

THE ESTRANGED

Written by

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INT. LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

A poorly decorated room. A few wilted flowers in old moldy vases. Adult and children books everywhere, not taken care of. FAMILY PICTURES of a mother and her son from him baby to being 4. The pictures are uneven as if they were cutting someone out of the frame.

INT. A SMALL DOUBLE BEDROOM. NIGHT

A mother, BELLE (38) is sleeping in her bed. She seems stressed as if she was in a nightmare. She's sweating and fidgeting, CRIES are heard in echoes becoming louder and louder, she wakes up in terror. CHILD CRYING from behind the door is heard. Belle is annoyed, she doesn't get up.

TOM (O.S.)
(moaning, mumbling)
Mhu-hu-mmy, Am... Am I a good boy?

Belle, still annoyed, stays in bed but looks under it. A DUFFLE-BAG is there, she opens it there's a lot of cash, basic hygiene kit and a few kid and adult underwear.

BELLE
Well... Right now, not really, go
back to bed.

TOM (O.S.)
But nothing bad is going to happen
to me? I don't want to be bad.

Belle looks reassured. She closes the bag and lays back down.

BELLE
(gasps)
Now why would anything bad happen
to you? It's if you make me get up
that you should be worried about.

TOM (O.S.)
But the hairy dark monster... He
scares me.

Silence. Belle gets a map out of her bed-stand draw and puts it in the duffle-bag. She then tries to go back to sleep.

TOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(crying again)
Can I sl... Sleep with you?

BELLE

(gasps)

No. Go back to your bed, you're a big boy and mummy needs her sleep. For the hundredth time, there is no monster here.

TOM (O.S.)

But I heard the monster say he would take me... He said this is not where I should be... Mummy, please!!... I'm scared...

CRYING is louder. Belle gets out of bed in an angry rapid movement and opens the door. Her cute young son, TOM (4) with big owly eyes stops crying and stares at her while wiping the last tear off his cheek with his teddy bear. She grunts but with a smile and picks him up to bring him in her bed.

BELLE

You get me every time. One night I won't open the door, you know that.

TOM

I love you mummy.

Belle frowns but then kisses her son on the forehead. She puts him under the covers of her bed. They both go to sleep with the son wrapped in the mother's arms.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. A SMALL DOUBLE BEDROOM. NIGHT

They're sleeping but the son is snoring and the mother is fidgeting angrily because of the noise. She turns around facing the door but opening one eye, she sees a rapid shadow leaving her son's bedroom. She immediately sits up with confusion. The son opens his eyes.

TOM

Mummy, did you hear the monster too?

The mother freezes. She struggles to remain calm.

BELLE

Nonsense. Stay there under the covers, don't move unless I tell you to.

TOM

But mommy, I want to stay with you--

BELLE

Close your eyes and sing the song
to Mister Bear.

The mother gets out of bed taking the bedside lamp and exits the bedroom. The son hides under the covers holding the teddy bear very tightly while humming the song "row your boat".

INT. CORRIDOR LEADING TO LIVING ROOM. NIGHT

TOM'S HUMMING is heard. The mother, holding her breath, slowly walks towards the living room but no one is there. She steps on something making noise and jump scaring her. Turning around she sees a moving shadow on the wall. She shouts but starts running to the shadow with the lamp held like a weapon. No one's there but squeaking and uncanny whispering are heard from behind the entrance door. She hesitates to move. Scared, Belle takes small steps to the door firmly holding the lamp. HEAVY STEPS are heard from the corridor. About to open the door, she hears GLASS BREAKING from the bedroom.

TOM (O.S.)

(crying and shouting)

MUMMY!! Aaaaaah...

She runs fast to her bedroom.

BELLE

No, no, no, no, no, no... Baby, no!

INT. A SMALL DOUBLE BEDROOM. NIGHT

Belle arrives next to her bedroom to see someone leaving through the emergency backdoor/staircase with her son. She runs to the door to catch him but they are already gone.

BELLE

NOOOO!!!!

KNOCKING from the entrance door. Belle, in a hurry, goes to open it. TWO POLICEMEN are there.

BELLE (CONT'D)

Thank god you're here, you need to
help me, someone took --

A POLICEMAN
 (handcuffing Belle)
 You are under arrest, you have the
 right to remain silent. Anyth --

Another man suiting the monster's description is behind the policemen.

BELLE
 (confused)
 Jay?

JAY (AKA THE MONSTER)
 Now you're going to know how it
 feels to have your own son taken
 away from you.

BELLE
 How did you fin-- Where's my
 son?!?!?!?

He remains speechless, Belle is completely distraught. The policemen walk her to the entrance door.

BELLE (CONT'D)
 Please Jay, WHERE IS MY SON?
 (shouting)
 You can't do this to me! He needs
 me!!!
 (crying, paralyzed,
 mumbling to herself)
 I need him...

Jay looks at her with anger, he turns around not facing her anymore. The policemen and Belle leave after picking her up off the floor.

EXT. ON A STATIONED AMBULANCE TRUCK. DAY

Jay and the police agent who rescued him are on the side, waiting for the forensic person to finish examining Tom. Jay gets the sign that he can come speak to his son.

TOM
 (crying)
 I want my mummy. Where's mummy?!?!?

JAY
 (uncomfortable)
 Listen, son. I'm... Well... you're
 probably going to hate me forever,
 but uhm...

(MORE)

JAY (CONT'D)

I'm so happy to see you again.
Please remember that I'll always
love you and protect you.

TOM

Mum... Mummyhyhyhy

A tear leaks off Jay's cheek but he smiles when Tom cuddles tightly Mister Bear. Jay sits down to Tom's level.

JAY

When you were a baby, Mister Bear
and I used to love singing to you.
How did it go again? Row Row Row
your boat gently down the stream...

TOM

(sobbing)

Merrily merrily merrily merrily...

JAY AND TOM TOGETHER

Life is but a dream.

TOM

Daddy?

Jay smiles of joy and hugs Tom.