

Secret Life (2007)

By Rowan Joffe

Charlie: My dad did stuff to me when I was eight. I thought he must be right. I must have wanted it. And then I grew up. And I thought every kid wanted it. Getting caught was the best thing that ever happened to me. But even now, after 6 years rehab; 6 years spent struggling towards understanding who I was and what I'd done; even now, I could slip back. So the question is can we survive in the real world? Can we go back out there and make a go of our lives? Because if rehab doesn't work, and if we can't change, then there's nowhere for us to go.

So, I'm not just leaving prison; I'm leaving prison on a mission. And not for a single second of a single day for the rest of my life, will I ever put a little kid at risk again. Golden rule, the big one: I can never go near children.

(Charlie is released from prison and goes to catch a bus, where he sees kids on board and elects not to take the bus.)

(Charlie arrives on foot at the rehab centre.)

(To clerk at door) Charlie Webb.

Clerk 1: License?

(Charlie hands the clerk his papers and enters the rehab centre.)

Clerk 2: Date, name, inmate number and time in.

(Charlie signs in, is shown to his room, unpacks his belongings, tacks up his lighthouse picture.)

Emma: There was some concern at the supervisor's office about whether or not something had happened. You were expected to arrive at 4:00.

(Charlie hands her a small book and points to an open page.)

(reading) There were school kids on the bus, I got off and walked the whole way. Took me three and a half hours.

Why don't you have a seat? May I call you Charlie?

Charlie: Charlie. What's that camera there for?

Emma: I'll be recording all of our sessions. No one will see the tapes but you and me. You can call me Emma.

Charlie: Emma.

Emma: Tell me how you felt on the bus.

Charlie: Ok, Nick. Nick's my psych - he was my psychologist at Grayden, he wouldn't have done that; he wouldn't have made notes, you know. He always said um, no secrets Charlie.

Emma: Well, I'll read them to you if you like. Charlie Webb, 30, Schedule 1 Sex Offender, Tuesday the 17<sup>th</sup> of September, Session 1.

Charlie: See, that's the - that's the problem, isn't it? That first bit: Sex Offender. You know, if you could just take that out, you might be able to just see past that, to the human being. You may even like me.

Emma: It's not my job to like you. It's my job to help you. Why don't I tell you a bit about me?

Charlie: You're a psychologist, trainee, probably. Your name's Emma. What time's this session finished?

Emma: This isn't a prison, Charlie. You're here as a volunteer, but the centre has rules and the rules can't be broken. If you break our trust, it's your own future you're throwing away, is that understood?

Charlie: What trust?

Emma: You'll have to earn that.

Charlie: (laughs) You should make a note of that, by the way. When I called you a trainee, that was a passive-aggressive outburst.

Emma: I am a trainee.

Charlie: What, you've never done this before?

Emma: I'm a fully-qualified clinical psychologist, but I've never worked with sex-offenders before, no.

Charlie: But why have they given me a trainee?

Emma: Because they say you were doing exceptionally well and perhaps they're breaking me in gently.

Charlie: (long pause, he holds up his wrist with rubber-band)  
Because of that.

Emma: Go on.

Charlie: It stops thoughts. I put a rubber band around my wrist and whenever I have a deviant thought, I say stop it, and I snap the rubber band. Not to punish myself, just to break the thought pattern. And then I say a prayer. I say 'Dear God, please let me treasure and respect this person.' It's probably all in the report.

Emma: It means much more to me to hear it in your own words, Charlie, go on.

Charlie: Er...well, I've never really been religious, but I said that prayer over and over and over again, for months and months and months, and then thoughts got less and less and less and then one day, they just stopped completely. And that was three years ago, December the twelfth, on a Tuesday. (laughs)

Emma: And with the children on the bus, you had no thoughts then?

Charlie: No. I didn't even need to snap the band.

Emma: There's no cure for paedophilia, Charlie, I mean generally speaking -

Charlie: (interrupting) Generally speaking, a Schedule 1 Sex Offender is capable of reoffending at any moment, given the opportunity to sexually abuse a child, the only thing that stops them - stops us - is the program. When you take away the support, the routine, and the elastic band, we're as much of a threat as we ever were.

Emma: There's no cure for paedophilia, Charlie, because paedophilia isn't a sickness. Let's be absolutely clear. You were a swimming coach, Charlie. You spent months, years, insinuating yourself carefully into peoples' lives, earning their trust. You then had sexual intercourse, oral, anal and vaginal with three girls of twelve.

(Charlie fidgets with his book)

You chose to do what you did, which means you can choose not to, and all we can do at the Centre is help you to make that choice.

(Charlie nods)

(Charlie is lying in bed, looking at his lighthouse picture, then building a pyramid of playing cards.)

(There is a loud knock on Charlie's door. It's dark in his room, and clerks 2 and 3 enter the room.)

Clerk 2: Charlie Webb.

Charlie: Yeah?

Clerk 2: (opening curtains) Thirty minutes of hot water left before breakfast. No smoking, no drinking, no pornography. If you go out, you sign out. Remember the eleven pm curfew. Any questions? (to clerk 3) Clear?

Clerk 3: Clear.

(Charlie sits up in bed.)

(Charlie is squeezing a lemon into his tea in the cafeteria of the Centre.)

Probation Officer (P.O.): Sex-offender's register. You sign within seven days.

Charlie: What, so I just turn up and ask to sign the book?

P.O.: There's no book. You just give them your name at the local police station. They need a recent photo, proof of address, and something with your date of birth on it. I've marked down the address and put the bus routes on the back.

Charlie: Oh, I don't think I should use buses. Um, kids use buses.

P.O.: I'm a probation officer, not a travel agent. How you get there is up to you.

Charlie: Oh, sorry. Maybe if I went mid-morning, then they'd be at school. I could go mid-morning.

P.O.: Just get there.

Charlie: I will.

(Charlie is dressing himself in his room and putting his papers together. He goes downstairs and signs himself out.)

Rudi: First day out?

Charlie: Yeah.

Rudi: Sweet freedom.

Charlie: Sweet freedom.

Rudi: Think of the outside world as a prison yard, only bigger. It gets easier, I promise.

Charlie: Thanks.

(Charlie leaves the Centre and walks to a bus stop, where a guy eyes him suspiciously. When he gets on the bus, he notices there are no kids.)

Charlie: (to bus driver) I'll just go to town.

(Charlie enters the local police station. People are chatting and a young mother comes in behind him with a bloody lip.)

Charlie: Are you all right?

Young Mum: No, I was mugged. A man ran off with my bag outside Tesco's.

Charlie: Did you get a good look at him?

Young Mum: I came out of the supermarket and he ran up to me, it all happened so quickly, he just punched me in the face, right in the face.

Charlie: You're probably in shock.

Young Mum: People in this world...I can't believe...just evil.

Charlie: Would you like a cup of tea?

Duty Sergeant: Next.

Charlie: (to Young Mum) You go first. (to Duty Sergeant) This lady's been mugged and she - she's got a baby. She probably needs a cup of tea, actually.

Duty Sergeant: Are you a witness?

Charlie: Pardon?

Duty Sergeant: Are you a witness?

Charlie: No.

Duty Sergeant: Husband, partner, friend, relative?

Charlie: No. No.

Duty Sergeant: Name?

Charlie: Er, Charlie.

Duty Sergeant: Surname?

Charlie: Webb.

Duty Sergeant: One 'b' or two?

Charlie: Two.

Young Mum: How am I gonna get home?

Charlie: Look, here I - take that - (Handing her change), no it's fine.

Young Mum: Oh, no, I couldn't, I'll call someone.

Charlie: You haven't got a phone?

Young Mum: No, I'll just use a payphone.

Charlie: They took it away? Please, I'd like to help. I'd like to help. Not everybody -

Duty Sergeant: Excuse me? Excuse me? Are you here to sign the Sex-Offender's Register?

(Awkward pause - people react uncomfortably.)

Charlie: Yeah.

(Young Mum backs away. Charlie stands at the window to register himself.)

(Charlie leaves police station quickly and goes into a drug store. He takes a basket, browses around

uncomfortably, then hears Kelly and Michaela giggling in the next aisle. He looks at them and sees them stealing. Michaela sees Charlie and puts the item back.)

Kelly: What the fuck are you doing?

Michaela: Someone saw.

(Charlie bolts out the front door of the store, stops around the corner and snaps his rubber band several times.)

(Charlie is in Emma's office.)

Charlie: I used to nick stuff like that when I was a kid. Not lipstick, but stuff. I was gutted, you know. First thoughts in three years, but I wasn't gonna let that ruin everything, you know, fuck what happened at the police station. People are - I know the drill, so, I grabbed my coat and went to the till and bought some shades, five-ninety-five, I talked to the checkout girl, saying, 'do you like working at a chemist', extend the avoidance structure, do my times tables, one eight's eight, two eights sixteen, three eights twenty-four, then I did a full-on escape drill. I just gave her a tenner and left it, didn't even wait for the change.

Emma: You said your first thoughts in three years, Charlie, what kind of thoughts? What kind of thoughts Charlie?

Charlie: She was shoplifting lipstick. But I didn't say anything. I didn't get involved. Not with kids.

Emma: What kind of thoughts, Charlie?

Charlie: I saw her - younger one, and I thought, 'some girls'.

Emma: Some girls?

Charlie: Yeah, it's nothing to do with what they look like; whether or not they're pretty, it's not that. It's er...you know you look at them and you think...you feel a connection. You think, she's special. (snaps rubber band 3 times) And then I thought I was special once. And that was as far as it went.

Emma: What made you special, Charlie?

Charlie: My dad. My dad used to tell me. He used to come into my room and tell me.

Emma: And did you want the girl in the chemist to be special to you?

Charlie: (nods)

Emma: Listen, the woman in the police station, she made you feel ashamed, alienated, angry. Those are triggers, Charlie, but you didn't give in. Instead, you thought about what it means, what it meant to you to be abused, and that's victim empathy. I mean, the girl in the chemist, you felt desire, but you also felt compassion, you said so yourself, she reminded you of...of you. You met the challenge head on, Charlie. You used the strategy and it worked.

Charlie: It worked?

Emma: It worked.

Charlie: (happily) Fuck. (laughs)

(Charlie, sitting at his desk, has successfully built his card pyramid, then he is writing Emma's name under "trusted individuals" in his little book.)

Charlie: (v.o.) An offense-free future is not something you can achieve on your own. Support from and accountability to trusted individuals is the key to your success.

(In Probation officer's office.)

Charlie: Waste management. You mean bin-man.

P.O.: I mean waste management professional.

Charlie: You mean bin-man.

P.O.: The pay's good, and you get plenty of free time.

Charlie: Is that it?

P.O.: What did you expect? Equal opportunity? Welcome to the real world, Charlie.

Charlie: There's nothing wrong with waste management. We'd be up to our necks in shit without it.



(Charlie is sitting on a bench in the yard. Rudi approaches and offers him a cigarette.)

Charlie: No thanks.

Rudi: (shaking Charlie's hand.) Rudyard Hamilton. Bloody silly name, I should do something about it, really. Friends call me Rudi.

Charlie: Rudi. Charlie.

Rudi: Pleased to meet you Charlie. (smoking) Shaky days. First few days out of prison I remember well. Pressed to the limits of human endurance. Still, there's light at the end of the tunnel, Charlie.

Charlie: Hope so.

Rudi: I'm living testimony. Year of residential rehab, got my own business off the ground, moved into my own place, stuck it out long enough to call it home. Got my health, and I've got this place. Come here for the daily sessions, and of course the garden. You any good with long-handled shears?

(Charlie is helping Rudi tend the garden.)

(Charlie is writing in his book again.)

Charlie: Though therapists are available to some, it is recommended that you share your recovery with a friend.

(Emma lighting cigarette.)

Emma: Making friends with other sex-offenders is - I mean, I'm not discounting you making an effort to fit in, but it's not gonna take you forwards, okay. Making contact with the outside world is what really matters.

Charlie: What if the outside world doesn't want to know? I mean, what am I supposed to do? Even if I met a girl, a woman, I'm under curfew. Come eleven o'clock, what am I gonna do? Am I gonna bring her back here? And how am I supposed to be myself? Actually tell someone, this is who I am, this is what I've done? (pause) I haven't been touched in six years. (Emma crosses her legs uncomfortably.) Look, don't worry, if women my own age did it for me, I wouldn't be here, would I? (Gets up and crosses to window.)

Emma: When was the last time you slept with a woman your own age?

Charlie: Seven or eight years ago. I imagined I was doing it to her little sister.

Emma: Then you didn't give it a chance, did you?

Charlie: Who's gonna give me a chance, Emma? You? Would you sleep with me knowing what you know?

Emma: Well, that's an inappropriate question. I wouldn't sleep with you because I wouldn't sleep with a patient, full-stop. There are boundaries.

Charlie: Boundaries. Right, thank you very much. That's encouragement. No, you wouldn't sleep with me for the same reason anyone else wouldn't. It's never gonna happen.

(Charlie is sitting in the lobby of an employment center.) Job Officer is on the phone, sitting behind a desk.

Charlie: Hello?

Job Officer: Can I help you?

Charlie: Charlie, Charlie Webb.

Job Officer: Yeah?

Charlie: I'm just here for the waste management job.

Job Officer: I know. (into phone) Hang on. (to Charlie) I just signed you in, Mr. Webb.

Charlie: Yeah, I know. I know.

Job Officer: So, if there's nothing else I can help you with, could you take a seat, please?

Charlie: It's nice to meet you. (Flirting.)

Job Officer: Now.

Charlie: Do you wanna go for a drink after work?

Job Officer: What?

Charlie: Yeah, not to a pub, somewhere nice. Do you like Italian food? I'm actually a quarter Italian. My aunt was from Naples -

Job Officer: Just sit!

(Charlie starts to walk away, but turns back to her, slamming his hands on her desk.)

Charlie: I'm not a dog! (sits back down and glares at her.)

(Charlie is walking through a park, kicking a can, bends down to tie his shoes and sees statue of little girls.)

Charlie: (Reading statue) With thanks to the people of the United Kingdom, for saving the lives of ten thousand children who fled from Nazi persecution. Whosoever saves a single soul is credited as though they had saved the whole world.

(Charlie is walking home, sees suspicious car, crosses street, and is chased by three men through the streets. Rudi sees him.)

Rudi: Get in, for Christ's sake! Get in!

(Charlie gets in Rudi's car and they flee.)

Charlie: How did they know?

Rudi: Tabloids.  
(The car pulls up outside a pub.)

Rudi: They'd have us stoned to death if they could. They'd bring back public hanging. We're still God's creatures, they forget that. Judge not, lest you be judged. Still, at this precise moment, nothing precludes us from an honest pint.

Charlie: Could we just - could we just sit here for a bit? (Rudi touches Charlie's arm.) Thanks.

Rudi: 1966. Yuri Gagarin, Russian cosmonaut, first bloke in space, right?

Charlie: Right.

Rudi: Landed in the middle of a French vineyard, this is true. Now, the local mayor's totally over the moon, and he

renames the wine Yuri Gagarin. Years later, this bloke's camping in Provence and gets plastered on Yuri with an old pal of his. They think they've struck gold. They smuggle 300 bottles back into the U.K., spend a month traipsing around the off-licenses, trying to flog it as a novelty wine. Trouble is; it tasted horrid. And now they're stuck with 300 bottles of it.

Charlie: What did they do?

Rudi: Drank it. Last I heard, they were trying to set up a mobile noodle bar on a ski slope in Switzerland. Point being, be careful who you go into business with. Pint?

Charlie: Er...I'm not supposed to drink.

Rudi: Aw, come on Charlie. One pint won't hurt you.

Charlie: No thanks. (Looking around, paranoid.)

Rudi: Relax, Charlie. Nobody knows us. Not here.

(Outside pub, in car.)

Rudi: No one can live in fear, Charlie.

Charlie: No, it's not that.

Rudi: What then?

Charlie: What if there's no hope?

Rudi: Do you mean what I think you mean?

Charlie: What do you think I mean?

Rudi: That you're having doubts.

Charlie: Doubts?

Rudi: Urges.

Charlie: No.

Rudi: Because urges are easily dealt with, Charlie. South side of the common, by the public loos. Young boys and girls from the local care home selling themselves. They're damaged goods, Charlie. Better them than a friend or neighbor -

(Charlie punches Rudi in the face, then gets out of the car and walks home.)

(Charlie is chopping up Rudi's gardening.)

(Charlie is sitting in Emma's office.)

Charlie: Why do you think he told me? Just outright confessed like that?

Emma: Well, maybe he wanted to get caught. Maybe he knew that you'd report him, Charlie.

Charlie: Report him?

Emma: Well, I'll have to pass on what Mr. Hamilton told you to the police. I mean, surely you understand that?

Charlie: What'll happen to him?

Emma: They'll question him, search his home, and if they find any evidence, he'll be rearrested.

Charlie: What, they'll send him back to prison?

Emma: Yes.

Charlie: (big sigh) Well, maybe that's - maybe that's the best place for him. Only place for him, maybe.

Emma: No one is above slipping up, Charlie. Not even you. God, I thought we were clear on that.

Charlie: We are clear.

Emma: Are we? Because you don't seem clear. You seem angry and condemning.

Charlie: He was a fucking fraud.

Emma: Yes, and maybe you'd be a little less angry with Rudi if you were being more realistic about your own difficulties.

Charlie: What difficulties?

Emma: This is never going to be easy, Charlie. Ever. Not for Rudi, and not for you.

(Charlie is doing sit-ups on his floor. Hears shouting outside, there are angry protesters in front of the Centre. He is now laying in bed, with his hands between his knees, rocking back and forth.)

(Charlie is writing in his book.)

Charlie: (V.O.) Tuesday, twenty-fourth of October, day 31. I can't afford to hate them back.

(Emma's office.)

Emma: What would you be doing, Charlie, if I wasn't here to talk to? (Lights cigarette) God, this is difficult. You have to prepare yourself for the outside world, Charlie, sooner or later, I mean, that's what you want, isn't it? That's the whole point of this place.

Charlie: Yeah, but I'm not ready for the outside world, which is why I'm here, isn't it?

Emma: You're readier than most, Charlie.

(A sex-offender appears onscreen in silhouette and Charlie watches him on television.)

Sex-offender: I don't know what I'd do if they shut this place down. It's home for me, I've got nowhere else to go. Nowhere safe; nowhere I can fit in. At the Centre I'm surrounded by people who are here to help. Take that away, all I've got is a few therapy sessions, a probation officer. I don't think that's enough. I don't know what could happen out there. They might put my picture in the paper, I could end up on the run, or living near a school.

(Protesters outside chanting "Paedophiles, out, out, out!" Charlie packs up his belongings and leaves the Centre with the chanting in the background.)

(Charlie is sitting at a desk in his new place, building a new card pyramid.)

Charlie: (V.O.) Thursday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>. 8 days in a home office B&B. 8 days in the real world. And counting.

(Charlie is looking at a jobs board and now mowing a lawn in a turnabout as a "landscape designer".)

(Charlie is leaving his flat and sees a child's toy at the bottom of the landing. He leaves quickly.)

(Charlie is at his P.O.'s office and sets the toy on her desk.)

Charlie: Neighbors.

P.O.: Asylum seekers. It's some sort of mistake. It's temporary.

Charlie: Who's temporary, me or them?

P.O.: You want to complain, complain to the home office.

Charlie: Yeah, I will. In writing.

P.O.: How's the new job?

Charlie: It's good.

P.O.: Hours a week?

Charlie: Sixty. I'm doing both shifts. Try to keep myself busy, that way I can hold out. I can hold out.

P.O.: Hold out for what?

Charlie: For the Centre to reopen.

P.O.: Won't happen.

Charlie: You don't know that.

P.O.: I've got 2 kids, Charlie. Do you think I'd want a sex-offender's rehabilitation centre at the bottom of my street?

Charlie: Who would?

P.O.: There's circles of support.

Charlie: Christians.

P.O.: So?

Charlie: My dad was a Christian.

(Charlie is working in the turnabout, then sitting in his truck, eating lunch and smoking a cigarette with the toy on the dash of the truck.)

(Charlie is returning to his flat, but leaves the toy on the landing, knocks on the neighbor's door, then returns to his flat quickly. He watches the child retrieve the toy through the mail slot in his door.)

(Charlie is sitting on a bench in front of the statue of the little girls in the park, eating a sandwich.)

(Charlie is at his P.O.'s office.)

P.O.: There's a spot opened up at hostel. So, we'll be moving you soon.

Charlie: Well, I'm settled in now.

P.O.: I thought you were gonna complain. In writing.

Charlie: Well, it wouldn't do any good, would it? Anyway, I'm fine where I am.

P.O.: What about your neighbor's kids?

Charlie: I haven't touched my neighbor's kids, or any other kids, and I'm not planning to. Thanks for the vote of confidence.

P.O.: I don't see anything to be confident about.

Charlie: No, I met someone. A woman. A grown-up.

P.O.: Tell me about her.

Charlie: She knows what I am and uh - knows all about me. What I did, and she still believes in me. That's the kind of person she is.

P.O.: What's her name?

Charlie: Emma.

P.O.: I don't believe you.



Charlie: Fuck you! (Storms out the door.)

(Charlie is bouncing a tennis ball in the park. Then he is at an underground station. A prostitute is standing nearby.)

Charlie is lying on a bed, and the prostitute is giving him a hand job, watching the clock.)

Prostitute: Hurry up, love. (The clock turns to 10:25). Right. That's your lot, I'm afraid.

(Charlie pulls his pants up, the prostitute gets dressed.)

(Charlie enters his flat, goes into the loo, splashes his face with water and looks at himself in the mirror.)

(Charlie is sitting on the end of his bed, eating a bowl of cereal, watching TV. His flat is a mess. He hears the neighbor's kid in the hallway and peeks through the mail slot to watch.)

(Charlie is sitting at a restaurant playing Sudoku. A girl and her mum are across the aisle, and the girl walks behind Charlie and examines a rack of toys behind Charlie. Charlie sets down his pen and Sudoku book and leaves the restaurant.)

(Charlie is talking on a pay phone)

P.O.: (V.O.) We'll talk about this next week then.

Charlie: No! No, I won't be there!

P.O.: If you miss...

Charlie: I know what a probation order is, okay? And I know what happens if I break it.

P.O.: You'd have another stint in prison, Charlie.

Charlie: I told you, I just told you, just now, that there's nowhere else to go, there's nowhere safe!

P.O.: Are you being threatened?

Charlie: No, no, no, it's not for me, it's for them!

P.O.: For who?

Charlie: It's for kids!

P.O.: Charlie, this isn't how it works.

Charlie: It's exactly how it works! It's exactly how it works! I don't turn up, you phone the police, the judge sends me back to prison! I'm giving you a head start!

(Charlie slams the phone down and leaves.)

(Charlie is lying on a park bench, cold. Then, he is walking down the street and the three men who chased him before are waiting outside his flat, and chase him. Charlie loses them when one of them gets hit by a car. He runs into a funfair in a field. He wanders around a bit and sees a young girl alone.)

Charlie: You're not Susie, are you?

Girl: Sorry.

Charlie: You're not Susie, are you Emily then?

Girl: No, sorry.

Charlie: Okay. My friend - do you know, er - do you know Charlie, Charlotte? Why is this not working?

Girl: I'm not sure.

Charlie: Maybe they should er...I'm waiting for my friend. She's on that one. (Feigns vomiting) It made me sick rather, back there.

Girl: My dad went on with me and he was sick as well.

Charlie: It's really bad, isn't it? It's good though, I'll go on it with you if you want. (The girl's dad arrives.) See you later.

(Charlie is wandering around, watching people. He sees a girl 2.)

Did you drop this?

Girl 2: No.

Charlie: Are you sure? Did you drop it over there?

Girl 2: No. (She walks away.)

(Charlie is wandering around again, and sees Michaela and Kelly. He follows them, gets a coke. They are in an arcade and drinking out of red plastic cups and giggling.)

Michaela: (seeing Charlie) Kels.

Kelly: What?

Michaela: Look at that guy.

Kelly: What guy? He's coming over.

Charlie: All right?

Kelly: All right.

Charlie: You on your own?

Kelly: No. You?

Charlie: What?

Kelly: On your own?

Charlie: Er...sort of, yeah.

Kelly: I'm Kelly.

Charlie: Charlie.

Kelly: That's Michaela.

Charlie: Pleased to meet you.

Kelly: How old are you?

Charlie: Twenty-six.

Kelly: How old do you think I am?

Charlie: Seventeen?

Kelly: What about her?

Michaela: Kelly!

Kelly: (mocking) Kelly!

Charlie: Sixteen.

Kelly: Bollocks. (indistinguishable) are still served there (indistinguishable), and they wouldn't even let us in until fifteen.

Michaela: Fuck off!

Kelly: It's true.

Michaela: It was nineteen.

Kelly: She's lying!

Michaela: I am not!

Kelly: Show us your tits then. She ain't got none. Got an ass on her though. Too many (indistinguishable) bars.

Michaela: Why are you being such a bitch? (leaves)

(Michaela is sitting on a tow trailer, drinking out of a glass bottle. Charlie joins her.)

Charlie: You're prettier than she is and she knows it. That's all. That's all it is. (Lights cigarette.) I thought this was supposed to be a funfair.

Michaela: It is.

Charlie: We're not having much fun, are we?

(Charlie and Michaela on various rides, he wins her a big stuffed dog.)

Kelly: I'm going.

Michaela: Bye, then.

Kelly: What do you mean? You're coming with me!

Michaela: I'm not going anywhere.

Kelly: Michaela!

Michaela: (mocking) Michaela!

Kelly: She's only twelve, you know. She's just a kid.

Michaela: I am not!

Kelly: I'm just trying to account for you.

Michaela: No you're not; you're trying to spoil things for me.  
You're always trying to spoil things for me!

Kelly: Bye. (leaves)

(Charlie squeezes the big dog's nose to cheer her up and she laughs.)

Charlie: He's cute, isn't he?

Michaela: Yeah, he's cute. I like him. We should name him.

Charlie: What are you gonna name him?

Michaela: Charlie.

Charlie: (Feigning flattered.) Oh!

(Charlie and Michaela on more rides together.)

Michaela: What do you do for a living?

Charlie: Um, I'm an astronaut.

Michaela: An astronaut!

Charlie: Yeah, in my spare time.

Michaela: And you go into space?

Charlie: Yeah, NASA - NASA rang me up and said 'Do you want to go to space' and I said - well, how much are you paying? And I said I'll go if you pay me a million pounds.

(Michaela and Charlie are in a café, she is drinking a milkshake.)

Michaela: You're staring.

Charlie: Am I?

Michaela: It's rude to stare.

Charlie: I don't care!

Michaela: You know what you are, don't you?

Charlie: What?

Michaela: I don't know. Weird.

Charlie: Would you like to see a card trick? Right! (Claps hands.)  
A proper card trick for her majesty! Any of you stiffes  
got a pack of cards?

Michaela: Are you on crack?

Charlie: (whispering) All the best people are a little bit potty!  
That's what my old mum used to say, except she said it  
like this (funny voice) All the best people are potty,  
honey! Potty!

(Michaela laughs.)

What about your mum?

Michaela: Bitch.

Charlie: Hey! Bet she's not. Bet she's a diamond; daughter like  
you. Must be. (pause) How about, um, a milkshake? Or some  
chips?

Michaela: That's all right.

Charlie: Which?

Michaela: Both.

Charlie: Both? (laughs. To waiter.) Pineapple milkshake and chips,  
twice.

Michaela: How'd you know I like pineapple?

Charlie: Because I'm a genius. (pause) Lucky guess. Plus, you've  
got no earlobes. People with no earlobes like pineapple.  
It's a well-known fact.

(Michaela and Charlie are walking in tandem down a street  
together.)

Charlie: You've seriously never been to the seaside?

Michaela: I can't swim.

Charlie: No?

Michaela: No? You?

Charlie: Backstroke, breast stroke, butterfly, crawl. Backstroke, breast stroke, butterfly, crawl. No, I was a junior champion. And then I was a swim coach.

Michaela: You could teach me.

Charlie: Yeah, I could if you like.

(Michaela sits on a park bench, he joins her. She snaps his rubber band.)

Charlie: (Leans over and whispers in her ear.) Little present. (He hands her his lighthouse picture.) See, the thing about lighthouses is, er, they have a very important job. They do it all on their own. Warning people, day and night, not to come too close.

Michaela: You mean ships and stuff?

Charlie: Ships and stuff. May not make much sense now, but one day it will.

Michaela: Thanks. For everything.

Charlie: Any time.

Michaela: Can I see you again?

Charlie: Would you like that?

Michaela: Yeah. (She kisses him on the cheek and stands up.)

(She enters her house.)

(Charlie is sitting at his desk, thinking, and pushes all the stuff off the desk onto the floor. He enters a hardware store, sets a can of white spray paint on the counter, and cuts some rope.)

Charlie: Do you have any pliers? Large ones, and I'll need some bleach as well.

(Charlie is spray painting something on the wall outside his flat.)

(Charlie is writing a letter. While he writes the letter, we see him enter the loo and scrub himself with bleach, then get dressed up, then work the rope into a noose.)

Charlie: (V.O.) Dear Michaela, thank you for a brilliant time. You're a really amazing girl and I think swimming lessons are a great idea. But the truth is I'm not allowed to go near children. That's the golden rule. It's funny, I know you'll never get this letter, but in the end I just couldn't help writing it anyway. Things don't make much sense to me until I write them down. Anyway, that's all I wanted to say, really. Be good. Charlie.

(Charlie hangs himself from the railing outside his flat. On the wall behind him, he spray painted the word 'paedophile'.)

(Michaela is sitting on the school steps, joking with her friends.)

THE END