"An Uneventful Day"

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SCHOOL GATES - MORNING

A large noisy crowd of parents and young children.

MRS. WINTERTON (40s), a prim-looking woman, hurries her two children, 6 and 8, out of the car, neatening up clothing and checking lunches as she does so. She's no-nonsense but not stern.

Across the road, ABBY (20s) watches from her car.

The children are ushered into the playground. Mrs. Winterton stops to chat with a few of the other parents.

Unseen, Abby drives off.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A pleasant, middle-of-the-road tune plays quietly on the radio.

Mrs. Winterton is in the middle of her daily housekeeping. A vacuum-cleaner stands idle in the corner. She runs a duster expertly over the furniture and ornaments.

She makes a tiny adjustment to a china figurine... steps back to get a good look at it.

MRS. WINTERTON

Perfect.

Continues with the dusting.

RADIO DJ
(On radio)
We've got Jane from Worthing on the phone right now. Hello Jane.

JANE
(On radio)
Hello.

RADIO DJ
(On Radio)
To win two nights in a top quality holiday resort in the south of
France all you have to do is answer this question: what is the capital of Costa Rica?

MRS. WINTERTON
(Not looking up from the dusting)
San Jose.

JANE
(On radio)
San Jose?

A pause as the DJ builds tension.

RADIO DJ
(On radio)
Congratulations Jane! You and your partner are off to the south of France!

Quietly pleased at herself, Mrs. Winterton switches off the radio. She starts to coil up the power-cord of the vacuum cleaner.

The doorbell rings.

Slightly annoyed at the interruption, she arranges the power-cord as neatly as possible then heads to the FRONT DOOR

She takes a moment to straighten-up her clothing and then opens the door.

Abby is stood there, clutching a clipboard. She seems a little anxious.

MRS. WINTERTON
Hello.

ABBY
(Beat)
Hello.

There's a pause, then Abby realises she's supposed to speak.

ABBY
Hi. I'm here on behalf of a prominent environmental charity. I
(Cont'd)
wondering if you could possibly answer a few questions.

MRS. WINTERTON
Well...

ABBY
It'll only take a few minutes.

MRS. WINTERTON
Okay then. Tell you what, come in and have a sit down.

Abby is a little taken aback by this.

ABBY
Are you sure?

MRS. WINTERTON
Of course. I can't stand talking on the doorstep. And I expect you've been on your feet for most of the day. Come on in.

Abby hesitates a second, then steps inside.

ABBY
Thank you.

Mrs. Winterton closes the door behind her.

MRS. WINTERTON
Can I get you a cup of tea?

ABBY
I don't want to be any trouble.

MRS. WINTERTON
The kettle's already on. And there's more than enough for two.

ABBY
Okay.

MRS. WINTERTON
(Gesturing to the living room)
Make yourself at home. I'll join you in a moment or two.
Mrs. Winterton disappears into the kitchen, as Abby heads into the

LIVING ROOM

She puts the clipboard down on the settee.

Glancing back at the doorway, she starts to have a nosey around the room, paying close attention to the various family photos on the wall.

MRS. WINTERON (O.S)
How do you take your tea?

ABBY
Oh, just milk please.

MRS. WINTERON (O.S)
I know I shouldn't use so much water in the kettle. It's one of the things they frown upon, isn't it?

ABBY
(Still engrossed in the pictures)
I'm sorry?

MRS. WINTERON (O.S)
Environmental groups. It wastes energy, doesn't it?

ABBY
I think so. Yes.

MRS. WINTERON (O.S)
But then you never know when you might need that cup extra.

ABBY
I suppose.

MRS. WINTERON
Here you go.

Abby jumps as she realises that Mrs. Winterton is back in the room.

MRS. WINTERON
I didn't mean to startle you.
ABBY
No... it's just... I was just—

MRS. WINTERTON
Oh, don't worry. I'm a terrible snoop myself. I can never resist it when I'm in someone else's house. I'll just pop the tea down on the table.

She does so, then sits down in one of the comfy chairs. Abby sits opposite on the settee. Takes a sip of the tea.

MRS. WINTERTON
I know what thirsty work this door to door stuff can be. I've done a little of it myself in the past. I like to try to stay quite involved in local issues. Take part in raising awareness, fund-raising, things like that. It keeps me busy. And it can be quite rewarding, can't it. Making the world a better place, one thing at a time.

Abby smiles politely, but a little coldly. She indicates one of the photos nearby.

ABBY
Those your kids?

MRS. WINTERTON
Hmmm? Oh yes. We have three. The oldest was feeling a bit camera shy at the time. Do you have any?

ABBY
No.

MRS. WINTERTON
You're still young.

ABBY
I don't... intend to have kids. My childhood wasn't exactly a happy one.

MRS. WINTERTON
Oh, I'm sorry to hear that.
ABBY
My father died when I was young.
Things sorta went downhill from there. I started to have nightmares... panic attacks...
things like that. My family, they just wanted to move on with life. I couldn't.

Talking about this is obviously difficult for her. She drinks some more of the tea, trying to steady herself.

MRS. WINTERTON
I really am sorry to hear that. I can sympathise. My own childhood was... less than perfect.

Silence. Abby is building up to something...

ABBY
You recognise me. Don't you.

MRS. WINTERTON
I'm sorry?

ABBY
You recognise me. I thought I saw it when you answered the door.

MRS. WINTERTON
I...

ABBY
Let me help you: you murdered my father.

More silence. What can you say to that?

MRS. WINTERTON
That's ridiculous.

ABBY
Edward Farroway.

Mrs. Winterton tries to move away, but Abby gets up as well: blocks her way, becoming more aggressive.

ABBY
Sixteen years ago. His name was Edward Farroway.
MRS. WINTERTON
I don't know what you're talking about!

ABBY
I think you do.

MRS. WINTERTON
My husband will be home any minute!

ABBY
No he won't. I've been watching you. He won't be home for hours. Neither will your kids. There's no one.

MRS. WINTERTON
This really is ridiculous. Tell me. Do I look to you like the kind of person who could... who could kill somebody?

ABBY
I saw you.

This stops Mrs. Winterton dead.

ABBY
I saw you do it.
EXT. BEDROOM WINDOW - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

An eight-year old Abby looks out as Mrs. Winterton and EDWARD FARROWAY argue in the shadows at the bottom of the garden.

Edward starts to walk back towards the house.

Mrs. Winterton grabs a nearby hammer... swings it at him...

(END OF FLASHBACK)

INT. LIVING ROOM

As before.

Mrs. Winterton sits back down. Abby paces anxiously.

ABBY
Those nightmares I told you about... for years I convinced myself that they were just dreams. That I'd made the whole thing up. Just a young child traumatised by the death of her father. But they refused to go away. Then I saw your face in the paper, for your charity work!

MRS. WINTERTON
I thought it might have been something like that.

ABBY
I knew then that it was all true. That I hadn't just made it up. You really existed!

MRS. WINTERTON
The police will never believe you.

Abby sits back down on the settee. She's struggling a little to stay in control.

ABBY
I know.
She pulls a small gun out, points it at Mrs. Winterton.

ABBY
Tell me why you did it. Tell me why you murdered my father.

MRS. WINTERTON
If it helps, I really was very sorry to have to it.

She sits back, only vaguely concerned by the gun.

MRS. WINTERTON
As I've said, my childhood wasn't a happy one either. When I was able to get away I only knew one thing for certain: that I was going to have the kind of life that had been denied to me. Finding my husband was the first step of that. A good job and happy children were the next step. But, unfortunately, it turned out that my husband is unable to have kids. So I had to look elsewhere for that. Your father was the answer. But he wanted more than that. He was going to tell your mother, and then everyone would know. That would have destroyed everything.

ABBY
You're psychotic!

MRS. WINTERTON
You're hardly in a position to comment.

ABBY
You killed him for that?

MRS. WINTERTON
There's nothing more important to me than my family. I won't allow anything to threaten that. Anything.
Abby goes to speak... but then it begins to dawn on her that something isn't right... she struggles to focus.

ABBY
What have you done to me?

MRS. WINTERTON
Sleeping pills. Ground up in the tea. I knew it was you the moment I first saw you weeks ago... watching me... working up the courage to approach me.

(Softly)
You have your father's eyes. Quite unmistakable.

She leans forward and takes the gun from Abby, who can offer no resistance.

Fighting against the pills, Abby tries to get up but can't.

Mrs. Winterton watches, her expression a mixture of resignation and pity.

Abby slumps to the floor, unconscious.

Mrs. Winterton calmly puts the gun to one side, then -- with some difficulty -- starts to drag the body into the HALLWAY

Leaving Abby's body nearby, she opens up the cupboard under the stairs... searches around inside until she finds a hammer, hacksaw and bin liners.

MRS. WINTERTON
Perfect.

EXT. GARDEN - AFTERNOON

Mrs. Winterton, wearing different clothes to earlier, is tending to the flowerbeds. There's plenty of fresh earth around. A shovel is lying on the ground nearby.

MR. WINTERTON (O.S)
Honey? Honey?
Mr. Winterton emerges from the house.

MRS. WINTERTON
Hello, dear. Good day at work?

MR. WINTERTON
Not bad. Where at the kids?

MRS. WINTERTON
I arranged for them to go round to their friend's houses for the afternoon. I felt like a bit of peace and quiet for a change.

MR. WINTERTON
No complaints from me there. So... how's your day been?

Only the slightest flicker.

MRS. WINTERTON
Oh. Pretty uneventful.

FADE OUT: