

Twisted Smile

By

Anthony Cawood

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anthony@anthonycawood.co.uk

FADE IN:

INT. SUBURBAN HALLWAY

MUM (30s) watches as MAE (12) puts her shoes and coat on.

The hallway is a jumble of coats and shoes - typical family hallway.

Hung on pegs are coats, cardigans, a couple of hats, scarves and a nurses uniform.

MUM

Just to Mrs Green's, and no dawdling.

MAE

Yes, Mum, I know.

MUM

And back right after, seven o'clock - no later.

MAE

I know Mum, I'm not a baby and it's only the next street!

MUM

Ok, ok. Seven though, or I'll be coming to find you.

Mum plants a kiss on her daughter's forehead.

MAE

Geroff Mum!

MUM

Have fun and be good!

Mae sprints out of the house and slams the door behind her.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET

Mae walks down the street, after a few paces she looks over her shoulder, checking Mum isn't observing.

She isn't.

Mae crosses the road and heads to the park.

She crosses the small park and heads out through the exit, to the street beyond.

Mae stops and looks up at the street sign, Grunyard Avenue.

Mae walks down the street until she reaches a bright yellow door.

She pauses, takes a deep breath, another.

She knocks.

Beat.

No answer.

Mae knocks again, a little louder.

Sounds of movement emanate from within, after a few moments the door opens.

FRANK (60s) stands in the doorway, wild haired and disheveled.

He smiles crookedly at Mae.

FRANK

Hello there, and what do you want deary?

MAE

I'm sorry, sir, but I'm raising money for my school.

FRANK

And what's that got to do with me?

MAE

I came to see if I can do any jobs or small errands for you?

FRANK

Oh, you did, did you?

MAE

Yes, sir, I did. So can I help you at all?

Frank pokes his head out of the door and furtively looks up and down the street.

The street is empty.

FRANK

Oh, I'm sure I can find something for you to do.

Frank stands aside and ushers Mae into the house.

FRANK (CONTINUING)
Come on in.

INT. EMPTY HALLWAY

Mae passes Frank on the doorstep and goes through to the sparsely decorated hallway.

FRANK
(gesturing)
Just through there, on your right.

Mae follows the instruction and disappears from view.

Frank pokes his head back out of the door, checks the street again, turns and closes the door.

He turns the key in the lock and puts the chain on the latch.

He smiles malevolently and follows Mae up the hall.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Mae stands in the centre of the messy room, mismatched sofa and chairs, newspapers and magazines strewn on every surface.

Frank comes through the doorway, still smiling.

FRANK
So what's your name young un?

MAE
Mae Summers, and what's yours, sir?

FRANK
Frank, or Franky if you'd prefer.

MAE
It's very nice to meet you Franky.

FRANK
And you too my dear.

MAE
So can I do some jobs for you Franky?

FRANK
Hmm, sure I could think of something.

MAE

Mum says I make the best tea in
Yorkshire, shall I make us some
while you have a think?

FRANK

(smiling)

Okay, dear, just further up the
hallway, milk is in the fridge, tea
and sugar are by the kettle.

MAE

Got it, and how do you like your
tea?

FRANK

Milky and four sugars. Are you sure
you can manage?

MAE

(insistent)

Yes, I'll be fine Franky.

Mae leaves the room.

Soon the sounds of tea making drift in from the kitchen.

Frank sits down in his armchair and surreptitiously massages
his crotch.

An almost inaudible moan escapes his lips.

After a short while Mae re-appears with the tea on a small
tray.

FRANK

That was quick dear, well done.

MAE

Thank you, Sir, I do hope you like
it.

FRANK

I'm sure I will, now why don't you
sit there on the sofa my lovely.

MAE

Thank you, Sir.

Mae sits on the sofa across from Frank.

FRANK
So, where do you live then?

MAE
Not too far away Sir, just past the
park.

FRANK
Less of the Sir, please Mae.

MAE
Sorry Sir, I mean Franky.

FRANK
That's much better Mae.

Frank shoots Mae his best smile, all missing teeth and
spittle.

FRANK (CONTINUING)
And which school do you go to Mae?

MAE
I go to Riverside, do you know it?

FRANK
Oh yes, Mae, I know it very well.

Frank's eye's cloud over for a moment as pleasant memories
temporarily take his attention.

Mae watches him intently.

Frank comes back with a start and almost spills his tea.

MAE
Careful, you nearly spilled your
tea.

FRANK
Yes, silly old Franky, would be a
shame with such good tea too.

Mae smiles at Frank and waits expectantly.

Frank takes a sip.

FRANK (CONTINUING)
Lovely!

Mae picks up the local newspaper from a side table.

Headline reads.

LOCAL CHILD MISSING

Frank takes a bigger slurp of his tea.

MAE
It's terrible isn't it?

FRANK
What's that, my dear?

Frank puts his tea down to focus.

MAE
That boy going missing last week.

FRANK
(smiling slightly)
Yes, certainly is, I wonder where
he went?

Frank takes another big slug of his tea,

MAE
Is the tea okay?

FRANK
Yes, Mae, your Mum was right!

MAE
Thank you. Do you know what my Mum
does Franky?

FRANK
No, what?

MAE
She's a midwife, delivers lots of
babies.

FRANK
That's great Mae, and then they
grow up like you and all the other
lovely little children.

MAE
Yes, I guess they do.

FRANK
How old are you Mae?

MAE
I'm twelve Frank, same age as Ben.

FRANK

Ben?

Franks takes another slug of his tea, but seems to be struggling with the cup.

MAE

Ben Jeffries, the boy who went missing last week.

FRANK

(distractedly)

Oh yes, maybe he was. Didn't ask.

MAE

Didn't ask what, Frank?

FRANK

His age, didn't need to, young enough.

MAE

Young enough for what?

FRANK

My needs Mae, my special needs.

A pained look passes over Frank's face.

MAE

What needs?

FRANK

Time for you to find out Mae!

The cup drops from his hand as he makes to get up, a snarl etched on his face.

Frank only moves a few inches.

MAE

Do you need some help?

FRANK

I don't know what's wrong, it's like I'm moving in treacle.

Frank pulls himself up with real effort.

He advances on Mae, legs unsteady.

MAE
Did Ben come here Frank?

FRANK
What?

MAE
Ben, and the others did they come
here Frank?

FRANK
(laughing)
They're still here my dear, all
still here!

Frank advances with a lurch.

Mae is quicker up and out of his grasp.

Frank pitches forward and falls onto the sofa.

With a grunt, he manages to turn himself into a near sitting
position.

MAE
(smiling)
Are you ok?

FRANK
What have you done to me, you
little monster?

MAE
It's a sedative Frank, a heavy one
that Mum has for baby emergencies.

FRANK
So, you knew?

MAE
Yes, I've seen you near my school
before and I saw you talking to Ben
too.

FRANK
And now what Mae?

MAE
I'll help my school in the best way
I can.

Mae advances on Frank, picks up a cushion.

FRANK

No Mae, this isn't right, I'm your
elder...

MAE

But not my better.

Mae pushes the cushion into Frank's face, covering his nose
and mouth.

MAE

They'll just think an old man died
in his sleep.

Frank's drug inhibited struggles are feeble and ineffective.

MAE

Then they'll find the others and be
glad you're dead.

Mae holds the cushion in place as Frank's struggles weaken
further and finally stop.

She holds the cushion over his face for a few moments
longer.

When she removes the cushion Frank's smile has been replaced
by a grimace.

Mae puts the cushion back, carefully cleans the tea cup and
tray with her sleeve and leaves the room.

The sound of a key turning is followed by a door opening and
then slamming shut.

INT. HALLWAY - HOME

A knock on the door.

Mum appears and opens the door.

Mae springs into the hallway and gives her Mum a fierce hug.

MUM

Wow, thanks, love you too.

MAE

Me more!

They both laugh.

MUM
And back in plenty of time too,
good girl.

MAE
Thanks Mum.

MUM
So good deeds all done?

MAE
What?

MUM
Mrs Green's gardening, for the
school funds!

MAE
Oh, yeah, all done, and all good
now too.

MUM
That's great, school will be
pleased.

FADE OUT:

THE END