

Chapter 1

The story starts right from the action and infuses a good amount of adrenaline in the readers, while also impressing the readers with the edgy voice that the narration has--when Harper reads the note from her mom and makes a valid comment before throwing it away. The scene ends with the most justifiable thing the protagonist can do at that time--hide in a close with a baseball bat--and she even leaves the reader's guessing with the *[if I hadn't gotten into it with Mom]*. This definitely makes the reader turn the page so great hook!

The mother-daughter conversation is typical but not boring since it works as an introduction to the Sleeping Syndrome where the author has cleverly stated what actually happens to the brain *[open up your brain and find it full of tiny holes]* while also warning Harper and Olivia to stay inside the house. Harper running out is, again, justifiable for her age and not to mention, it definitely takes the plot forward because now she has the chance to observe the 'movement' in the bushes. The glowing human silhouette is interesting and the colorful heat waves, like halos, and the passing through the bushes is another interesting aspect that will certainly hook the readers even further. At the end of this scene, not only does the panic build up for Harper but also for the readers.

Upon returning home, Harper's mother doesn't believe her story with her anger blinding her. However, it does seem a little too forced in order to just let the scene pass away and for Harper to fall into trouble later with the 'dark figure'. Writers often tend to stall the obvious reactions or concerns of their characters in the hope of keeping the secrets or the actual conflicts under cover--and for the audience to stick around longer--but it can certainly backfire when a *lot* of science-fictions do that. Given the conversation between Harper and her mom, her mom sounded genuinely scared for her children and highly concerned about their safety. But when her daughter actually walked off into a night, she didn't chase her neither did she ask Brett or Olivia to do so. It sounds too much of a leeway for the sequential events to happen. Furthermore, when Harper actually makes it back and mentions seeing something, her mother immediately shuts her up. Why does her scared thoughts regarding the Sleeping Syndrome suddenly disappear? While the syndrome itself and the 'black figure' scenes were interesting, this particular scene can be a total buster for some readers who are tired of seeing the parents being super apprehensive one second and totally ignorant in another.

Maybe Mom does run behind her but she isn't able to catch up with her, which can be understandable since Harper is a soccer player. Of course, since the POV is of Harper's, she doesn't know what until she reaches back home. So when she does enter, tip-toes, and Brett finds her, followed by her mom calling her out, the mom can showcase a frantic reaction (filled with anger) where she shouts how she ran behind Harper but her daughter was so fast, she couldn't find her around. Upon registering this reaction, Harper *assumes* her mother would never believe the 'dark figure's story and instead, lash out more. So she keeps the incident to herself and stays quiet. To which the mom responds with the drug remarks and so on. This would allow the scene to not change a lot while also keeping the readers in Harper's head and her assumptions leading to the dark-figure-incident being ignored rather than raising their pitchforks for the mom who decided to assume her daughter is lying.

Harper's room description gives away her interests like soccer and indie rock. Even her smartness makes it to the readers when she draws the conclusion of her mother bitching about her to Olivia and Brett and Olivia says the word 'careless'. Also when she makes a remark [*diseases don't spread when they kill that fast.*] The sisters' conversation about the syndrome works as a pamphlet for the readers to understand the disease and it's a smart way to get the essentials across so good!