

A Mother's Love

By

Stephen Brown

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ste_spike@yahoo.co.uk
Blyth, Northumberland
England

FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The sun shines brightly in the clear blue sky.

A peaceful winding road dissects the broad, open fields.

A beat-up YELLOW BEETLE coasts along.

60s ROCK N ROLL MUSIC plays out from the car.

INT/EXT. BEETLE

STEVE(32) and GEMMA(25) sit in front. Steve drives and SINGS along to the music...badly.

LOUISE(5) sits in her baby chair in the back.

Gemma turns around in her chair and smiles at Louise.

GEMMA

You okay sweetheart? We're almost there.

Louise nods, a teddy bear in her hand.

LOUISE

Yes Mommy.

Gemma reaches over and strokes Louise's hair. She lets out a GIGGLE.

Gemma faces the front and pulls out the ATLAS. Looks through it with a shake of her head.

GEMMA

You're lost aren't you Steve, admit it.

Steve carries on SINGING, shakes his head.

GEMMA

Well where are we? I can't even find this road in the atlas.

STEVE

It's a short cut that's all. I have everything in complete control.

Gemma keeps her eyes on the atlas, traces a finger down a page.

GEMMA

Well what road is this? We're in
the middle of nowhere.

A car approaches them in the distance.

Gemma holds the book towards Steve. He looks over,
irritated. Points his finger to the page.

STEVE

It's right there.

The car hits a bump. The steering wheel spins to the right.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD

The Beetle slides across the white lines, towards the
oncoming car.

They collide, with devastating force.

The front of the Beetle collapses instantly. The windows
SHATTER.

Gemma flies out of the windscreen. CRASHES into the other
car.

The CAR HORN sounds constantly. Everything else deathly
silent.

INT/EXT. BEETLE

Steve's head against the steering wheel. He stirs and sits
up. Looks around.

Louise, still in her baby chair, sits as still as stone. Her
eyes wide and open. She opens her mouth...

...an ALMIGHTY SCREAM.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD

Gemma's bloody body lies on the bonnet of the other car.

Her eyes stare blindly out. They take nothing in.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - LATER

MONTAGE: PARAMEDICS AND VOICE OVER

- TWO AMBULANCES ARRIVE

- GEMMA'S BODY IS PUT ON A STRETCHER.

- LOUISE AND STEVE ARE TAKEN TO AN AMBULANCE

LOUISE(V.O)
I'll always remember that day
Mommy. The day you were taken from
me.

END MONTAGE.

INT. AMBULANCE - DAY

Steve sits in the back. Louise held tightly on his knee. Her eyes blank, void of emotion.

LOUISE(V.O)
I'll always love you Mommy, I'll
never forget you. Never ever.

GEMMA(V.O)
I'll always love you too baby.
You're my baby girl.

Steve looks down at Louise, brushes her hair with his fingers.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: ONE YEAR LATER

Steve and TANYA(27) snuggle up on the sofa. Steve whispers softly into her ear, she GIGGLES.

GEMMA(V.O)
I'll always be here for you
sweetheart, you remember that.

A romantic film plays on the TV screen, but they don't watch. Steve turns Tanya's face to him with two fingers and kisses her passionately.

A fish tank sits in the corner of the room. Two Goldfish swim around a large castle ornament.

INT. LOUISE'S BEDROOM

Louise sits on her bed. A picture of Gemma in her hands.

LOUISE
I'll remember Mommy.

She kisses the photo and puts it on her bedside table.

STEVE

What? Are you okay honey?

He walks over and sits on her bed. Holds her in his arms.

LOUISE

Is she still here?

Steve LAUGHS and looks down at Louise, strokes her hair.

STEVE

Who? Tanya? Yeah, she's downstairs,
we're watching a film.

Louise looks up at Steve with puppy dog eyes. She pouts.

LOUISE

I want her to go. I don't like her.

Steve looks to the photo on the table. Picks it up. They both look into it.

Steve picks Louise up and puts her on his knee.

STEVE

She's not trying to replace your
mummy Louise. No one will ever do
that. You understand?

Louise frowns and swings an arm at the photo. It flies out of Steve's grasp and SMASHES on the floor.

They both stare down at it.

Steve puts Louise back down on the bed and stands up.

STEVE

Look what you've done Louise. Go to
sleep now, I'll try and fix that in
the morning.

He walks out.

Louise doesn't take her eyes off the broken photo, an ugly look of hate on her face. This is no cute kid any more.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Tanya sits on the sofa and watches the movie. She looks to the door when Steve walks in.

STEVE

I'm so sorry Tanya.

He sits down next to her. Refills their wine glasses.

TANYA

It's fine honestly Steve. Is she okay? I heard something smash.

STEVE

Yeah, it's just...you're the first woman since...you know.

Tanya strokes Steve's arm, gives him an understanding smile and nod.

TANYA

It must be tough on her. I can leave if you want?

Steve takes Tanya's hand in his, raises it to his lips and kisses it.

STEVE

It's been a year babe, I've got to move on -- she's got to move on. I understand if you want to go though.

Tanya raises an eyebrow seductively, shakes her head as she leans towards Steve. They kiss tenderly. Sink back down on the sofa.

The TV shows a couple in a similar position.

INT. STAIRS - LATER

Steve and Tanya walk up the stairs hand in hand. They make every effort to be quiet. Slow, gentle steps.

TANYA

(whispering)

Should we be doing this?

They walk into -

STEVE'S BEDROOM

- and Steve eases the door closed.

Steve gazes into Tanya's eyes. Runs his fingers through her hair.

STEVE

I don't know, but I think I have to.

Steve smiles and picks up Tanya, she GIGGLES softly and wraps her legs around his waist.

They move to the double bed and lie down.

They kiss and undress each other.

INT. LOUISE'S BEDROOM - LATER

The night-light by Louise's bed illuminates her face. She is very much awake. Her eyes wide and a deep frown on her face.

Various MOANS and GRUNTS sound through the wall. BANGS on the wall match the timing of Louise's breaths. Her chest rises and falls. Her frown deepens.

The noise grows louder still. The bangs speed up.

Louise slides off her bed and sits on the floor.

She brushes the broken glass off the picture of Gemma. Stares at it.

TANYA(O.S)

(breathless)

Fucking God yesssssss!

SATISFIED SIGHS resound through the walls.

A tear falls onto the photo.

INT. STAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

Louise walks down to the -

LIVING ROOM

- the moonlight through the thin blinds guides her way.

INT. KITCHEN

A selection of knives in a knife rack sits on a bench. A small hand slides one out. A TWINKLE from the razor sharp blade.

Louise kneels on a step-stool by the bench. The knife in her hand. A calm expression on her face.

She lowers her feet to the floor. Walks out of the room.

INT. STEVE'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Steve lies asleep. His arms wrapped around a sleeping Tanya. He MUMBLES and rolls the other way.

A CREAK OF A DOOR(O.S) as Tanya breathes softly. A deep peaceful sleep.

Louise stands by the bed, knife in hand. She watches Tanya. Disgust on her face.

She climbs onto the bed and raises the knife. Sinks it into Tanya's chest.

Tanya's eyes flash open. She SCREAMS.

Louise raises the knife again and smashes it back down into her. Blood SPURTS out, all over Louise and Steve.

Steve wakes up in shock. Catches Louise's hand as she raises the knife again. He pulls her to him. Wraps his arms around her tightly.

He stares at the bloody mess that is Tanya. She GASPS for air. Holds her chest with both hands. Blood GUSHES between her fingers.

Steve fights to hold onto Louise, she GROANS and SQUIRMS in his arms.

His startled eyes try to take in the sight. Tanya's GASPS fade. Her head falls to the pillow. Her eyes blank as they stare at him.

Steve's shoulders sink, Louise breaks his grasp. She spits on Tanya's face.

Steve looks at her in disbelief.

Louise looks at him, calm.

LOUISE

You should have sent her away.

She looks down at Tanya and shakes her head. Looks back at Steve.

LOUISE

Look what you made me do, daddy.

Steve tries to form words but only a QUESTIONING GRUNT comes out.

LOUISE
We've got to chop her up.

Steve's eyes widen. He stares at Louise.

His hand moves to the PHONE on his bedside table. Picks up the receiver. He dials 999.

Louise watches him, a smile comes over her face.

LOUISE
My seven year old daughter killed
my girlfriend?

She GIGGLES and wipes the handle of the knife on the bedsheets. Slides it into Steve's hand.

Steve holds the receiver to his ear, his eyes on Louise.

OPERATOR(V.O)
Emergency services. What department
please?

Steve's jaw drops, eyes blank.

OPERATOR(V.O)
What department please? Hello?

STEVE
(into phone)
Sorry...erm...sorry false alarm.

OPERATOR(V.O)
Are you sure Sir? What was the
trouble?

Steve and Louise's eyes are locked. Louise grins.

STEVE
(into phone)
I thought I heard something outside
but it was just...it was just a
cat, sorry.

He lowers the receiver into it's cradle.

STEVE
What have you done, Louise?

Louise slides off the bed and walks to the door.

LOUISE

Get the shower curtain and lie it
on the floor. I'm going to the
shed.

Steve looks down at Tanya, the colour in her skin already
pale.

INT. STEVE'S BEDROOM - LATER

Tanya's body lies on a shower curtain on the floor.

Steve kneels by her side, a saw in his hand. He RETCHES.
Turns his head and is sick on the carpet.

Louise sits cross-legged on the bed. Her eyes fixed on
Steve.

LOUISE

Come on daddy, it's just like being
a butcher. Just think of her as a
cow.

Steve looks up at Louise, saliva hangs from his lips. He
LAUGHS.

STEVE

I'm not a butcher though.

LOUISE

(whining)

Pretend.

Steve runs his hand through his hair, looks down at the
body.

Moves the saw to the ankle. Stops.

Puts the saw down.

STEVE

I'm calling the police. This is
insane. You need help.

He stands up and walks to the phone.

LOUISE

You'll go to jail -- actually
you'll probably go to a nut house
if that's going to be your story.

Steve stops.

LOUISE
 You'll be in a nut house, I'll be
 in a foster home. You want that
 daddy?

STEVE
 Why did you do it? Why did you
 fucking do this?

He swings an arm to Tanya's body.

LOUISE
 It's what Mommy wanted. She told me
 to do it.

Tears run down Steve's cheek, he stares at Louise.

STEVE
 Have I caused this? Sure you've
 been quiet since -- since it
 happened. Should I have had you
 checked out?

LOUISE
 Probably. Too late now though
 Daddy. We've just got to keep it
 you and me from now. It's what
 Mommy wants. It's what I want.

She pouts.

LOUISE
 You should want that too. You chose
 her over us.

A ray of light shoots through the curtain. The sun is
 rising.

They both look to the window.

LOUISE
 Cut her up. It's going to take a
 long time.

Steve looks to the clock on the wall. The hands mark out
 Five Twenty-Seven.

The second hand TICKS away.

FOOTSTEPS(O.S). The TINKLE(O.S) of the saw being picked up.

The sound of SAWING(O.S). Metal on bone.

INT. STEVE'S BEDROOM - LATER

The clock shows Six Fourteen.

A very sweaty Steve kneels by the shower curtain. Blood all over it and pieces of Tanya's body scattered.

Louise watches from the bed.

LOUISE

They need to be smaller.

Steve looks up at her, brow burrowed.

STEVE

Smaller? Why?

LOUISE

I don't know yet, they just need to be smaller. Let me think, you saw.

Steve shakes his head and picks up a foot. Saws it into smaller pieces.

A smile washes over Louise's face.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

A large bucket sits on a bench, it holds tiny bits of meat. Bones protrude here and there.

Tanya's head sits under the bench on the floor.

EXT. GARDEN

Steve paces back and forward on the grass. Louise sits on the step from the kitchen.

STEVE

Who the fuck are you? This is fucking crazy.

LOUISE

It's the only way Daddy, otherwise you'll get caught.

Steve stops, faces Louise.

STEVE

I'll get caught? What have I done?

Louise shakes her head.

LOUISE
 Still thinking they'll believe a
 seven year old girl did this Daddy?
 You're so stupid.

Steve sinks onto the grass. Sits down. He LAUGHS
 hysterically.

STEVE
 Right, yeah. Stupid.

LOUISE
 Besides...I definitely couldn't saw
 her up like that.

Steve raises his eyes to Louise. She looks back with a
 shrug.

LOUISE
 Well, I couldn't could I?

He shakes his head and lies back. Looks to the sky.

STEVE
 It'll smell. It'll taste funny.
 Everyone will know it's not beef.

LOUISE
 Well put some herbs in it. Tell
 them you bought them fresh...from a
 farm -- besides once you barbecue
 something it all tastes the same.

A barbecue stands at the bottom of the garden.

The sun is bright in the clear blue sky.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

The bucket of Tanya is on the bench.

Steve stands by it. Holds a piece by the bone and cuts the
 flesh off with a knife.

It falls onto a large pile of meat on a cutting board.

LOUISE(O.S)
 (into phone)
 Well we would really love it if you
 could come Andy. I haven't seen Sue
 for ages.

Louise sits at the kitchen table, phone to her ear. A cute
 smile on her face.

LOUISE(O.S)
 (into phone)
 Great! Come round at Two O' Clock
 -- yeah, Daddy said it would be
 cute. See ya later.

She hangs up the phone. Her face darkens as she looks to Steve.

LOUISE
 That's Andy, Sue, Trev and Peter
 coming. That should be enough --
 think that'll be enough?

Steve looks over his shoulder at her. Continues cutting the meat.

STEVE
 I really don't know Louise. I've
 never fed a woman to my friends
 before.

LOUISE
 You're not being very helpful
 Daddy. I'm doing this for you, you
 know?

Steve LAUGHS and turns back around.

LOUISE
 What about the head?

Steve stops cutting. Freezes. A look of disgust on his face.

LOUISE
 Shit! What about the head?

Louise lowers her head into her arms on the table. SIGHS
 deeply.

EXT. GARDEN - LATER

The barbecue stands on the lawn. Juicy burgers and sausages
 sizzle on the rack. Smoke rises into the air.

ANDY, SUE, TREV and PETER (all 30s) sit on garden chairs.
 They all hold plates of food. Tuck into a burger or hotdog
 each. They all watch -

LOUISE

- dance on the lawn. A smile on her face, she's loving the attention.

She stops and takes a bow. CLAPS(O.S). She GIGGLES.

BACK TO SCENE

Peter finishes the last burger on his plate and sits back. Puts his hand on his belly.

PETER

Good burgers. Where's Steve at?

Everyone looks around and shrugs.

SUE

Maybe, he's on the phone to that girl from last night?

TREV

Yeah, that'll be right. I'll go see.

Trev stands up and walks inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Steve sits with his head in his hands. He looks up to the -

FISH TANK

- where two Goldfish swim around the large castle ornament.

BACK TO SCENE

His eyes are fixed on the castle, fear spread all over his face.

Trev walks in.

TREV

What you doing in here you unsociable bastard?

Steve ignores him, Trev takes a seat opposite him.

TREV

Fancy leaving your daughter to do all the -
 (noticing Steve's look)
 - Christ, Steve, what's up man?

Steve and Trev's eyes meet.

STEVE
It's too fucking terrible mate.
It's awful.

Trev stands up and takes a seat next to Steve.

TREV
Come on man, you can tell me. I'm
sure it's not that bad. That girl
dump you?

Steve looks back to the fish tank. Shakes his head.

STEVE
No Trev, I don't know if I can even
say it out loud. I can't believe
she --

Steve jumps as Louise runs in. A broad grin on her face as she jumps on the sofa between Steve and Trev.

Trev smiles and picks her up. Puts her on his knee.

She looks to Steve, her eyes dark, eye brows low. The innocent smile still in full force.

TREV(O.S)
What were you saying mate?

LOUISE
Yeah Daddy, what were you saying?

Steve lowers his head.

Trev shrugs and stands up, picks Louise up.

TREV
Come on baby, lets get some more of
those burgers eh?

They walk off.

Steve looks back to the -

FISH TANK

One of the fishes swim out of the -

CASTLE

Hair flows in the water.

CLOSER

Two dead eyes look out of the the castle windows.

STEVE(O.S)
(repeating to fade)
The horror, the horror, the
horror...

FINAL FADE OUT.