

LONELY BOYS

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Version 4

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EXT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, FRONT STREET - DAY

A road of terraced houses in a regular neighborhood. Quiet, suburban and relatively unassuming.

A boy, CHARLIE, (11, small and shy), walks home from school with his head downcast.

Nearby, a front door opens and Charlie stops abruptly. He watches as his neighbor, CONNOR, (40s, brutal looking) walks out.

Connor stares Charlie down as he gets into a beaten up car and drives away. Connor's car has an extremely loud exhaust.

Charlie looks up at Connor's house and sees an upstairs curtain move back into place, but Charlie doesn't see anyone inside.

Charlie continues towards his own house next door, which has a SOLD sign outside.

He opens his front door and enters...

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Charlie's modest home is in disarray with packing boxes and tools still scattered around.

Charlie's father, JACK (30s, jack-the-lad) gets ready for a night shift and is in his own world.

Charlie's mother, SUE (30s, loud, good-natured), prepares dinner in the kitchen, she is also somewhat distracted.

Jack walks towards the front door, deep in conversation with Sue, they don't spend much attention on Charlie.

JACK

Sue, this button's loose on my pants again
and I can't find my other pai-

(sees Charlie)

All right, Charlie boy, good first day?

Charlie knows this isn't a sincere question and so he doesn't answer. Sue leans out of the kitchen doorway.

SUE

Look in the bottom of your dresser-

(sees Charlie)

Hello, love, good first day-?

(to Jack)

I'm sure that's where I put them.

Jack purses his lips and walks upstairs.

JACK (O.S.)

(jokey)

No one ever moved my things when I was a bachelor.

SUE

By move your things, I think you mean put them away!

Sue rolls her eyes at Charlie as if to say - "*this guy*" - as she disappears back into the kitchen.

Charlie drops his bag and runs out into...

EXT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

A small square yard completely boxed in by a fence. It's like a small cage for children filled with brightly colored toys.

Charlie kicks a soccer ball around the yard. He seems bored. Unaware that someone secretly watches him through the fence.

Getting too excited, Charlie accidentally kicks the ball too hard and it bounces off into Connor's yard.

Charlie's eyes widen, then he looks frustrated, realizing that he likely won't get it back.

Charlie looks for something else to do when the ball unexpectedly lands back in his yard.

Surprised, Charlie grabs the ball and looks eagerly at the fence.

CHARLIE

Hello?

There's a long silence as he tries to look through the fence.

IZZY (O.S.)

...Hi.

Charlie gets excited when he notices an eye looking at him.

CHARLIE

Hi! I'm Charlie.

Charlie waits for the girl to respond, but she doesn't.

CHARLIE (cont'd)

What's your name?

IZZY (O.S.)

...Izzy.

Charlie smiles, mashing himself against the fence in his excitement, trying desperately to spy Izzy through the crack.

CHARLIE

Hi, Izzy. We just moved here, so I haven't met many other kids yet.

Izzy stares at him through the fence. She looks pale and strange. Charlie doesn't know what to make of her.

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Um, we could play soccer, if you like.

IZZY (O.S.)

...I don't know how.

CHARLIE

I can teach you!

Izzy goes quiet. It makes Charlie anxious, he tries harder to see her through the fence, but she's out of view.

IZZY (O.S.)

...I'm not allowed to leave.

Charlie furrows his brow, he's tactless.

CHARLIE

What? How old are you?

IZZY (O.S.)

...Eleven.

Charlie smiles brightly.

CHARLIE

You must go to Atwood Academy, like me!

IZZY (O.S.)

...No.

Charlie cocks his head, something isn't adding up here.

CHARLIE

Where do you go to school then?

IZZY (O.S.)

I don't-

The sound of Connor's loud exhaust causes Izzy to fall silent.

Charlie waits... then tries to spy through the fence again.

CHARLIE

Izzy?

Charlie realizes she's gone.

SUE (O.S.)

Charlie! Dinner! Come wash up.

Charlie whips around in surprise to see Sue stood in the doorway. He dawdles by the fence for a moment before heading in.

As Charlie passes her...

SUE

What were you doing over there?

Charlie stops and smiles at his mother.

CHARLIE

I was talking to Izzy.

Sue furrows her brow like - "who?"

CHARLIE (cont'd)

The girl who lives next door.

Charlie grins as he saunters into the house, but Sue's frown deepens. She stares at Connor's house in bemusement.

EXT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, FRONT STREET - DAY

Charlie again walks home alone from school, he looks unhappy. His jacket is ripped and he has dirt on his face and shirt.

As Charlie passes his neighbor's house, the door opens and Connor comes outside.

Charlie offers Connor a bright, hopeful smile, only to be completely disregarded as Connor gets in his car and drives off.

Charlie's shoulders drop miserably, he sees the curtain move upstairs and his face brightens.

Excitedly, Charlie rushes home and enters...

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Charlie stops abruptly as he almost slams into Sue's rear, who is stood at the bottom of the stairs and blocking his path.

SUE

Jack!

JACK (O.S.)
(faintly)
What?

Sue doesn't hear Jack upstairs, or notice Charlie behind her.

SUE
Jack!

JACK (O.S.)
What!!

Impatient, Charlie bundles past and bombs towards the back yard.

SUE
Watch it, Charlie!

Charlie ignores Sue and runs straight into...

EXT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Charlie runs to the fence and mashes his face against it, trying to peer through the slats.

CHARLIE
Izzy!

Silence.

CHARLIE (cont'd)
Izzy!
(beat)
It's me - Charlie. Come outside!

More silence... Disappointed, Charlie slides down the fence and sits on the ground.

IZZY (O.S.)
How was school?

A slight smile brightens Charlie's face, but he seems glum. He inspects his frayed, dirty jacket with a curled lip.

CHARLIE
Do you find the other kids nice here?

IZZY (O.S.)
I don't know any of them.

CHARLIE
You're lucky, I don't like them at all.

Charlie pitches up on his knees and peers through the fence.

CHARLIE (cont'd)
Hey, we should go to the park tomorrow.

IZZY (O.S.)
...I'm not allowed to.

Charlie balks.

CHARLIE
Your dad sure is strict!

Izzy becomes irritated, her usually timid voice full of venom.

IZZY (O.S.)
Connor isn't my dad!

Connor's exhaust is heard in the distance. Izzy gasps and her body goes rigid.

She rushes off before Charlie can respond and scurries off into the house.

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, CHARLIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Charlie is awoken by a loud exhaust, but he's full of energy.

EXT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, BACK YARD - LATER

Charlie tries to peer through the fence into Connor's yard, anticipating the arrival of Izzy.

CHARLIE
Izzy, come and play!

Charlie grins, but when there's no response, he becomes dejected. He purses his lips as he climbs onto a trampoline.

He lies staring up at the sky. Charlie glances next door and sees Izzy watching him from an upstairs window.

He bolts upright with excitement and runs off into...

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Charlie runs to a front window and looks at the front street. He can't see Connor's car anywhere.

Immediately, Charlie puts on his shoes and rushes out into...

EXT. CONNOR'S HOUSE, FRONT STREET - CONTINUOUS

Charlie knocks on Connor's front door excitedly. When no-one answers he rings the doorbell several times.

CHARLIE
Izzy, it's me. Open up!

Eventually, footsteps come stomping down the stairs moments before the front door is thrown open.

Charlie recoils from Connor who appears at the door with a face like thunder. He looks drawn and exhausted.

CONNOR
Do you know what time it is!?

Charlie freezes in fear, causing Connor to advance on him.

CONNOR (cont'd)
Say something!

Something in Charlie shifts and he becomes bolder.

CHARLIE
I want to go to the park with Izzy.

Connor's body stiffens, a haunted expression on his face. He has the eerie calm of someone who's about to go ballistic.

CHARLIE (cont'd)
She said you won't let her, but I'll look after her I promise.

Connor notices Charlie attempt to look into the house and moves to block the door. Connor glares at Charlie.

CONNOR
Is this a joke?

Charlie's confused.

CHARLIE
Izzy, she...

Connor stares Charlie down, daring him to say another word. Then, Connor slams the door.

Charlie backs away from the house, unsure what to think. He glances up expecting to see the curtain move, but it's still.

Petrified and confused, Charlie sprints home.

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Charlie enters just as a sleepy Jack walks down the stairs.

JACK
Morning, Charlie boy.

Jack ruffles Charlie's hair as he walks past, oblivious to the panic on his son's face.

There is a bang next door followed by muffled shouting. Jack glances at the connecting wall and smirks.

JACK (cont'd)
Jeez, it's a bit early for that.

Jack walks off into the kitchen, completely indifferent to the drama going on next door.

Charlie stares at the connecting wall in horror.

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, CHARLIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Midnight, Charlie is awoken by a girl crying next door. He sits up and presses his ear against the wall, it sounds like Izzy.

Charlie frowns feeling guilty.

He hears a door open and heavy footsteps enter the room. Then something heavy is dragged along the ground.

Charlie narrows his eyes as he listens to the wall. Without realizing, Charlie starts following the sound...

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

He follows the sound downstairs and towards the front door.

Charlie hears Connor's front door and rushes to...

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, FRONT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Charlie stations himself at the front window and watches the street outside.

Connor drags a heavy suitcase, wary of prying eyes, and throws it into the trunk of his car.

Connor storms back toward the house, his eyes glance over the front window and Charlie ducks down in fear.

Worried he's been seen, Charlie bolts back upstairs.

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, CHARLIE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Charlie rushes into bed and tucks himself back in, where he stares wide-eyed at the ceiling unable to go back to sleep.

He flinches at the sound of Connor's loud exhaust driving away.

EXT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, BACK YARD - DAY

Charlie plays soccer alone in his back yard. He glances wistfully at Izzy's house, willing her to appear.

Charlie climbs onto the trampoline and jumps trying to peek over the fence. Izzy's yard, unlike his, doesn't have any kid's toys.

Charlie jumps down and kicks his ball into Izzy's yard.

He waits expectantly but the ball is never returned.

EXT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, FRONT DOOR - LATER

Charlie goes outside and sits on his front stoop. Waiting...

He sits there ALL DAY until the sun burns low on the horizon. Sue appears at the door and watches her despondent son.

SUE

Time to come in now, Charlie.

Charlie looks sad as he enters the house. Sue surveys the street wondering what he was waiting for.

EXT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, FRONT STREET - DAY

Charlie walks home from school. He looks sad, clearly having had another bad day.

He passes Connor's house and stares at it, devastated to see a FOR SALE sign hanging outside.

Charlie surveys the road but Connor's car is not there.

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Charlie and his parents are sat eating dinner. He pushes his food around in silence, as Sue and Jack chat.

Sue notices the sad look on Charlie's face and elbows Jack, they have a silent back and forth before...

JACK

Tell us about your day, Charlie.

Charlie glances up and shakes his head before returning his attention to his plate.

Jack and Sue shrug at one another.

INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE, FRONT ROOM - LATER

Charlie sits watching TV in the dark lounge, wedged between his parents who are fast asleep.

It is past Charlie's bedtime, but he doesn't want to sleep.

He stares into space as the 10PM NEWS begins.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)

Good evening and welcome to the News at 10. It is currently 10.03 and here are the night's top stories-

B-Roll of people holding lit candles in a dark park plays. They hold pictures of a young girl in their hands.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.) (cont'd)

A vigil was held in Providence this evening to mark the 4-year anniversary of the disappearance of Isabella Bamford-

Then, photos of a girl who looks just like Izzy appear on-screen. Charlie sits upright and his breath catches.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.) (cont'd)

Izzy was just 7 years old when she was abducted from Waterplace Park, and despite police efforts, no trace has ever been found of her...

Charlie stares at the TV in the horror of realization.

FADE TO BLACK

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.) (cont'd)

Those with information about Isabella's whereabouts are urged to come forward...