

Film Title and Release Date: *The Silent Child* (2017)
Length of Film in Minutes: 20 minutes
Film Genre: Short Film

Reviewer Name and Grade: Grace G., 8th Grade

Date Reviewed: March 31, 2021

Libby is a deaf four year old, and refuses to wear any sort of hearing aid. She's rather quiet and reserved and is pushed aside with her family's other matters, like her brother's and sister's activities. The film starts when the family hires a new social worker, Joanne, to help 'fix' their daughter before she starts school. Joanne strives to teach Libby through a mix of sign language, and their relationship deepens a lot. Libby begins opening up more, and starts to begin understanding her situation more and in reality is a pretty smart kid. But Libby's mother, Sue begins having issues with this change, as she thinks sign language isn't as widely known, and that speech therapy would be better. Joanne struggles with this concept however, because Libby has speech problems, and that if they would work around it with sign language it would be much more effective. In a random meeting and exchange with Libby's grandma, Joanne discovers that Libby isn't even Sue's real biological daughter. Sue starts being more hectic about the sign language, and having arguments with Paul, Libby's father, and they decide to just completely stop Joanne's visits, against Joanne's will. In the end, Libby starts school, not understanding anything and unable to have any hearing aid or support. She's alone and confused, without Joanne and the attention she needs as a deaf girl. This film shows the realistic view on how deaf children are treated, with un-understanding parents and tries to bring more awareness to the cause.

How did you find the film on Kanopy?

I found the film through browsing.

Did the presentation of information keep you interested?

The presentation of the information was easy to follow and steady.

Was the pace of the film too fast, too slow, or just right?

The film was at a good pace, it was sort and concise enough to get the point across

What grade level(s) is this film appropriate for?

I believe that this film would be appropriate for all ages, or atleast grades 4+ and that it shouldn't be restricted by age. There aren't any major issues for children to be able to watch this film.

Rating- 4 stars: I enjoyed this film and found it worthwhile to watch.

This film conveyed a message about deaf children and the lack of understanding most people felt for them, and reflected that if given the same opportunities, should be on the same foot and have the same abilities as other children.

Reviewer Name and Grade: Eren G., 11th Grade

Date Reviewed: April 11, 2021

In England, Joanne, a social worker is hired to take care of a deaf child named Libby. The mother of Libby, Sue says she wants to give her help so she can feel more welcomed when she starts school. The rest of the family leaves to do their own business, and Joanne stays at their home alone with Libby. Libby isn't very good with speech, and can only understand through lips. Joanne decides to teach her British sign language, the day passes through, and it seems like hardly any progress is made. Then eventually Libby attempts at sign language, and Joanne becomes hopeful. Joanne later learns that Libby's family has given up on her, as they don't know what to do to help. They hardly communicate with her at all, and all Libby can do is watch. Joanne decides to take her out to the outside world, and they eventually form a bond, one Libby never formed with her own family. Libby begins to adore the first person that ever truly loved her. Unfortunately, Sue confronts Joanne and questions her method of teaching and communication, saying that hardly anyone really understands sign language, and will be hard to use in school. Joanne then says that schools and such should learn this form of communication so deaf people can have a better time there. Sue and her husband argue whether Libby should get school support. Joanne then find out from the husband's mother that Libby was born out of wedlock, and her father was her mother's lover. Her grandfather had been deaf and was a cleaner. Libby's family sadly have low expectations for her. Sue still insist she gets speech therapy, and just wants her child to be normal. Eventually, Joanne was fired. Libby is then sent to school and her parents stuck with the speech therapy plan. It doesn't work however, and Libby struggles in school. A spelling test was given on the first day, but Libby couldn't hear anything the teacher said. Joanne goes to the school and sees Libby leaning on the school building, not playing with any of the other kids. Libby signs "I love you" to Joanne, and realizing Libby has no hope for a normal future due to the lack of support and love, in tears, she signs back, and leaves.

How did you find this film on Kanopy (by title search, subject, casual browsing, etc.)?

I was only casually browsing, and came across this film.

Did the plot (for fictional movie) or presentation of information (for documentary) keep you interested?

Yes, the plot made it easy to grab my attention, even if it was just 20 minutes.

Was the pace of the film too fast, too slow, or just right?

For a 20 minute film, the pacing worked out really well. Each short scene had enough for the viewer to know what's going on.

What grade level(s) is this film appropriate for?

I think all ages should take a look at this. It holds a deep message to support all kinds of disabilities.

Rating:

I rate this book *4 stars: I enjoyed the film and found it worthwhile to watch.*

The cast of characters in this film work out really well and the message it sends really stands out.

The personalities of the characters are well thought out and help develop the story's message.