

Sweet Child o' Thine

by

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FADE IN:

INT. TREMBLAY'S OFFICE - DAY 1

MILLIE FANNING (8) sits on a colourful rug playing with the toys scattered around her.

FABIENNE TREMBLAY (30s), elegantly groomed, sits on a chair watching Millie play while making notes on a clipboard.

MILLIE pushes a toy car up to a plastic petrol station with Barbie half-jammed in the front seat, half-falling out the side. Two troll dolls are wedged in the back.

MILLIE
(talking to herself)
Wait here while I fill up. Don't move.

Barbie goes to the petrol pump and grapples to lift the nozzle.

MILLIE (CONT'D)
(putting on a different voice)
Come Louise, let's play I Spy.
(putting on a different voice) You stink.

One troll pushes the other out of the car, who knocks over Barbie. Barbie flails and MILLIE quietly mimicks her cry.

FABIENNE makes another note on her clipboard. "Barbie - mother; Troll 1 - Millie; Troll 2 - Louise???"

There is a knock on the door.

FABIENNE
I'll be right back, Millie.

FABIENNE gets up and opens the door. Detective JOE COTE (50s), smart-casually dressed, peeks inside and sees MILLIE so gestures to FABIENNE to join him out in the corridor.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

FABIENNE closes the door behind her. The brass plaque on the door reads DR FABIENNE TREMBLAY - CHILD PSYCHOLOGIST.

JOE
Has she said anything?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FABIENNE

No. Any more developments?

JOE

We're holding the husband for questioning. He's not talking though. Millie's our only other witness.

FABIENNE

It's going to take some time.

JOE

We need her. We can't hold him indefinitely.

FABIENNE

She's eight and she's just witnessed the most horrific thing a child could possibly see. She needs time.

JOE sucks his teeth impatiently and stuffs his hands in his pockets.

JOE

Fine. Let me know if she says anything.

INT. TREMBLAY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

FABIENNE lets herself back into the office and shuts the door quietly.

MILLIE plays on, undisturbed. She picks up her juice bottle and pours it over Barbie. 'Barbie' screams.

FABIENNE watches in the background, but MILLIE clocks her presence and shuts up. She tenderly brushes Barbie's soggy hair.

FABIENNE gives her a friendly smile and walks over to join her again.

FABIENNE

Okay, Millie?

MILLIE remains neutral.

FABIENNE (CONT'D)

What happened with Barbie?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MILLIE

That's Mummy, not Barbie.

FABIENNE

Okay, what happened with Mummy?

MILLIE

She got wet.

FABIENNE

Was she thirsty?

MILLIE gives her a 'duh' look.

MILLIE

Mummy doesn't drink petrol.

FABIENNE

Oh.

MILLIE jams the troll back in the car with the other one, both now sitting in the front, and makes the sounds of a car going through the gears as she pushes it away from the petrol station, leaving a soaked Barbie on the ground.

INT. TREMBLAY'S OFFICE - DAY 2

MILLIE sits at a desk peeling off the paper jacket of a wax crayon. A dozen more litter the desk. Sitting opposite her, FABIENNE slides a blank piece of paper across to her.

FABIENNE

Now, Millie, I want you to draw a house as good as you can for me.

MILLIE draws a large house with odd angles and heavy boundary lines. She draws big windows, a tall roof and a winding path to the front door.

FABIENNE makes notes, remains quiet. We see "Walls - anxiety; roof - fantasies; windows - open, path - withdrawn. Contradiction" on her clipboard.

FABIENNE (CONT'D)

Who lives in that house?

Millie continues to draw, pushing down hard to colour in the roof.

MILLIE

Me, Daddy, Mummy. (beat) Louise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FABIENNE
Who's Louise?

MILLIE
My big sister.

FABIENNE frowns and flips through her notes. Her lips thin in annoyance.

FABIENNE
You have a sister? How old is she?

MILLIE shrugs.

FABIENNE (CONT'D)
Is everyone happy living in the house?

MILLIE shakes her head, carries on colouring.

FABIENNE (CONT'D)
No? Who's not happy in the house?

MILLIE
Louise.

FABIENNE
Why is Louise unhappy?

MILLIE
She's fighting with Mummy.

FABIENNE
Why is she fighting with Mummy?

MILLIE
Louise is naughty.

FABIENNE
Where is Louise now?

MILLIE
She went away.

FABIENNE frowns in concern.

FABIENNE
What else do the people in the house
want to add to the drawing?

MILLIE hesitates, chooses her next crayon carefully. She draws a bloodied knife. FABIENNE looks anguished.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FABIENNE (CONT'D)
Who does that belong to?

MILLIE
Daddy.

FABIENNE is immediately on the alert.

FABIENNE
That's Daddy's knife? Who's blood is
on it?

MILLIE draws a face in the window.

MILLIE
Louise took it out of the drawer.
Mummy got cross.

FABIENNE looks perplexed.

FABIENNE
Cross with Louise?

MILLIE viciously scribbles over the face in the window.

MILLIE
"Get out! Get out! You're not allowed
in here!"

FABIENNE
Who was Mummy cross with?

MILLIE picks at the crayon's paper jacket, her shoulders
hunched.

MILLIE
(mumbling)
Louise.

FABIENNE
Can you tell me what happened the
other day, Millie? How Mummy got hurt?

MILLIE throws down the crayon, twists off her chair and
leaves the table. FABIENNE sighs.

INT. TREMBLAY'S OFFICE - LATER

MILLIE plays behind the sofa with an assortment of Lego
horses and cars, which she rolls up the back of the sofa.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FABIENNE (O.S.)

Tell me about Louise. Were you and she friends?

MILLIE

Sometimes. Sometimes she'd get mad.

FABIENNE (O.S.)

With you?

MILLIE

With everyone.

FABIENNE (O.S.)

Mummy and Daddy too?

Millie shrugs, unseen by Fabienne.

FABIENNE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Millie?

MILLIE

Yeah. She was naughty though.

MILLIE canters a horse along the back of the sofa, crawling along the tight space on her knees and free hand. She canters the horse to the corner and comes out from behind the sofa.

FABIENNE is sitting in a chair, a clipboard resting on her knees.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

She threw Poppy on the fire.

FABIENNE

(confused)

Poppy... a flower?

MILLIE shakes her head.

FABIENNE (CONT'D)

A doll?

MILLIE

My hamster.

FABIENNE tries to hide her horror and makes more notes. MILLIE turns away to canter the horse along the sofa. A small smile plays on her lips, but it is uncertain whether she's amused at her horse game or the death of her hamster.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FABIENNE

Did Louise get into trouble a lot?

MILLIE's smile is replaced with a sulky frown.

MILLIE

I didn't get Christmas presents
because of her.

FABIENNE

Why was Louise so naughty, do you
think?

MILLIE shrugs and turns to sit cross-legged on the rug. She
picks up a Captain Hook with a wind-up rotating sword arm,
doesn't make eye contact.

MILLIE

No one listened to her. She got angry
when they ignored her.

FABIENNE

So, you think she did naughty things
to get attention?

MILLIE winds up the toy from the back, then lets it go,
watching the sword arm spin around manically. She smiles
again.

FABIENNE (CONT'D)

Millie, do you know where Louise went?

MILLIE

She ran away.

FABIENNE

Do you know why she ran away?

MILLIE fingers Captain Hook's sword.

MILLIE

Because she hurt Mummy.

FABIENNE stills.

FABIENNE

Why did she hurt Mummy?

MILLIE looks up at FABIENNE, sulky.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MILLIE

Mummy was shouting at her and she didn't like it. (beat) Louise is always getting into trouble. "You naughty little girl!"

MILLIE throws Captain Hook at the rest of the toys in a gesture of frustration.

FABIENNE

Are you sure it was Louise who hurt Mummy? Did Daddy ever get mad at Mummy?

MILLIE shakes her head.

MILLIE

Louise was very naughty. Much more naughty than me. Much more naughty.

The tension in the room is broken by a sudden knock on the door.

FABIENNE exhales impatiently. She smiles at MILLIE.

FABIENNE

Be right back.

She goes to the door and yanks it open.

FABIENNE (CONT'D)

I'm in the middle of a thera-

JOE stands in the doorway.

JOE

Sorry to disturb you. Thought I'd drop by for an update.

FABIENNE looks over her shoulder and drops her voice.

FABIENNE

Why didn't you tell me there was a sister? Where is the sister?

JOE

Sister?

FABIENNE

Yes. Louise. Millie's been talking about her older sister, Louise. *She's*
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FABIENNE (CONT'D)

the one you're after, not the husband.

JOE looks confused.

JOE

Millie's an only child.

FABIENNE

But...

As realisation dawns, they both turn to look at MILLIE playing.

MILLIE is gouging out Barbie's eyes with Captain Hook's sword.

MILLIE

"You naughty girl! You naughty little girl!"

FADE OUT.