

NEIGHBOUR

By

Cillian Daly

+353 86 2473663
cilliandaly@gmail.com

FADE IN:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL FOOTPATH - DAY

Suburbia. Damp and quiet. A school day.

Grass flickers in a breeze. A dogs paw crushes the blades, wet nose takes a curious sniff.

A GIRL (19), elfish, withdrawn, malnourished almost, walks along side the dog. Her trainers tap softly on the ground. The dog's lead goes taut. They move on.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET, OUTSIDE NUMBER 10 - DAY

The dog takes a shit on the grass, walks away, content. The Girl pulls her hoodie tight around her head, yellow stained fingers flick a cigarette butt to the ground.

INT. LIVING ROOM, NUMBER 10

A MAN (60's), regimented, straight shouldered, possibly ex-army, watches the Girl through net curtains until she walks out of sight. He keeps his eyes on the empty street a little longer, making sure. The curtain floats back to position.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET, OUTSIDE NUMBER 10 - DAY

Another day, another dog shit steams on the grass.

The Girl pulls the dog off the verge, takes a drag of her cigarette. She glances at Number 10, sees the net curtain fall into place.

INT. LIVING ROOM, NUMBER 10

The Man stands still, rigid, stares at the Girl, looking in. She takes another drag, walks on with the dog. The Man straightens the curtain, leaves the window.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM, NUMBER 10 - DAY

The Man puts away clothes, looks outside. The Girl walks into view with the dog pushing on ahead. She stops outside, the dog fouling the grass. Again.

(CONTINUED)

The Man watches the Girl turn and looks toward his living room. She moves to his garden wall, shades her eyes, peers in.

Satisfied, she lights a cigarette, moves on.

The Man removes a small black notebook and pencil from his pocket, writes something inside.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL ESTATE, PARK - DAY

The Girl lets the dog out on a long lead. It chases phantoms around the grass. The Girl plays on her phone, occasionally looks up to check on the mutt.

An annoying electronic JINGLE -- a text arrives on her phone. She checks it, pockets the phone, glances around the neighbourhood. It's deserted, only distant traffic noise intrudes.

The Girl pulls an old tennis ball from her pocket, flings it past the dog. After a delayed reaction, the animal bounds after the neon toy.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET, OUTSIDE NUMBER 10 - DAY

Rain pounds the pavement. The Girl's trainer steps onto a fallen cigarette butt, drowns it underfoot.

INT. LIVING ROOM, NUMBER 10

The Man, nose pressed against the curtain and glass, peers out at the Girl, wrapped in her rain soaked hoodie. Water drips from the hem.

The Man opens his black notebook, begins to write.

Rain slaps against the glass.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET, OUTSIDE NUMBER 10 - NIGHT

The Girl stands on damp pavement, watches the warm glow from the living room of Number 10 spill onto the front garden. She catches sight of shadowy movement behind the curtains.

INT. LIVING ROOM, NUMBER 10

The Man sits on a sofa, remote in his hand, channel surfing through soft porn.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET, OUTSIDE NUMBER 10

The Girl watches the flicker of the television on the curtains.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET, OUTSIDE NUMBER 10 - DAY

The Girl stands on the path, bounces the tennis ball casually on the ground. She catches it, stares at the side gate to Number 10.

INT. BEDROOM, NUMBER 10

The Man shoves clothes into a drawer, closes it. Behind him, on an open wardrobe door hangs a bright red dress.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET, OUTSIDE NUMBER 10

The Girl weighs the ball, throws it over the wall. It rolls along the side of the house and disappears under the side gate.

The Girl takes a look up and down the street -- no one around.

She moves down the side of the house, tries the gate -- locked. She jumps to see over the gate, can't.

The Girl kicks the door in frustration, leaves.

INT. BEDROOM, NUMBER 10

From upstairs the Man watches the Girl disappear. He makes a note in the black book.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

The Girl sits on a low wall, kicking it with her heels. The dog patiently waits nearby.

A group of excited kids, filled with smiles, sprint past, throwing a ball amongst themselves.

The Girl watches them pass.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET, OUTSIDE NUMBER 10 - DAY

The Man glances onto the street, pulls the curtains across the living room window.

INT. LIVING ROOM, NUMBER 10

The Man powers up a laptop, connects a small USB drive. On the screen he searches through -- Pornographic video files.

He hovers the cursor over one -- the thumbnail shows a woman in lingerie, bearing a strong resemblance to the Girl with the dog.

He clicks the image, the video plays. The woman on screen removes her bra, licks a vibrator seductively.

She stares into the camera, directly at the Man.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET, FOOTPATH

A black VAN races down the street. The Girl watches it pass.

The van does a U-turn, comes back, stops beside her. She ignores it, hops off the wall, walks on, eyes front.

The van inches forward. The drivers window winds down. A muscled, tattooed arm swings out, gestures for her to come closer.

The Girl steps over, reluctantly.

The Girls hair is rubbed. She pulls away. Her hair is gripped tight, head, shoulders, pulled inside the cab.

Seconds later, she's shoved back out. The van tears away.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT GARDEN, NUMBER 10 - DAY

The Man dumps a plastic bag into his black bin. He walks down the side of the house, leaves the side gate open.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL ESTATE, PARK - DAY

The Girl plays with her phone, waits for the dog to do it's business. She taps her foot on the kerb, anxious.

Her phone BEEPS. She reads the text. She turns her attention to her dog, pets it, then walks off, pulling the dog with her.

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL FOOTPATH - DAY

The Girl strolls, eyes down, dog further ahead.

As she reaches --

OUTSIDE NUMBER 10

-- She sees the side gate is open. She stops, looks around, back at the house. No movement, all quiet.

The Girl quietly steps around the side of the house, glances back, makes sure no one sees her.

She pauses at the threshold, peers around the corner --

REAR GARDEN, NUMBER 10

An open back door of the house looks out on medium sized back garden, clean washing on the clothes line.

Strangely normal.

The tennis ball waits in the middle of the lawn.

The Girl moves quietly onto the grass, almost on tiptoe.

Behind, as the Girl reaches down for the ball, the Man appears, standing on the patio, a BLADE gleams in his hand.

She hears his feet shuffle on the patio, freezes, takes a breath. From her sleeve, a FLICK, and a blade of her own appears.

She turns, conceals the knife at her back, out of sight.

The Girl moves slowly at first, but breaks into a sprint, covers the ground to the Man easily.

He's surprised to see her lunge at him, even more so when she rams the knife into his stomach, and again into his chest.

The Man falls to his knees, drops his weapon -- a bread knife, crumbs still attached.

He grabs the Girls sleeves but she brushes him off, pushes him to the patio. He collapses, face down, gurgling.

INT. KITCHEN, NUMBER 10

The Girl steps over him, into the kitchen, rifles through the drawers. On the table, a couple of freshly cut sandwiches. And the black notebook.

INT. LANDING, NUMBER 10

She sprints upstairs, ducks into each room, goes to the bedside lockers of the main bedroom, goes through the drawers, pulls everything out.

INT. BEDROOM, NUMBER 10

An envelope filled with cash falls from a pile of papers. She picks it up, flicks through it, leaves.

INT. LANDING, NUMBER 10

The Girl stops at the top of the stairs, checks herself in the mirror, as if going out on a date, ignores the blood on her sleeves. She heads downstairs.

INT. KITCHEN, NUMBER 10

The Girl glances outside, the Man is still lying on the patio. The dog licks his head, oblivious.

The Girl turns to the table, eyes taking in every detail, and with her arm -- shoves everything to the floor.

The black notebook falls open on a page -- A sketch of a girl in a hoodie faces out. Punctuated with the drum roll of broken crockery, It has the Girls undivided attention.

She looks out at the Man. He no longer makes a sound. Returning to the notebook, she turns the pages, sees numerous sketches of herself, the dog, the street outside. All dated.

As she flicks through, the sketches become intimate, sexual, and frighteningly accurate.

The Girl looks at herself, degraded in pencil.

EXT. REAR GARDEN, NUMBER 10

The Girl cautiously sidesteps the body on the patio. She bends down, looks closely at the Man. He's not moving. Breathing. Living.

She stumbles back onto the grass, stares at the body. She retches, vomits into a flower bed. Shakes.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET, OUTSIDE NUMBER 10 - DAY

The Girl staggers out of the driveway, and on up the road, the dog dragged behind.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL FOOTPATH

She reaches the corner as a car passes by, heading back the way she came. The WOMAN (50's) behind the wheel glances out at the Girl, just for a second, offers a friendly nod.

INT. CAR

The Woman turns back to the road. In the back seat, a large suitcase, airline tags still attached.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL FOOTPATH

The Girl watches the car pull into the driveway of Number 10, the woman get out, unload her case, and enter the house.

The Girl puts her hand over her mouth, runs.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL ESTATE, PARK - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The Girls phone receives a text --

"SCOPE HIS GAFF OUT. FIND AN IN. YOU OWE ME."

She throws the tennis ball at the dog.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL FOOTPATH - DAY (PRESENT)

The Girl, panicked now, looks at the book in her hand, the blood on her sleeves. On the wad of cash.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The van stops beside her. She walks over, reluctantly. The tattooed arm emerges, rubs her hair.

THUGS VOICE (O.S.)
You're total's goin' up every day.
You gonna do like you're told?

The Girl says nothing. The hand grabs her hair, pulls her inside.

INT. VAN

The Girls head is inches away from the lap of the thug that has a vise-like grip on her hair.

THUGS VOICE (O.S.)
Are you?

(CONTINUED)

Now she nods, as much as she can considering the grip on her hair.

GIRL

Yes.

A folded metal knife is pressed into her hand.

THUGS VOICE (O.S.)

Might need it. Never know with pervs.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET

She's pushed out of the van, released.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL FOOTPATH - DAY (PRESENT)

The Girl, crying, eyes dart around like a lost child looking for the comfort of a missing parent.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL ESTATE, PARK - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Another text, waiting for the dog to take a shit. It reads --

"GET IN N ROB THE CUNT. EVRY1 NOS HES A PERV. DO LIKE YOU'RE TOLD. HIM R D DOG."

The Girl stares at the text, glances at her dog, kneels, and rubs it's head affectionately. She puts the phone in her pocket, walks away.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL FOOTPATH - DAY (PRESENT)

The SCREAM from number 10 can be heard across the estate.

The Girl dumps the notebook and cash in the wheelie bin of a nearby house. Stray notes float to the ground, stained red.

And she runs.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END