisle. Hillar sits at the table in front of the courtroom. Barker sits at the opposite table. Kenny enters and sits in the same pew as Harold. He looks over and says hello to Anne. Harold jumps up. Anne stands in between them... JUDGE enters and tells the BAILIFF to move Kenny to the defense desk. The game begins.

Hillar states a plea for the court to retract Kenny's granted appeal. Judge says we will take a ten-minute break before hearing the defense. Harold is confronted by a JOURNALIST outside of the room. Harold darts to the bathroom. Barker steps in to confront Harold.

Back in the room, Judge asks for a member of the Harmon family to stand. Harold stands and gives Kenny the dead eye. Judge, "Mr. Harmon, how old were you when your mother disappeared?" Harold doesn't seem to hear the judge. "Mr. Harmon?" ... "Harold?" Anne tugs at Harold's sleeve. Harold comes back to earth and apologizes to the judge. "What did you ask?" Judge, "How old were you when this event occurred?" Harold, "Thirteen, your honor." Judge nods and gestures for him to sit. Harold does.

Barker presents his case portraying Kenny as innocent due to complicated and uncertain evidence. Judge invites Hillar to rebuttal. He shares that the two eyewitnesses stated they helped Kenny and admitted guilt. As well, a confirmed timeline can be found when uncovering Helen's murder. Helen's case is if anything an extreme case of sexual harassment which culminated into murder. Judge states that after careful review of his case, Dickson violated his powers and authority in releasing Kenny and therefore his reinstatement of a life sentence will go back into effect. Kenny fights and yells at Barker as he is handcuffed and dragged out of the room. People surround Harold with pats, handshakes, hugs, and kisses.

Anne whispers something in Harold's ear which changes his entire mood. Harold hears a boy from down the street. He turns to see himself at 13-years-old running into his Helen's arms. She asks, "Ready to go home?" Younger Harold, "Am I ever!" The boy looks at Harold, takes his mother's hand and walks in the crowd.

Closing Scene:

SUPER: Year 15 and 6 months After Disappearance

Porch chimes clink alongside the laughter of children. In the front yard of the Harmon house, Scott and Louise run around playing with Jerry's new dog. Betty, a few feet away, instructs Jerry on where to set the dishware along the picnic table prepared for family lunch. A car pulls up.

Polly and her HUSBAND step out with large containers full of food. On the porch, Anne pushes and holds the screen door open for both Lisa and her husband as they carry a few extra chairs out which clearly came from the breakfast table. She looks over and smiles as Harold sits in a chair holding their new BABY GIRL. Anne nears the table to help the setup. Harold looks out at his family joining hand for a prayer. He is called to join them.

Overlooking the family, a collection of fully grown pine trees sway in the wind. Its branches almost dance with the breeze... letting us know we are still loved from above.

The End

SUPER: Dedicated to Hellen Griffin Hanks, my mother.