

A close-up, high-magnification photograph of a human eye. The iris is a deep, textured brown. A metallic, segmented insect leg, resembling a centipede or similar arachnid, is crawling across the lower eyelid and the inner corner of the eye. The background is a blurred, warm-toned skin texture.

BARRY J. HUTCHISON

“Horri-fy-ingly brilliant”

- The Phantom Zone

THE BUG
EPISODE ZERO

THE BUG: EPISODE ZERO
By Barry J. Hutchison

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INTRODUCTION

Thanks for signing up for your free eBooks! You hold in your hands (OK, your *virtual* hands) an exclusive mini prequel episode to my apocalyptic horror serial, The Bug. At a little over 5,000 words, it's around a third of the length of the other episodes in the series, but will introduce you to some of the characters you'll meet in the series proper, and drop some major hints about how the world started to go to Hell!

Once you've read Episode Zero, be sure to pick up **The Complete Season One** to find out how the story develops, and save a small fortune over buying the episodes individually.

Get [The Bug – Complete Season One](#) now!

THE WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON DC

23rd May, 4:34 PM

Jay Garrick paused outside the doors to the Oval Office, steadied his shaking hand, then knocked twice and entered without waiting to be told. The President and the recently-appointed Agriculture Secretary – Jay knew her name, but for some reason it was escaping him – turned to the door, surprised by the sudden appearance of the Chief-of-Staff.

“Mr President. A moment of your time.”

President Trant was clearly irritated, but for once made a half-decent effort to not show it. “In a meeting here, Jay. What’s the problem?”

“I’m afraid we’ll need to clear the room, sir,” Jay said. “Secretary, could you give us a moment?”

The President leaned back in his chair. “Hey now, wait a minute. I set the rules round these parts. Wait right where you are, sweetheart,” he said, and Jay felt his fingernails dig into his palms.

This rich, crass, orange-faced asshole had been president for barely over three months, but had already managed to make the country a laughing stock around the globe. He was a car-crash, turning the post of the most powerful man in the world into some trashy reality TV show, and Jay didn’t have time for his shit.

“Secretary, leave. Now,” said Jay. She glanced at the president, but something in Jay’s voice and expression told her that the decision was now out of Trant’s hands.

“Now wait just a goddamn minute,” the President began.

“Mr President,” Jay said, grudging every syllable. He continued to speak, but quickly faltered to a stop. Trant was no longer paying him any attention. He had turned away, his eyes following the Agriculture Secretary as she swayed out through the double doors.

Trant whistled quietly below his breath. “Would you look at that ass.” He looked up at Jay, as if only just remembering he was there. “So, what’s the problem?”

Jay lay a document folder on the desk, more forcibly than he’d intended. “Shortly after sixteen-hundred hours today, a number of currently unidentified objects were picked up on radar all across the mainland US,” Jay said.

The President flipped open the folder, cast his gaze across a page of dark green with some lighter green dots on it, then shrugged. “So?”

Jay stiffened. “So, they showed up for a few seconds, then vanished. We have no idea where they went.”

“So they’re gone?” said Trant. He flipped the folder closed. “That’s great. Good work.”

“Just because we don’t know where they are, doesn’t mean they’re gone, sir.”

“But they might be,” said the President.

Jay bit his lip. Trant smiled, showing off teeth which appeared supernaturally white against his orange-hued face.

“Technically, they could be gone, sir, yes, but--”

“Well alright, then!” said the President. “Score one for the USA. Am I right?”

He held up a hand for a high five. Jay looked at it for a few lingering seconds, then leaned over and flipped open the folder again. “NASA detected over a thousand objects in the space of a few seconds. We have reports from our allies abroad of similar situations occurring in their territories. Objects – hundreds of objects – showing up for a moment, then vanishing.”

The President sighed and rocked in his chair, agitated. “OK. So what is it?”

“We don’t know, sir,” said Jay.

“Well then you should probably go find out,” Trant said. “Could it be a malfunction?”

“No.”

“You sure?”

Jay sighed. “As sure as we can be, sir.”

Trant’s fuzzy eyebrows raised. “Aha! So you’re *not* sure!” He waved the report away. “It’s probably a malfunction.”

“That’s so unlikely as to be almost impossible, *sir*,” said Jay through gritted teeth.

“It’s a malfunction. Trust me. I can feel it in my gut,” said the President. He slapped his stomach with both hands. “I have a knack for this sort of thing.”

Jay opened his mouth to snap, then decided against it. He took a long, slow breath before he finally spoke. “With all due respect, Mr President, there is no ‘this sort of thing’. What we’re seeing here has never been seen before. This is unprecedented.”

The President flashed a patronizing smile. “You stress too much, Jay. That’s your problem. You’ve got a bug up your ass about this. I don’t think it’s anything worth worrying about.”

“Well I *am* worried about it, sir. And so are a lot of other people who, with respect, aren’t cretinous assholes who bought their way into the job.” He slammed a hand down on the report, making the President jump. “Twelve of these things were spotted here. Over Washington. Where my family lives. Until we figure out what they are and where they’ve got to, then you’re Goddamn right I’m worried.”

The President blinked several times in surprise. He looked down at Jay’s hand, fingers splayed on the report, and nodded slowly. Trant straightened his tie. He smoothed down his ridiculous hair.

“Mr Garrick,” he said, stabbing a finger towards the Chief-of-Staff. “You’re fired.”

INTERSTATE-495, MASSACHUSETTS

23rd MAY, 11:25 PM

"I really gotta pee!"

"He really needs to pee, Dave."

Dave Morris glanced in his rear view mirror. He could see his son in the back, bouncing up and down in the car seat. "I know. I heard. There's a gas station a couple of miles ahead."

"Noooo!" protested Donnie from the back seat. "I can't wait that long."

Dave felt his wife's eyes on him. "He can't wait that long," she said. "He's going to pee his pants."

"Jesus, he went like forty minutes ago," Dave muttered. He indicated right, despite there being no other traffic in sight, and swerved onto the shoulder. "There," he said. He looked at his wife expectantly.

"What?" she said. "I'm not taking him out there. It's dark."

Dave mumbled something below his breath and unclipped his seat belt. "Fine. I'll go."

Throwing open his door, Dave jumped out of the car, stomped to the back and opened the rear door. Donnie was clutching himself, his bouncing becoming more and more frantic. "Hurry, Daddy!"

As soon as the belt was undone, Donnie jumped from the car. Leaving the doors open, they ran, hand in hand, over to where the edge of the road fell away into grass. They both fumbled with the drawstring of Donnie's jogging pants and hurriedly pulled them down.

Dave jumped back as a stream of hot urine erupted like a jet. "Hey, watch it!" he yelled, and Donnie giggled.

"Nearly got you!" he said. "I nearly peed on you!"

"I know, you little brat!" Dave said, laughing.

They waited for Donnie's bladder to drain. Headlights passed in the opposite direction, reflecting off something shiny and metallic in the grass just off to their left. The lights passed and the shape was lost to the darkness again.

Donnie hummed quietly to himself as the flow slowed to a dribble. Curious, Dave took out his phone and hit the flashlight button. An oval of light illuminated the patchy grass ahead of him, just before it met a wall of tall evergreens. He swept the light across the ground a couple of times, then stopped.

A metal cylinder lay half-buried in a mound of soil. At first, Dave thought it was a fire extinguisher, but there were no hoses or handles to be seen on it. In fact, there wasn't much of *anything* to be seen. The cylinder was a polished steel color, with no markings or attachments at all.

"Huh," said Dave. He took a step closer to the thing.

"Daddy?" said Donnie, suddenly panicked.

"Don't worry, buddy, I'm not going anywhere. You finish up," said Dave.

He stopped a few paces from the cylinder, not daring get too close. For all he knew it was an unexploded bomb, and messing with it probably wasn't a good idea.

"Daddy!"

"One sec, Donnie," Dave said, giving a thumbs-up over his shoulder. He ducked down and shone the flashlight at the end of the metal tube. Now he was closer, he could see a black spot there, half-hidden by the churned up dirt.

The light picked out a dark hollow area, and Dave realized the spot was actually a hole. He felt himself relax. It wasn't a bomb, it was a container. He angled himself so he could see as far as possible inside the tube. Empty. If anything had been in there, it wasn't there any longer.

"Daddy!" Donnie said.

Dave turned and almost blinded the four-year-old with the flashlight. "Sorry! What's up, Donnie?"

Donnie pointed off to the left. "Who's that man?"

Dave followed his son's finger. The town of Franklin was just a few miles up ahead. Silhouetted against its glow, a man was running towards them. No, not just running, *sprinting*. His head was down, and his arms and legs pumped furiously as he chewed up the ground between them. He was around five hundred yards away, but at the speed he was going, he'd close that gap in no time.

"What the Hell?" Dave muttered, then he felt his stomach tighten when he saw the man had something long and pointed in his hand. A knife. Combat or chef's, he was too far away to tell, and Dave had no intention of hanging around to find out.

"Shit," he hissed, grabbing his son under the arms and running with him up the embankment.

"I haven't pulled my pants up!" Donnie protested.

"It's OK, son, it's OK," Dave said, scrambling up onto the shoulder. He glanced over his shoulder. The man was only a couple of hundred yards away now, and the knife looked bigger than ever.

Kicking Donnie's door closed, Dave jumped into the front seat and shoved the boy into Elaine's arms. "Take him!" he barked, and Elaine pulled Donnie over to her side.

“What’s the matter? What’s wrong?” she asked.

Dave slammed his door and hit the central locking, then nodded ahead to where the man was closing fast. He was within the beams of the headlamps now, and from the way his face was twisted up with rage, Dave knew he’d made the right decision to run.

“Jesus. Jesus, who is that?” Elaine gasped.

“Hold on,” Dave barked. He hit the gas and the car lurched forward. Wheels spun and tires screamed as the car swerved off the shoulder and back onto the freeway.

“Dave! He’s coming, he’s coming!” Elaine cried, holding Donnie tight to her chest. The man hurled himself at the moving car. There was a *thud* as the hood clipped him, sending him spinning into the darkness.

Dave hit the brakes and the car skidded to a stop. “What are you doing? Drive!” Elaine urged.

Turning in his seat, Dave searched the ground behind them. He could see a crumpled shape in the road, picked out in the red of his tail lights. “He’s hurt,” Dave said.

“Good!” said Elaine. “Did you see the knife he had?”

“Mommy?” Donnie whispered, his bottom lip trembling. “Is that man going to hurt us?”

“No, baby, no he’s not,” Elaine said, squeezing him in tight.

“Holy shit,” Dave mumbled. The man with the knife was moving again, already halfway to his feet, his eyes locked on the car.

Dave hit the gas again. For a few seconds, he could see the red-tinted outline of the man giving chase, but then he was swallowed by the darkness.

“Who the Hell was that guy?” asked Elaine.

“How should I know?” spat Dave. “Sorry,” he said. “Didn’t mean to snap. Just a little tense.”

Elaine smiled shakily. “No wonder.” She rested a hand on his arm. “We should call the cops.”

Dave nodded, and checked his mirrors again. He knew there was no way the guy could run fast enough to catch them, but he wanted to be damn sure they were as far away from him as possible.

“You OK, buddy?” he asked, as Elaine pulled up Donnie’s pants.

“I’m OK,” Donnie said. He broke into a grin and turned to his mom. “I nearly peed on Dad!”

Elaine gasped in dramatic shock. “You did not!”

“I did, too!” Donnie giggled. “I almost peed right on him!”

“Oh, you little scamp,” Elaine said, tickling Donnie until he laughed so hard he almost peed again. “We should get you back in your seat,” she said.

“Can you clamber in yourself, buddy?” asked Dave. He shot his wife a sideways look. “Maybe best if we don’t stop just yet.”

Elaine nodded and helped Donnie scramble into the back seat. "Grab your belt and pass it to Mommy, sweetheart," she urged, stretching over as far as she could. After a few attempts, she managed to slot the seatbelt buckle into place.

Donnie put on his headphones and his eyes immediately glazed over as he stared at the screen on the back of Dave's headrest.

"Ah, good old *Paw Patrol*," Elaine said, turning back to face front. "So... what the Hell was all that about?"

Dave blew out his cheeks and shrugged. "Beats me. Donnie saw him just, I don't know, running at us. Soon as I saw the knife, I knew I had to get us out of there."

Elaine squeezed his leg. "Crazy." She patted her pockets. "Damn, my cell's in my bag in the trunk."

Dave glanced down at his hip. A tiny circle of light shone through his jeans. "Mine's in my pocket. Left the flashlight on," he said. He began wriggling into a position where he could reach into the pocket. "How come you didn't see him?" he asked.

"Hmm?"

"The guy. The knife guy. He was in front of the car. How come you didn't see him?"

"Oh, I was looking at a bug," Elaine said.

Dave shot her another sideways look. "You were what?"

"A bug. I was looking at a bug," she said, matter-of-factly. "Guess it climbed in when *someone* left the doors wide open."

Dave blinked. "You were looking at a bug?"

Elaine nodded. "Uh-huh."

"What sort of bug? I don't... You spent the whole time looking at a bug?"

"It was a big bug," said Elaine. "It was, I dunno, it was interesting."

"Interesting?" said Dave. "You hate bugs."

Elaine shrugged. "I didn't hate this one. Well, I did at first, but then it crawled onto my leg and, I dunno. It was cool."

Dave snorted. "Bullshit. A bug crawled onto your leg and you didn't scream the place down? You panicked at that cartoon with the ladybug in it."

"Yeah, yeah," Elaine said. She smiled, but there was a flash of irritation behind it. "Whatever."

"So where did it go?" asked Dave. "This cool big bug you saw. Where did it go?"

Elaine shrugged. "Inside me, I guess."

Dave glanced from the road to his wife, expecting to see her smirking, but she was looking ahead at the lights of Franklin. "It crawled *inside you*?"

Elaine's head snapped sharply round to the left. "Yes, Dave, it fucking crawled inside me. Do you have a problem with that?"

Dave frowned. "Do I have a problem? What are you talking about? What's *your* problem, Elaine?"

Elaine shook her head and scowled. She muttered something below her breath, too quiet for Dave to hear.

"What did you say?" he asked.

"I said I'm itchy, OK?" she spat, scraping her fingernails down her neck and leaving four parallel red lines on her skin. "Do I have to tell you fucking everything?"

"What the Hell's the matter with you?" Dave demanded. "Why are you being such an asshole?"

"Pull over," Elaine said.

"What? No, I'm not pulling over! Why the fuck would I pull over? What's wrong with you?"

"I said," Elaine hissed, grabbing the wheel, "pull *over*."

She yanked hard on the wheel. The car swerved violently, tires screeching across the asphalt. Dave heard his son scream from the back seat, then felt a strange sensation of weightlessness as the wheels hit the embankment, and the car flipped sideways into a roll.

THE GRAYS' FLAT, GLASGOW, SCOTLAND

24th MAY, 2:48 PM

Ashleigh Gray stubbed the end of her cigarette into the foil wrapper of a cherry bakewell tart, and reached for another. She was halfway through lighting it when she heard the front door open.

"Owen? What you doing home?" Ashleigh demanded, stepping out of the narrow kitchen and into the narrower hall. "Why are you no' at school?"

Owen dropped his bag inside the door and shrugged. "It's boring. We're not doing nothing."

He looked over at the door to his little sister's room, where he could hear her crying. "What's wrong with Bethan?"

"I don't know, she won't shut up," Ashleigh said. She lit her cigarette and inhaled deeply. "What do you mean, you're not doing nothing? What about lessons and that?"

Owen shrugged again. "I'm not missing nothing. Is she alright?"

Ashleigh rolled her eyes. "She's having a tantrum, leave the wee bitch. Look what she did to me." She pulled down the neck of her t-shirt to reveal three narrow scratches across her shoulder. "She was wailing and greetin', and I'm trying to settle her down and give her her bottle and that, and the vicious wee cow goes and scratches me."

Owen pulled down the hood of his sweatshirt and stared at the door, like he could see right through it. "How long's she been like that for?"

Ashleigh shrugged. "An hour."

"An hour? Fuck's sake, Ma. We'd better check on her."

Owen reached for the door handle, but Ashleigh stopped him. "Don't! She needs to learn no' to be a wee dick. We'll give her another half an hour."

"You can't just leave her greetin' like that for an hour and a half!" Owen protested.

"Aye I can. Didn't do you any harm, did it?" She took another draw on her cigarette, and blew the smoke out through her nose.

"Crash us a fag, will you?" Owen said.

"Away and jog on and get your own," Ashleigh told him. "I've only a couple left. And you're only fifteen, so you're not old enough."

Shaking his head, Owen made for the living room. "Can't go in there," Ashleigh told him.

Owen stopped. "How no'?"

"The insect man's in there."

Owen looked from her to the door and back again. "The fuck's the insect man?"

"You know what I mean. The thing. The spray guy. The insect killer."

"Pest control, you mean?" said Owen.

"Aye. Him. Whatever," Ashleigh said. She rolled her eyes and raised her voice to be heard over the sound of Bethan's cries. "We found these big... beasties. Crawling all over the place. Dozens of the bastards." She inhaled another lungful of smoke. "Came in through that hole up in the corner above the telly. Big, horrible black things. I nearly shat myself when I saw Bethan with one."

Owen frowned. "How d'you mean?"

Ashleigh shuddered. "She was holding one. Just sitting there holding it in her hands and smiling at it, like it was a fucking puppy or something. That was when I noticed the rest of them piling in through the hole, and ran to get the phone."

"You didn't just leave Bethan there, did you?"

"Of course I didn't," Ashleigh scowled. "I mean, aye, for a bit, but then I went back in and got her. I'm no' a fucking monster."

"Fuck's sake, Ma! No wonder she's greetin'!"

"She's fine," Ashleigh said. "She'll cry herself to sleep and wake up grand. You did it all the time. Right moaning wee bastard you were. I just learned to block you out."

"Mother o' the fucking year," Owen muttered. He pulled up his hood and headed for the front door.

"Where you going?" Ashleigh demanded.

"Out. No point sticking round here, is there?" Owen said. "I'm going to go and meet Dagan."

"I need you to babysit the night, don't be late."

Owen snorted. "Aye, we'll see."

"You'd better not be. You'd better be back here by seven."

"Sorry, can't hear you, Ma," Owen said. He tapped his ear and smirked. "I must've just learned to block you out."

SHOP WISE GROCERY STORE, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

24th May, 7:37 PM

“Have a nice day, and thank you for shopping wise at Shop Wise.”

Wayne Goldwyn tucked his thumbs into his belt loops and rocked back on his heels, quietly congratulating himself on a job well done. It had taken a few months of hard work and laying down the law, but the store was now operating like a finely-tuned machine.

Jaden had been one of the bigger hurdles to overcome, of course, and so to hear him reciting the store’s corporate valediction word-perfectly felt like a victory that was to be celebrated. And Wayne knew just how to do it.

“Col,” he said, interrupting the other checkout operator mid-way through scanning a customer’s groceries. “I’m going through the back for five minutes, OK? Hold the fort while I’m gone.”

Col nodded. “Uh, yeah. Sure. No problem.”

Wayne smiled at the customer, then half-walked, half-skipped through the swing doors leading through to the back store. Half a dozen fully-laden pallets stood lined up, waiting to be offloaded after the store closed. Wayne glanced at his watch. A little over twenty minutes until closing. Plenty of time.

Squeezing between the pallets and the wall, Wayne hurried towards the bathroom, his heart picking up speed as he worked the buckle on his belt.

By the time he’d slid the lock closed on the door, his pants were at his ankles, and his phone clutched in his left hand. He reached down with his right hand and gently massaged his balls as his thumb hurriedly tapped out a web address on the phone.

An image of a fresh-faced teenager wearing nothing but a forced smile filled the screen, and Wayne let out a little groan of anticipation. He backed up towards the toilet, his hand now gently stroking the flaccid shaft of his—

SPLASH!

Wayne jumped, startled by the sudden sound from behind him. He turned to see a fat, shiny insect thrashing its legs frantically in the water at the bottom of the toilet bowl.

“Ugh,” he muttered, leaning over and staring down at the thing. It was almost as big as the phone in his hand. At first, he thought it had a cut on its back, then he realized that it was upside-down, and what he thought was a cut was actually...

No. No way.

Wayne leaned in closer. The bug's thrashing made it hard to clearly make it out, but there was a horizontal slit running right across its abdomen which looked unsettlingly like a tiny mouth.

Swiping away the porn, Wayne flicked to the camera app. The insect's thrashing had slowed to a series of jerky twitches now, which would make it much easier to focus. He'd stick the photo up on Facebook and see if anyone knew what the Hell it was. He knew already it was sure to be his most commented post ever.

Wayne tapped the screen to focus. He positioned the now motionless bug in the frame. Then he jumped as something landed on his back and scurried upwards into his hair.

FRANKLIN, MASSACHUSETTS, USA

24th MAY, 6:45 PM

Amy Banks sat hunched over the kitchen table, swirling a half-eaten bowl of Fruit Loops around with a spoon and wishing her hangover away. The smell of dinner roasting in the oven wasn't doing her stomach any favors.

She looked up briefly when he dad came in, untucking in his shirt and loosening his tie. "Amy," he said, and she could tell right away he wasn't happy. "When did you come home?"

Amy shrugged and pushed one Fruit Loop around another in a little dance. "I didn't really notice the time."

"Your mother and I did. After 5 AM. Where were you?"

"A friend's."

Her dad rested his hands on the back of the chair across the table from her. "Oh? Which friend?"

Amy let the spoon clatter into the bowl and sighed. "Just... just a friend's, Dad. Jesus."

"You watch your tone, young lady," her dad warned. "You stay out all night, you sleep to mid-afternoon... That sort of disrespect is not welcome in this house. Is that clear?"

Amy sighed, then nodded.

"I didn't catch that. Is that clear?"

"Fine, yes, it's clear. Sorry," Amy said. She rubbed her forehead with the tips of the fingers on both hands. Her dad sighed.

"Are you hungover? Have you been drinking alcohol again?"

"It was just a few drinks, Dad," Amy told him.

"A few *illegal* drinks. You're nineteen."

"Yeah, well, it's a stupid law," Amy spat. "I'm old enough to get married, have kids, vote, go to war... I'm old enough to drink."

"*Get married*. Ha!" her dad said. "Who'd want to marry you?"

That one caught Amy off guard. "Uh... thanks, Dad. You're a real morale booster."

Her dad was leaning on the back of the chair now, his fingers flexing in and out, in and out.

"Did you see the bugs?" he asked.

Amy frowned, which made her headache pound even harder. "What?"

"The bugs," said her dad. "In the garden this morning. Did you see them?"

"Not that I noticed," Amy said.

"I did," said her dad.

Amy waited for him to say more, but when it was clear he wasn't going to, she picked up her spoon again and went back to swirling the cereal. "Well, good for you. Bugs. In the garden. Way to go, Dad."

Her dad's fingers were *cricking* in and out faster and faster now. That, and the way his breath was whistling through his nose, was really starting to get on Amy's nerves.

"Where's Mom?" she asked.

"Upstairs. Getting your brother ready for archery," Dad said. "You woke him up, this morning. Coming home late like that. From seeing boys."

"I wasn't *seeing boys*," said Amy.

"Seeing boys," her dad hissed, his eyes burning into her. "Kissing boys. *Fucking* boys."

Amy stopped twisting the spoon in her cereal. She looked up at her dad in shock. "I'm sorry?"

"You heard me, slut."

Amy's eyes went wide. "Dad, what are you...? Why are you saying this shit? What's wrong with you? I'm not a slut. I was with a friend. You're out of line."

Her dad violently tossed the chair aside, sending it sailing across the kitchen. Amy watched it until it hit the wall with a *crack*. When she looked back at her dad, he was lunging across the table at her, his face twisted into a furious snarl.

"What the fuck are you doing?" Amy yelled, leaping back. "Mom! Mom!"

"She won't help you," Amy's dad spat. He made a grab for her, but she dodged to the opposite end of the table, avoiding his swipe. "Why would anyone want to help a dirty slut like you?"

Hot tears sprang to Amy's eyes. She backed away as her dad advanced around the table. He shoved the remaining four chairs aside one by one, stalking Amy round the dining area. "Dad, why are you saying this stuff? Please stop."

"No, *you* should have stopped, Amy," he said. "Stopped sneaking out, stopped drinking, stopped behaving like the dirty little whore you are."

There was a *shninkt* as he pulled a knife from the wooden block on the counter. Amy's heart leaped into her throat. "Dad! Dad, Jesus, what are you doing?"

She eyed up her exits. There were two doors out of the kitchen, and her dad was between her and both of them. "Mom!" she screamed. "Mom, help me!"

"She won't help you. No-one will help you," her dad said, his voice flat and level. All rage was gone from it now, which for some reason terrified Amy even more. "She knows this is right. This is the right thing to do."

He advanced, forcing Amy to back right up against the sink. "Dad, don't, please, don't!" she babbled, but still he kept coming, kept staring, kept gripping the knife. He drew the blade back and

lunged forwards, closing the gap between them. Amy's arm flailed out. Her fingers brushed against metal. She swung.

The heavy-based frying pan smashed into the side of her dad's head, right above his left ear. He stumbled right, fighting to keep his balance, then spun back to her, the knife already drawing back once again.

Amy sobbed as she swung again, again, again, slamming the pan against his skull, filling the kitchen with the sound of metal on bone. Blood bloomed across his left eye and seeped down his neck, and his face furrowed into a red-slicked mask of fury.

Something between a hiss and a roar erupted from within him and he flew at her again, one hand clawing for her throat, the other taking aim with the blade. Amy screamed as she swung the heavy pan once more.

The curved cast-iron edge struck his across the temple, and there was a sound like splintering wood. Her dad stopped coming and went suddenly limp, his eyes rolling back in his head.

He sagged down onto the linoleum like a deflating balloon, twitched twice, shuddered once, then lay deathly still. Amy was staring at him when she caught sight of the frying pan in her hand. She frowned as she studied it, like she'd never seen the thing before in her life.

Then, after a moment, she threw the pan across the room. Her legs collapsed from under her, the room began to spin. Alone in the kitchen with her dad's body in front of her, Amy Banks screamed.

And screamed.

And screamed.

Enjoyed this exclusive teaser episode? Continue the story below...

[The Bug – Complete Season One](#)