

Title: The Boy

Soundtrack link: <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLgN4jjAOkKKXJ1v3RT3erBM9PSkx4mJOC>

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An old, derelict mansion stood at the top of a hill; it had been empty for ten years ever since the accident that had killed sergeant Baker and his family. The car had left the road on an icy winters night and hit a huge oak tree nearby. The police found the burnt-out car with the remains of Mr and Mrs Baker and their only son inside, a horrific accident.

Avery Lane stood gazing up at the tree where it had happened. There was a gold plaque on it with a quote: 'Unable are the loved to die, for love is immortality.' She looked up at the sky, it was a blend of purples and reds, greys and blues; she took a deep breath. Avery knew she needed to get home as the sun was setting, casting shadows of tree branches onto the road. She took one final look at the magnificent oak in front of her and the plaque. She wasn't quite sure what drew her to it, but she always ended up there every day after school. Finally, she turned away and began walking home.

As she walked, the path appeared to be narrowing before her; the branches were reaching out as if to detain her and the wind was whistling softly, sending shivers down her spine. Avery squinted, straining her eyes and desperately trying to make out how much further it would be before she would reach home; but it was no use.

There was a rustling in the bushes next to her forcing her to stop suddenly in her tracks and swiftly spin around:

'Is anyone there?'

No reply.

Avery decided to jog and headed further down the path.

After a while, her throat felt tight and her breathing became shallow, she needed to slow down again. Standing stooped over with her hands on her knees, she breathed hard. After finally catching her breath, Avery began walking again; determined to reach home as soon as possible.

However, to her horror, when she looked down, she saw a large shadow enveloping her own and realised she wasn't alone.

Thinking her eyes were playing tricks on her, Avery kept walking, until she approached an area which she was glad to see she recognised. Looking through the gloom she could see something ahead; a

boy in a black hoodie sat under a bus shelter, his hood was pulled up concealing his face. Judging by his build, he looked quite young. Avery decided to speed up, but as she scurried past him, she heard a voice.

'Hello.' The boy had stood up and was looking straight at her.

She thought about not looking back, but her curiosity caused her feet to swivel around:

'Hi.' She said, turning around to face him.

She could see his face now, sharp dark features and pasty skin. He smiled slightly, the corners of his mouth only somewhat turning upwards. But there was something sinister about him. She backed away.

'I'm...em...so sorry but I can't talk right now.' Avery turned and sprinted away; she didn't stop until she made it home. Her Mum and Dad tried to call her name, shouting: 'How was school?' But Avery bolted straight to her room without answering.

Once in the safety of her room Avery: grabbed her duvet, swung it over her head and wrapped herself in it like a caterpillar nestling into its cocoon; every time she closed her eyes flashes of the boy's face invaded her mind but after what felt like an eternity, Avery began to drift off to sleep.

A knock on the door woke her with a start. She looked around the room, confused and disorientated, the knock hadn't come from the door...

It had come from the window and standing there consumed by darkness and shadows was the boy she had seen at the bus stop.

Avery shouted: 'What do you want from me?' Her breathing started speeding up and her eyes were glaring with tears. But he simply lifted his hand slowly and put his finger to his lips, urging her to be quiet: 'I just want to talk, that's all.'

Avery wiped the tears from her eyes and replied, 'I'm listening.'

'I saw you looking at the plaque on the oak tree.'

'Yes.' Avery's voice was hoarse and shaking.

'I wondered why? Why do you go there every day?' He looked curious but his expression still seemed menacing.

'My Mum told me the story of the family that died there and I wanted to know more. I found it strange that no one ever bought their house; you know up on the hill.'

His face softened a little, not much, but a little.

Avery thought the boy looked familiar. She didn't know why.

'Why were you watching me every day?' She asked.

'I've just...never seen someone care to look before.' His face looked kinder now, more welcoming.

'I think I know you from somewhere.' Avery said.

The boy's expression appeared to change, he looked annoyed and frustrated.

She looked down at her hands and then asked: 'what is your name?' But he was gone.

Avery wondered why he was interested in the plaque and the tree. She grabbed her laptop and searched the Baker family's accident and what she saw was completely unbelievable. There was a picture of a boy, a boy that didn't just look like the boy she saw but was the boy she saw. He had died in the crash at the oak tree with his parents. But that was ten years ago and he was still just a boy. Avery remembered the boy's pasty complexion and the strange way he had looked. It seemed impossible but...

Her train of thought was interrupted by her mother entering her room:

'Avery?' Her mum said. 'What's wrong, you look like you've seen a ghost!'