

**Let Me In**

A short play by Harrison Zacher

Based on, "*Awaken, My Love!*" an album by Childish Gambino

## **CHARACTERS**

JUNI: A teen struggling to make ends meet while taking care of his sick mom.

VELVET: Juni's mom. Traumatized, sick, bedridden.

UNCLE CHARLES: Velvet's brother. Erratic, dealing with alcoholism and mental health problems.

FREDDIE: A Boogiemani that lives in the pit. A persuasive and smooth-talking spirit.

## **SETTING**

Uncle Charles' estate, his home located in the corner of a dead-end neighborhood.

## **NOTES**

The stage is split in half. Stage Right represents the living room of Uncle Charles' estate, while Stage Left represents his backyard.

## **SCENE 1**

*(Lights up on SR.)*

*(A messy living room with a big, brown couch and recliner, a matching pair.)*

*(UNCLE CHARLES relaxes on the recliner.*

*VELVET is asleep on the couch, an IV drip looms over her.*

*JUNI enters carrying a cardboard box labeled "Mom's Photos".)*

**JUNI** Uncle Charles.

**UNCLE CHARLES** ...

**JUNI** Hey! Aren't you going to help me carry all this stuff in?

**UNCLE CHARLES** What? Why're you asking me?

**JUNI** I don't know. I thought you would help. Guess I was wrong.

**UNCLE CHARLES** What did you just say?

**JUNI** Nothing.

**UNCLE CHARLES** You better stop running that mouth of yours. I got enough stress on me with my boss breathing down my neck every day.

**JUNI** Last time I heard, you were unemployed.

*(Juni sets down the box and exits)*

**UNCLE CHARLES** *(Calling after him)* You know Juni, times get hard. Real hard. But sometimes, you get blessed with a real opportunity. A light at the end of the tunnel.

*(Juni enters with another box, this time labeled "Mom's Kitchen Stuff")*

**JUNI** Right. Whatever that means.

**UNCLE CHARLES** You know, you and your mother have been making this so complicated lately.

**JUNI** Uncle Charles, she's sick. It's not complicated, it's just a responsibility.

**UNCLE CHARLES** Me and your mama grew up together. Your grandfather gave out one hell of a beating and she was always fine. I mean, how serious could her sickness even be?

*(Juni sets down the box)*

**JUNI** You wouldn't know. You weren't the one who was there when she found out.

**UNCLE CHARLES** What.

**JUNI** It's always been me taking care of her, not you. But now you've gotta step up and do your part. I'd do anything to help my mother. Wouldn't you?

**UNCLE CHARLES** What are you trying to say about me, kid!

*(Charles lunges out of the chair, hands outstretched at Juni)  
(He gets lightheaded and collapses back into his recliner)*

**JUNI** Now I see why you weren't helping me.

*(Juni exits and re-enters with another box, this one labeled "Medicine")*

**JUNI** This is the last one.

*(He sets the box on top of the other two, crosses to SL, lights shift following Juni.)*

## **SCENE 2**

*(The backyard. Junk piles and a large blue tarp held down by a couple bricks.)  
(Juni paces back and forth, then kicks one of the bricks out of frustration. The brick flies offstage, crashing into a window.)*

**UNCLE CHARLES (O.S.)** What the hell was that noise Juni!

*(The tarp flaps open, revealing a pit.)  
(Juni peers down into it.)  
(He picks up a crushed can from nearby and drops it into the pit.)  
(He waits for the sound of it hitting the bottom, but it never comes. Instead, the can flies back out of the hole and hits Juni in the face.)*

**JUNI:** Ow...

**FREDDIE (O.S.):** No littering.

**JUNI:** Did the ground just talk?

**FREDDIE (O.S.):** No. But I did.

**JUNI:** Who are you?

**FREDDIE (O.S.):** I'm just trying to make my way in this world. Thank you for taking that tarp off.

**JUNI:** I mean it was kind of an accident, but you're welcome. Do you live in this hole?

**FREDDIE (O.S.):** Yes and no. I exist here but my home is elsewhere.

**JUNI:** So are you trapped?

**FREDDIE (O.S.):** Not necessarily.

**JUNI:** I don't get it.

**FREDDIE (O.S.):** There's nothing *to* get. I'm just down here and you're just up there. Simple as that. Now can you throw me one of those lawn chairs from up there, my feet are killing me.

**JUNI:** Really? And why do you think I would help a suspicious voice coming out of a random hole.

**FREDDIE (O.S.):** Because I can offer you something even better, Juni.

**JUNI:** How'd you know my name?

**FREDDIE (O.S.):** Oh Juni, I know more about you than you can understand. Now, I just need you to come down here, and we can make a deal.

**JUNI:** I can't help you.

**FREDDIE (O.S.):** Yes you can! It seems like you're trapped in a hole too. We can help each other. You just gotta let me in.

**JUNI:** What exactly are you offering me?

**FREDDIE (O.S.):** I am offering you a lifetime of prosperity and power. All of your problems can just melt away. No more worrying. No more pain. However, the only condition is that you become loyal to me. You answer to me and do as I wish. Opportunities like this don't happen all the time, Juni. I'm giving you a real chance here. What do you say? Do we have a deal?

*(Uncle Charles stumbles onto SL.)*

**UNCLE CHARLES:** Hey! I didn't say you could be back here!

**JUNI:** I'm sorry I—

*(Uncle Charles grabs him by the collar.)*

**UNCLE CHARLES:** Get back inside. And no more snooping around. Got that?

*(Uncle Charles pushes Juni to SR, both sides lights are on.)*

*(Juni checks on Velvet. He sits on the floor beside her, holding her hand.)*

*(Uncle Charles walks over to the pit and looks around cautiously before jumping into it.)*

*(Lights down.)*

### **SCENE 3**

*(Lights up on Tartarus, not really a place but more like a blank space.)*

*(Charles enters. Freddie sits on a throne.)*

**FREDDIE:** Well, well, well look who it is. Been a while since you covered me up with that tarp huh, Charles. Hopefully it's given you time to think about our little deal.

**UNCLE CHARLES:** Shut it, Boogieman. I heard you talking to the kid. Why're you bringing him into this? I thought this was *our* deal. I bring you the people and you help me in return.

**FREDDIE:** You know I'm always looking for more clients.

**UNCLE CHARLES:** Clients? That's a twisted way of thinking about it.

*(He takes a swig of his beer.)*

**FREDDIE:** You're just as twisted as I am, Charles. Why are you arguing with me anyways? You're under my control. You're nothing but a zombie working for me.

*(Charles finishes the bottle.)*

**UNCLE CHARLES:** Who's next.

**FREDDIE:** C'mon Charles, don't be so naive. You know who's next. Don't you see a pattern?

**UNCLE CHARLES:** Not the kid.

**FREDDIE:** The kid? No. I have other plans for him. Right now, I need you to show your loyalty to me by cutting off any other connection or relationships you have. Even family.

**UNCLE CHARLES:** Don't make me do this.

**FREDDIE:** What are you gonna do? Stop yourself?

*(He laughs maniacally.)*

**FREDDIE:** Go. Finish what you started.

*(Uncle Charles exits.)*

*(Lights down.)*

### **SCENE 3**

*(Lights up on SR, the living room at night.)*

*(Juni, in the recliner, and Velvet are fast asleep.)*

*(Uncle Charles enters from SL. He crosses the room to the sofa. He unhooks Velvet's IV drip and picks her up in his arms.)*

*(He crosses to SL, lights up on both sides.)*

*(A loud creak as he steps through the doorway and into the moonlit backyard.)*

**FREDDIE:** Well done, Charles. You have been my favorite and most efficient servant yet.

**UNCLE CHARLES:** I hope you're happy with what you're doing to this family.

**FREDDIE:** Charles, you don't understand how your one family is so miniscule in the grand scheme of things. You would never understand what it's like to be as powerful as I am Charles. You're a lowlife and you can't do anything to resist me.

**UNCLE CHARLES:** I would shoot you dead in a heartbeat if I could control myself. You took this deal too far, and you don't even hold up your end. You're a fraud. You're pure evil.

**FREDDIE:** I'm not afraid of you.

*(Charles sets Velvet's unconscious body down next to the pit.)*

*(Juni wakes up and notices Velvet is missing.)*

*(He gets up and searches around frantically before crossing to SL.)*

**JUNI:** Uncle Charles...what are you—

**UNCLE CHARLES:** Stop! Don't come any closer. Juni. You are not involved in this so just leave us alone.

**JUNI:** Wait, who were you talking to?

**UNCLE CHARLES:** It's not what it looks like.

**FREDDIE:** He was talking to me. That's right. And as long as your good-for-nothing Uncle is under my control, you can't stop me.

**JUNI:** Wait, Uncle Charles, what is he talking about?

**FREDDIE:** Go ahead Charles. Tell him. Tell him how you chose this life. How you chose to be a killer.

**UNCLE CHARLES:** *(Holding back tears.)* He's right. He tricked me. He said he was going to help, and I believed him because I was desperate. I would take anything I could get at that point. I made the wrong decision and I put everyone I love in danger. Including you. I'm sorry.

*(Freddie grabs Velvet's arm and pulls her closer to the pit.)*



**JUNI:** I can't let you hurt her.

*(Juni lunges at Charles and Freddie, tackling them into the pit.)  
(Lights down.)*

#### **SCENE 4**

*(Lights up on Tartarus.)  
(Juni and Charles fall into the scene.)  
(Juni stands up, Charles lays still on the ground.)*

**JUNI:** Uncle Charles?

*(Juni shakes him.)*

**JUNI:** Where are we?

*(Charles groans and rubs his head.)  
(He sits up.)*

**UNCLE CHARLES:** Oww. Wait a minute. I can move! On my own!

*(Uncle Charles looks speechlessly at his hands for a moment.)*

**UNCLE CHARLES:** I've been under his control for so long, I forgot what being free felt like. I'm finally me again.

*(Uncle Charles gets up and stretches.)*

**JUNI:** It's good to see you again, Uncle Charles. You were lost for so long, I can't look at you the same way.

*(Juni turns his back on Charles.)*

**UNCLE CHARLES:** I'm sorry. You have to understand. I thought I was doing it for the right reasons.

**JUNI:** I get it, we all make mistakes. But you hurt our family, Uncle Charles. The people we're supposed to protect. I couldn't let you hurt mom. Or else I would have been tortured by it for the rest of my life.

**UNCLE CHARLES:** I'm glad to hear there's still a little bit of good in our family. I would've stopped myself if I could've. But now that I'm back to normal, I can make up for all of it. I promise.

*(Freddie enters SL.)*

**FREDDIE:** I don't mean to interrupt your little family quarrel. Well, actually I do. I didn't really care for that stunt you pulled back there, little boy. You have a lot of nerve doing something dangerous like that. And to think I almost struck a deal with you. Would've been the riskiest decision of my life. And because of that, you're next. Charles, please bring me that devilish boy as your next loyalty sacrifice.

**UNCLE CHARLES:** No. I'm done playing your game. You don't control me.

**FREDDIE:** Pffft. Are you playing with me again? Go grab him.

**UNCLE CHARLES:** No.

**FREDDIE:** Yes. Don't try to resist, it won't work.

**UNCLE CHARLES:** Like I said. You don't control me any more.

**FREDDIE:** I'm not afraid of you.

**UNCLE CHARLES:** You should be.

*(Charles pulls out a handgun and points it at Freddie.)*

*(Without hesitating, he pulls the trigger until the gun is empty.)*

*(Freddie staggers back and falls to the floor, clutching his wounds. Blood gurgles from his mouth.)*

**FREDDIE:** Fool. Now you're trapped here for good...

*(Freddie dies.)*

*(Uncle Charles drops the gun and approaches Freddie's corpse.)*

**UNCLE CHARLES:** It's time to go. You have to make sure your mom is ok.

**JUNI:** When we get out of here, I'm not letting any of this go. I hope you know that.

**UNCLE CHARLES:** I know. But I don't think I'm getting out of here.

**JUNI:** What do you mean?

**UNCLE CHARLES:** With his dying breath, the Boogiemán said "Now you're trapped for good". He didn't tell me much about how he became who he was, but now it all makes sense. The one who kills the Boogiemán must sacrifice himself to take his place. So, I guess it's my turn. I brought so much pain and suffering to our family and the people around us that this must be the punishment. This is my fate. But you, Juni, you have so much potential. Keep all your dreams, keep standing tall. If you are strong, you cannot fall. There is a voice inside us all. So smile when you can.

*(A magical set of stairs appears.)*

**UNCLE CHARLES:** This may be my destiny, but there is more out there for you.

*(Juni exits.)*

*(Charles takes his place on the Boogiemán's throne.)*

**END OF PLAY**