

Cat's in the Cradle

Written by Sean M Elliott

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1. Ext. Suburban street. Night.

Dark night, but streetlights light the street. DAMIEN walks around the corner and into view. He is in his late thirties, wearing a crumpled business suit, carrying a brown briefcase. There is the noise of traffic in the distance, but no cars are driving in his street. He walks up to a townhouse, going through his usual motions of finding his keys. He unlocks the front door and heads inside his house.

2. Int. Hallway.

DAMIEN pulls the door shut behind him. The moment the door snibs the outside noises are silenced. DAMIEN spends a moment at the front door looking down and at nothing. Then he looks long down the hallway like he heard something. Shot looking down the hall from DAMIEN's POV. We see doors leading off the hallway into other rooms of the house. Down the far end the hall opens into a kitchen/dining/living room. There's a blue glow from down the end there. DAMIEN walks into shot, moving carefully and quietly forward, putting his brief case on a table, but still holding his keys. As he walks he moves these into his hand to become more threatening. He passes his bedroom and glances in.

3. Int. Damien's bedroom.

It's dark, but there's a lump in the bed where DAMIEN'S WIFE is curled up and sleeping. DAMIEN notes that his wife is there and continues down the corridore.

4. Int. Hallway.

DAMIEN nears the end of the hallway. He pauses, looking into the kitchen. As all this is happening, a noise that has been getting progressively louder as he comes closer to the kitchen - a whine, much like many thousands of flies - is now very loud. He reaches to the light switch and flicks it on. At that instant the sound stops. He stands at the entrance to...

5. Int. Kitchen.

Slow pull into DAMIEN's face as he looks at something in the kitchen. As this pull happens, we get flashes of what he sees: filthy dripping black ooze; limbs that hang with tentacles and the wrong bits from abattiors; clusters of flies around decaying black flesh.

Hold on DAMIEN's face as it shifts from slight horror to complete disappointment.

DAMIEN
Hi dad.

Now we get a better view of DAMIEN'S DAD. Even so we still can't get a clear view of him through either extreme close up, misaligned shot, bad lighting. He is vaguely humanoid - maybe use these words: dark dripping icor tentacles misshappened fulgurous polypous perversion. Downright ugly. BEAT before his answer.

DAD
(His voice is rumbling and annoyed.)
Damien.

DAMIEN
I see you've help yourself to the kettle.

DAD looks down at a mug in his hand/tentacle then across, and view pans to the bench where the kettle is kept. It's covered in black sticky stuff.

DAMIEN
(Arms folded.) What do you want?

DAD
Do you know how difficult it has been to find you.

DAMIEN
What do you want?

DAD
The time is fast approaching. Nations stand at war, the Earth is dying, and even now the lamb approaches the Seals of Judgement Day...

DAMIEN
(Hand goes to his eyes) Not this again...

DAD
You have a role to play in the End of Times. You are he, that denieith the Father and the Son. The Man of Sin who is to come. The one known as deciever,

the desolator, the Angel of the Bottomless Pit. You are the anti-

DAMIEN
Oh, stop with the names!

DAD
Be proud of you titles, son.

DAMIEN
You and bloody names! You raise it to a whole new level of fetish-

DAD
I do not.

DAMIEN
Do too! Like what do you call yourself...?

DAD
I am known by many names! (Draws breath.)

DAMIEN
Exactly, here it comes, the (imitates DAD mockingly) "I am known by many names" speech. "I am Lucifer, I am Beelzebub, I am the Lord of Flies, I am the High Poobah of the Bog People." Give it a rest!

DAD
(BEAT) (Indignant.) Well, I am known by many names.

There's an awkward pause. DAMIEN sighs, and sits in the chair in front of his DAD on the other side of the table.

DAMIEN
I didn't mean to... It's just... It's been a while, dad. I don't see you for years then you suddenly turn up in my kitchen and tell me you want me someplace for something.

DAD
The time is upon us.

DAMIEN
Well I don't want to.

DAD
Why not?

DAMIEN
Look, dad, I've never been interested in the family business. I don't care about the coming war or what-have-you.

DAD
You do not know the identity that beats within you-

DAMIEN
Uh-uh! You know nothing about me. I'm married. I have another job.

DAD
Tempting the innocent? Corrupting the righteous?

DAMIEN
I'm an actuary.

DAD
(Really disappointed.) Oh.

DAMIEN
Oh come on dad, what was I meant to be?

DAD
You're meant to be the antichrist! Start acting like one, for God's sake! Oh! (Too late, he slaps a hand over his own mouth.)

DAMIEN
How old was I when you left me with mum with me while you went to discover yourself? How was I meant to take an interest?

DAD
How is your mother?

DAMIEN
She joined a convent.

DAD
Ah, that hurts.

Another awkward pause.

DAD
What is an actuary?

DAMIEN
I deals with the financial impact of risk and uncertainty.

DAD
Oh. Could probably use that...

DAMIEN
Don't start.

DAD
I'm not Beealzeebub, you know.

DAMIEN
What?

DAD
Beealzeebub. That's not me. He's a guy at work. Lesser demon. Makes a mean lasagne.

DAMIEN
Huh.

DAD
Actually, that's something he's pretty good at. We look forward to lasagne Fridays when Beebee's on the roster. Quite a talent, all those layers of pasta, the bolognese sauce, the cheese. Whereas me... (the emotions are kicking round) Me? I was meant to make the End of Days. The kick-arse apocalypse, and I've messed it up! (Sobs) I couldn't even armageddon my way out of a paper bag! I'm a loser. A big, sodding loser! (Howls and tears.)

DAMIEN

(Awkward, worried, looks over shoulder.)
Hey, hey, come on, enough of that. You're
not a loser. Hey. You might wake
somebody...

DAD
(Inconsolable crying) I don't care about
your wife!

DAMIEN
No, not her, I mean-

They both stop as they hear a baby cry.

DAD
Who was that?

DAMIEN
It's...it's my son. (Sheepish).

DAD
Son.

DAMIEN nods.

DAD
Son? I didn't know you had a son?!
(Suddenly clucky like a delighted mother.)
Can I see him?

6. Int. Baby's room.

This is the last room off the hallway. We've inside looking back at the door. There the corner of a cot in shot. A nightlight illuminates the whole scene. The door opens with DAMIEN. His DAD is behind him.

DAMIEN
Hey there, little man. (Soothing noises.
The baby is already settling itself back to
sleep.)

DAMIEN goes to the small bookcase and turns on a CD player that plays a lullaby. DAD leans into the cot.

DAD
(To baby.) Look at you! Look at you with
your little toesies and nosie and and...
Aw, I bet you're a perfect little sweetie for
you mum and dad, aren't you. Yes you

are. Yes you are. (While this happens there is a shot of a perfectly normal baby with the DAD's hand/tentacle coming into shot to lovingly rub the child's head.) (To DAMIEN.) What's his name?

DAMIEN

We called him Louis (french pronouciation). After, well, after you.

DAD takes in breath and stares opened mouth at DAMIEN.

DAD

(Disbelieving joy.) You didn't. Aw, that's so wonderful. (To baby.) Looie. Looooooooooooie.

DAMIEN

Look, ah, we'd better let him sleep. (Nods towards door.)

DAD

Oh, yes, of course, of course, of course.

DAMIEN leaves through door and DAD turns to follow. At the door he stops and looks back at the cot. Close up of face as it moves from joy to steely determination.

DAD

Be seeing you, Lou.

*And he smile a smile that's far too wide and filled with too many teeth. Closes the door. **Fade to black** while still hearing the tinkling baby lulaby.*

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