

THAT LOOK

by J. Gordon

EXT. PARTY - NIGHT

Muffled music from the party inside. Out here it's quiet. Cold. RILEY (17), paces alone. FRANCIS (17) steps outside to check a text. They acknowledge each other politely:

RILEY
Hi.

FRANCIS
Hi.

RILEY
Are you following me?

FRANCIS
What?

RILEY
What are you doing here? You here to bring me back?

FRANCIS
Uh -- This is a public place.
(beat)
Sorry, do I know you?

RILEY
No. Don't start. This is not happening. We are not happening. Sorry. Not my type.

FRANCIS
Okay.

RILEY
See?! That look! That's the look.

FRANCIS
What look?

RILEY
It means "You're not normal! "You need help!"
(quiet)
They give you that look, then they take you away from your family.

FRANCIS
Do you need to call someone? Did you lose your --

RILEY

-- I'm never going back. Not to that place. It's like a black hole sucking everything in. Nothing escapes.

Riley is in a dark place.

FRANCIS

Are you Riley Morris?

RILEY

Yeah. That's me. Why?

FRANCIS

I think you used to date my cousin. Devon? Soccer player?

RILEY

Wow. That was a long time ago. Forever ago. That was...

FRANCIS

Yeah, you were different.

RILEY

Oh yeah? Different how? Like better? You like the way I was or the way I am now?

FRANCIS

Both? I guess.

RILEY

Polite.

(then)

I bet no one ever gives you that look. You don't have to prove you're sane every time you open your mouth.

FRANCIS

Look, you seem agitated.

RILEY

You'd be too. I'd like to see someone like you live with the shit I live with. You wouldn't last a day. Eyes everywhere.

(beat)

Y'know what? Forget this.

Riley exits. Off Francis, worried...