

Charles Mirath

- ▶ Species: Human
- ▶ Sex: ♂
- ▶ Age: 30
- ▶ Birthday: April 1988
- ▶ Height: 5ft 9in
- ▶ Weight: 179lbs
- ▶ Siblings: 2 older brothers. John, 8 years older, and Donnie, 6 years older
- ▶ Career: He and his family are thieves in various forms. Each brother has his own specific skill-set but Charles himself is an excellent pick-pocket. He may do the occasional car-jack or even bank heist occasionally, but he prefers forms of thievery that keep him out of the limelight
- ▶ Interests: Joy-riding, cars, men, and money

Charles is the youngest of three brothers, and part of a family of petty thieves. His family are secretive, both in terms of their career choice and their personal emotions, and Charles is no exception. Charles' general attitude is low-key and casual.

Trust & Confidence

Baby

Charles was a little underweight at birth but was cared for well enough that he went on to develop a healthy weight. This is quite surprising given the circumstances into which he was born.

He was born into a lower social class family who earned their bread via semi-legal or illegal means. The family culture was to avoid getting too attached, even to one another, and this had an impact on Charles' very first relationships. Because of this, weak personal attachments became his pattern for life. Aside from this, the family's culture was one of secrecy and stoicism to avoid rocking the boat within the family. Rather than open up and share their fears and frustrations with one another, the Mirath family mostly kept their distress to themselves.

Charles' symbiotic relationship with his mother (the powerful, almost two-become-one bond that a mother and baby usually develop to ensure the hard work of looking after an infant is done with care and enthusiasm) was disrupted as a result of this isolating family culture. She kept a certain emotional distance from all of her children and often left Charles in the care of his older brothers.

That relationship rupture meant that Charles couldn't be quite sure who would be there for him and who would help him regulate his emotions during that early developmental period when, like all infants, he couldn't self-regulate. Ultimately his brothers did an effective job of helping him calm down from the usual tears, fears and raging, but their approach could at times feel rather blunt to Charles. In addition, the lack of relationship permanence (as an infant he was better suited to entering a symbiotic relationship with one person, not two or three) left its mark in the form of a reluctance to present his stronger feelings to other people in the first place.

Charles' dad flitted in and out of his family's life for the first few months, until he eventually

disappeared completely. Whether he went on the run or got sent to jail was kept secret from the boys, and given the possibility that he had done some terrible things, perhaps it was for the better that he didn't stay and play the part of a role model.

Freedom & Self-Determination

Toddler

By the time he reached toddlerhood, Charles had established a habit for numbing himself to his more potent emotions.

Beyond that, by the time he reached adulthood, he was very well practised in concealing his emotions, and rationalised his lack of emotion by telling himself that it was unprofessional and dangerous to let one's emotions get in the way of his work. It also allowed him to avoid confrontation, and 'the quiet life' became his normal.

Toddler Charles's family didn't interact with others all that much and as a result, Charles himself didn't develop a habit of building and maintaining friendships, instead letting people come and go from his life in a way that kept disturbance to a minimum.

As an adult he refined these anti-networking skills and became good at keeping to himself while also picking up the occasional tip-off for work. He also became adept at avoiding answering questions. Every now and again he resolved to try overcoming his self-isolating skills but the training ran too deep and he inevitably gave up the pursuit.

He felt safer immersing himself in activities than hanging around with other people, so that was what he did. He focused exclusively on activities – including play or tutoring from his brothers – and often delayed in showing the results of his games or other efforts to other people. He kept this habit all the way into adulthood and beyond.

That isn't to say that he couldn't bear for other people to see his projects. Indeed, as he grew older he came to understand the value of a second pair of eyes to judge the quality of his work. However he retained a sense of reluctance about this, and would only invite another person to look when he felt good and ready.

Overall, Charles' over-arching pattern is that he 'lets go' of people but is passive enough about it that it seems like it was the other person's idea to leave, and not Charles himself avoiding a relationship by failing to respond to it. Of course, to Charles himself this wasn't how it appeared. His decision to close off from others was made so early and fit into his family culture so seamlessly that it didn't even seem like a decision to him.

Ambition

Young childhood

In this life stage Charles became more conscious of his relationships with others, including those beyond the bounds of his family. After all, relationships are often key to fulfilling our ambitions, whether it's out-competing others, collaborating, or impressing others and basking in their admiration. Charles found himself at a crossroad here: on the one hand he could maintain his deeply felt need for safety by avoiding relying on people (but that would mean culling any ambition that involved other people) or he could try to recover from the distance he kept by habit, and explore the many benefits of relying on others.

Charles straddled these two options, which seems fair considering that he was a small boy so he almost entirely lacked a conscious understanding of this dilemma. He avoided ambition by being easily distracted and by blaming himself for any shortcomings or failures in fulfilling his goals and dreams (with the rationale that if he kept messing up, why would he want to try anything in the first place?). However, ultimately he chose to keep trying at fulfilling said goals and dreams, and continued to seek his older brothers' help.

His brothers helped him overcome the worst of this dilemma and find a way of negotiating his need for personal safety in ways that benefited him, and them, more.

Productivity

Older childhood

Charles's lack of interest in being sociable meant that he focused on other things more than people: reading, writing, and other things his brothers taught him. By the time he reached older childhood, in some ways he seemed to be a model student.

Only two issues got in the way of this: his quick, distraction-free uptake of new information meant that he often felt bored with the material he was taught, and his lack of social confidence meant that he shunned teamwork, which sometimes impacted his grades. The promise of rewards helped him regain his motivation, but as this isn't a standard feature of most schools he didn't feel motivated to focus at school.

He had a handful of loose friendships, including people who managed to overcome his disinterest and attract his attention, but largely he considered the social world to be something he was separate from. As far as he was concerned, other people socialised; he did not.

Money held a particular draw, and that helped prompt him towards his career choice in adulthood.

Adult Selfhood

Adolescence

As a younger teenager, Charles was known for being daydream-y and disinterested in most of what was going on around him. At this time he developed more sophisticated rationales for avoiding social contact. For a start, his family were of a lower social class than most of the people around him so overall, he kept himself separate from anyone who was of a higher social status.

As he went through his teens he got the occasional boyfriend, and these relationships were usually initiated as a result of the boyfriend being able to amuse Charles enough to coax him out of his self-imposed isolation. Once he found himself in such a relationship, Charles would stay in it for a few years.

However, despite this Charles still didn't develop much of a taste for social interaction and kept himself relatively distant and safe. As a result these relationships were often quite sexual. He didn't feel that he came to harm as a result of this, and he did no notable harm to any of his boyfriends, but sex remained a substitute for the excitement and glow of

genuine relationship intimacy.

The nearest he got to true intimacy was that closeness with his two brothers. All three had similar careers, and each looked out for the other two, so circumstance kept them together just as much as the family bond.

Closeness in Relationships

Young adulthood

Charles's main focus as an adult was his professional life. As an adult, he was no longer chained to school (and it had often felt as if he was chained there), and was finally able to use everything he had learned for himself and been taught by his brothers, to make his fortune in whatever way he could. That was much more engaging for Charles!

He found little need to change his pattern with intimate relationships so continued his trend of serial monogamy, and some of these relationships could last for several years. Sex continued to be a high priority and usually one of the other in the couple would play a dominant role.

One partner however, broke this fairly harmonious pattern and took advantage of Charles, which left him wary of new relationships for a while.

Aside from this, his main source of high quality social contact came from his family, with whom he remained close, in part due to the family enterprise – which was of questionable legality.

As an adult, Charles developed a long-term friendship (which sometimes bordered into intimacy) with a guy called Soren. Charles never learned Soren's surname as he felt he didn't need to know it. Soren had a legal job but sometimes acted as an accomplice, albeit an ostensibly reluctant one. Charles pretty much always believed he knew best, despite Soren's efforts to be "the voice of reason". Their relationship gave each of them the occasional thrill that both needed to counter the mundanity of their daily lives.

Passing on Responsibility

Middle age

Charles continued with the life he had developed for himself into middle age. He never had children, partly because he preferred to be his own first priority, and partly to avoid the risk that he might not be able to provide for his children.

With that said, as a middle-aged man he was able to boast that he had consistently kept a roof over his head, even if his career hadn't kept him in any great luxury.

End of Life

Old age

Charles feels uneasy about the impending end of his life. Superficially he's happy with the goal of keeping himself safe, fed, off the streets, dry, and warm, but sometimes he wishes he could become stable and adept enough at relationships to settle down with a guy

beyond a casual relationship. However, he never did this due to his early social conditioning.

He knows he isn't the last of his line, as his brothers have taken female partners and had children. This has helped him find peace with his own lack of continuation of the next generation.

Charles leads a life in which he flirts with danger but remains curiously safe, owing to his fine-tuned criminal and social avoidance skills. Deep down, this isn't quite enough for him and he wishes for more from life, but lacks the proper support to do so and isn't under enough pressure to actually make the change and learn a new skill set.

Credits

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Erikson, E., (1951) 'Childhood and Society', W.W. Norton & Company, Inc. chapter 7.

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~Hayley, The Character Consultancy