

The Butcher's Daughter

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FADE IN:

EXT. PARK - DAY

The sun shines in the clear blue sky above the crowded park.

SANDRA (18) and TREVOR (20) sit by a picnic blanket full of food - fruit, nuts, beans and the like.

Sandra scoops up some odd-looking beans.

SANDRA

What are these again?

Trevor smiles and takes one from Sandra's palm. Pops it in his mouth.

TREVOR

Pulses. Try them, they're packed with protein. Taste pretty good too.

Sandra puts a couple in her mouth. Chews. Smiles.

SANDRA

Not bad.

Trevor pulls her to the ground, laughing. She joins in as she lies in his arms looking up at the sky.

TREVOR

So... you decided yet?

Sandra's smile fades.

TREVOR

Come on, he's gonna find out sooner or later.

Sandra glances at Trevor's wrist-watch.

SANDRA

Shit! I'm late.

She jumps to her feet. Trevor stands, his smile gone.

SANDRA

I'll tell him. I've just got to find the right time... okay?

Trevor looks far from convinced.

TREVOR
Okay... I love you.

They kiss. She grins.

SANDRA
Love you too.

She runs off, leaving Trevor standing above the half-eaten picnic. He looks down at it, shaking his head.

INT. BUTCHER'S - DAY

A fat, juicy slab of meat. A cleaver cuts it in half with a loud CHOP.

BERNARD (late 40s) stands behind the counter, cleaver in hand. Barrel-chested would be a nice way to describe him, fat as fuck would be another.

MRS. WOODCOCK (70s) stands across the counter.

Bernard weighs the meat, bags it then hands it across to her with a smile.

BERNARD
Just as you like it, Mrs. Woodcock.
Nice and juicy.

MRS. WOODCOCK
(taking the bag)
Thanks Bernard, see you next week.

She walks off. Bernard looks to the wall behind him - a clock reads '12:25', beside it a portrait photo of a chubby but friendly looking woman.

Sandra runs through the door, flushed.

SANDRA
Sorry, sorry, sorry...

Bernard grins, shaking his head in mock disapproval.

BERNARD
I'll be docking your wages soon,
honey.

Sandra puts her apron on.

SANDRA
I'm really sorry, dad. I just lost
track of time.

Bernard taps her on the shoulder.

BERNARD
There's a steak sandwich out the
back. I thought we'd eat together
but...

He slaps his hefty belly with a guilty smile.

SANDRA
Nah, you're alright dad, I've
eaten.

Bernard looks her up and down.

BERNARD
Come on girl, you're wasting away.
Get it down ya!

SANDRA
Honest, I couldn't... I'll have it
later.

Bernard nods and walks through to the backroom.

Sandra looks down at the meat on display with disgust.

INT. TREVOR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sandra lies in Trevor's arms in his bed.

Posters of equal rights and 'meat is murder'-like slogans.

SANDRA
We could run away?

Trevor chuckles.

SANDRA
I'm serious, we could.

TREVOR
You'll never leave your dad and you
know it. I wouldn't want you to
anyway.

A long silence...

TREVOR

Do you want me to tell him about us?

Sandra sits up and turns around to face him.

SANDRA

He's not going to accept us, Trevor. You don't know him, he's so old school it's like --

TREVOR

-- trust me, I've met enough people like that. Listen, why don't you invite me for dinner tomorrow? I'll bring the food.

Sandra gives a look - 'Are you for real?'

TREVOR

Just tell him.

Sandra bites her lip, the picture of uncertainty.

INT. BERNARD AND SANDRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bernard sits at the table sipping from a steaming cup while Sandra paces back and forward.

BERNARD

I don't know why you didn't just tell me straight away? Why would I mind that you have a boyfriend?

Sandra faces her father, closes her eyes and breathes slowly. She gives her best 'angelic daughter' look.

SANDRA

I don't know. I just kinda thought you'd be mad.

Bernard chuckles and drains his cup. Stands.

BERNARD

Don't be silly. I'd be happy to have him here for dinner and what a good lad cooking for us too, eh?

Bernard walks towards the door.

SANDRA
Erm... dad?

Bernard stops and looks over his shoulder.

BERNARD
Yes, sweetheart?

SANDRA
... nothing. Thanks.

He winks and walks through the door.

Sandra's head droops, defeated.

INT. BERNARD AND SANDRA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bernard sits in his favorite, comfortable looking armchair watching the television.

BUZZ... the doorbell.

He rolls his eyes and moves to stand but --

Sandra bounds down the stairs towards the door.

SANDRA
I'll get it.

EXT. BERNARD AND SANDRA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Trevor stands with a covered pot in his hands. Sandra opens the door and steps outside, pulling it closed behind her.

SANDRA
I'm really sorry...

Trevor gazes at her.

TREVOR
You haven't told him?

Sandra screws up her face.

SANDRA
Sorry.

BERNARD (O.S.)
Is that lover boy?

Sandra looks over her shoulder then whispers to Trevor.

SANDRA

We'll tell him together, okay?

She pushes open the door and steps back to reveal the imposing figure of Bernard behind her.

Trevor gulps...

Bernard flashes a broad grin and extends his hand.

BERNARD

Pleasure to meet you, son. Sandra's told me all about you.

Trevor shakes Bernard's out-stretched hand, glancing to Sandra, who smiles innocently.

INT. BERNARD AND SANDRA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Trevor and Sandra stand over the pot of vegetable curry on the table.

TREVOR

So what do I say? "Sorry there's no meat in it, Bernard, but I'm vegan... and guess what? Your daughter is too."

SANDRA

It'll be okay, we'll go and tell him now.

Trevor nods and walks to the door... stops, turns back to face her.

TREVOR

How do you think he'll take it?

Sandra shrugs and walks towards him. Takes his hand as they walk out.

DINING ROOM

Bernard sits at the head of the table. He turns to face Trevor and Sandra as they walk in.

BERNARD

Grubs up? I'm starving.

Sandra takes a seat. Trevor isn't moving.

SANDRA
Listen dad, you might not be
expecting what Trevor's made.

Bernard looks up at Trevor with anger in his eyes.

BERNARD
It's not pigeon is it?

Sandra smiles. Trevor can't hide his look of fear.

SANDRA
No dad... it's vegetarian. Trevor's
a ... We're vegan.

Bernard lowers his gaze, his brow furrowed in confusion...

Sandra and Trevor share a look.

TREVOR
It means we don't eat meat. We
don't eat anything that --

BERNARD
You don't eat meat!!?

Bernard staggers to his feet.

TREVOR
Erm... no. We -- I mean, I believe
that animals have the right to not
be eaten. I don't drink milk, eat
cheese... anything that comes from
animals.

Bernard stares at Trevor in disbelief.

Sandra moves closer to Trevor and wraps her hand around his.

SANDRA
We believe in animal rights.

Bernard moves his furious gaze between the two of them...

BERNARD
No wonder you're so thin, girl.
You're one of those bloody
anorexics aren't you?

Trevor moves in front of Sandra.

TREVOR

No, she's not anorexic, Bernard.
She just doesn't want to kill
animals so that we can have a nice
meal, that's all.

BERNARD

Get out of my house, lad. Before I
throw you out.

Trevor stands his ground.

BERNARD

I'm warning you, son. Get out and
stay away from my daughter or I
can't be held responsible.

Sandra pulls Trevor back. Steps in front of her father.

SANDRA

I'm old enough to make up my own
mind, dad. It's what I believe in.

Bernard's gaze doesn't leave Trevor.

TREVOR

You don't want her to go the same
way as her mother, do you?

Bernard's eyes go wild. He pushes past Sandra and takes a
swing at Trevor.

Trevor dodges the wild punch.

Bernard - face flushed - swings again.

Trevor ducks.

SANDRA

Dad! Stop it!

Trevor holds his hands up defensively.

TREVOR

Please, Mr. Henderson --

Bernard swings again. His fist connects with Trevor's chin.

Trevor hits the ground. Hard.

Bernard, panting, face bright red, stands proudly over him.

Sandra runs over and squats down by Trevor.

SANDRA

What have you done, dad?

Bernard rests a hand on the table-top, trying to get his breath back. Wheezes.

His face turns into a grimace as he moves his right arm across his chest.

He crumbles to the floor.

Sandra, in the middle of the two fallen men, doesn't know which one to attend to first.

INT. HOSPITAL - WARD - NIGHT

Bernard lies on a bed. A DOCTOR, Sandra and Trevor stand around it.

DOCTOR

You're a lucky man, Mr. Henderson.
A lot of people don't get these
sort of warnings.

Bernard sulks, not looking at any of them.

DOCTOR

After speaking to your daughter, it
seems that the main reason behind
this is your diet. Too much red
meat. Too much fat.

BERNARD

Just leave me alone, will you?

The Doctor raises his eye-brows.

DOCTOR

Mr. Henderson, you could have quite
easily died this evening. I am just
trying to help you get healthy.

Bernard rolls over onto his side, facing away from them.

BERNARD

Just leave me alone.

The Doctor shrugs, then walks off.

SANDRA

Dad?

No response.

Trevor pulls at her arm. She shakes it off.

SANDRA
Dad... I love you.

Nothing.

She fights back the tears in her eyes as Trevor takes her hand in his. They walk away.

Bernard looks around the ward. The families visiting their mothers or fathers. The wives visiting their husbands...

He sits up, catches his reflection in the television screen hung to the wall -- he's all alone.

INT. TAXI - MOVING - DAY

Sandra sits blindfolded.

SUPER: TWO WEEKS LATER

Trevor sits beside her in the back of the cab.

SANDRA
Come on, where are we going?

Trevor grins.

TREVOR
You'll find out in a minute. We're nearly there.

The cab turns a corner.

EXT. BUTCHER'S - DAY

Bernard watches as the 'Butcher's' sign is taken down by WORKMEN. He turns at the sound of --

-- the taxi cab approaches. Bernard walks towards it.

Trevor gets out, smiles at Bernard then opens the other door for Sandra.

He helps her out then takes the blindfold off.

Sandra sees - the sign 'GREENGROCERS' above her father's shop. Bernard grins.

BERNARD

It's yours, sweetheart. If you'll
forgive me?

Sandra squeals in delight, kisses her father then runs
inside the shop.

Bernard holds out his hand to Trevor.

BERNARD

No hard feelings, son?

Trevor laughs and shakes his hand.

TREVOR

As long as you don't have any when
I tell you your diet?

Bernard laughs and slaps his shoulder.

BERNARD

Deal.

They walk towards the shop.

FADE OUT.