

THE EVIL GENE

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FADE IN:

A SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS:

-- An EAST-INDIAN GIRL, 3, face smeared with filth, stands in squalor.

-- An AFRICAN BOY, 2, stomach distended from malnutrition, sits on a dirt floor. Flies crowd his face.

-- A CHINESE GIRL, 4, looks at the camera. PULLING BACK we REVEAL she is sewing a pair of shoes.

FURTHER BACK we discover these are covers to ADOPTION PAMPHLETS littered across a coffee table.

BERG HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

ISAAC and KATIE BERG, 30s, stare at the mass of brochures.

KATIE

What do you think?

ISAAC

They all look so... dirty.

KATIE

That's because they're orphans.

ISAAC

You're saying all orphans, by definition, are filthy? It just seems like we should be hearing Sarah McLachlan in the background or something.

Katie opens a pamphlet. Sarah McLaughlin's Angel plays from the brochure. She closes it. The music stops.

KATIE

Don't you want a baby anymore?

ISAAC

Come on. Don't say that. You know I want a kid. Just not any of these. An Asian could be an investment though. Like a 20 year IRA.

KATIE

Quit joking around. If you don't think you could love a child that doesn't have your DNA, we shouldn't do it.

ISAAC

And we're sure we can't have a kid? Like 100% positive?

KATIE

We've been to four doctors. They all said the same thing.

ISAAC

Just... Let me think about it.

KATIE

I really want a baby, Isaac.

Isaac picks up a handful of brochures.

ISAAC

What if we get one that's a total dick? Are there return policies or are they all "as is?"

Katie rolls her eyes, stands. Grabs her purse and keys.

KATIE

I've got to get to Hannah's. I'm going to be late. Promise me you'll think about it.

ISAAC

Yep.

Katie leaves. Isaac continues to flip through brochures.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

It's like picking a cell mate for the next eighteen years. Which one of you fuckers won't shiv me in my sleep?

Isaac's cell phone rings. He answers.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Y'ello?

INT. OFFICE - SIMULTANEOUS

DON, 40s, overweight and balding, on the phone.

DON

Hey, Izzy. Gonna need you to come
in today.

BRYAN, 4, Don's son, comes SCREAMING down the hallway with a
FIRE EXTINGUISHER.

INTERCUT:

ISAAC

Come on, Don. It's Saturday.

DON

No shit. I was supposed to take my
kid to Legoland. Think my dream
weekend is baby-sitting you? This
is why you get paid the big bucks.

ISAAC

I'm the lowest paid member of the
team. I've never even gotten a
cost of living raise. There are
literally janitorial staff that
make more than I do.

DON

Maybe you should keep that in mind.

ISAAC

Yeah, alright. I'll be there.
(sotto)
Libidinous asshole.

Bryan grabs a folder from a desk. Shoves it in a shredder.

DON

(distracted)
Huh?

ISAAC

Libidinous... Never mind. On my
way.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Isaac hangs up. Mimes shooting himself, brains exploding out
the back of his head.

EXT. BERG HOUSE - DAY

Isaac trudges to his car.

One driveway over, EVAN LYTE, 30s, wears a police uniform, waves.

EVAN
Howdy, neighbor!

Isaac gives an annoyed grunt, nods. Avoids eye contact.

EVAN (CONT'D)
We just got the pool finished.
Y'all should come over for a
cookout. Heather-Lynn would be
tickled pink.

ISAAC
(sarcastic)
We should totally do that.

EVAN
Great!

Isaac opens his car door.

ISAAC
Hey, Ev?

EVAN
What's up, buddy?

ISAAC
Does it ever get annoying? You
know... always being happy? You're
like a Mormon about to get your own
planet.

EVAN
Why would that get annoying?

ISAAC
No reason. Have a good one.

Isaac gets in his car, drives away.

EXT. HANNAH'S BACKYARD - DAY

Katie sits on a patio, drinking lemonade with a GROUP OF
YOUNG MOTHERS.

A HALF-DOZEN KIDS run around the yard like maniacs.

MOM #1

Jeremy just learned how to say
"no." So guess what I get to hear
on a loop all day?

MOM #2 pours herself some lemonade.

MOM #3

You want a little...

MOM #3 holds up a bottle of Vodka. Shakes it.

MOM #2

You have to ask?

MOM #3

Katie, want a nip?

KATIE

I'll pass. Not feeling the best
today.

Vodka is poured. Lots of it.

MOM #1

Want to go to the playground? No.
Want to have lunch? No. It's
like, fuck you, you fucking little
prick. The same thing happened
with Andrew so I don't know why I
expected anything different.

MOM #4, HANNAH, is very pregnant.

KATIE

(to Hannah)

Have you decided if you're going to
do a natural birth again?

HANNAH

Are you kidding? I'd take an
epidural right now if I could get
one. Drug me up and slice me open.
No one tells you it's going to tear
the bejeezus out of your hooaha.
Not a fun place for stitches.

MOM #1

Or that you'll probably crap
yourself in the process. That'd
change some minds real quick.

HANNAH

The miracle of birth, my ass.

MOM #2

Katie, how about you guys? When are you going to join the club?

KATIE

We're talking about it.

MOM #1

You totally have to. It'll be the best thing to ever happen to you.

MOM #3

It's amazing.

OFFICE - CUBICAL - DAY

Isaac types away at his computer. Little Bryan shows up.

BRYAN

Why do you work in here? --

Isaac tries to keep working.

BRYAN (CONT'D)

-- My dad has windows, a door, and walls that go all the way to the ceiling. When I'm older, I'm going to have an office like him. This place sucks.

ISAAC

More than you know.

Don approaches.

DON

Leave Izzy alone, Bry.

BRYAN

Is he one of the idiots you talk about?

DON

Why don't you go play in the break room, Champ?

Bryan takes off, screaming.

ISAAC

He really is a miniature version of you.

DON
You think?

ISAAC
Carbon copy.

CRASH! Something in the break room. Don doesn't flinch.

DON
You know. You get one of those fuckers and you make big plans. How you're going to mould 'em. Unleash their potential. But that's not how it works. It's the kid that ends up revealing who you really are.

Isaac isn't paying attention, just wants to finish and leave.

ISAAC
Must be magical.

BRYAN (O.C.)
Daad! DAAAAD! DAAAAAAAAAAD!

ISAAC
Think you can finish in the next hour? Promised we'd go to the game tonight since he missed out on Legoland. -- You really think he's just like me?

BRYAN (O.C.)
DAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAD!

ISAAC
Oh, god, yes.

GROCERY STORE - PARKING LOT - DAY

Katie gets out of her car. Pauses, her hand on the hood. Looks ill.

Regathers. Heads toward the store.

She passes an SUV. Something catches her eye.

Inside the SUV, the MOST ADORABLE TODDLER IN THE WORLD stares at Katie. Like a puppy in a pet store window.

A devastatingly sad smile scrawls across Katie's lips.

ANXIOUS MOTHER (O.C.)
Oh geeze. I was only inside for a minute. I promise.

Katie looks up to find an ANXIOUS MOTHER with a shopping cart approaching.

ANXIOUS MOTHER (CONT'D)
Please, don't call child protective services. It's a cool day. I was gone five minutes. Half an hour tops.

KATIE
Actually.

ANXIOUS MOTHER
(looks at watch)
It's three? Seriously? So, like an hour forty-five. Not a second more. Are there security cameras in this parking lot?

INT. GROCERY STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Katie shops. Every woman in the store has a kid in tow. They seem overly happy, glowing.

Katie looks ill again, steadies herself.

An EXASPERATED MOTHER, with THREE KIDS ON LEASHES, rounds the corner.

The kids are wild animals. One pulls things from shelves, throws them on the floor.

EXASPERATED MOTHER
Stephen! Stop that! Pick it up!
Now!

STEPHEN
No!

Little Stephen throws a box across the store.

CHILD ON LEASH #2
Mom, can I have gummy worms?

EXASPERATED MOTHER
No.

CHILD ON LEASH #2
Please?

EXASPERATED MOTHER
No.

Katie half-watches from the produce section, clearly not feeling well.

Stephen throws another box.

EXASPERATED MOTHER (CONT'D)

If you do that one more time, I swear your picture will be plastered all over Nancy Grace.

CHILD ON LEASH #2

But I want it!

The third child has his finger deep inside his nose.

Katie runs to a nearby trash can. Vomits. Loudly.

The exasperated mother approaches.

EXASPERATED MOTHER

Excuse me! That is disgusting! If you're sick, you shouldn't be going to a grocery store! My children eat this food!

The third child pulls a massive booger from his nose. Wipes it on an apple.

Katie collapses.

OFFICE - CUBICAL - DAY

Isaac types away. Finally in a groove.

Bryan silently stares at Isaac.

ISAAC

You are one creepy little dude.

BRYAN

Wanna see a trick?

ISAAC

Does it involve human sacrifice?

Bryan pulls a toy horse from his pocket. Pretends the horse is walking along Isaac's desk.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Can you make yourself disappear?
Do you know that trick?

Bryan gallops the toy horse onto Isaac's laptop, across the keyboard. The computer monitor starts acting wonky.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

I think I've seen enough.

Bryan trots the horse over the monitor. The monitor is fucked.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

No! NO! NO! What did you do?

BRYAN

It's a magnet. Look at the screen.
Isn't it cool?

ISAAC

Are you kidding me? You -- you put
a magnet against my hard drive? My
monitor? I will end you, you
little piece of --

DON (O.C.)

-- What's the problem, Izzy?

Isaac grabs the magnet from Bryan, throws it to Don.

ISAAC

It's a magnet. This little
assclown just fried my hard drive,
monitor, everything. All the work
I've done today. Gone.

Don bends down to his son.

DON

Is that true?

Isaac's phone rings. He answers.

ISAAC

(into phone)

Yeah?

KATIE (O.C.)

What are you doing?

ISAAC

It's very likely I'm about to maim
a small child. What's up?