

GUILTY

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - DAY

It is a clear morning. The area is quiet in the early hours and there is a chill in the air.

CHARLES HUGHES (28), stylish, sophisticated, and charming, adjusts a scarf around his neck and buttons up his jacket as he walks briskly towards a wooden bench with a book in hand.

He takes a seat, crosses his legs, and opens the book. Charles removes a bookmark and takes a tender SIGH.

He starts reading.

The BLARING SOUNDS of traffic are barely audible, an ECHO in the distance.

FOOTSTEPS approach Charles and he briefly looks up. DAVID (28), clean shaven, sly, and wearing a black coat, takes a seat next to him.

As they sit in silence, a plane RUMBLES overhead. David reacts and looks up towards the sky.

Charles adjusts on the bench, quietly reading.

David looks at Charles, then clears his throat.

DAVID

Benny loved watching the planes
every morning.

Soon the ROAR of the engines are distant, and the faint CHIRPING of the local birds return.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Remember his dream?

(beat)

He wanted to be a pilot. Would have
made a damn good one too.

Charles puts the book down. He clenches his jaw and glares at David. David stares back with sharp, piercing eyes.

CHARLES

Leave me alone.

DAVID

They're going to find out, Charles.
You need to leave.

*
*

CHARLES

This was all a mistake.

*

DAVID

You don't mean that. What he did
was unforgivable, but now is not
the time to reminiscence.

*

*

*

CHARLES

Just stop talking.

DAVID

Were you really going to let him
hurt you like that? Charles, listen
to me...

*

*

Charles remains silent. David anxiously looks over his
shoulder, surveying the park. He leans inwards towards
Charles, his voice quick.

*

*

*

DAVID (CONT'D)

You think you got away with it, but
they'll find the body.

*

*

CHARLES

I just want to forget about it.

DAVID

That's not an option. What's done
is done. Now make a call and get
the hell out of here!

*

*

Charles stands up, grabs his book and leaves. He takes a look
over his shoulder and sees that David is gone, and the bench
empty.

Charles slows to a comfortable speed. He spots a second bench
coming up and sets his eyes on it.

Sweat glistens on his forehead as Charles takes a moment to
catch his breath before taking a seat on the bench.

He opens the book and continues where he left off.

DAVID (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You think you got away with it...

*

Charles holds a hand to his forehead, closing his eyes.
David's voice lingers.

Charles shakes his head. The voice is gone. His shoulders
relax and he smiles.

Suddenly FOOTSTEPS. HILLA (28), noble, virtuous, and wearing a white coat, approaches him.

HILLA
Mind if I join you?

Charles shrugs his shoulders.

Hilla takes a seat. She crosses her legs, puts her hands in her lap, then stares intensely at Charles.

There is a moment of silence.

Finally, feeling her watchful eyes burrow through him, Charles lowers the book and GRUNTS.

CHARLES
What do you want?

HILLA
You can't live like this, Charles.

CHARLES
How hard can it be? *

HILLA
You're a good man. What you did was wrong! *

CHARLES
I did what I had to. What's done is done. *

HILLA
You're trapped. Set yourself free.
Make the call.

Hilla glances down to Charles's phone inside his front pocket. Charles stares at it and grows aggressive.

CHARLES
Benny had it coming. If he just kept his hands off Kate, we wouldn't be having this conversation.

HILLA
If you had controlled your temper, Charles, we wouldn't be having this conversation!

CHARLES
He deserved it.

HILLA
He was your best friend.

CHARLES
He betrayed my trust.

HILLA
You lost your nerve.

Charles puts down the book and takes out his phone. He waves it in the air in front of Hilla's face, taunting her as he CHUCKLES.

CHARLES
Alright. Let's say I make the call.
Then what?

HILLA
Confess.

Charles shakes his head before releasing NERVOUS LAUGHTER.

CHARLES
No.

HILLA
Charles, you're better than this.
What's the alternative? You run
away?

CHARLES
Why not?

He grabs his book and prepares to get up. Frantic, Hilla searches for words.

HILLA
And what of his children? Don't
they deserve the truth?

Charles stops and drops his head. He stares at the ground as his eyes glaze over with tears.

CHARLES
I didn't want any of this.

Hilla slides close to him and puts a hand on his shoulder.

HILLA
Then make it right.

Charles tilts his head and INHALES a sharp breath as Hilla pushes his phone towards him. It sits motionlessly in her palm.

CHARLES

I-I don't think I can...

HILLA

It's your choice, Charles, but
choose wisely. You'll live with it
for the rest of your life.

Charles takes the phone from her hand. He is shaking, his
fingers trembling as he slowly inputs his passcode and
prepares to make a call.

DAVID (O.S)

Get the hell out of here!

*

HILLA (O.S)

Confess.

Charles hesitates. He slumps forward, staring intensely at
the phone. His thumb lingers over the center of the screen.

Hilla and David now sit on either side of him on the bench.
They each place a hand on his shoulder.

HILLA (CONT'D)

Do it, Charles.

DAVID

Do it, Charles.

With a SIGH, he enters a number and puts the phone to his
ear.

RING. RING. RING.

Charles takes several deep BREATHS.

A CLICK. Someone answers the call.

OPERATOR (O.S.)

(filtered)

911, what's your emergency?

FADE OUT.