

The Child

by
Mr. Breakfast

A LIVING ROOM

Two **CRIME-SCENE TECHNICIANS** lift a bloody corpse into a body bag. Zip the bag shut.

SAUL enters.

He's the lead detective. He crosses the room toward the technicians... blood splatters the carpets and the walls.

Something terribly violent has visited here tonight.

SAUL
Where's the kid?

They point to the kitchen.

KITCHEN

Where we find a teary-eyed, 9-year-old **GIRL**. She looks shell-shocked and vulnerable. Wears a blanket over her shoulders like a jacket.

Huddled around her, two **EMTs**. They try to comfort the grieving child.

In walks Saul.

EXT. HOUSE -- SUBURBIA -- NIGHT

Emergency vehicles, lights twirling. A two-story roped off by crime-scene tape.

Saul escorts the child out of the front door and over to one of the patrol cars -- where he passes her off to **EARL**, a fellow officer of the Law, waiting dutifully by the vehicle.

Saul heads back inside the house.

Earl situates the little girl into the car, buckles her seatbelt -- closes the door.

DRIVING ALONG

The police radio crackles throughout, in bg.

Earl attempts small talk...

EARL

The drive shouldn't take long.
 Maybe fifteen minutes, max, to get
 to the station from here. Have you
 ate dinner yet? (no response)
 Well, if you get hungry, lemme
 know.

He smiles warmly. She eases, engages...

THE CHILD

Is my mommy-n-daddy gonna be okay?

EARL

I don't know, sweetie. But let's
 not think about that right now,
 okay?

She nods. Convo dissolves into silence. Then....

THE CHILD

Do you got any kids?

EARL

Sure don't.

THE CHILD

Do you want 'um?

EARL

Yeah, sure. Someday. If it's meant
 to be.

Silence returns. Radio crackles.

SAUL (OVER RADIO)

Come in, Earl. Earl, we're
 getting some conflicting
 information over here, but Rebba
 from Child Services agreed to meet
 you guys there.

EARL (TO SAUL)

10-4.

(to the child)

In the meanwhile, we'll find an
 open cell. Set it up all nice and
 neat for you. Someplace you can
 get some sleep while we try to
 sort things out, get a hold of a
 relative to come pick you up,
 sound good?

THE CHILD

'kay.

She looks out the window. City lights and darkness. She turns back to the driver...

THE CHILD

How's Beth?

Earl sheds a puzzled look....

EARL

Hmm?

THE CHILD

You know, the woman you do mommy-n-daddy things to late at night.

EARL

You shouldn't talk like that. It isn't becoming of a lady your age. And how do you know Beth-- my wife? Are you in her class or something? Her student?

THE CHILD

I bet she wants kids. Really bad, too. Doesn't she?

Earl, dodging the question, speaks into his police radio...

EARL

Dispatch, come in...

THE CHILD

(lashing out)
ANSWER ME! (then) Did you cry when she told you she miscarried?

EARL (IGNORES HER, INTO RADIO)

...possible 51-50...

THE CHILD

SHUT UP before I stitch your lips shut. (then) I bet you cried like a bitch.

EARL (CONTINUING INTO RADIO)

...Alert EMS.

THE CHILD

I bet she cries like a bitch when she sees you dead, too.

Radio crackles...

SAUL

Ey, Earl? I'm being told that the kid doesn't even belong to these folks. Keep her at the station til I get back there -- gonna wanna speak to her again.

Earl looks at the child. Who's now perched on the passenger seat!

She screeches, lunges in attack. Mouth wide, full of piranha-like teeth.

Earl reacts in horror.

SMASH BLACK

Tires SQUEAL!

CRASH!

The end.