

A MINOR INCONVENIENCE

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FADE IN:

INT. LOFT — DAY

Soft morning light illuminates dust in a dingy loft room. The light drifts down from a tiny window from its sloping roof. A VOICE can be heard from below, drifting up like a distant memory. A woman's voice.

MOTHER (O.S.)  
Charlie? Are you still up there?

Another much younger voice answers.

YOUNG BOY (O.S.)  
Yes, ma, why?

MOTHER (O.S.)  
We're leaving very soon.

PAN ACROSS a MODEL TRAIN STATION.

The station is part of a larger model railway on which a YOUNG BOY, 8, is playing intently. His name is CHARLIE.

An older MALE VOICE calls up.

DAD (O.S.)  
Charles, come on! Time to go!

Charlie whirls round to look behind him.

There is a sudden rush and a whir as his little steam train disappears through a tunnel and falls off the table!

CHARLIE  
Oops!

Charlie looks at it angrily as-

DAD (O.S.)  
Charles!

CHARLIE  
Stop calling me Charles! I hate it!

Charlie's father TOM appears at the door, silhouetted by the strong sunlight coming through the roof window.

TOM  
What happened here?

CHARLIE  
It was an accident.

TOM  
Well, I wouldn't put you in charge of  
the trains. Come on, you can clean it  
up later.

Tom holds out his hand but Charlie is reluctant to leave.

CHARLIE  
Can't I stay here and play.

TOM  
You can't be here on your own. I'll  
help you when we get back, OK?

They can still be heard talking in the corridor.

CHARLIE (O.S.)  
How long will it take?

TOM (O.S.)  
As long as it needs to.

INT. CAR - DAY

Charlie sits on his own in the back of a 70's era family CAR as it moves swiftly along a country road. He stares out the window at the greenery passing by.

Tom is driving. His wife and Charlie's mum, GRACE, gives Charlie a concerned glance in the rear-view mirror.

CHARLIE  
Are we there yet?

GRACE  
Not yet.

CHARLIE  
How much longer?

TOM  
Not much now.

GRACE  
There's no need to be nervous,  
Charlie.

CHARLIE  
I'm not nervous. Just bored.

TOM  
Charles-

GRACE  
(to Dad)  
-he doesn't understand.

TOM  
He doesn't need to. I just think it's  
important for him to be there.

GRACE  
If you say so.

CHARLIE  
Will there be ice cream after?

GRACE  
I certainly hope so.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Their car approaches a large CAR PARK, next to other old fashioned looking cars popular in the 1970's. The car parks, and everyone gets out.

It is noticeable now that they are all wearing BLACK.

Charlie keeps a tight hold of his mothers arm and they all walk through a large iron GATE.

There is a procession of other MOURNERS, also wearing black, walking in a long line and approaching a CEMETERY.

Charlie can see the looming spire of a Gothic-style CHURCH, rising up over the horizon from endless lichen-covered, weather stained graves and tombstones.

CHARLIE  
Is that it?

TOM  
Yes.

At the grassy outskirts of the graveyard, a large CONGREGATION is gathering.

Some of them turn to Tom, nod, and shake hands. Others embrace both Tom and Grace. One old man ruffles Charlie's hair, much to his annoyance.

A GRAVE has been dug under the green grass, a deep dark hole, which seems to go on forever. Charlie stares down into the earth below.

He seems genuinely scared of it and clutches at Grace.

GRACE

Its alright.

TOM

It's not for you, Charlie. It's much too big.

Grace tuts sharply at her husband.

From behind Charlie five MEN, also dressed in black, walk up slowly, as a large black HEARSE follows them up the road.

Tom joins them, and they all pull out a large black COFFIN.

All six men proceed to HAUL it onto their shoulders and Charlie looks on in apprehension as the coffin is slowly LOWERED into the dark hole.

As it descends it reveals a PRIEST, dressed in a white and black cassock, standing at the end of the grave. He holds a bible and is peering through tiny round glasses.

PRIEST

In the midst of life, we are in death...

As Charlie stares deep into the grave, he can hear Tom's voice talking in the distance.

TOM (O.S.)

Someday all this will be yours...

CUT TO:

INT. MANSION - CORRIDOR - DAY

Tom is striding swiftly along a long, ornate corridor, covered in paneled wood. His footsteps ECHO loudly.

Charlie appears from behind him, timidly following a few paces back. The interior looks like it has not been cleaned in a very long time, cobwebs and dust everywhere.

CHARLIE

Can we go home now?

TOM (O.S.)  
Not yet, there is still something I  
want to show you.

Tom opens another large wooden paneled door, looking like it was part of the wall. It creaks as it opens.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Tom turns on the light.

They look inside. Dust hangs heavy in the air, the notes drifting through the light from a very grand but grubby-looking large bay window.

Through this thick gloom can be seen many shelf-fulls of dusty ancient books and crusty aged magazines.

CHARLIE  
What's this?

TOM  
Your Great-Grandfather's library.

CHARLIE  
Have we been here before?

TOM  
I was here when I was a little boy. I  
wanted you to see it before...

His voice trails off, a sudden sadness in his voice.

CHARLIE  
Did he read all these books?

TOM  
I doubt it.

CHARLIE  
Have you?

TOM  
No, of course not. of course I'd like  
to.

CHARLIE  
You said you wanted me to see-

TOM  
Yes!

Tom walks over to a huge wooden table covered by a dust-covered canvas covering. It looks like it has been in place for a very long time.

Charlies sneezes as Tom pulls the canvas off with a flourish. Dust fills the air, obscuring them both in a CLOUD for a short moment.

As it clears, Charlies eyes open wide. On the table is a massive, very elaborate TRAIN SET.

CHARLIE

Wow!

TOM

That's exactly what I said.

CHARLIE

Is it mine?

TOM

Ours, Charlie. Technically Pops left it to me, but he knew you were the real enthusiast.

Charlie looks over the long circular train line, the little train station platform it passes through, and its intricate recreation of an English country landscape, with hills, trees and tiny streams.

It is a quite perfect recreation of a small provincial train station.

There are even little FIGURES waiting on the platform, a MAN in an old military uniform and cap, and a WOMAN in a white dress.

Both wait for a model steam train that has not arrived for a generation.

CHARLIE

Can we play with it now?

TOM

After the funeral.

Charlie looks disappointed. He looks down at the tiny sign on the little platform.

"LITTLE TORRINGDON"

CHARLIE

Little Tarringdon? Is that a real place?

TOM  
Yes, its near here. Apparently it's  
where these two met.

Tom points to the tiny man and woman on the platform.

CHARLIE  
Who are they?

TOM  
Your great grandfather, and his wife.  
That's where they saw each other for  
the last time too. I think my dad  
liked to remember him this way.

Charlie moves in for a closer look at the tiny people.

CHARLIE  
What happened to him?

TOM  
He went off to the war?

CHARLIE  
What war?

TOM  
The first world war.

CHARLIE  
What was his wife's name?

TOM  
Lilly.

CHARLIE  
Can we visit?

TOM  
Visit where?

CHARLIE  
Little Torrington.

TOM  
I don't think there's anything left  
there now.

CHARLIE  
Please?

TOM  
Maybe one day.

Again, Charlie looks disappointed. Tom places a hand on his son's shoulder and turns to go.

TOM (cont'd)  
Time to go.

Charlie, with his back to his dad and the door, sneakily reaches down and picks up one of the tiny WAX FIGURES! The man in the old uniform. it does not give easily.

TOM (O.S.)  
Come on, Charlie. We'll be late!

Charlie yanks his great-grandfather off the platform and then pockets the little figure.

Then he quickly follows Tom, who ushers his son gently out of the door.

As the door closes on the old train set, steam train and little model station, they are left shrouded again in the gloom and the dust, forever frozen in another time.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Charlie is still holding the little wax figure from the library, as the Priest continues. he hides it as his parents look over at him, smiling reassuringly.

PRIEST  
...ashes to ashes...

Some from the congregation throw spoonfuls of DIRT onto the coffin, obscuring everyone surrounding the grave.

The priest's last words ECHO and die in the blackness.

PRIEST (cont'd)  
...dust to dust...

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

A CLOSE UP on grubby, nail-bitten FINGERS. They are holding that same small WAX FIGURE.

INT. CAFÉ — DAY

Charlie, now fully grown and in his thirties, sits at a small cafe table, turning the figure through his fingers.

He is tall, slim and deep in thought. He wears a smart, expensive looking gray suit.

MAN (O.S)  
Great company you are, mate.

Charlie looks across at the man opposite, his friend and colleague ANAR, in his early thirties too. He also wears an expensive business suit and overcoat.

Anar frowns at his friend.

CHARLIE  
Sorry. I'm just a little preoccupied.

ANAR  
The sale's a done deal, no?

CHARLIE  
Still need to dot the I's.

ANAR  
You don't need to go through with it.  
I'll sub you.

CHARLIE  
You don't have any money.

ANAR  
Divorce is expensive.

CHARLIE  
Tell me about it.

ANAR  
You don't feel ready?

CHARLIE  
My dad wouldn't-

ANAR  
He'd understand.

Charlie does not look convinced.

ANAR (cont'd)  
It's your decision. Can't you just  
pull out? What does Charlotte think?

CHARLIE

We went our separate ways.

ANAR

Oh? I am sorry to hear that.

Charlie just shrugs.

CHARLIE

It's too late, I need the money.

They share an awkward silence. The busy world of the cafe passes by.

Charlie puts the little wax figure back in his pocket, and stands up.

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Sometimes you just have to move on.

ANAR

Wait, I haven't finished my coffee.

CHARLIE

Well, hurry up.

ANAR

Why didn't you tell me?

CHARLIE

What?

ANAR

About Charlotte.

CHARLIE

'Cause you'd ask for her number.

ANAR

Me? Nah, mate. Not interested.

CHARLIE

Uhuh.

ANAR

C'mon. I'd never do that to you.

Charlie looks skeptical.

ANAR (cont'd)

I might wait a few weeks, days, maybe hours. How long has it been?

CHARLIE

Long enough. Drink up, I've a train to catch.

Anar throws his coffee back, but when he puts the mug back down Charlie is already out the door.

He has left something behind. His BRIEFCASE!

ANAR

Hey, Charles! Wait up, mate!

EXT. EXTERIOR CAFE / CITY STREET - DAY

Charlie keeps on walking, as Anar tries to catch up. He presents the briefcase to Charlie.

ANAR

Forget something? What are you like?

Charlie swipes it off him.

CHARLIE

Thanks. And stop calling me that.

ANAR

What?

CHARLIE

Charles.

Anar grins mischievously.

ANAR

Charlie?

CHARLIE

Yeah?

ANAR

Good luck, mate!

They shake hands and Charlie walks off.

Anar calls after him.

ANAR (cont'd)

You still got Charlotte's number?

Charlie mouths 'F\*\*\* off!' back at him, then disappears into the endless flow of commuters.

VOICE (O.S.)  
Hey, is this yours?

One of the STAFF from the coffee shop runs up to Anar, and shows him a mobile phone.

ANAR  
It's not mine. It must be-?

He looks over towards where Charlie just was.

ANAR (cont'd)  
Charlie?!

No sign. Anar looks down at the phone, shaking his head.

ANAR (cont'd)  
Not to worry, I'll look after it.

Anar slips the phone into his jacket pocket, shaking his head in Charlie's direction.

Then he too slips back into the crowded city streets.

INT. RAILWAY STATION - DAY

Charlie enters the station at pace. It is as incredibly busy as you would expect during London commuting hours.

He grows increasingly frustrated trying to wind his way through the endless bodies in his way.

Then he catches sight of the schedule board above.

CHARLIE  
Oh shit!

He tries to run, but there are too many people.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Come on! Come on!

He pushes past as best he can, ignoring the grumbling and dirty looks.

When he manages to reach the platform railway staff are already WHISTLING for his train to leave.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Wait! Hey! STOP!

He runs up to the barrier and tries his ticket, which refuses to work. He tries it again and nothing happens, just the dull BEEP of the machine refusing his ticket.

Swearing, Charlie tries to LEAP up over the ticket barrier.

STAFF MEMBER

Hey, sir, you can't do-

Charlie loses his footing, falling over his briefcase and HEAD FIRST onto the concrete of the platform.

His head HITS the floor with a sickening CRACK, and then everything goes BLURRY yet again, as staff and more commuters try to help him back up.

Charlie feels like he is falling in the BLACK GRAVE he witnessed his grand-dad being buried in earlier.

When he looks up he catches a glimpse of a WOMAN dressed in white on the platform.

She waves a white HANDKERCHIEF at him.

WOMAN IN WHITE (V.O.)

Charles? Over here...

Charlies eyelids flicker as he almost loses consciousness. As he tries to stand up a staff member tries to help him.

CHARLIE

I'm fine! Thank you.

Then he COLLAPSES again onto the ground! The busy commuters passing through the station fade into a BLUR. Everything sinks into a deep, dark hole.

He can hear the woman's voice again.

WOMAN IN WHITE (V.O.)

Charles? Is that you...

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

INT. TRAIN CARRIAGE — TUNNEL — DAY

Charlie WAKES UP with a start, BANGING his head on the window next to him. He holds his forehead and winces. There is a nasty BRUISE on the side of his temple.

CHARLIE  
Ow! What the-?

He is ALONE in a standard, modern, if fairly shabby train carriage. Charlie looks around in ALARM and glances out the window.

It is dark outside. The train is in a TUNNEL?

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
(calling out)  
Excuse me, what train...what train is  
this?

No answer. Charlie tries to stand up, woozily holding on to the chair behind him.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Hello? Anyone?

No answer. He notices his briefcase on the chair.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Thank God.

He picks it up and starts to walk back down the carriage. When he looks through the window into the next carriage there is still no sign of any staff or passengers.

Charlie looks around in some alarm.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Hello? Where is everyone?

He turns and walks back to the other end of the carriage, and then through to the next, which is also empty of people.

At the end he KNOCKS HARD on the driver's door.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Can you hear me in there? Is anyone  
driving this bloody train?

Charlie WRESTLES with the door handle. It is locked. A trickle of BLOOD runs down the side of his forehead.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Shit.

Charlie stands there holding his head. He blinks and his vision BLURS. For a moment it seems like he might pass out.

When he looks up he can see a MAN is standing in the carriage along, looking away.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Thank God. Hello?

He is dressed in a World War One era KHAKI UNIFORM. The uniformed man BLURS in and out of view.

Then he turns to look at Charlie. There is NOTHING on his face. No features. Charlie turns away, holding his eyes.

When he looks back the corridor is EMPTY again. Not one passenger. Charlie stands up, bracing himself against the carriage wall.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
What the hell-?

Then the digital SIGN on the ceiling at the end of the carriage LIGHTS UP.

The sound of the TANNOY pings and the sign says:

"NEXT STOP"

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Thank God!

TANNOY  
Next stop, Little Tarringdon.

It speaks with a mechanical, disinterested FEMALE VOICE, standard for a train service.

CHARLIE  
Little Tarringdon?

At that moment the train EMERGES from the darkness of the TUNNEL. The sudden sunlight almost BLINDS Charlie.

The Tannoy pings again.

TANNOY  
We are now approaching Little Tarringdon.

Charlie steps up to a window, unhooks the bolt and PULLS BACK the sliding pane of glass. He leans his head out, looking back down the speeding train and the track beyond.

The wind blows through his hair and he CLOSES his eyes, tight.

Then he opens them again.

He is still there, on the train, the world passing on by.

CHARLIE  
Looks real enough.

The train is approaching a small provincial TRAIN STATION.  
The SIGN on the platform reads:

"LITTLE TORRINGDON"

The tiny station looks familiar, like the platform from the model railway Charlie visited as a young boy.

As the train starts to pull up, Charlie can see a WOMAN standing on the station platform. A WOMAN DRESSED IN WHITE.

She is WAVING.

WOMAN IN WHITE (O.S.)  
Charles!

CHARLIE  
What the hell?

TANNOY  
We have arrived at Little Tarringdon.  
Please mind your belongings.

The train doors open. Charlie GRABS his precious briefcase, and JUMPS enthusiastically off the train, onto the Little Tarringdon platform.

EXT. LITTLE TORRINGDON STATION — DAY

As he does so Charlie tries to catch a glimpse of the driver at the front of the train.

There is NO SIGN of anyone. The train starts to PULL AWAY from the platform.

CHARLIE  
Hey, where-?!

He tries to chase the train but it is no use.

Charlie is now standing on the platform ALONE, out of breath, not at all sure he has made the right decision.

He stares in dismay as the train disappears round the bend of the lines, into yet another TUNNEL further up the track.

Charlie sighs long and hard. Where the hell is he now?

He looks over the platform. It is not really a station so much as a provincial railway stop.

Further down the platform, there is a closed NEWSPAPER STAND, a TOILET with an 'OUT OF ORDER' sign on the door, and a very shabby looking OUTHOUSE.

Everything is old fashioned, out of time, in not great repair. There is no sign of life now either, hardly even a sound, just the light breeze.

No sign of the woman in white either.

A ghost station.

The remains of a NEWSPAPER drifts up over the platform. Charlie STEPS on it.

It is dated 'September 1917' and has the headline:

'Finally the Big Push!'

CHARLIE (cont'd)

What?

The rest of the paper is missing. Charlie STARES at it in total disbelief.

VOICE (O.S.)

If you want today's paper, sir, I'm afraid you'll have to wait.

Charlie notices a hunched SHAPE shuffling up from the arch near the outhouse.

An old PORTER in a dark blue, unkempt uniform and rumpled cap, is carrying a cart full of luggage. A large and precarious stack of leather suitcases.

CHARLIE

At last an actual bloody human!

The PORTER regards him with some disdain.

PORTER

I'm obliged, sir. Can I ask how you arrived?

CHARLIE

How I arrived? By train. Just now.

PORTER

From where, sir?

CHARLIE

From London.

The Porter regards Charlie curiously, noting his clothes.

PORTER

We haven't had a train from London stop here today, sir.

CHARLIE

Look. I just got off the train! Not that it stopped very long.

PORTER

And what train would that be, sir?

CHARLIE

The one that just-are you kidding?

PORTER

I never kid, sir. I have too much to do as it is.

CHARLIE

This is a train station?

PORTER

Evidently.

CHARLIE

And trains stop here?

PORTER

On occasion.

CHARLIE

Then-

PORTER

No train has arrived from London today, sir, I assure you of that.

Charlie steps towards him.

CHARLIE

Then how do you explain me?

PORTER

I wouldn't endeavor to do that, sir.

CHARLIE

Let me rephrase. How do you account for my presence here now, if no train has stopped here?

The PORTER is eyeing Charlie now with some suspicion.

PORTER

I'm sure I could not at that. It's most curious. Which train did you depart on again?

CHARLIE

You know, I'm not entirely sure. I got on by mistake. And now I'd very much like to head back. I've a very important appointment-

PORTER

Go back? Today?

CHARLIE

Yes, on the next train.

PORTER

Where to, sir?

CHARLIE

To London! From this train station. And stop calling me sir! Please.

PORTER

As you wish, no skin off my-

Any sarcasm on Charlie's part is clearly lost on the Porter.

CHARLIE

So?

PORTER

What, sir?

Charlie sighs inwardly.

CHARLIE

When-is-the-next-train?

PORTER

In a while, sir.

CHARLIE

How long is a while? Wait a minute, why don't I just-

He searches the top pocket of his suit. Then checks again. Nothing. No phone!

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Oh shit.

PORTER  
Excuse me, sir?

Charlie searches the rest of his pockets in a sudden panic. He opens his briefcase too.

CHARLIE  
Oh great, I've lost my-

PORTER  
Lost what, sir? I'm afraid we don't have a lost property dep-

CHARLIE  
When is the next train!?

PORTER  
In a while, as I've said.

Charlie lets out a HOWL of exasperation! He COLLAPSES down onto a rickety wooden bench at the end of the platform and rests his head in his hands.

CHARLIE  
Oh God, how did I end up here?

PORTER  
I ask myself that each and every day. If you'll excuse me, I have my tasks to complete.

CHARLIE  
Wait, is there a phone I can use?

PORTER  
A what?

CHARLIE  
A telephone.

PORTER  
The candlestick? We have one in the office. I'm afraid it's-

CHARLIE  
Not working?

PORTER  
I'm afraid so. We'll have it fixed-

CHARLIE  
In a while?

PORTER

You could maybe send a telegram from  
the next town along?

Charlie looks up with optimism.

CHARLIE

How far is that?

PORTER

About twenty miles up the road. Not  
walking distance, I'll say.

CHARLIE

(to himself)

What a surprise. Does anyone have a  
car?

PORTER

Not that I'm privy to. Back of beyond  
out here, we are, sir. You're welcome  
to wait?

He points towards the old outhouse.

CHARLIE

I'll take my chances out here, thank  
you, just in case another train...  
appears.

Charlie gestures vaguely back down the line. Again the  
Porter regards him as though he were mad.

PORTER

As you wish. I'll be about my  
business.

The Porter shuffles off, muttering to himself. He glances  
back at Charlie then trundles out of sight with his luggage.

Charlie turns and looks back at the station, totally alone.

Charlie cuts a rather forlorn and lonely figure on the tiny  
platform. He holds tightly on to his briefcase, his only  
possession he has left in the world.

There is hardly a sound, just the soft wind. The station  
itself seems to be marooned in a sea of green fields.

At the far end of the tracks he can see the darkness of the  
two TUNNELS that bookend the railway line.

Charlie stand up and wanders along the platform, lost,  
staring into space and swinging his briefcase.

He reaches the OUTHOUSE DOOR on which is a sign:

'WAITING ROOM'

He tries the door. It gives inward, creaking and releases a thick cloud of SMOKE.

Coughing, Charlie pushes his way in.

Inside is a surprisingly large room, with some very basic gas lighting. Some more light comes in thick BEAMS through two sepia-stained WINDOWS.

There is a thick atmosphere of cigarette and cigar smoke.

Charlie COUGHS again loudly.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
 Maybe you'd be better waiting  
 outside?

In this atmosphere Charlie cannot see who is speaking. He peers into the gloom.

There are a number of benches against the walls, a lit fireplace and an old-fashioned CLOCK on the wall.

It TICKS loudly.

On the benches in the corner a barely seen MAN is playing a mouth organ, next to another in a stove pipe HAT, who is puffing away on his pipe.

They are all barely visible in this thick atmosphere.

CHARLIE  
 Are there any staff here?

MAN WITH PIPE  
 Shh.

The old man takes out his pipe and points it without a word at a door. Charlie walks towards it. It says:

'STAFF'

CHARLIE  
 Thanks.

OLD MAN  
 Welcome.

MAN WITH PIPE  
 Shh.

CHARLIE  
 (to himself)  
 Is this a bloody library or  
 something?

Charlie knocks on the staff door.

PORTER (O.S.)  
 Yes?

CHARLIE  
 You again?

PORTER  
 I'm afraid so, sir.

CHARLIE  
 Don't call me...are you the only  
 member of staff in here?

PORTER  
 Yes, sir, as I've said. I've already  
 mentioned there won't be a train for-

CHARLIE  
 Quite a while, yes.

PORTER  
 Quite some while, indeed, sir!

Charlie grits his teeth.

CHARLIE  
 Any chance we could narrow that down  
 a little?

PORTER  
 Of course!

CHARLIE  
 Well?

PORTER  
 Well what, sir?

CHARLIE  
 The train!

PORTER  
 I'll check.

CHARLIE  
 Thank you! mind the door.

The porter turns back inside the office and closes the door behind him. As the sliding door closes on him, Charlie coughs again.

He KNOCKS impatiently.

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Excuse me!

PORTER (O.S.)

Please take a seat, sir, and I'll be right with you.

CHARLIE

For Christ's sake-

MAN WITH PIPE

Keep it down!

Charlie looks for a seat, almost having to feel for it with his arms out.

He sits and looks down at his watch. Then he looks up at the station clock on the yellowing, cracked wall above.

CHARLIE

How can it be almost twelve already?

(to the room)

Look I only have a couple of hours to get to a very important appointment! I don't suppose anyone knows when the next train will depart?

PIPE MAN (O.S.)

Where to?

Charlie sighs.

CHARLIE

(to himself)

Anywhere!

PIPE MAN (O.S.)

A man should know where he's going.

CHARLIE

If you really want to know I really need to get back to-

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

London?

Again, whoever it was who spoke can't be seen. It sounds like a WOMAN's voice.

CHARLIE  
That's right, how did-

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)  
It will be along in a while, I expect.

CHARLIE  
So I've heard!

Charlie stands up in exasperation and stomps back towards the main door, glances back at the passengers, then steps through and SLAMS it. The draft sends a WAVE of thick smoke through the murky room.

Someone out of sight COUGHS loudly.

EXT. PLATFORM — DAY

Charlie steps back onto the main platform. Just him, on his own. He sighs long and hard, and sniffs his clothes.

CHARLIE  
Ew.

He looks from side to side along the train line.

One line disappears around a curve in the distance into the tunnel.

The other disappears into the dark mouth of the tunnel that Charlie's train first emerged from.

He grips the handle of his briefcase and raises himself up to his full height.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Worth a try.

Charlie starts walking back along the platform to the edge. There are some small very worn steps at the end that lead down to the gravel beside the main rails.

PORTER (O.S.)  
Excuse me, sir!

Charlie turns back, annoyed.

CHARLIE

Yes?!

PORTER

That area is off limits.

CHARLIE

To whom?

PORTER

Everyone.

CHARLIE

That doesn't include me!

PORTER

I'll call a constable!

CHARLIE

Do so!

Charlie turns back towards the tunnel and starts to march straight down the middle of the tracks towards it. The porter watches him, an increasingly worried frown stretching across his old leathery face.

PORTER (O.S.)

I wouldn't advise that, sir.

Charlie keeps going.

CHARLIE

What would you advise?

The Porter shakes his head and turns away. Charlie stops just outside the tunnel and looks uncertain, all alone on the track.

CHARLIE (cont'd)

(to himself)

I hope you know what your doing,  
Outhwaite.

He breathes in and keeps on marching into the darkness.

It envelops him.

INT. TUNNEL

Charlie stands in the near pitch dark, only the arch of the tunnel behind him offering any kind of reference point.

His tall thin form is silhouetted against the outside world.

He looks back briefly.

CHARLIE  
Well, I've come this far.

He grips his briefcase even tighter and keeps on walking, VANISHING completely into the dark.

It is only a few moments before he EMERGES again, blinking in the light.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Figures.

At the end of the track he can see the little platform of Little Torrington train station, again.

As though he has walked full circle. Charlie starts walking back towards the station, defeated.

Suddenly he stops. Someone is WAVING at him from the platform. A WOMAN.

Dressed in white.

WOMAN IN WHITE  
I see you've returned from your little escapade?

Her distant voice takes Charlie by surprise as he walks back towards the station.

He looks up at her in shock.

WOMAN IN WHITE  
You like to live dangerously, I see?

CHARLIE  
There would need to be a train coming and what's the danger of that?

WOMAN IN WHITE  
Fair to middling, I think. I'm told it should be-!

CHARLIE  
A while?

WOMAN IN WHITE  
They don't keep to strict timetables here, I'm afraid. Where were you trying to go?

CHARLIE  
Anywhere but here.

She smiles warmly and offers him her hand.

WOMAN IN WHITE  
I'm...

CHARLIE  
Lilly? You're...Lilly.

She looks taken aback.

LILLY  
Yes, that's right.

CHARLIE  
I'm Charlie. It's lovely to finally meet you.

LILLY  
Is it? How-?

Lilly regards him with suspicion, then her normal demeanor returns and they shake hands.

LILLY (cont'd)  
Lovely to meet you too, Charles. it is alright to call you Charles?

CHARLIE  
Um...yes.

LILLY  
I was in the waiting room when you walked in. I doubt you could have seen me in that awful fug. Absolutely poisonous atmosphere. How long have you been in Little Torrington?

CHARLIE  
Long enough.

LILLY  
Which way were you heading?

CHARLIE  
Back to London I hope. I had an appointment.

LILLY  
For?

Charlie looks sheepish.

CHARLIE

It's personal.

LILLY

I wanted to introduce myself. It can be very dull waiting in there. When I walked outside after you I noticed you marching along the track. Did you make it far?

CHARLIE

No.

LILLY

Well, I'm here too till the train arrives.

CHARLIE

You waiting for-?

LILLY

My fiance.

CHARLIE

And what's your fiance's name?

LILLY

Oh, it's-

The Porter appears, almost bumping into them both.

PORTER

Sorry ma'am!

LILLY

Oh, Haddows, my good man. When are we expecting to be rescued?

PORTER

Ma'am?

CHARLIE

When is the train arriving?

PORTER

(irritated)

In a-

CHARLIE AND LILLY

-while?

They both laugh, much to the Porter's annoyance.

CHARLIE

What a way to run a transport system.  
I already feel I've been here here  
most of my life.

LILLY

Chin up. It could be so much more  
unpleasant. We have a lovely view.

CHARLIE

I don't much like the countryside.

LILLY

City boy are we?

CHARLIE

Born and bred. I'm also slightly  
allergic to greenery.

Lilly tuts loudly, then grabs Charlies arm.

LILLY

I'll try not to make the wait too  
unpleasant then. You can tell me all  
about your adventures in that tunnel  
till our transport arrives.

CHARLIE

Well it was dark, that's about it.

She escorts him towards the waiting room again. Charlie  
stares at the door in some horror.

LILLY

Whats wrong?

CHARLIE

Its never going to arrive, is it?

LILLY

What?

CHARLIE

The train.

FEMALE

What makes you say that? You are very  
doom and gloom aren't you?

CHARLIE

Sorry, I'm a little prone to panic  
attacks. I think I've bumped my head.

FEMALE

Yes, indeed, that's a nasty bruise.  
Did you fall in the tunnel?

CHARLIE

Not, it was...I can't remember.

LILLY

Amnesia now is it? There's really no  
need to panic. I'm sure the train  
will arrive exactly when it should.  
I'll ask Haddows for a poultice or  
whatever witchcraft they employ here.

This does not reassure Charlie.

CHARLIE

So where are you off to then?

LILLY

Off?

CHARLIE

Are you going somewhere special?  
Honeymoon?

LILLY

Who said anything about honeymoons?  
I'm just...waiting.

She suddenly seems unsure.

CHARLIE

I'm sorry, I didn't mean to snoop.

LILLY

That's alright, I've asked you enough  
questions. I'm waiting for my Felix  
if you must know. He's just about  
to...well, of course you know.

CHARLIE

I-

LILLY

I certainly hope he'll be here soon.  
I hate that waiting room, just  
horrible. Do you smoke?

CHARLIE

No.

LILLY  
 Horrific habit, and more than likely  
 lethal I'll say. I've tried to quit  
 myself. Do you have your ticket  
 ready?

CHARLIE  
 I...um...its in my...

He fumbles in his pocket, but decides not to show her.

LILLY  
 You haven't lost your ticket?

CHARLIE  
 Yes. Kind of.

She looks confused.

LILLY  
 You are in a bad way. I like this  
 suit though. Is this in fashion in  
 London?

CHARLIE  
 Yes, I suppose.

LILLY  
 Very smart. Oh, Mr Haddows?

She is addressing the old Porter, who turns to them.

LILLY (cont'd)  
 My friend here has lost his ticket?  
 Can he buy a new one here?

MR HADDOWS  
 He can buy one from the inspector on  
 the train, ma'am.

LILLY  
 Thank you! We can buy one when the  
 train arrives.

CHARLIE  
 (at Haddows)  
 And when will that be?

MR HADDOWS  
 Shortly, sir, you'll be glad to hear!

CHARLIE  
 Very!

As if in answer they suddenly hear the loud noise of a STEAM WHISTLE in the distance!

Both Charlie and Lilly turn to look. Just coming through the tunnel is indeed a train, but not the one he was expecting.

A STEAM TRAIN!

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Oh my God!

LILLY

We're saved!

A cloud of white STEAM shoots up as the engine leaves the tunnel, partly obscuring the huge metal bulk of its engine.

It emerges from the steam as if straight out a dream or distant memory and is strangely similar to the one Charlie crashed off the table in his childhood loft.

LILLY (cont'd)

What's the matter.

CHARLIE

I just wasn't expecting-

LILLY

Come on!

She GRABS his hand and drags him along the platform.

The train starts to pull up, the steam WHISTLE screaming as it comes to a halt alongside the platform.

Doors start to open and TRAIN STAFF start to PILE luggage and help PASSENGERS off the carriages. The poor old porter, Haddows, is struggling to keep up.

Charlie and Lilly walk into the steam clouds.

CHARLIE

I'm not sure I-

LILLY

I insist, Felix will love to meet you. No doubt he'll want me to procure him one of these suits when he gets back.

CHARLIE

Back from-?

She looks over towards one of the carriages. Inside sits a MAN in an old fashioned British Army uniform.

LILLY (O.S.)

There he is!

She WAVES with her handkerchief, the same wave that haunted Charlie in the busy train station earlier.

Felix is wearing the khaki uniform of his tiny wax figure, smoking a small pipe and seems lost in thought, a newspaper hanging off his fingers.

Other passengers are still exiting the carriages and pass by in a blur.

As Charlie stares in shock Lilly waves and screams with joy.

LILLY

Felix!

FELIX

Lilly!

Charlie just stands and stares in shock.

FELIX (cont'd)

And who is this slack jawed character with you? Have you finally found me some competition?

LILLY

No, silly! This is Charles. I found him here at the station, lost like an abandoned pup!

Charlie can hardly believe his eyes.

FELIX

Well, more the merrier, in you both come. I think we are stopping here for a while. They are expecting a boatload of our boys to rendezvous here soon.

He swings the carriage door open. Lilly climbs in and instantly KISSES Felix full on the lips.

The kiss lasts some time, as Charlie stands there awkwardly.

FELIX (cont'd)

Steady on, Lills. We have company.

LILLY  
I wanted to say goodbye properly.

FELIX  
I'd say you succeeded. I haven't left  
yet though.

He laughs slightly, almost painfully. Then he turns towards  
Charlie.

FELIX (cont'd)  
And who is this 'lost pup'?

He holds out a hand. Charlie takes it firmly.

FELIX (cont'd)  
Charles, is it?

CHARLIE  
I prefer Charlie.

FELIX  
Charlie it is. Please take a seat.  
I'm glad Lilly had someone to keep  
her company. Rail stations can be  
lonely places to wait for a woman.

Charlie just nods. He sits down awkwardly across from them,  
eyeing Felix with some shock.

FELIX (cont'd)  
Are you feeling alright, you look a  
little pale.

CHARLIE  
Its been a stressful morning.

LILLY  
He bumped his head.

FELIX  
Oh, has it been seen too? We'll see  
if there's a doctor on board.

CHARLIE  
I'm fine, honest.

Felix eyes him up and down, just with a hint of suspicion.

FELIX  
Nice outfit.

LILLY  
I thought you'd notice that.

FELIX  
You've not been issued with your  
uniform yet?

CHARLIE  
Uniform? No, not yet.

LILLY  
Charlie was telling me all about the  
new fashions in London.

FELIX  
Ha! I imagine if I make it back I  
will already be out of fashion.

LILLY  
When you make it back.

Felix kisses her hand softly.

FELIX  
When.

LILLY  
I tell you what, you two. I'll head  
to the dining car and book us a table  
for three? How does that sound?

FELIX  
Capital!

LILLY  
I'll leave you two to get acquainted.

CHARLIE  
I can't stay. I need to get back to  
London as soon as-

LILLY  
Oh yes, of course, I understand.  
(to soldier)  
Just for two then.

FELIX  
Thank you, darling.

LILLY  
(to Charlie)  
Can I ask just one question? One more  
question.

CHARLIE  
Yes?

LILLY  
How did you know my name?

Felix eyes Charlie carefully.

CHARLIE  
I...Haddows must have told me? The  
porter?

LILLY  
I see.

She eyes Charlie strangely, then leaves with a flouncing flourish.

Charlie and Felix are alone.

LILLY (O.S.)  
Be right back!

FELIX  
Wonderful girl, don't you think.

CHARLIE  
Yes. Very.

FELIX  
I'm looking forward to being a  
husband. Are you married?

CHARLIE  
Not any more.

FELIX  
I'm sorry to hear that.

CHARLIE  
Well-

He stops, and they share some silence. They can still see and hear the hustle and bustle outside, although it seems distant, again like a long ago memory.

FELIX  
So, Charlie, what brings you out here  
to Little Torrington?

CHARLIE  
It's a long story.

FELIX  
I very much enjoy long stories.

Charlie notes the obscured headlines on his newspaper.

'HUN INVADES...'

The paper is dated 4th August 1914.

FELIX (cont'd)  
Well, I don't wish to pry. Lilly keeps me abreast of all the new fashions. Maybe even she is falling behind, as I've never seen a suit like that before.

CHARLIE  
It's new. I bought it for-

He stops, looking almost guilty.

FELIX  
You know, I feel like we've met before? Is that possible?

CHARLIE  
I don't think so.

FELIX  
A gut feeling. So strange, don't you think? It's hard to know for sure when you should trust your instincts.

Felix gazes out the window, lost in thought. Outside the small station is emptying.

FELIX (cont'd)  
Curious little place, isn't it?

CHARLIE  
Yes.

FELIX  
I expect all provincial stations have their own particular character, and characters. I would like to visit them all. If I return.

CHARLIE  
Return?

Felix regards him curiously. He gestures towards his newspaper.

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Yes.

FELIX  
You're still to join up then?

CHARLIE

I have a...a government job.

FELIX

I see. Well, you'd best not dither, we had been told all this would be over by Christmas. As if. Not so much a war as a minor inconvenience.

Charlie has no answer. Felix almost smiles, but there is doubt in his eyes. Charlie looks out the window, unable to make eye contact. Haddows is struggling with his cart.

CHARLIE

You're going back to the continent?

FELIX

To Southampton, eventually, then France. What's your department?

CHARLIE

Spying.

They both laugh.

FELIX

Well, if you are you obviously like to make an entrance. How good is your German?

CHARLIE

Sprachen-

His voice trails off. The reality of his situation is sinking in.

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Do you think Lilly will be back soon?

FELIX

Do you miss her?

Felix looks Charlie up and down again, not even trying to hide his suspicions. He glances at the briefcase.

FELIX (cont'd)

Standard issue for a Jerry agent?

They both laugh again, easing some of the tension.

FELIX (cont'd)

Such a terrible business, isn't it? To be suspicious of your fellow creatures. Chills the soul.

Charlie is finding it hard to answer.

FELIX (cont'd)  
Not chatty either? I'm the same, it's  
difficult enough to have a word in  
edgeways with Lilly about.

At that moment the ticket INSPECTOR slides the door back and  
peeks his capped head inside.

INSPECTOR  
Tickets?

CHARLIE  
Oh, I...this isn't my train.

INSPECTOR  
I see, sir.

Charlie actually pulls out the train ticket he had bought  
earlier in the day. He stares at as though it was from  
another world.

As though sensing this Felix leans forward and presents his  
own ticket. The inspector almost bows to him.

INSPECTOR (cont'd)  
Thank you, sir.

FELIX  
I don't think my new friend here is  
staying.

He looks expectantly at the sheepish Charlie.

INSPECTOR  
I'm afraid you'll have to leave the  
carriage then, sir. You can purchase  
another ticket for your station at  
the station office.

CHARLIE  
I've tried that.

LILLY  
He was told to buy one on the train.

FELIX  
You're back, and in the nick of time!

LILLY  
I booked a table for three, just in  
case?

LILLY (cont'd)  
If you'd like to join us?

Charlie looks up at her, sadly.

CHARLIE  
I can't, I'm sorry. I'll get off now.

INSPECTOR  
As you wish.

The Inspector retreats and slides the door shut.

INSPECTOR (O.S.)  
Tickets please!

FELIX  
What a shame. I was enjoying our  
conversation.

CHARLIE  
Me too.

They shake hands firmly.

FELIX  
Make the most of your time.

CHARLIE  
You too. Good luck, Felix.

FELIX  
When I get back I hope I'll have the  
chance to try on one of these suits.

Charlie only nods, just about holding his feelings in check.  
Felix opens the compartment door.

FELIX (cont'd)  
Mind the gap!

Charlie steps out. Felix tips his cap and closes the  
compartment door.

FELIX (cont'd)  
Goodbye Charles, and good luck!

CHARLIE  
You too!

The train WHISTLES and starts to pull out from the platform.  
Charlie follows it as it starts to move, steam streaming  
into the platform, SHROUDING Charlie from view for a moment.

LILLY  
Charles, you forgot this!

She holds Charlie's BRIEFCASE out the window!

CHARLIE  
Oh!

Charlie starts to RUN after it. As he reaches for the briefcase and the moving train, Lilly tries to hand it him and misses.

The briefcase hits the platform and SNAPS open, littering the platform with many PAPERS.

They SCATTER EVERYWHERE!

CHARLIE (cont'd)  
Shit!

LILLY  
Oh dear! Good luck, Charles!

CHARLIE  
(to himself)  
Please don't call me Charles.

FELIX  
Bon voyage, Charlie! I do hope we'll meet again!

CHARLIE  
(to himself)  
Me too.

Then Lilly and Felix are GONE, the train carriage disappears into a the clouds of steam again! Charlie can still hear them shouting 'Good Bye' in the distance.

Charlie hastens across the platform, GATHERING up all his papers and stuffing them back into his briefcase with audible annoyance.

Mr Haddows appears behind him, as the last carriage of the steam train vanishes in a cloud of vapor, its shrill WHISTLE fading into the distance.

HADDOWS  
Need any help there, sir?

CHARLIE  
No, it's fine. I think I've found them all.

HADDOWS

As you wish. That's me for the time being. Maybe I'll see you in the morning?

CHARLIE

I hope not.

The Porter turns to go.

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Haddows?

HADDOWS

Yes, sir?

CHARLIE

Thank you.

HADDOWS

You're most welcome, sir. Good day.

Then Haddows also fades from sight into the cloud of steam. Charlie watches him disappear, a little sadly.

Then he SLUMPS down onto the platform bench, as though in shock. What now?

When he looks down he finds he is holding something tightly in the palm of his hand.

It is his little WAX SOLDIER.

Charlie clutches it and looks back across the platform.

Everyone is gone. He is totally alone, again.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

The distant figure of a MAN dressed in tweed emerges in the distance, walking with a stick through the green bright fields. Running in front of him is a bouncing DOG.

The dog STOPS at the edge of the ridge. It has spotted something.

TWEED MAN (O.S.)

What is it, pooch?

The dog BARKS.

TWEED MAN

Another fox?

He halts when he sees what the dog is barking at. Across the field is the ruins of an old station platform. It is Little Torrington station, many years later. The platform is not completely devoid of life either.

SOMEONE is sitting there, on his own, on the remains of an ancient wooden bench.

It is Charlie. He is slightly SLUMPED over, as if unconscious or asleep.

Next to him can still be seen the faded 'Little Torrington' station sign, broken, weathered and not easy to read.

The man in tweed waves at Charlie, instantly realising this is a useless gesture. The dog barks again.

Is Charlie asleep, or dead?

TWEED MAN (cont'd)  
Hello down there?

Louder.

TWEED MAN (cont'd)  
HELLO DOWN THERE!

The dog starts barks loudly again, which seems to wake Charlie this time.

TWEED MAN (cont'd)  
Hi there! Are you waiting for something?

CHARLIE  
A train.

The tweed man looks confused. It is clear the platform is no longer in service, it is so overgrown, and the train lines are no longer even there. It is now just a grassy ditch.

MAN IN TWEED  
(shouting)  
You'll be waiting a good while then.  
This line was decommissioned many decades ago.

CHARLIE  
A good while?

MAN IN TWEED  
I'd say fifty, sixty years at least, give or take. How long are you willing to wait?

Charlie shakes his head as though waking from a dream.

MAN IN TWEED  
Are you alright?

CHARLIE  
I'm not sure. I banged my head.

MAN IN TWEED  
Oh dear. We should get that looked at, eh? Where are you from?

CHARLIE  
London.

MAN IN TWEED  
London? London's at least four hours away, even by train. How did you-

He can see how confused Charlie is.

MAN IN TWEED (cont'd)  
Look here, I'm more than happy to give you a lift along to the next station. It's an hour or so by car. As long as you don't mind dogs?

CHARLIE  
No, of course...that would be greatly appreciated. Ah... how do I get across?

MAN IN TWEED  
Don't worry, we'll come to you. You just sit tight.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - DAY

Both the tweed man and Charlie sit in the front of a classic CONVERTIBLE.

The countryside WHIZZES by outside the window. Charlie stares into the middle distance, lost in thought.

MAN IN TWEED  
Chatty, aren't you?

CHARLIE  
Sorry. Um, thank you for this.

GEORGE  
You'd have been sitting there a long  
time otherwise.

He reaches out a hand, still keeping his eyes on the road.

GEORGE (cont'd)  
My name's George. George Haddows.

He reaches a hand out.

CHARLIE  
Haddows?

Charlie grips and shakes his hand.

GEORGE  
Is that a surprise?

CHARLIE  
I'm Charles. Charlie. Outhwaite.

GEORGE  
Nice to meet you, Charles Charlie  
Outhwaite. This hairy creature in the  
back is George, or G Junior as I call  
him.

CHARLIE  
Nice to meet you, G junior.  
(to George)  
You're staring.

GEORGE  
Yes.

CHARLIE  
You want to know what I was doing at-

GEORGE  
Little Torrington. It had occurred.

CHARLIE  
It's a long story.

GEORGE  
Want to talk about it?

CHARLIE  
Not especially.

GEORGE

Are you sure you wouldn't want to stop for something to eat? I know a lovely little pub-

CHARLIE

-no, thanks, really. I just need to get back home.

GEORGE

Wife?

CHARLIE

Not anymore.

GEORGE

Oh? I'm sorry to hear that.

CHARLIE

I'm not. Truth be told I was just late for an appointment. I was too eager, and got on the wrong train.

Charlie stops talking. They share a moment of awkward silence as the dog snores in the back seat.

GEORGE

Well that happens. Honestly. You do look pale.

CHARLIE

I'm fine. Just a bang on the head, I think. I slipped running for the train.

GEORGE

I have some pills in the glove box. Paracetamol. Help yourself.

Charlie opens it.

GEORGE (cont'd)

So what business are you in if I may ask? Or is it top secret?

CHARLIE

Sorry?

GEORGE

Just by that suit, I expect your in the City?

CHARLIE

Yes.

GEORGE

Can I ask-?

CHARLIE

How long till the station?

GEORGE

A half hour at most.

Another awkward silence.

CHARLIE

I'd rather you didn't.

GEORGE

What?

CHARLIE

Ask.

GEORGE

So it is Top Secret. We're not in any danger, are we? I don't care about myself, but if anything happens to the dog my wife will kill me.

George expects his joke to have some impact. Nothing. Charlie's head lolls slightly. George watches him, concerned.

GEORGE (cont'd)

Just as well me and GJ came along, eh, you could have been sitting there for the duration.

CHARLIE

Certainly felt like it.

The dog in the back barks suddenly.

GEORGE

At last some life from the back! I think someone needs fed? I know how you feel, mate.

CHARLIE

Sorry, I'm keeping you from your tea.

Charlie notices something on the horizon next to the road. A walled graveyard, with a large Gothic church steeple.

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Oh. Could we stop? Please?

GEORGE  
You'll miss your connection.

CHARLIE  
Please.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

The car pulls in to the lay-by next to the main wall of the graveyard. There is a rusty old GATE right in the middle.

INT. CAR - DAY

Charlie gets out on his own, as George feeds the dog in the back. As the dog eats George watches Charlie carefully.

EXT. GRAVEYARD

Charlie looks through the gate. It is all overgrown, the gravestones barely visible in the long grass.

At the front of the graveyard is a WORLD WAR 1 MEMORIAL.

GEORGE (O.S.)  
Have you been here before?

George walks up to him with the dog at his heel.

CHARLIE  
Yes. A long time ago.

This is the same graveyard he attended with his family at the start of the story.

Charlie PULLS on the gate, which stubbornly refuses to give.

They both pull on the gate.

GEORGE  
Heave!

At last the old metal gives in with a groan.

Charlie walks up to the memorial. George and the dog watch from a distance as Charlie traces his finger down the names on the memorial plaque.

He recognizes one.

'FELIX OUTHWAITE'

Charlie feels inside his pocket for the little wax soldier and carefully PLACES it at the base of the memorial.

Then he stands up slowly, silently saying his last goodbyes.

GEORGE (cont'd)  
All done?

CHARLIE  
Think we can still make that train?

GEORGE  
We can but try.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

It is already twilight as George's car alongside the busy train station.

Charlie stares out at the bustling, dark silhouettes of the commuters through the drizzling rain.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

He turns back to George.

CHARLIE  
Thank you so much. Both of you.

He pats GJ, who growls.

GEORGE  
That means 'you're very welcome.'

They both smile and shake hands. Charlie opens the door and shields himself as best he can from the rain.

GEORGE (cont'd)  
Wait, Charlie!

Charlie has forgotten his briefcase again!

CHARLIE  
Thanks. I'd forget me own head if-

George gets out the car with the case, and hands it over.

What they say to each other outside is muffled by the car engine and the rain.

The dog watches them though the rain-soaked glass as Charlie's silhouette walks away on its own, disappearing into the glow of the train station's bright entrance.

George watches him go, then gets back into the car and sighs a little.

He looks at GJ in the rear view mirror.

GEORGE  
Strange this life, isn't it?

The dog looks unimpressed. George turns on the wheel and they drive off into the night.

INT. TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

Charlie sits on his own on the train.

At least there are other passengers on this one. Everything seems normal. He looks out at all the tiny lights populating the dark landscape.

Suddenly, a small brightly lit STATION PLATFORM whizzes past. For just a moment, Charlie catches a glimpse of a WOMAN, WAVING, and smiling at him as the train passes by.

A lady in white!

CHARLIE  
Lilly?

Lilly is there, and then like a dream she is gone again.

Charlie sighs and looks down at the collection of official DOCUMENTS on the table in front of him.

He lifts up the one with a signature on it, and RIPS it in two.

Then he sits back on the seat and closes his eyes.

Outside, the world just passes on by.

THE END