

CLARA

written by  
Austin Bennett

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415. 305. 6339  
AustinBennettwriter@gmail.com

INT. HARWOOD HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

CLARA (20, pretty with a black eye) holds EVA (a crying infant) against her face. She kisses Eva's cheek but she won't stop crying.

CLARA  
Come on, honey. Mama needs you to stop crying. Please baby.

SUPER: TEXAS, 1915

Over Eva's cries, Clara hears the front door slam. She puts the baby back in her crib and then dries her wet face. She sits on the edge of the bed.

ROSCOE (24, muscular, in thick pants, undershirt, and jacket) steps into the doorway, arms crossed over his chest.

ROSCOE  
Are you ever able to get her to shut up? All she does is cry.

He takes off his jacket and hangs it on a chair, revealing suspenders over his broad shoulders.

CLARA  
I think she's sick.

Roscoe moves to the crib and bends down to Eva's level. He gently rubs Eva's head. She stops crying, mesmerized.

ROSCOE  
So take her to the doctor.

CLARA  
I need money.

His neck snaps toward her.

ROSCOE  
What'd you do with the money I gave you on Monday?

CLARA  
How do you think we've been eatin'?

Roscoe kisses the Baby on her forehead and stands up. Eva starts crying and doesn't let up.

His boots thud across the floorboards. He stands over Clara, who can't look up to him. She keeps her eyes on his boots.

CLARA (cont'd)  
Please, Roscoe. Not in front of Eva.

ROSCOE  
I don't ask much of you, Clara.

CLARA  
I'm sorry.

Roscoe gently rubs her cheek. She holds her breath.

ROSCOE  
I believed you to be a good mother,  
but you keep on letting me down.

CLARA  
I'm so sorry.

ROSCOE  
You keep saying that.

He back hands her and she falls with the slap. She moves her hair out of her face and swallows.

CLARA  
She just cries so much and I don't  
know what to do.

ROSCOE  
I work all day to make sure that  
you're taken care of. That Eva is  
taken care of and you can't even  
manage that. Do you even love me?

She grabs his hands.

CLARA  
Of course, Roscoe! I love you with  
all my heart. Please. I'm trying.  
You're out there all day and night  
and I'm left all alone. All she does  
is cry and I'm tired!

ROSCOE  
Okay, Clara. I believe you. You're  
trying your hardest.

CLARA  
Do you forgive me? Please?

ROSCOE

All I want to do is come home and have my beautiful wife and my daughter ready to eat dinner but dinner's never ready and my daughter is always crying. How hard is it Clara? Why can't you just do this one thing for me?

CLARA

Eva's our daughter.

Another slap. Clara catches herself and swallows.

CLARA (cont'd)

Okay, Roscoe, she's your daughter. Now, can I please start dinner? I have a chicken soaking in buttermilk. I know you love my fried chicken.

Roscoe smiles. He does love her fried chicken.

ROSCOE

If it'll make you feel better, I'll watch Eva while you get dinner ready, okay? But can you clean yourself up? You smell like you haven't bathed in a week. And wear some make up.

He stands up and moves toward Eva's crib. She stops crying as he picks her up.

ROSCOE (cont'd)

Come to Daddy, baby girl. You miss your daddy, don't you?

Clara watches as he walks out with her against his chest. She dries her face with the sleeve of her dress, revealing a look of determination.

INT. HARWOOD HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Clara, with perfect curls and rosy cheeks, and in her best dress, sits a platter of fried chicken on the table next to a bowl of mashed potatoes. Eva coos from a high chair as Roscoe plays with her.

ROSCOE

This looks mighty delicious, doesn't it Eva?

She laughs.

ROSCOE (cont'd)

This is what I expect every night.  
You looking beautiful and a plate  
full of delicious food. Now where's  
my drink?

CLARA

I've gotta pitcher of fresh tea in  
the ice box.

ROSCOE

Go on and get me a glass then.

She smiles as sweetly as possible. He picks a fried thigh  
and breast from the platter as she walks to the ice box.

AT THE ICE BOX

Clara opens the door and takes out a pitcher of sweet tea.  
Takes a large wooden spoon from the counter and gives it a  
long, slow stir with that same sweet smile.

She then pours herself a glass of water.

AT THE TABLE

She places the glass of sweet tea next to Roscoe's plate.

ROSCOE

Ain't you gonna drink any?

CLARA

I think I made it a little too sweet  
for me.

Roscoe shrugs. Takes a sip.

ROSCOE

Tastes fine to me.

Clara serves herself a piece of chicken and some mashed  
potatoes as Roscoe eats.

CLARA

I'm sorry that I wasn't able to get  
dinner ready on time, but Eva's been  
such a handful.

ROSCOE  
(while chewing)  
It's okay, baby. There's always  
tomorrow.

He pats her hand. He swallows his food with a large gulp of sweet tea.

ROSCOE (cont'd)  
This tea is delicious. Thank you  
honey.

He leans over and kisses her. She dodges the kiss, and he kisses her cheek.

She watches, with a smile, as he goes back to eating. He downs another gulp of tea, finishing the glass.

CLARA  
Can I get you some more?

He nods, mouth full of food.

LATER

Roscoe pushes his empty plate away from him.

ROSCOE  
I'm not feelin' so good.

CLARA  
That's probably the poison.

He looks at her, shocked.

ROSCOE  
What'd you say?

CLARA  
I put poison in the tea.

He jumps from the table and launches toward the sink.

ROSCOE  
Are you fucking crazy?

Clara shakes her head.

CLARA  
I've told you not to curse in front  
of Eva!

ROSCOE  
You fucking poisoned me.

CLARA  
You deserve it!

He strains his neck trying to drink from the faucet. When that doesn't work, he runs to her.

CLARA (cont'd)  
Don't you get near me!

She jumps up and stands against the table, defending herself with the butter knife.

Roscoe stops short and vomits fried chicken and sweet tea all over her and the table.

ROSCOE  
I need to lie down.

He collapses. Eva laughs. Clara grins.

EXT. HARWOOD FARM - NIGHT

SERIES OF SHOTS

- Clara, now wearing boots, pushes a dead Roscoe in a wheelbarrow across the yard to a rusted pick up truck.
- She struggles to get Roscoe into the passenger seat.
- Clara, behind the wheel, turns the key and the engine roars to life.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Clara manages to get the truck in gear. She releases the brake and the rust bucket lurches forward. She gasses it and Roscoe's body jerks with the truck, falling on her. She pushes him back against the passenger side window.

She drives through the grass in the dark. The headlamps come on and she heads toward a large cluster of trees.

EXT. HARWOOD FARM - NIGHT

Clara crashes the truck into the largest Oak tree. Then throws it in reverse and drives into it again. Smoke bellows from the engine as she pushes open the driver's side door.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

She pulls Roscoe across the bench seat and behind the wheel.

EXT. HARWOOD FARM - NIGHT

Smoke turns to fire as Clara marches away from the fire. She stops at the wheelbarrow and pulls out a bottle of booze. She marches back to the truck.

AT THE TRUCK

Clara unscrews the cap, tosses it, and takes a shot. She opens Roscoe's mouth and pours the booze down his throat. She then empties the bottle over his head and tosses the bottle into the grass.

She marches back to the house, grinning from ear to ear.

FADE OUT

THE END.