

IM 120 1-3 Treatment: Stitches

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Logline: An emotionally damaged boy struggles to understand what it truly means to grow up while going up against a possessed teddy bear whom tries to pull him back into childhood with him forever.

Kenny Ryder:

Kenny Ryder is a self-reliant eleven-year-old boy who has volunteered to give up his own childhood in the efforts to carry the weight of his father around the house and to alleviate his mother's burden. He takes this decision in stride and uses it as the instrument needed to grow up and become a responsible and dependable adult like his father. One of the quotes Kenny mentions is, "I don't have time to play today, I'm not a little kid you know!" While Kenny tries to cut ties with his childhood, he does try to strive to become more like his fun loving yet responsible father. Ironically though, the more Kenny tries to speed up the process into becoming an adult like his dad, the farther he pushes himself away from his goal. This stems from Kenny's weakness of having shut himself off from his childhood, and eventually leads into his dark side. In which his constant friction between him and the antagonist Stitches, Kenny becomes defensive in nature and soon turns cold, cynical, and bitter. Yet with the remembrance of his father's words and child-like spirit, Kenny begins to understand that all he really needs is to embrace his inner child rather than shun it away. It is from this, Kenny learns how to return to his child-like wonder while at the same time continuing to take on the burden of responsibility, only this time to take things in moderation. Balancing both the burden of moving forward and the enjoyment of being a kid.

Stitches/Sam Ryder:

"Stitches" is the beloved teddy bear of Kenny Ryder who unbeknownst to him contains the enraged spirit of Kenny's older brother Sam Ryder. In the beginning Sam Ryder had died an hour after birth from pneumonia, yet his soul refused to pass on seeing as how he wanted to experience life for himself. While Sam knew that he couldn't return from the dead, he managed to find a way to see life with his younger brother Kenny by possessing the body of his brother's favorite toy, Stitches the Bear. Before Mr. Ryder was deployed, Kenny would play with Stitches everyday, enjoying all their youth had to offer, and from that time, Stitches wanted those moments of childhood to last forever. Although behind the vale of childlike innocence, lies the fear of being forgotten. During the first few years of Kenny's life, their parents had been grieving for the loss of their son, Sam. But as time passed, the parents were able to move on from Sam's death and learned to cherish Kenny more, yet in the process Sam was slowly being forgotten by their parents. As a result of this, Stitches' greatest fear has been the thought of being forgotten forever. Although it was also during that time where the brothers really got to spend time together, which soon became Stitches' strength. That being his ability to remain within childhood bliss, which meant that the problems of adult life have no true effect to Stitches, in fact Stitches' motto is, "Come on Kenny, let's play!" Before only Kenny would acknowledge Sam's presence as Stitches, and it was from that act of kindness that Stitches really came to admire Kenny for giving him the chance to experience life itself. But now that Kenny has shut himself from childhood, he unknowingly cut ties with Sam, and because of that, Stitches has grown dark and

envious towards Kenny for unintentionally abandoning him. Refusing to accept that Sam would be forgotten again, he is determined to fulfill his core need to have someone remember him and spend time with him, by forcibly pulling Kenny back into childhood where he will never be alone anymore. It will be left to Kenny to help Sam understand what it truly means to grow up and move on, therefore finding true happiness in embracing life as a whole.

Synopsis:

Within the present day story of Stitches, deals with the struggle of a young boy named Kenny Ryder, who is coming to terms with the true meaning of growing up. As well as a possessed teddy bear named Stitches who refuses to grow up and move forward in life. Both of who are locked against one another in a dispute between desire and duty, all of which is confined within a seemingly quiet Virginia home.

Act 1:

Kenny Ryder is an 11-year-old boy wanting to help his overworked mother around the house and proving to her that he is all grown up enough to handle the responsibilities of being the man of the house. Kenny and his mother live within their quiet little home in the quiet suburbs of Barboursville, Virginia. After Kenny's father was deployed to a distant country in the fall of 2014, Kenny took up the helm of responsibility in picking up the slack around the house and helping his mother. Although Kenny soon found that doing so wouldn't be as easy as he once thought. Seeing just how backbreaking the stress of maintaining the house was, especially on his mother. With no visible option in sight, Kenny forcibly cut off his childhood in order to ease his mother's burden. It soon came to the point where Kenny had less and less time to play and more time spent working, that his toys began to collect dust, one toy in particular was Kenny's once beloved teddy bear named Stitches.

Stitches who used to be Kenny's constant companion throughout his many adventures through early childhood, now sat on a shelf forgotten. But almost at an instant, the teddy bear began to move. His worn fuzzy limbs began to squirm around, his head looking around the room and quickly dusting himself off. From waiting for what felt like an eternity, Stitches grew impatient and angry. Feeling like he had been forgotten and abandoned by Kenny, Stitches was left to rot away as a trivial relic. Hopping off the shelf he saw that Kenny was cutting ties from everything that dealt with his childhood, and that included Stitches.

Act 2:

With Stitches feeling betrayed by his only friend's actions, he decides to take matters into his own hands. Stitches' formulates a plan to get Kenny back as a permanent playmate, but first confronts Kenny about his grievances to him, hoping he will listen to him. Unfortunately for him, Kenny stubbornly tells him that he no longer has the time to goof off, and that it's stupid to play such childish games with a lowly stuffed toy. Stitches' taken aback by this blunt response, demands that Kenny stop working and play with him, but his pleas fall on deaf ears. Kenny returns to his tasks, leaving Stitches to carry out his plan: take Kenny back by force.

Furiously determined, Stitches' was starting a small fire, such as moving items around, unscrewing caps to bottles and spices, and even stacking chairs and pillows together to create medium sized towers. But soon Stitches' behavior only grew worse and worse, from simple pranks and minor inconveniences to sabotaging Kenny at his regular chores, drawing all over the walls in crayon, and even going so far as breaking items in the house. Anything from windows, chairs, lights, food jars/boxes, and even toilets, nothing was safe from Stitches' wrath. All of it done in order to get Kenny's attention and to antagonize him, which would lead to having the mother punishing him. Resulting in leaving Stitches alone with Kenny.

Mrs. Ryder returns home from the market to find the house in shambles. Stitches' actions starting with the destruction of the washing machine, the large amounts of candy and toys scattered throughout the whole house, and even unplugging the refrigerator, causing all the food to spoil. All of this leaving Kenny grounded in his room for a good one-month.

Unfortunately the latter portion of the plan backfires, Kenny snaps into his darker self due to the constant harassment and wrongful sentence brought upon him by Stitches. He becomes cold, cynical, and very bitter towards the whole world, and he begins taking his aggression out on Stitches.

Erupting into a serious fight, Kenny charges at the flabbergasted teddy bear and throws him against the wall. But on an impulse, Stitches quickly recovers from his flight, and launches a baseball at Kenny thus hitting him in the eye, as well as throwing a few other toys at him. Every time that Kenny would get close to the insane toy, Stitches would immediately start scratching Kenny's face, torso, and arms. Infuriated with the constant barrage of playthings, Kenny then tackles the stuffed bear to the ground and with all his might, pulls Stitches' arm to the point where it actually rips off from its seams. The fight then ends with Stitches' right arm torn off and Kenny being significantly bruised and scratched concludes by kicking him across the room.

Act 3:

Defeated and terrified, Stitches retreats under the bed, leaving Kenny contemplating what he had just done. Kenny quickly passes out from exhaustion and enters his dream world. Although instead of a peaceful dream of Kenny ridding himself of the deranged doll, he witnesses a nightmare of himself. Before Kenny's eyes, the scene plays as him becoming a terrifying monster tearing his teddy bear to unrecognizable shreds. It is only at this part that a large silhouette wraps around the monster, causing the abomination to disappear, leaving the shadowy figure to reveal his dad.

From that, his father gives him a few words of wisdom concerning the path he has taken in life, and how he can achieve his goal without losing himself in the process. Kenny woke up from his sleep but overcome with a horrible sense of guilt for treating Stitches so badly. The boy slides under the bed to find the mangled bear and apologize. Upon looking under his bed, Kenny finds a secret door that was built into the wall, from there Kenny went crawling through the tight space until he came to a small room that held old pictures of Kenny's mother holding him and another baby in her other arm, and next to the pictures was Stitches.

Unbeknownst to Kenny, his Stitches' teddy bear was actually being inhabited by his older brother, Sam Ryder who died a day after he was born from pneumonia. Sam at first roamed the house saddened that he would never get to experience life, but at the same time hurt that his parents avoided bringing him up out of grief. To him, it truly felt as if his parents were purposely trying to forget about him, in fact Sam's fear is the idea that he could fade away completely if everyone forgot about him. However it wasn't long till Sam discovered that his brother Kenny received a teddy bear from their father and would constantly play with it wherever he went. Seeing a golden opportunity to enjoy life with Kenny, he took possession of the bear and made it move and talk (only in the presence of Kenny).

With Stitches' telling him the truth, and remembering his father's intervention in the dream Kenny apologizes to Sam and hugs him. Promising his older brother that he will always remember him and will do what he can to spend time with him again. From that day on, Kenny began sowing up Sam's arm, but at the same time realizing that moving forward is an important part of growing up, as well as embracing our childhood for all its joys and flaws.