

THE FAMILY MAN

By

LUKE MEPHAM

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INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A WOMAN, mid 30s - very attractive, is sat facing the TV. Her arms are relaxed down by her side and she's sat up right in a very stiff manner.

The door opens and a MAN, same age range, enters carrying bags of shopping. He hurries inside and closes the door.

MAN

Weather's mad today. Said no to strong winds and what happens? There's strong winds.

(locking the door)

I tell you, if they ever say no to a hurricane, we'd better batten down the hatches.

He pockets the key and turns to her, smiles aplenty.

MAN

What are you watching?

WOMAN

I've no idea. I haven't changed it since it's been on but it looks like some rubbish morning TV show.

The Man approaches her and then looks at what's playing:

A daytime talk show.

The Man picks the control up and turns it off.

MAN

You don't want to watch that. Fills your head with too much crap.

WOMAN

Only if you pay attention to it.

(eying the bags)

What's in the bag?

The Man opens one of the bag with childish glee.

MAN

I got you both some clothes. I'm sure these are your sizes. Got a nice jumper for you...

He pulls out a red sweater and holds it out for her. Her eyes look up at it and she smiles.

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

I like it. Even if it doesn't fit
I'm sure we can make adjustments to
it.

He pulls out a baseball cap.

MAN

I got this for Dan.

WOMAN

Oh he'd love that. He loves that
brand.

MAN

Where is he?

WOMAN

He's in his room, no doubt playing
on his console.

MAN

Really? He's been on that an awful
lot.

WOMAN

It's his solace. He can't work up
the courage to go and meet with
other kids.

The Man walks to the staircase.

MAN

(calling up)
Danny?

DAN

(o.s)
Yeah?

MAN

(calling up)
Why don't you come downstairs and
sit with your Mother?

DAN

(o.s)
I really can't, Dad.

The Man ascends the stairs.

MAN

Surely the game's not that important.

WOMAN

If he's happy, let him be.

The Man stops mid way and thinks about it, then decides to come back down.

WOMAN

Would you mind doing something for me?

MAN

Sure, babe, anything.

WOMAN

I'm a little cold, do you mind getting me the blanket?

MAN

Of course.

She smiles, still facing the switched off TV.

The Man walks off to get her a blanket.

CUT TO

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The Man, the Woman and Danny, a bright looking 12 year old wearing his new baseball cap, are all sitting on the small sofa and watching cartoons. The old type of cartoon.

The Man laughs out loud as the Woman and Danny look at it with vacant closed mouth smiles.

The microwave pings.

MAN

Ah, dinner's ready.

He gets up and leaves the area as the others continue to stare at the TV.

CUT TO

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

The Man is happily spooning away at his soup and looks at the others, who haven't touched theirs.

He huffs and rolls his eyes.

MAN

What's wrong with it?

WOMAN

Nothing, it's fine.

MAN

Then why aren't you eating it?

WOMAN

You know me, I like it cold.

The Man smiles.

MAN

How stupid of me to forget, I'm sorry darling.

He leans across and kisses her on the cheek.

The NEWS begins to play on the TV and the Man quickly grabs the remote and switches it off.

MAN (cont'd)

Don't need that. There's enough horror in the world, I don't need to be reminded of it during my dinner.

WOMAN

I heard that the Police are near to catching that serial killer from years ago.

MAN

Yeah?

WOMAN

Yeah.

MAN

That is exactly why I don't like the news. It fills your mind with little horror stories.

He sucks the soup from his spoon for a beat until:

(CONTINUED)

Dan groans.

DAN

Oh, I'm sick of soup. Do we not have anything else?

WOMAN

Please don't say that, angel. Your father works very hard to put food on our plate.

MAN

It's that or nothing, boy.

DAN

I'd rather have nothing.

MAN

(to the Woman)

Can you believe this?

The Woman, eyes to the blank screen, ignores him.

MAN (cont'd)

(to Danny)

Then you can go upstairs but there won't be anything else.

DAN

Okay.

He sits there.

DAN

Can you take me?

The Man is growing quite impatient at the boy.

He gets up then takes the boys arm and carries him up the stairs.

The Woman stays facing forward and looks completely ignorant of the event that's just happened.

CUT TO

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - A LITTLE LATER

The Man slumps down next to the Woman and looks at her bowl.

Untouched tomato soup.

He looks up at her.

(CONTINUED)

MAN

How was it?

WOMAN

So good. I'm so stuffed. Thank you for making it for me.

The Man gloats.

MAN

It was nothing. Anything to please the hottest wife in the world.

She smiles.

He takes the bowl from her lap and sits it on the floor.

He then turns the Woman's head to face him.

MAN (cont'd)

You're seriously, unbelievable. My life was nothing, till I met you.

WOMAN

Where's all this coming from?

MAN

My heart.

WOMAN

You're so amazing to me. My old husband was a cheating slime. Hitting me, hurting me... Not to sound too...evil...but if I ever met the person who cut his brakes, I'll give them a cash reward. A big one.

The Man smiles.

MAN

Call it pure luck. He was scum. He deserved it.

WOMAN

Then I met you. My new hubby. You care so much for me and you'll do anything for me.

MAN

Absolutely, hon.

WOMAN

Then we adopted Danny and...I dunno
I just feel my life is complete.

MAN

It is.

He leans in and they kiss. Slowly - like it means something.
They break away and look in each others eyes.

MAN

Did you wanna take this upstairs?

WOMAN

But Danny's still awake.

MAN

I put headphones on him, he won't
hear a thing.

The Woman smiles.

WOMAN

Care to take me?

MAN

Come on, my love.

He lifts her up and carries her up the stairs.

On the shelf by the sofa is a photo of the Woman on her
wedding day standing next to a completely different Man.
They're happy and in love.

CUT TO

INT. LIVING ROOM - THE NEXT MORNING

The Woman is laying across the couch and still under a
blanket.

The Man steps briskly down the stairs.

MAN

Breakfast?

WOMAN

I'm not hungry.

(CONTINUED)

MAN

Are you okay?

WOMAN

Hmm...not really.

The Man, concerned, walks over to the sofa and sits on the edge.

MAN

What is it?

WOMAN

I was up for most of the night thinking.

MAN

About what?

WOMAN

Okay, please don't feel pressured but it's been on my mind for a bit.

MAN

What? Tell me.

WOMAN

I want a daughter.

The Man, relieved, takes a breather on the arm of the chair.

MAN

Oh thank God. I thought it was serious. Yeah...yeah why not? I'd love a daughter too.

WOMAN

You would? Maybe someone a little older than Danny so he has someone to look up to? She could babysit him when we go out? It won't be too much trouble for you will it?

MAN

Absolutely not. Sounds like a plan.

The Man, grinning from ear to ear, gets up and hugs the Woman.

WOMAN

Woah, not so tight.

(CONTINUED)

MAN

Sorry, I'm so excited I could just

-

Blue flashing lights light up the living room and the Man looks around - alarmed.

MAN (cont'd)

What? No...

WOMAN

What is it?

MAN

Uh...look I'm gonna have to get you somewhere safe.

He grabs the Woman by the shoulders.

MAN

Hold on.

He tries lifting her up and stumbles. He drops the Woman.

She lands on the floor but in a crumpled heap.

The Man looks at her and sees her REAL FORM.

Skeletal remains. A blonde wig placed over her skull. The jaw gapes open.

MAN (cont'd)

Shit.

The surfaces of the house are covered with thick black mold.

He races to the stairs.

MAN

(calling up)

Danny! I need help!

DAN

(o.s)

I'm busy, Dad.

INT. DAN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The skeletal remains of Dan is sat on the bed with headphones on and facing a switched off TV. The controller is placed in his hands.

(CONTINUED)

MAN

(OS)

On that damn game, no doubt?

DAN

(voice)

Yeah, leave me alone.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

MAN

Shit.

WOMAN

(voice)

What are we going to do now?

He looks at the skeleton on the floor. It's facing him. The voices echo.

WOMAN

(voice)

Well?

There's thumps on the door as the Police get nearer.

MAN

I don't know...I just don't know.

The Police thump on the door even louder.

The Man realizes this is the end of the line for him.

THE END