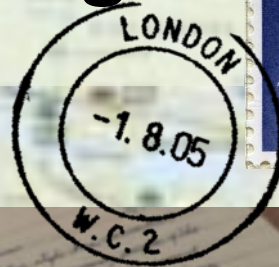


"The Postman's Reign"

Feature by Jan Wilson



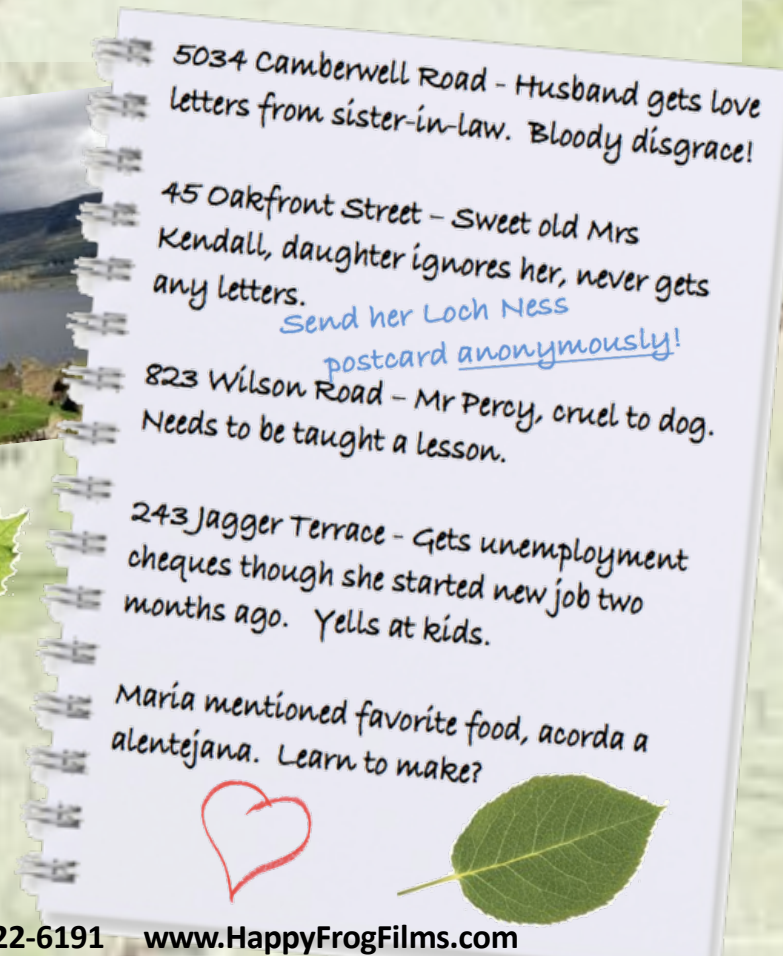
"The Postman's Reign" is a darkly romantic psychological thriller set in present day London.



The last thing you want is a special delivery from Milo.

Milo is your friendly neighborhood postman -- with an unhealthy interest in your mail...and your life. Milo, a shy yet vengeful postman, manipulates his control over the mail to win the love of a woman on his route. Along the way he secretly distributes rewards and punishments to the neighborhood residents based on their behavior and his skewed sense of justice. Milo rules his kingdom of southeast London, and the residents are his unknowing subjects.

Think of Milo as a darker cousin of Amelie" crossed with Travis Bickle from "Taxi Driver" with a streak of a lovesick Romeo.



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Logline:

Milo is your friendly neighborhood postman -- with an unhealthy interest in your mail...*and your life*. Milo, a shy, overlooked postman, manipulates his control over the mail to win the love of a woman on his route. Along the way he secretly distributes rewards and punishments to the neighborhood residents based on their behavior and his skewed sense of justice. Milo rules his kingdom of southeast London, and the residents are his unknowing subjects.

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Summary:

You ever stop to think about how much your postman really knows about you? Bills, love letters, legal notices, personal parcels...he has more control over your life than you think. Milo knows this...and uses it.

Milo is a postman who delivers mail in a working-class suburb of London. No one really takes much notice of him each day as he goes along his route. To the residents of the neighborhood Milo is just “the postman.” And this anonymity suits Milo just fine.



Through his years of posting, Milo has learned everyone’s routines, the players in their lives, their habits and tendencies. He has constant and easy access to people’s mail. Bills, love letters, legal notices, personal parcels...he sees it all, and he has more control over their lives than they would ever imagine. It is like reading a novel and the residents of Milo’s postal district are the characters. He uncovers the personal details of their lives and revels in the secrets only he knows about.

Milo wields a strange kind of power with this information.

Milo’s undercover trespasses stir up feeling inside of him. These are no longer just strangers on his route. He knows them now. Some of them he pities and wants to help. Others he despises and wants to destroy. This leads him to an even higher level of customer service. Milo gets involved. *Really* involved. Safe in his anonymity, Milo manipulates their lives.



He metes out rewards and punishments based on his own skewed sense of justice. Sometimes with angelic grace, other times with severe force.

His anonymous manipulations become painfully personal when he falls in love with a woman on his route. She is his Juliet, but he is no Romeo. Milo takes the path of least humiliation and puts pen to paper, and woos her anonymously. In person he is a disaster...but on paper he is pretty damned charming.

But there is a point for Milo when the fear of rejection by her is outweighed by the pain and suffering he endures staying anonymous. His self-appointed role as judge and enforcer to the people on his route collides disastrously with his efforts to hold on to the love of his life.

Characters:

Milo Finch, 40ish, is a postman who delivers mail in southeast London. Originally he wanted to be a police constable, but for reasons he'd rather not go into he failed the entrance exams. He ended up delivering mail because there was an opening, he needed a job, so he took it. He's good at his job, been doing it many years. After so long of delivering mail everyday and watching the neighborhoods he now knows everything about everyone on his route. It just happened naturally. But after a while Milo began using this knowledge as he saw fit. He's a bit plain, and his frumpy postman's uniform does nothing to enhance his appearance. He's a bit shy, especially with women, but he's found a way to express his feelings: he writes really great love letters. He's great on paper, but in person he's a disaster. He's comfortable with sending anonymous letters and staying safely hidden.

Maria, mid 30s, is originally from Portugal, but moved to London a few years ago. She's been working in the Cataplana Café for over a year, and started dating a regular customer, Franco, who owns a shop several doors from the café. She's very content and happy with her little life though she does miss Portugal from time to time. Her customers love her for her gentleness and easy charm.

Kiki, early 20s, lives with her Mum and Dad in southeast London and as Kiki herself will tell you, she's not retarded, she's just a little slow. Kiki loves a life of rigid structure and always tells it like it is in her brash and loud manner. She's one of those unfiltered people who say all of the things that we all wish we could say. One of the highlights of her day is seeing Milo the postman and occasionally shadowing him on his route.

Derrick, late 20s, is a macho dim bulb with a beer-addled brain usually in polyester sweatpants and a *Star Wars* t-shirt. He's obsessed with *Star Wars* and has aspiration to turn his collection of *Star Wars* paraphernalia into a financial empire. You just know his bedroom reeks of dirty laundry. Derrick never senses when a conversation is winding down, he just plows on through and keeps it going. Milo tries to avoid conversation with him each day, but sometimes it's unavoidable.

Arthur, mid 30s, is a dapper college professor and Milo's brother-in-law. He and Milo are friends and occasionally meet at the pub for a few pints. He's married to Milo's sister so he

can't join Milo's romantic adventures, he can only listen and give advice. He usually tries to reel Milo in and help him lower his wild expectations, but part of Arthur is secretly jealous of Milo's romantic endeavors with the love letters. Arthur has his own opportunity to have an illicit romance when one of his students flirts with him and indicates she's open for more than just flirting.

Franco, mid 30s, is a happy-go-lucky guy who is dating Maria. Like Maria, he is Portuguese, but he's been in London most of his life. Though he's happy and always has a good time wherever he goes, overall he doesn't have much ambition in life and aimlessly shifts from one endeavor to another without much follow through.

Mrs. Kendall, elderly woman who lives alone and always seems very lonely. She's unable to leave her house so her entire social life is constrained to whoever comes to her front door. Milo tries to chat with her and keep her spirits up, but he doesn't always have time for her. When he finds out the reason she is house-bound he devises a plan to help her.

Comps

Here are successful but small budget films with dark content similar in tone to "The Postman's Reign" from the last decade.

Title	Budget in USD Millions	Worldwide Gross in USD Millions	Awards
Parasite (2019)	11.4	258	Won Academy Award Won Independent Spirit Award
BlacKkKlansman (2018)	15	93	Won Academy Award Nominated for Independent Spirit Award
Get Out (2017)	4.5	257	Won Academy Award Won Independent Spirit Award
Call Me by Your Name (2017)	4.5	47	Won Academy Award Won Independent Spirit Award
Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri (2017)	15	160	Won Academy Award Won Independent Spirit Award
Moonlight (2016)	4	65	Won Academy Award Won Independent Spirit Award
Manchester By the Sea (2016)	9	79	Won Academy Award Won Independent Spirit Award
Room (2015)	13	35.5	Won Academy Award Won Independent Spirit Award
Nightcrawler (2014)	8.5	48	Nominated for Academy Award Won Independent Spirit Award
Dallas Buyers Club (2013)	5	55	Won Academy Award Won Independent Spirit Award
The Sessions (2012)	1	10.6	Nominated for Independent Spirit Award

Treatment:

Milo trudges along house to house delivering his mail. Most ignore him. He's just "the postman." One sweet old woman, Mrs. Kendall, meets him at her door. They have their usual exchange – she hopes for some 'good' mail, and Milo disappoints her daily. Only bills and catalogues. No one writes to this lonely old woman. Milo goes about his usual rounds, taking a break to jot down a few notes in his notebook. Observations and details about his customers that are much too personal to be of any "official" use.

He is interrupted by the brash Kiki, an overly-friendly mildly retarded woman who latches onto Milo on his daily rounds. He is used to her, and they walk together to the Portuguese café where Milo stops for lunch each day. Kiki chatters about her passion, betting on dog races. On the street they notice a man being abusive to his dog. Kiki begins to shout at him, but Milo silences her. "That's no way to handle this," he says a bit enigmatically.

At the café, Milo tolerates Kiki shadowing him as he waits for his brother-in-law Arthur to join him for lunch. Milo returns from the restroom to see that Kiki has sat in his seat and is reading the menu. Her loud voice rings out. "Mr. Paddy - receives checks on the second Friday of every month. Number 128 Cody Avenue, Mrs. Larson, goes for hair appointment every other Friday..." Shit! She's not reading the menu, she's got his notebook! "Why do you need to know those things, Milo?" Milo whips his notebook out of her hands before anyone pays any notice to them. The implications are lost on her. She happily shows Milo that she has a notebook too. She keeps track of what she wears each day, what her dog eats, what her Mum wore each day. Routine things that help her navigate through life. Milo is slightly flattered to see that he merits a page too. The fact that Milo wears the same dark blue postal uniform everyday appeals to Kiki's sense of routine.

Arthur joins Milo for lunch, and Kiki is waved off to another table. Arthur and Milo joke and argue good-naturedly until Arthur comes to the heart of the matter. "Which one is she?" Arthur knows Milo well, and knows that Milo has a crush on a waitress who works here, and would logically choose her table at which to sit. Arthur is right. When Maria the waitress approaches, Milo is suddenly tongue-tied and goofy. Arthur urges Milo to speak up, charm her, woo her. Milo says that he IS wooing her...in his own way. "Oh Jesus, not *those letters* again?"

Milo mentions to Arthur that the Jamaican man on his route is a drug dealer who is letting his girlfriend take the fall for him. "She writes all the time from prison. Childlike writing, probably not very bright." Arthur sympathizes but states, "I don't even want to know how you know that." Pretty detailed information for a postman to know.

Milo watches as Maria absent-mindedly winds her necklace around her finger, shortening the chain then gently biting on the pendant. "She always does that," Milo says, adoring her habitual quirk. Milo watches as she picks up the letter that he himself has just delivered, always in a pale blue envelope. She smiles, and pockets the letter.

Maria's letter is charming, romantic and endearing. But it is only signed "Browning" at the end, in reference to the poet Robert Browning who wrote many romantic poems and love letters to Elizabeth Barrett, whom he later married.

But Maria has a boyfriend, Franco, who runs a shop down the road. A nice enough man, but to Milo the simple fact that Maria is his girlfriend means that Franco has committed the ultimate crime. Franco gives Maria a surprise – modern gold earrings. A sweet gesture by Franco that will surely be used against him by Milo's devious ways.

At home, Milo expertly doctors up a postcard to look as if it were sent from Loch Ness and smudges a vague signature at the bottom. He chats with his cat Nicky as he works on his masterpiece postcard.

While sorting his day's post, Milo skillfully and gracefully steals officially looking envelopes from a bulk mailing. He obviously knows what goes in and out of the post every week.

While delivering a package to Mr. Percy, the abusive man with the dog, Milo sees the dog is being kept in a cage far too small. This dog is suffering at her owner's hands. Milo says nothing. Goes on his way.

Milo surfs the net on a community computer at work. After he leaves, a few coworkers enter and laughingly say that no one uses these computers for work-related things. To prove their point they go to the browser and click on the last website that was viewed: "Pyramid Products" – the site Milo was on. They're horrified. It's a porn site with kids well below the age of consent. Luckily for Milo they don't know who was last used that computer.

As they sit in a pub, Arthur nudges Milo to flirt with a woman. As Milo is failing miserably trying to be suave and charming in person, Maria is at home devouring Milo's anonymous love letter which is full of charm and romance. The difference between Milo-in-person and Milo-on-paper is never more evident. In person he is a social disaster.

At home, Milo waits as Nicky poops in the litter box. "More please," Milo encourages his cat to do more. Milo takes the poopy litter, mixes it with some other foul garbage, and strategically places some junk mail into the mix. This is junk mail that Milo has held back from Franco's shop – with Franco's name and address clearly displayed.

That night, Milo gleefully sprawls his junk mail and garbage concoction all down the high street near Franco's shop.

The next day, Milo greets the lonely Mrs. Kendall. Today he has some 'good' mail for her! Looks like someone sent her a postcard from Loch Ness. She can't read the messy signature, but decides it must have been sent by a past boarder. Someone remembered her! She cradles her cherished postcard. Milo beams. Another happy customer.

Milo's mood is lifted even higher now -- Franco is being yelled at by irate neighbors. They found his disgusting trash all over their yards. Franco protests, but in vain. They know it was his -- they saw his mail in the garbage.

Franco mentions to Milo that he is going to take Maria to a special flower show. Maria has said how she misses the semi-tropical flowers of Portugal. Franco is determined to put some effort into this date to impress Maria, who for some reason seems a bit distracted lately. Franco doesn't know about her secret pile of pale blue love letters and the tokens of her secret admirer's affections -- leaves, rocks, natural things that "Browning" claims mimics her natural beauty. Surely when her secret admirer claims that modern garish things like bright gold jewelry do not suit her natural beauty it is a coincidence that she just received such a gift from Franco.

Milo sits in a park writing a love letter for Maria. But he is distracted when he sees a little freckle-faced girl strolling nearby with her parents. The parents walk hand-in-hand. The girl walks lags behind, left all on her own.

Milo is in high spirits after visiting Franco and seeing his junk mail garbage handiwork did the trick. He even invites Kiki to join him for lunch. Milo is amused at hearing a "my-ailment-is-worse-than-yours" competition between two old ladies at the next table. A crabby old Portuguese woman berates her friend for thinking that swollen ankles were worth complaining about. After all, the crabby old Portuguese woman accidentally ate peanuts last week, and her eyes were swollen shut for two days -- surely that's worse than swollen ankles. Though Milo is amused at the conversation, Kiki takes offence at the old lady's berating tone and loudly chastises her. Maria intervenes and calms Kiki down, and Milo is even more taken by her gentle and sweet demeanor.

Later in the cafe, Maria confides in her friend Alma, saying she wishes Franco was more like her secret admirer, "Browning." At the height of her frustration Maria says "I wish I could be with him. Browning, come rescue me!" Milo nearly tips over his tea when he overhears her. This changes everything! Dare he make himself known?

On his rounds the next day, Milo is cornered by dimwitted Derrick, late 20s but still living at home with his mum. Derrick is eager to show Milo his Star Wars collection. Derrick is quick to point out that he means the original trilogy, not the new ones. Having put Derrick off for weeks and months, Milo is out of excuses and politely goes inside to see Derrick's meager collection. Derrick thinks he's got enough valuable collector's items to build an empire on. Milo already has Kiki as a clingy hanger-on, he doesn't need another one.

As Milo tactfully escapes from Derrick's, he's met by a demanding Kiki. Milo is late, why is he late? Kiki's life is grounded in routine, she's upset that Milo is not keeping his regular schedule and she's come to find him. Kiki berates Derrick for delaying Milo, but she is struck with happiness upon seeing that Derrick is wearing a Star Wars shirt. The two bond instantly and suddenly Milo is the odd man out. But happily so. Lost in their mutual Star Wars excitement, Derrick and Kiki go inside, suddenly oblivious to Milo.

Milo meets with a shady character and hands over some post office goods. Sheets and sheets of stamps, government issued checks, and the like. The man negotiates a price with Milo. Several hundred pounds. Milo squawks at this, surely it's almost £800 worth of stuff. The man hisses, "YOU wanna fence 'em? You have any idea what I have to do to cash these? Ain't easy, mate." Milo relents and takes the £300.

Late that night Milo prints about 100 copies of a flyer on bright yellow paper. "Neighbourhood Pot Party -- Come one, come all! Join me in celebration of Bob Marley's birthday! Free Samples Available -- Discounts to Neighbours!" On the flyer is the time, date, and the address of the Jamaican man. He's amused. "Discounts to neighbours!" He laughs at his own work. He glances at his cat Nicky and chuckles. "Devious AND funny."

After the flyers are printed, Milo prints out one copy of a schedule for local dog races. He puts Kiki's address on it...but the next day he deliberately delivers it to *Derrick's* house. He then waits and watches for Derrick to discover the misdelivered mail. Milo is pleased when Derrick walks it over to Kiki's street.

With his sneaky matchmaking task behind him, Milo continues his daily posting duties. Each house gets a bright yellow flyer added to their mail. He spies the little freckle-faced girl up ahead, playing by her front gate. Milo catches her eye. Motions her toward him. She goes to him – after all, he's not a stranger, he's their postman – and he guides her down a bit of alleyway. He sits. Pats the ground next to him. She sits.

Milo says that he knows that her dad has gone away for some time now. And he's noticed a new man in her mum's life. She nods, none too happy about it. Milo says that the same thing happened to him...

Milo narrates a little story for her...Little Milo's dad died, and he takes it upon himself to comfort his mum. As a result they grew much closer. They had special times together watching TV together, sharing popcorn. Little Milo was proud to be the man of the house, doing manly chores like taking out the trash. His mum was proud of him. But one day a new man entered the picture. And this man seemed to make his mum really happy, but Milo resented having his position as man of the house usurped. Milo tells the freckle-faced girl that after time though, the new man turned out to be okay, and that she should give her new mum's man a chance too. The little freckle-faced girl's spirit seems renewed, and she happily skips back home.

The next day, Milo approaches Mr. Percy's door only after making sure no one is watching. Mr. Percy carefully opens the door, but only a few inches. BAM! Milo kicks the door open, sending Mr. Percy flying back. Milo darts inside and shuts the door behind him.

Meanwhile, Franco's flower show date with Maria is a disaster. Due to some mysteriously doctored flyers with the wrong date on them, they missed the flower show. It was last night. Maria is disappointed in him. Clearly Franco put very little effort into this. One more strike against him.

The next day as he eats his usual lunch in the café Milo is delighted to watch as Maria gets some flowers delivered. Wild plums blooms, just like she used to have in her garden in Portugal. She looks even more delighted to see the card – she takes it before anyone else sees it. She mouths to her other waitress friend “from Browning!” She takes the card out of her pocket and looks at it, smiling. As she does, she winds her chain around her finger and then brings the pendant to her lips. Ah yes, Milo grins when she does this. He’s charmed.

But when he leaves the café, he is alone again. Being safely anonymous is becoming unbearably lonely for Milo. He hears Kiki’s familiar brash voice echoing down the street. He turns, half-expecting her to come sidling up next to him. But she doesn’t. She’s walking down the other side of the street holding hands with Derrick. Though he’s sincerely proud of his odd-duck matchmaking, losing Kiki’s attention causes a bit of a sting for Milo. Loneliness. He longs to tell Maria that he is “Browning.”

After some careful writing and rewriting, Milo comes up with the perfect letter asking Maria to meet him. He implies that he probably isn’t good-looking enough, or young enough for her, but hopes she can put that aside and give him a chance. She is delighted and tells her friend that she is finally going to meet her “Browning.” At the appointed time and day Maria waits for him. At this appointed spot – under the statue of Copernicus in all his glory. He is a symbol of the sun holding the earth in his outstretched hand.

Milo is nearby and - in typical Milo fashion - watching from afar, safely hidden from view behind a caretaker’s shed. At first he’s a bit shocked and delighted to see her there. “She’s here. She showed up. Jesus!” He takes one last look at himself in grimy window and is stunned and disappointed at his reflection. He stares at himself.

Hours later in the pub, Arthur stares at Milo, open-mouthed. “You what?! You stood her up?! What the hell were you thinking?!” Milo is miserable. He explains that he had gotten so used to being charming and romantic in his letters that he sort of forgot the real Milo. He had this false image of himself. And when he saw his reflection, he was suddenly struck by how unlikely it was that Maria would be attracted to him at all. Better to not ruin it – just leave things as they are, and she can have this image of a suave and handsome “Browning” in her memories. Arthur’s mortified, but can understand where Milo’s coming from. He feels Milo’s exquisite pain.

That night, Maria is devastated by being stood up and is getting drunk in her flat with her friend Alma. She supposes that “Browning” changed his mind, doesn’t want to meet her in person, is just toying with her. Disappointment washes over her on so many layers. “Browning” stood her up. Franco isn’t very romantic. But after realizing that “Browning” is not going to come to pass she wonders if she shouldn’t just take Franco up on his offer of marriage. “Men, they always disappoint, don’t they?”

The next morning Milo glides invisibly down his normal route. As he passes 28 Welling Street the Jamaican man is being led out of his house in handcuffs. Milo passes this chaotic scene without a glance.

Eventually he reaches Mr. Percy's door. Milo has a key this time, and lets himself in with stealth. Inside, the tiny cage that housed poor Echo is still there – but the dog is gone. In her place is Mr. Percy himself, gagged and beaten and cramped into the tiny cage. Milo has been teaching him a lesson and treating Mr. Percy like he deserves to be treated. Milo also has been monitoring his packages and knows that Mr. Percy has been receiving child pornography for some time from "Pyramid Products." This is the research Milo had been doing on the community computer at work. Milo keeps Mr. Percy caged for a while longer to teach him a lesson.

Later when Milo delivers his mail to Franco, Franco happily mentions that Maria has finally agreed to marry him. Like a sleepwalker, Milo leaves Franco's shop. He walks in a daze down the street. The sounds of the street, the cars, the buzz of people don't affect him. He doesn't even stop to deliver the post at the shops, he just trudges on by. He cannot bear to stay anonymous any longer. He heads for the "Cataplana Cafe."

At the café, Maria rings up a customer. Milo holds his arm straight out in front of him, extending it toward Maria. Seeing this out of the corner of her eye, Maria looks up. Milo is offering a leaf to her, holding it up by its stem, in a stance that mimics Copernicus -- arm outstretched, the earth in his hand.

She sees the leaf, and it takes a few seconds for it to register. Then she freezes, staring at it. "It's for you, Maria." Slightly dazed, she takes the leaf from Milo's hand. He smiles. "I'm Browning."

After an awkward pause and much gawking by the patrons, Maria staggers out the back door of the kitchen with Milo following her. She is surprised to say the least. Probably not getting the response he had hoped for, Milo immediately regrets his rash decision and backpedals. But she doesn't let him. At last she smiles. "So Milo. You've come to rescue me. Where are you going to take me?"

That night, Milo, with a certain bounce in his step returns to Mr. Percy's house. Now off duty, he wears a cheerful green jumper (sweater) and jeans. He lets himself in and lets Mr. Percy out of the cage. Mr. Percy collapses on the floor. Milo wrinkles up his nose. "Christ it stinks in here." He flings open some curtains and opens the window. Milo ends his reign of terror over Mr. Percy, telling him that he will continue to monitor his incoming mail, and if Mr. Percy ever breathes a word about this, Milo will ruin him forever by leaking the pedophile stories. But Milo adds that Echo was in such bad shape she had to be put down. Mr. Percy is devastated. Good, he deserves to be.

Milo lets himself out of Mr. Percy's house and is almost to the sidewalk when he hears Kiki's voice, distant, but definitely her voice. He strains to hear. "Milo! I saw you!" Milo turns to Kiki's house next door, looks up and sees Kiki's form silhouetted in a top floor window. Her voice echoes, "I saw you!" She grabs her green notebook and is writing frantically. Kiki's bedroom window provides her a perfect view of Mr. Percy's living room and Milo's violent treatment of him.

Milo very cautiously slinks in through the back door to Kiki's house. Upstairs he hears Kiki's loud voice babbling on, but can't make out the words. Milo can discern his name being mentioned a few times. Catlike, he moves up the stairs in the darkness.

Kiki is alone, riled up, scribbling in her book. Behind her the door opens. Milo stands in the hall. Sensing him, she slowly turns. They are both still and silent for a second as they size each other up. She grabs her notebook and shouts "I saw you, I saw you!" Oh my God, she documented the whole Mr. Percy episode!

Truly panicked now, Milo grabs her arm and flings her on the bed. He covers her mouth, but her mouth is no match for his hand. She flails and grasps thin air, but he won't let her up. Another shout almost gets out of her. He grabs her pillow and smashes it down over her face, holding it down. "Shut up!" he whispers fiercely. And then it becomes easier. She doesn't squirm. She doesn't flail. She's still. Milo scrambles around looking for her green notebook, and after finding it, he runs down the stairs and out the back door.

Calmer now, Milo straggles home and tosses the incriminating notebook on the table. He flips through the notebook until he comes to the last page. Scribbled messily is Kiki's last entry: "Milo: jeans, green jumper! Green jumper! Not blue trousers. Milo wore green!" Milo thrusts his head into his hands in anguish. "Green jumper?! That's all she saw?! Green jumper!!" Now angry, he throws her notebook across the room.

Later, Milo lays in bed quietly, but his eyes are wide open. "Nobody saw. I'll be okay."

While Franco is at work the next day, Milo takes a few of Mr. Percy's packages, repackages them and delivers them to *Franco's* apartment. Then Milo calls the police and gives them Franco's name and address and tells them that he is in position of child pornography and lord knows what else.

On Kiki's street there are police cars and police constables everywhere. They question Milo only casually as he strides through on his daily route. The police think it was just a random break-in gone wrong. They show no interest in Milo. But despite being in the clear, Milo throws suspicion onto Derrick, mentioning that Derrick had been dating Kiki recently and seemed "a bit rough."

Milo visits his brother-in-law Arthur. They watch as Arthur's seven year old son plays with Echo in the yard. Echo is bandaged and still a bit ragged looking, but much improved. Her tongue hangs out as she happily chases the little boy around the yard. Arthur is impressed. "I can't believe you spent £400 on a stray." Milo smiles. "Poor thing needed help, couldn't just leave her, could I?"

As Franco approaches his home he is met by a swarm of police officers. They've already searched his house and shove packages at him. "These were found in your home sir, can you explain?" Clearly, he cannot.

In Milo's skewed sense of justice the pedophile dog beater Mr. Percy gets away with a slap on the wrist and a stern warning, whereas Franco -- whose only crime is that he is Maria's boyfriend -- will have his life ruined. Even if Franco doesn't go to prison, his record of suspected pedophilia will haunt him forever.

That night Milo takes Maria for their big date. After a few awkward false starts, they get to the heart of the date. Milo takes her to a charming little garden spot with special meaning to him. It's an herbal garden for a nearby botanical school, and Milo jokingly tells her that it's a garden for blind people called the Smell Garden. "Really?" she asked, intrigued. "No." he says, deadpan. "Good story though, isn't it?"

He shows her around, tries to impress her with a picnic dinner, but things don't go as planned. Milo tries a little too hard, he *thinks* everything goes wrong. Far from thinking it's quite the disaster that Milo does, Maria is charmed and won over by his sweet attempts. Milo thinks he's ruined his chances, and despite Maria's reassurances, he closes himself off and tells her that she is better off accepting Franco's marriage proposal. He's convinced they were both better off when he was anonymous. The night ends badly. Milo's anger is directed at himself, but Maria is hurt.

Milo doesn't want to linger at the café today. He just delivers the mail and leaves. As he leaves, he notices the crabby old Portuguese woman yelling at Maria -- they are speaking in Portuguese, he has no idea what they are arguing about, but she's making Maria cry. Despite their disastrous date, Milo still loves Maria and is infuriated that the old lady is making Maria weep. He knows exactly what to do.

At home, Milo gets some peanut oil and expertly injects some into the gourmet chocolates. They look untouched and perfect. He writes a short note. "Thanks for being a good neighbour." He signs it with an illegible scrawl, and then tucks it under the ribbon. Next morning, Milo plunks the pretty box of chocolates through the old lady's post slot. "Enjoy, you nasty old cow."

After some soul-searching, Milo realizes that he must go and apologize to Maria for how he treated her after the date. But when he gets to the café, he is greeted not by sweet, demure Maria, but an unfamiliar, furious and hurt Maria. She finally knows who her suitor is and now it's her turn to talk! When Milo apologizes for ruining the date by taking her to such a stupid place, she fires back. "It wasn't ruined by where we went, it was ruined by YOU! *Your* inability to trust that just being you was good enough, your need to try and live up to the fantasy you have in your head, some fantasy you think I am expecting! Yes, I loved your letters, but I don't expect you to be that way ALL the time! I like you, just how YOU are!" She starts to soften a bit when she sees Milo's puppy dog eyes, but she doesn't want to lose her anger. "I kept each leaf that we picked in the garden. I was going to press them, I wanted to remember that night." She ratchets her anger up again. "So if you don't like being that person, if you insist on trying to live up to some impossibly literate and suave personality that doesn't really exist, then go on and do it with someone else!"

It's time for Milo to either withdraw forever, or come forward. He goes to her. He lays himself on the line. He's there for her. No fancy letters. No wooing. No poetry. Just Milo. And she loves him.

That night, Milo finally gets to make love to Maria. They spend a beautiful passionate night in her flat. He has won the love of the woman of his dreams just by finally being himself. Heaven.

In the morning, they lay romantically in each other's arms. But she reluctantly pulls away explaining she will come right back, she just needs to go down the road to her aunt's house and feed her dog. She doesn't want to forget since she'd had a big argument over it with her. Milo is surprised, he didn't know she had any family in London. She says yes, just an aunt, in fact he knows her, she's the crabby old Portuguese woman at the café. Milo laughs. Yes, he does indeed know her.

After a few passionate kisses, she grudgingly pulls herself away from him and heads out. Milo gets up and makes some tea for them, anxious for her to come back.

Maria lets her aunt's dog in, and as he eats, she picks the mail up off the floor. "Mmm, chocolates." After putting them aside, she can't resist and opens the box. The dog looks up, hearing the sound of chewing. Maria protests to the dog, "What? I'll just have a few."

Milo snuggles back down into bed with his tea. But something pokes him. He reaches down into the bed and finds Maria's pendant – the chain broken in a moment of passion. He smiles as he looks at it. He gets a closer look. A look of sheer terror crosses his face. He leaps out of bed and bolts out the door.

Milo runs down the street, barefoot, at top speed. "Mar-iiii-aaa!!" he screams.

CLOSE UP OF PENDANT -- Maria's pendant is a Medic-Alert necklace. "*Extreme allergy to peanuts*"

Milo continues to bolt down the street, screaming as he goes. "Mar-iiii-aaaa!"

But Maria, in full anaphylactic shock, is writhing and gasping for breath on the kitchen floor -- her eyes bulging, her body is in full seizure -- she can't breathe, she's not breathing --she's trying to gasp for air -- it's not coming --

Milo suddenly bursts through the door. He sees her writhing on the floor and lunges for her, panicking. "Oh my God, what do I do? What do I do?" He dashes for the phone and dials 999. "Come on, come on, come on!" He kneels beside Maria, desperately trying to help, but literally not knowing what to do.

Maria's time is running out. She is in the agonizing last throes of asphyxiation -- Milo watches in horror -- tears streaming down his face -- he's trying to listen to the medical

officer on the phone, but she's dying in front of him! "Oh God! Maria!!!" He screams into the phone, "HUUUURRYYYY!!!" He is screaming like a child and tearing his hair out – but what can he do?!

Minutes later, two emergency medical technicians carry Maria's dead body out the door on a stretcher. Milo is numb. A kind nurse tries to soothe him. "Mr. Finch, it was too late when you got here, she was already in anaphylactic shock. Without an immediate shot of epinephrine, there's nothing you could have done for her." Milo watches through the open door as they load her body into the ambulance. *"It's not your fault."*

Later that night, Milo sits on Maria's bed, exhausted. His eyes are swollen and red, he's been crying for ages. Milo remembers what she said about keeping leaves from their date, he checks her coat pockets. There they are. But he also finds a letter with his name. It is her first attempt at a love letter for him. "Dearest Milo, please don't laugh at my first attempt. I've never written a love letter before. But after receiving so many beautiful letters from you that touched my heart, I was happy tonight that I now know who you are, and will be able to give this to you on our first date tomorrow night..." This is almost too much for Milo to bear. Her letter goes on, but the ending is Milo's undoing. "I think you do not lack courage, Milo. In my eyes you are noble, and will always live up to what I expect of the man who will win my heart."

Milo is a mess. He is grieving, heart-broken and now horrified at himself. "Noble?! I am noble?!" Tears stream down his face. He catches his reflection in a mirror. "I'm not fucking noble!!!" He can barely stand to look at himself. His sobs gradually subside. He looks himself straight in the eye. "Be noble, Milo Finch."

Milo sits on the interrogation table in the police station. The detective on Kiki's case sits across from him. Milo is calm and steady. Milo places Kiki's green notebook on the table in front of them. "I killed Kiki Monroe." The detective seems disbelieving, he gives a scoffing laugh. Milo puts his own notebook on the table next to Kiki's. "And there's a few other things I'd like to clear up."