

English as an Additional Language 2019 v1.4

IA3 high-level annotated sample response transcript

Transcript

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Athos speaks

Student

The monster is here.

It had to come to this ... to this moment when we were asked to believe a monstrous thing. It had to be this awful.

There are always monsters, but before, they were just in the game and in our imaginations. Now, they are here, with us, and what we created in our game has become real. A hideous version of real.

The monsters we dreamt of we could control, but this monster controls us. The beast has taken us, pawns in its horrifying game, and flung us about in a whirl of chaos. As the dark winds of treachery swirl, we suffer. And we must bring ourselves out of that darkness.

There is a body in the morgue, and the body is supposed to be that of my friend, Will Byers. Will of our Gang of Four, Will of great gentleness, Will the lost boy. He has always been a little adrift, probably because his very ordinary father has always been a very ordinary man. I have always tried to shield him, especially since his drop-kick dad left Hawkins. Sure, I'm the Dungeon Master because I like to be the boss, but I'm also the Dungeon Master because Will needs me to be. I'm another male to learn from, bond with, believe. He trusts me, and he knows whatever beast or challenge we are facing, we do it together. The three musketeers transplanted to Hawkins, Indiana! We lean on one another, and Will, more than the others, needs me to direct him, guide him and protect him. And now the game has become our reality, and I can protect him no longer.

The monster may have taken Will Byers, but not his life. Lucas, Dustin and I know that whatever thing they dragged from that quarry is not Will, but we also know the Demogorgon is here. We feel its hot breath in the lies swirling around us, its tentacles invading our homes and its rancid smell pervading places that were once perfect to us. Our homes, which were once our sanctuary, our fortress against the cruelties of the schoolyard bullies, our places to laugh and share. If Mum and Dad knew what we were doing! The beast of that betrayal now lurks in every jagged moment of fear that splinters our thoughts.

And fear is everywhere. Ever since we found El in the woods, fear and hope have been mixed in all of us, like the chocolate and cream of a Twinkie bar. It's almost as if the master of the game gave us El at the moment Will was taken — a monstrous exchange. But I trust her. I trust that her awareness of Will is not part of an elaborate play in an elaborate game. Hopefully, I can bring her to trust me. She seems to like me, but then she turns with that cold stare and I'm lost again in the labyrinth of doubt. She doesn't exactly say much, but something

stirs in me when I am near El. It's like an electric current ebbing and flowing between us — that we are the terminals of the circuit. Just now, when I was doubting her, when I challenged her about it all, she brought Will back to me. When she summoned up the Clash through the walkie talkie, Will was with us, smiling, strumming the beat, singing along. And El brought him here, a prized gift, to our den, just for a moment from the Upside Down. And for a moment, the Demogorgon diminished and we were again the masters of the game.

The Upside Down. That is where the monster lurks, where Will is trapped, where El has endured. When we found her, I knew we were opening ourselves and our families to danger. A strange girl with shaved hair, perhaps delivered to us to force us to make the ultimate play. I longed to tell my parents, but she outplayed me. Slamming the door before me was a master stroke - in awe, I understood that whatever they'd done to her in the Hawkins Lab was freaky, and real. I understood how strongly I needed to protect her. I am the Dungeon Master, and this challenge is mine.

Before, we played games. We'd never fought, except in the game. El changed that, flinging Dustin from me when he challenged me about her. She has helped us to fight the monsters of our adolescent world too — humiliating Troy, our own school bully in a puddle of her making. If I'm the Dungeon Master I have to run this game - Lucas and Dustin need me, but El and Will need me more. We have a chance to release Will from the dimension of the Demogorgon. We have a chance to save El from the savagery of the creepy science of the Hawkins' lab. We have a chance to save Hawkins from the monster that lurks in all of our nightmares. But this salvation could come at a great cost — the cost of friendship, the cost of safety, the cost of lives.

NO. A body was dragged from the quarry today, but it was not the body of Will Buyers. Will is trapped in the Upside Down, where a monster hunts him. El is traumatised by men who keep the secrets of a strange science. And I need to be the master of the game, and keep these pieces on the board.

There are monsters everywhere. We dream them, hear about them on the news spewing from the televisions in our living rooms, imagine their ferocity and cunning in our games. But this monster is here — the worst monster of all — and it threatens us all. As master of the game, I will master it, for Will, for El, for us all.