

Special Bond
by
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INT. TINA'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY

TINA, late 40s, confident looking, with hair blow-dried to perfection, is half-watching some grim news on TV while eating a bowl of salad.

She fleetingly looks through the window - her eyes meet something.

EXT. TINA'S HOUSE. CONTINUOUS.

A taxi parks up outside the house. JAYNE, mid 30s, lovely long hair, slender but drained, emerges from the taxi.

INT. HOUSE. CONTINUOUS.

Tina jumps to her feet and hastily places the bowl with salad on the coffee table.

EXT. HOUSE. CONTINUOUS.

The TAXI DRIVER pulls a massive suitcase out of the boot.

Jayne helps her daughter DAISY, 2 y.o., out of the taxi.

INT. LIVING ROOM. EVENING.

Tina and Jayne sit on the sofa, serious-faced, Daisy plays with building blocks.

TINA
(to Jayne)
You're going to report him, aren't you?

JAYNE
He never touched me, so...

TINA
He locked you in the bedroom! It's an offence - false imprisonment!

JAYNE
It's my word against his.

TINA
(urgent)
From now on, you need to report everything. You need to collect evidence to prove that he's been abusive towards you.

JAYNE

If he beats me black and blue then I'll report him, otherwise I can't see the point.

TINA

(urgent)

He has an anger problem. Most probably, Daisy shouldn't be left with him unsupervised.

JAYNE

God, you're professionally deformed...

Tina sighs and shakes her head with frustration.

TINA

This conversation is pointless...
(turns to Daisy) What shall we build, Daisy? A house? A tower? A tower will be easier.

Tina gets down on her knees and starts stacking up the building blocks.

Jayne trying hard to compose herself...

JAYNE

I can't believe I did it. I almost chickened out when I started packing. For a moment I had a horrible feeling, like I was looking death in the face.

TINA

I'm glad you did it. You're welcome to stay here until you sort yourself out.

JAYNE

I don't know how I will ever repay you.

TINA

Don't be silly. It's good to have some company, (looks at Daisy) isn't it, Daisy?

Daisy takes one of the wooden blocks and throws it at Tina.

EXT. ALLOTMENTS. DAY

Tina opens a little wooden gate. She's dressed smart and is a

complete misfit in her chaotic allotment - piles of branches, an old bath, a couple of real looking scarecrows...

She unlocks the padlock on her shed, takes out an old fishing chair and sits down under a tree. She exhales with relief - it's just her and her kingdom.

INT. TINA'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. EVENING.

Tina and Jayne watching Dinner Date on TV...

Jayne is halfway through a bottle of cheap wine.

Daisy is asleep on an inflatable mattress in the middle of the room, a sweet little angel.

JAYNE

Are you sure you don't want any wine?

TINA

(uptight)

I'm sure. And you've had enough today.

JAYNE

You're right. At least I never needed any drugs. Booze always did enough for me. Kept me alive, I reckon.

Tina wants to object, when - the doorbell goes.

TINA

Who the heck is it this late?

Jayne doesn't seem to care.

INT. HALLWAY. CONTINUOUS.

Tina opens the door and freezes.

TINA

Hi Phil.

Indeed, PHIL, mid 40, arrogant and entitled, hands in his trouser pockets, is facing Tina.

PHIL

Hi.

TINA

What's up?

PHIL
Is Jayne here?

TINA
Of course she's not. And it's bloody
late. Go home!

Tina shuts the door on him in a hurry.

TINA
Shit.

EXT. ALLOTMENTS. DAY

Birds sing like crazy.

Daisy is playing with soil, her clothes dirty.

Jayne sitting nearby, looking lost...

Tina digs out some carrots.

TINA
Look at these babies! These are all my
children!

JAYNE
You're bonkers!

Daisy runs off, into the nearby shed, unnoticed.

JAYNE
(to Tina)
Aren't you scared here?

TINA
No.

JAYNE
You could get murdered here.

TINA
Nobody knows about this plot. It's
called Secret Garden for a reason.

All of a sudden, Daisy's frightened SQUEALING comes out of
the shed.

Jayne and Tina rush to see what's happened.

INT. SHED. CONTINUOUS

JAYNE
(to Daisy)
What's up, sweetie pie?

Tina glances over the tools hanging on the walls - spades, forks, a bow saw...

TINA
I hope nothing fell on her.

Daisy keeps crying.

DAISY
(pointing)
Spider.

TINA
(relieved)
Oh, don't be scared of spiders, Daisy.
Spiders are harmless. It's PEOPLE you
should be scared of.

Jayne gives Tina a stern look. She lifts Daisy and carries her outside.

JAYNE (O.S)
Don't say such weird things in front
of my child!

TINA
I meant certain kind of people... Not
people in general.

Tina opens her mouth to say something more in her defence but no sound comes out.

INT. TINA'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. EVENING.

Tina, wearing her dressing gown, enters the room and stops in her tracks.

Jayne and Daisy are lying on an inflatable double mattress on the floor, covered with a duvet. Daisy is asleep, the TV still blares.

TINA
(uncomfortable)
You want to hit the sack already?

JAYNE
I'm knackered.

TINA
I guess I'll go and read my book...

JAYNE
Thanks.

TINA
Shall I turn the TV off?

JAYNE
No, it's fine. I need some background noise to fall asleep.

TINA
(bossily)
But I'll turn the lamp off...

Tina makes her way to the lamp in the corner, by the window, and turns it off. She pulls the edge of the curtain aside and peers outside.

TINA
He's gone now.

JAYNE
I know.

TINA
How long was he sitting there today?

A beat.

JAYNE
I'm not sure. Do you think he knows I'm here?

TINA
(confident)
No. He doesn't know. He just displays typical threatening behaviour. Log it in your journal. (beat) He will move on.

JAYNE
I think I am the one who's going to move on. To a friend's house.

Tina taken by surprise.

TINA
Do I know her?

JAYNE
You've met him. His name is Gavin.

TINA
Oh. Isn't he... Phil's friend?

JAYNE
Not quite... Phil doesn't have
friends. Gavin lives on his own, so...

TINA
You've gone mad!

JAYNE
Thanks.

TINA
Come on, Jayne... You don't want to
move in with a bloke just because he
has an empty house! You should settle
down with Daisy, concentrate on being
a mother...

JAYNE
I wouldn't be able to live alone. I
don't know how you do it. It just
seems such a nightmare!

TINA
What do you mean, nightmare? Does it
really look like I'm the one whose
life is a nightmare?

JAYNE
You talk to the vegetables in your
allotment!

TINA
(uptight)
This conversation is pointless. I'm
going to bed. Good night.

Tina leaves the room.

INT. BEDROOM. CONTINUOUS.

Tina lying in her bed with an open book but staring into the ceiling. The TV blaring through the wall...

TINA
(under her breath)
Bitch!

She slams the book shut and turns the bedside lamp off.

INT. TINA'S HOUSE. DAY

Tina frantically looking for something in the kitchen draws...

She grabs her phone and punches some buttons.

TINA
(into the phone)
Hi Jayne. How are you doing? I can't find my allotment keys. You haven't seen them somewhere before you left, did you? (A beat). Okay, don't worry, And how's things with you? Has Phil given you the child maintenance yet?

Tina frowns.

Have you applied for that collection action? (Beat) You can apply for emergency loan if you don't have money for food, electricity and other basic things. But booze is not a basic thing, Jayne, and I can hear that you've been drinking! (Beat). Can you hear me? Are you still there?

Jayne sighs, puts her phone down and shakes her head in disbelief.

INT. TINA'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. DAY.

Tina sits at the coffee table, in her smart office clothes, the dinner on the plate in front of her. She pours some white sauce over the fish and vegetables. The presentation is immaculate. She grabs her phone and takes a photo of her meal.

Just as she grabs her cutlery, ready to dig in, her phone rings.

TINA
 (mutters)
 Oh for God's sake.

She hesitates a second or two before reaching for the phone.

TINA
 Hello?

Said in a cold, apprehensive way.

CALLER (O.S.)
 Mrs Wilson?

TINA
 Speaking.

CALLER (O.S.)
 I am DC Marvel from Redhill police station. I'm afraid I need to talk to you in regards to a missing child.

TINA
 What missing child?

CALLER (O.S.)
 Daisy Brown. We believe her mother and you are very good friends.

Tina's mouth opens in shock. She wants to say something but no sound comes out.

INT. TINA'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. LATER.

Tina, still in her smart clothes, and a POLICEMAN and POLICEWOMAN, sit on the settee in the living room.

TINA
 Since when has Daisy been missing?

POLICEMAN
 Since yesterday, around 1pm, which is a long time for a 2-year-old.

TINA
 How?

POLICEWOMAN
 She disappeared from the back garden.

TINA
Did she just wander off?

POLICEMAN
We don't know...

INT. TINA'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM. EVENING

Tina sits on the sofa, her smart clothing now somewhat creased, phone at her ear, half-empty bottle of wine and an empty wine glass on the coffee table.

TINA
They didn't even arrest him, did they?

JAYNE
(drunken laugh)
Not yet.

TINA
Are you drunk again?

JAYNE
Oh fuck of. I'm distressed, that's what I am!

TINA
Did you tell them everything? How he smeared his shit all over the walls of that company's new toilets when he didn't get promoted?

Again, Jayne's laugh in the phone.

TINA
You have to stop drinking and laughing. Your child is missing and you are laughing!

The phone goes dead. Tina reaches for her bottle.

INT. TINA'S HOUSE. BEDROOM. NIGHT

Tina asleep in her bed.

The doorbell. Tina awakes, sits up in her bed. Puts the light on and rubs her eyes.

The doorbell goes again. She checks the time on her bedside

alarm clock - 2am. She sits up.

TINA
(mutters)
Fucking hell!

INT. LIVING ROOM. CONTINUOUS.

Through the semi-darkness, Tina creeps to the window. She peeks out through a gap between the curtains - there's a police van outside.

She pulls a curtain open, trying to make the sense of things.

BANGING on her front door.

POLICE (O.S.)
Open the door! We are the police! We
have a warrant!

Terror in Tina's face.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM. POLICE STATION. LATER

Two cops hang onto Tina's every word. A good and a bad cop. She looks worn out yet defiant.

TINA
I had a busy week at work. So I
haven't been to my allotment for five
days. Plus, I couldn't find my
allotment keys. Plus, my friend's
child has gone missing, which kept
me...

COP 1
Well, she's not missing any more.

TINA
Sorry?

COP 1
She's been found.

TINA
(surprised)
When?

Silence. Both police officers are bad cops now.

TINA
Is she okay, or...

COP 1
She's doing fine, considering...

TINA
Did her father take her?

COP 2
Nothing suggests that he did.

Both officers keep looking at Tina, who is reaching boiling point.

TINA
I hope you don't think that that I had something to do with her disappearance!

COP 2
Well, the fact is that your friend's daughter was found locked up in your shed.

Tina laughs, half outraged, half desperate.

TINA
What shed? Didn't the guys who arrested me tell you that I have no shed in my pitiful back garden?

COP 2
Daisy was found in the shed in your allotment.

The disbelief in Tina's eyes.

COP 1
Is it true that you refer to your allotment as 'Secret Garden'?

TINA
(defensive)
Everybody refers to it that way!
Listen. You are barking at the wrong three here. You need to go and arrest Daisy's father!

COP 1
And how do you think he would manage

to padlock his daughter in your shed?

COP 2
And why would he do it?

TINA
To have control. To have control over
his wife and child. And to frame me.

Tina almost fanatical about her words.

COP 2
How would he get hold of the padlock
key?

Tina thinking...

TINA
I need a layer...

INT. HOLDING CELL. NIGHT

Tina sits on the edge of the bed. Metal and tiles around her.
Her hair is greasy at the roots and her eyes are lifeless.

INT. POLICE STATION. INTERROGATION ROOM. DAY

TINA'S LAYER is a scrawny man with a nervous vibe.

TINA'S LAYER
You're going to be released.

TINA
(looks at the Cop 1)
Am I?

COP 1
Yes.

Tina slowly exhales, with relief. Tries to keep her emotions
under control.

TINA
(bossily)
Have you arrested Daisy's father?

TINA'S LAWYER
(nervous)
Your friend, the little girl's mum,

has been arrested.

TINA
Jayne? What for?

COP 1
Several charges. She's our main
suspect at the moment.

TINA
Her husband is trying to frame her.

TINA'S LAWYER
Her husband's been arrested too. He's
been charged with the murder of Gavin
Pascall, Jayne Brown's partner.

Tina opens her mouth, want to say something... No sound comes
out...

INT. TINA'S HOUSE - EVENING

Tina sitting on her sofa. Relieved. She turns the TV on.
Grabs a plate with a microwave dinner and puts it on her lap.

The News come on.

PRESENTER (V.O.)
The father of the toddler Daisy Brown,
who was locked up in a shed for almost
two days, has been charged with the
murder of his wife's new partner Gavin
Pascall.

Tina's relaxed demeanour disappears. She is staring at the
screen, trying to make sense of things again...

INT. PRISON. VISITORS HALL. DAY

Jayne sits on a plastic chair opposite Tina... They are
divided by a little plastic table and wall of awkwardness.

TINA
Any news about Phil, since he was
arrested?

Said in a careful tone. Jayne shakes her head.

JAYNE

I don't want to know now, when
everything's gone tits up...

TINA

(dishonest)

I don't blame you...

JAYNE

When Daisy upset me, I could see him
in her, you know... Narrow-minded,
spiteful, selfish...

Tina's caring face changes into a concerned one.

TINA

Every child acts like that...

JAYNE

(spiteful)

How did you become an expert on
parenting?

TINA

Talking to the vegetables in my
allotment!

Jayne smirks.

Tina gets to her feet. Fights hard to keep her dignified
posture.

TINA

I'd better go.

Jayne unfazed.

JAYNE

Well, there's plenty of parenting
experts like you in this world. People
who know how special is the bond
between the mother and the child, even
though they never had a child.

TINA

I'm leaving. This conversation is
pointless...

JAYNE

Of course it's a special bond, but
when life becomes unbearable... (looks

at Tina) Would you look after Daisy?

Tina stops dead. Waits for whatever comes next.

JAYNE

I mean, would you take her into your care, now that she has both parents banged up?

Tina exhales and slowly sits down.

EXT. PLAYGROUND. DAY

Tina pushing Daisy on a baby swing.

TINA

Do you want to go higher, Daisy?

DAISY

(giggling)

Higher, higher, Mummy!

END