

MONGREL

By Niall Reynolds

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Nine boys (14 years old) SEAN, EVAN, KIERAN, PADDY, LORCAN ANDY, KILLIAN, DANNY, CONOR, quietly wait outside the office door. Evan and Kieran are either side of Sean, who is looking at a fresh scar on his palm.

MR. LARKIN (O.S.)
Sean Burke!

INT. MR. LARKIN'S OFFICE - DAY

We see a Tiny doll's head, half its face has been melted and charred black, it rests on MR. LARKIN'S (50s) desk as Sean takes his seat.

MR. LARKIN
How have you settled in so far
Sean?

SEAN
Good.

MR. LARKIN
Good sir*.

SEAN
Good sir.

MR. LARKIN
... Do you have any idea why you
are in here speaking to me today
Sean?

Sean looks at the doll's head, then back to Mr. Larkin.

5 Weeks Earlier

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - DAY

Sean bends down to tie his shoe laces - something catches his eye. A flower - Sean picks it and looks up to MRS. CARROLL (50s) who is waiting for him a bit ahead.

MRS. CARROLL
Come along pet.

CUT: All the boys are lined up in front of the house to greet Sean. We hear a dog barking inside the house.

MR. LARKIN
This is Sean lads... He's going to
be living with us for the next
while and you're all to make him
feel most welcome is that clear?..

KIERAN
Nice flower.

Sean drops the flower as the boys snigger and smirk. Mr. Larkin goes behind Kieran and clips him on the back of the head. Evan stands at the other end of the line.

MR. LARKIN
Is that clear Mr. Keating?

KIERAN
Yes sir.

MR. LARKIN
Good.

INT. LOUNGE ROOM - DAY

HARRY the jack russell, is on the windowsill, barking furiously out at the line of boys.

INT. SEAN AND EVAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Sean is sitting on his bed, looking at his tiny doll, **the same doll from the 1st scene**, Sean hides it under pillow as Evan enters the room and makes his way over to Sean.

EVAN
Howya?

SEAN
Alright?

EVAN
So you're my new roommate then?..
No one told me...

Evan is standing over Sean, he offers his hand.

EVAN (CONT'D)
I'm Evan...

Sean keeps his hands to himself - cautious.

SEAN
...I'm Sean...

Outside the window we see Harry barking up at the bedroom.

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - MORNING

The sun rises over the cold country morning.

INT. SEAN AND EVAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

CUT: A flower emblem on the back of a maroon paddy cap.

Sean is looking in the mirror, he keeps putting on and off his paddy cap, unsure whether he should wear it. Evan comes behind him.

EVAN

Wear it... Think it suits ya.

INT. LOUNGE ROOM - DAY

Sean enters the room and his cap is swiped off his head straight away.

KIERAN

Nice hat fairy!.. Big surprise, a fucking flower on it.

He throws it to Conor.

CONOR

Fuck sake.

Who throws it to Paddy.

PADDY

He's a queer lads!

He throws it back to Kieran.

KIERAN

We don't like little queers around here fairy boy.

He shoves the hat back in Sean's chest and so Sean leaves for the front door. Harry starts barking frantically at Evan who stops at the door for a moment and looks into the room at the bullies and the barking dog, Kieran looks at Evan, before Evan follows Sean out the front.

MR. LARKIN

Behave yourself Mr. Keating, do ya hear me?

KIERAN

Yes sir.

Mr. Larkin is over by the kitchen door.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Mrs. Carroll looks out the window and sees Sean who is crouched down, alone, staring into the water of the pond.

EXT. MANOR GARDEN - DAY

Evan Approaches Sean.

EVAN
Are you ok?

SEAN
Yeah.

Sean turns back to the pond and stares into the black water as Evan comes behind him.

EVAN
Don't worry about them, they're like that to all the new lads. Half them are probably gays themselves.

Sean smiles.

EVAN (CONT'D)
It will be alright Sean, you just have to settle in a bit, they'll get bored and leave ya be...

Evan places his hand on Sean's shoulder.

EVAN
Everything will be alright... You'll see.

Sean puts his hand on Evan's.

MONTAGE - Cello and Strings - Ominous

WOODS - Sean and Evan walk a forest path.

WOODS - Sean and Evan climb a tree.

LOUNGE ROOM - Harry barks at Sean as he leaves the room.

KITCHEN - Sean is studying, 'Fairy' is written all over his copies.

GARDEN - Kieran kicks a football at Sean. Mr. Larkin clips Kieran on the back of the head.

KITCHEN - Sean eating breakfast as Harry stares at him.

WOODS - Sean and Evan sitting on ground - messing.

GARDEN - Sean and Evan playing football, Evan in goals. Mrs. Carroll watching from upstairs window.

LOUNGE ROOM - Sean is jocked by Kieran in front of lads.

SEAN & EVAN'S ROOM - Sean is crying and Evan consoles him.

FRONT OF HOUSE - Harry barks at Evan and Sean.

HALLWAY - The boys come in from school, Sean's hat is smacked off his head. Mrs. Carroll worried.

LOUNGE ROOM - Sean stares at the boys, then to Harry.

The sun rises.

END MONTAGE

EXT. MANOR GARDEN - DAY

Kieran approaches Sean who is by the pond alone.

KIERAN
Alright Sean?

SEAN
Alright.

KIERAN
You thinking of hopping in?

SEAN
(Dark)
What if I drown you instead?

Sean looks at him in a way we haven't seen before.

KIERAN
...haha yeah... Listen, we're heading to the woods later to have a smoke, Paddy robbed some off the cleaner, you want to come with us?

SEAN
With all of you?

KIERAN
Yeah... We were hard on ya, but it's done now... We were only testing ya, we do it to all the new lads... But it's over now, so come with us.

A beat.

SEAN
I Don't know.

KIERAN
How long you been here now?

SEAN
A month.

KIERAN
Exactly, that's how long it takes,
but that's it now... Mon out with
us, we'll save ya a smoke.

SEAN
(Smile)
Alright...

KIERAN
We'll see ya later then?

SEAN
Yeah, See ya.

INT. LANDING - DAY

Harry sits outside growling at Evan and Sean's bedroom door.

INT. SEAN AND EVAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Sean is at the mirror fixing his hair.

EVAN
You're not actually going to go are
you?

SEAN
Why not?

EVAN
Are you that thick?

SEAN
They like me now.

EVAN
No one likes you Sean.

SEAN
I thought you did?

EVAN
Obviously I like you, but this is
different, you can't trust them...

SEAN
Kieran said they were only testing
me... They do it to all the new
lads... So we can start going out
with them now.

EVAN
How are you going to believe him?
After everything, they just decide
they want to be friends with you?

Sean ignores Evan.

EVAN (CONT'D)
Fine!.. Don't come crying to me
when it's done...

INT. LANDING - DAY

Harry is sitting facing the closed bedroom door.

CUE MUSIC

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

All the boys walking down the road.

EXT. CRUAGH WOODS PATH- DAY

The group of boys walk along.

EXT. CRUAGH WOODS - DAY

The lads surround Sean.

KIERAN
Take your clothes off.

SEAN
What?

KIERAN
(Flicks out knife)
Take your fucking clothes off you
little queer... Now.

CUT: Sean is in his underwear, curled up on the ground as the lads kick a football at him and throw stones. All sound sucks out of the world as Sean screams for help.

CUT: Evan watching from the bushes as they all leave.

WIDE SHOT - Evan comes over to Sean and stares down at him.

CUT MUSIC

CUT: Evan slices his palm. Time has jumped forward, Sean, fully clothed, approaches Evan and hunkers down beside him.

EVAN
(Offers knife)
You to...

SEAN
Why?

EVAN
It's blood brothers, means we watch
out for each other, no matter what
happens...

Sean goes for knife but Evan takes it back.

EVAN (CONT'D)
This is serious Sean, once it's
done, there's no going back... So
don't do it unless you mean it.

Sean takes the knife, looks at Evan then slices his palm.
The two boys clasp their hands under the bare winter trees.

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - DUSK

Time lapse - The sun goes down and the house goes to sleep.

INT. SEAN AND EVAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sean wakes up and sees Evan isn't in bed - he hears a noise,
a creak or footsteps maybe? It came from the landing...

INT. LANDING - NIGHT

Sean steps out into the dark landing. It's dead quiet.

Sean's POV - We look down the landing, all's still.
Something crawls into the end room. Sean creeps down toward
where it went...

INT. UPSTAIRS SITTING ROOM - NIGHT

Sean slowly opens the door. Some sort of thing is perched
staring at him, very still, over by the window, it's too
dark to make out what it is.

Sean turns on the light and sees that it is a child in a
black suit and tie, hunkered down, only it has a rubber
dog's head instead of a boy's, a *Dogboy*.

Close up Sean - horrified. Close up *Dogboy* - dead, lifeless,
still.

Wide - now 7 *Dogboys* sit, 3 either side of the 1st one.
Their heads jerk, 3 quick unnatural movements, perfectly
synced - Up, Down, Tilt.

HARD CUT - The 7 *Dogboys* looking down at us. Sean is below
them all, in his boxers with a collar and lead around his
neck. The *Dogboys* start to laugh and shriek. Evan with no
mask on, has Sean at the end of his lead and looks down.

HARD CUT - Wide Evan with Sean on lead, the *Dogboys* have all disappeared, leaving only them two.

INT. SEAN AND EVAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

SEAN WAKES UP - smacking the wall with his hand.

INT. KIERAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kieran wakes up with noise of Sean smacking the other side of his wall.

INT. SEAN AND EVAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Sean catches his breath and sees Evan is not in his bed, so Sean gets up and opens the door.

INT. LANDING - NIGHT

Sean creeps out to landing. **Kieran** quietly opens his door and sees Sean head downstairs.

INT. SHED - NIGHT

Evan opens the door and takes a can of petrol.

EXT. MANOR HOUSE DRIVE - NIGHT

Evan gives Harry some ham and walks the dog away from the house, Sean follows a distance behind.

EXT. CRUAGH WOODS - NIGHT

Evan brings Harry into the woods, Sean still following but Evan hasn't noticed.

CUT: Evan ties the lead, takes Harry's name tag, places something on the ground and douses the dog in petrol. He lights some paper and throws it on the dog.

Fully ablaze, Harry spins in circles, screeching. Evan, blanks face, looks down at the burning dog.

Sean, horrified steps out into the clearing and Evan turns to face him.

Wide shot - Sean and Evan face one another.

Sean runs home through the trees -

EXT. MANOR HOUSE DRIVE - NIGHT

Sean sprints toward the house.

INT. SEAN AND EVAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sean is curled up in bed, all is quiet. A hand holding a knife comes slowly to his head and Sean turns to see Evan.

EVAN
If you tell anyone... I'll burn you
alive.

Sean just looks at him, terrified.

CUT (MUSIC): Top corner POV, Evan standing in middle of room.

EXT. MANOR GARDEN - DAY

MR. LARKIN
(Whistling)
Harry!.. Harry come on!

INT. KIERAN'S ROOM - DAY

We see kids in the garden calling for Harry and pan to see Evan hiding something under Kieran's mattress. Sean comes to the doorway.

SEAN
What are you doing?

EVAN
Shhh will ya!

INT. LANDING - DAY

Evan barges by Sean and heads back into their room, Sean follows him as Kieran comes up the stairs, just missing them.

EXT. CRUAGH WOODS - DAY

Wide Mr. Larkin, with a FARMER (50s) and his sheep dog, Mr. Larkin falls to his knees when he sees his cremated dog. He then sees Sean's doll's head in the muck.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

All the boys stand outside the office.

INT. MR. LARKIN'S OFFICE - DAY

MR. LARKIN

Tell me Sean, do you like dogs?

SEAN

Yes Sir....

MR. LARKIN

And how about Harry? You like him don't you?..

SEAN

Yes Sir.

MR. LARKIN

He can be a bit mean sometimes though can't he?

SEAN

Sometimes ye...

Mr. Larkin's facade fades.

MR. LARKIN

What were you doing out of bed the night before last?

SEAN

Sir?..

MR. LARKIN

Why were you out of bed the night before last?

SEAN

...I... Was Getting a glass of water sir.

MR. LARKIN

Were you now?

SEAN

Yes sir.

MR. LARKIN

And you came straight back up after?

SEAN

Yes sir.

MR. LARKIN

You didn't see or hear anything strange that night did you?

SEAN

No sir.

MR. LARKIN

Glass of water and straight back up to bed?

SEAN

Yes sir.

MR. LARKIN

This will be a lot worse for you if you lie to me Sean.

A beat.

MR. LARKIN (CONT'D)

Because Kieran said you went downstairs for an awful long time...

No answer.

MR. LARKIN (CONT'D)

He said he saw you head down stairs but you didn't come back for at least an hour, maybe more?

Sean looks at the doll's head on the table.

MR. LARKIN (CONT'D)

Is this yours Sean?... I asked you a question.

SEAN

No Sir.

A long beat.

MR. LARKIN (CONT'D)

If you have anything to tell me Sean... Now is the time...

Sean makes his decision.

SEAN

I'm sorry sir... I've not been telling you the full truth... I... Well I did see Kieran that night, because he came down stairs and saw me... I didn't want to get him in trouble so I didn't say anything...

MR. LARKIN

So you saw him now?

SEAN

Yes sir... In the kitchen, the night before last... and... Did something happen to Harry sir?

MR. LARKIN
Why do you ask?

SEAN
Well it's just that Kieran had
Harry and left the house with him.

MR. LARKIN
Left the house?

SEAN
Yes sir... And yesterday... I came
to speak to him about it and... He
was putting something under his bed
and... He told me to keep my mouth
shut... Or... Or that he'd burn me
alive...

INT. KIERAN'S ROOM - DAY

Mr. Larkin finds Harry's name tag and the rest of Sean's
doll (missing a head), that Evan hid under Kieran's bed.

EXT. MANOR HOUSE - DAY

Kieran, with his suitcase, heads off with two men.

INT. SEAN AND EVAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mrs. Carroll smells Sean's clothes - smoke, and looks to
window.

EXT. MANOR GARDEN - DAY

Sean and Evan are playing football. Sean kicks a goal past
Evan.

EVAN
You're terrible!

MRS. CARROLL
Hi Sean pet.

The lads stop playing and look to Mrs. Carroll.

MRS. CARROLL (CONT'D)
Who are you talking to love?..
Who's terrible?..

EVAN
No one Mrs.

We see **there is no Evan**, Sean is completely on his own.

END.