

THE STATE OF PROLONGED MUTUAL HOSTILITY

CAST LIST

JEFF - Late twenties/Early thirties Male with a typical parental look about them.

SANDRA - Late twenties/Early thirties Female with a typical parental look about them.

BABY THOMAS - Male twin baby

BABY MICHAEL - Male twin baby

TWO YEAR THOMAS - Male toddler aged twin child

TWO YEAR MICHAEL - Male toddler aged twin child, must have hair that can be styled differently to 2 year Thomas.

SCHOOL AGE THOMAS - Six year old male twin

SCHOOL AGE MICHAEL - Six year old male twin

INNOCENT LOOKING SCHOOL AGE CHILD - Needs to have a lovely, kind smile.

EXTRAS - Health visitor, GP, Social Worker, Child Behaviour Expert, children wearing school uniform, and holiday camp reception staff: 'Redcoats'

THE STATE OF PROLONGED MUTUAL HOSTILITY SCRIPT

This story is set in the present day.

FADE IN

INT. CAR. DAY.

Car radio is playing and there is arguing from two male children in the background

View of car speedometer rapidly increasing to 85mph.

EXT. MOTORWAY. DAY.

Car moves over to middle lane to undertake slower car in the overtaking lane. Once past the slower car it returns to the overtaking lane and speeds ahead of the slower car.

INT. CAR. DAY

Car radio is playing and arguing from children in background is LOUDER

View of driver's (JEFF) hands on steering wheel. He is gripping the steering wheel tight.

View of passenger's hands (SANDRA). They are in her lap clasped tightly together.

View of all occupants of car. Jeff is in the driver's seat. Sandra is in the passenger's seat. THOMAS is in the back seat behind Jeff. MICHAEL is in the back seat behind Sandra. Thomas and Michael are in car seats and have tablets on resting their laps. Thomas' is an iPad, Michael's is a Kindle Fire.

SANDRA

Jeff, aren't you going a little fast?

JEFF

I just have to get pass this Sunday driver. He's been driving me mad going so slow for so long. I'll slow down in a second or two. Just got to get away-

SANDRA

Boys, be quiet back there!

(pause)

Sorry darling, you were saying?

JEFF

Don't worry about it. I've slowed now.

(voice raised)

Boys! Your mum has just told you to stop, listen to her!

THOMAS

Michael pinched me.

MICHAEL

You punched me first...

View of Thomas' arms outstretched the fingers in a pinching motion opening and closing.

Thomas mimics badly the JAWS theme.

THOMAS

Bunnnn bun buuuunnnn bunn bunnnn bun

MICHAEL

Mum! He's doing it again, make him stop!

Michael screams with rage. Starts banging his head violently against the headrest of the car seat. Fights with the seat belt restraint.

JEFF

Shut up, Both of you! Any more and I'll take away your iPads.

Sandra looks worried at this. Jeff shakes his head in reassurance.

Michael stops screaming.

MICHAEL

(In a matter of fact tone)

Mine isn't an iPad, it's a Kindle Fire.

JEFF

At this minute I don't care, Michael. I am trying to concentrate on driving.

THOMAS

You haven't got an iPad because Mum and Dad don't love you as much.

Thomas blows a raspberry. Michael wails.

SANDRA

Boys, let your Dad drive. It's been a long day and we're nearly home.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. HOSPITAL WARD. NO NATURAL LIGHT.

Pregnant Sandra laying on a hospital bed in obvious pain. Jeff is beside her holding her hand.

SANDRA

(VO) We struggled so long to have kids it became all we wanted, all I could think about. Fertility tests, IVF, miscarriages. We suffered them all. We almost gave up hope. I even tried dodgy herbs from the local Chinese medicine clinic.

(pause)

Then there were positive pregnancy tests and the hope rekindled. When we had the ultrasound scan and it showed twins we were overjoyed. However it has not been the idyllic life we anticipated.

JEFF

(VO) Thomas and Michael have been fighting since before they were born. Sandra had to be hospitalised twice because of it.

View of Sandra's stomach. Punches and kicks from within showing on the surface of the stomach.

SANDRA

(VO) They beat me up badly from within. Kicking my bladder, ribs, stomach and spine. As babies things didn't get any better.

EXT. STREET. DAY

MONTAGE:

Sandra pushing twin buggy. Babies trying to scratch each other. Both have mittens on.

Sandra and Jeff pushing individual buggies.

INT. BEDROOM. NIGHT

MONTAGE:

Double bed has cots on either side of it.

Sandra breastfeeding one baby. The other sleeping in cot. Jeff is sleeping in bed.

Sandra puts baby in cot. The other wakes up screaming.

Sandra breastfeeding other baby.

This repeats three times. Sandra looking more and more ragged in each.

Jeff feeding one baby with bottle. The other sleeping in cot. Sandra is sleeping in bed.

Jeff puts baby in cot. The other wakes up screaming.

Jeff feeding other baby with bottle.

This repeats three times. Jeff looking more and more ragged.

INT. DINING ROOM. EVENING.

Children are older - around two years old. They are sitting at opposite ends of the dinner tables. Their hairstyles are dramatically different, they are wearing different clothes.

JEFF

(VO) As they grew they wanted to be completely different from each other. Different clothes, hair, food, stories, television shows.

Thomas is served a dinner, Michael is served the same. Michael throws his dinner on the floor.

INT. CHILDRENS BEDROOM. NIGHT.

The children's beds are on opposite sides of the bedroom. There are small chairs next to each bed. Jeff and Sandra are sitting on them reading different stories to the children.

INT. FRONT ROOM. DAYTIME.

The children are wrestling on the sofa for the remote control. The television channel keeps changing between programmes.

EXT. SCHOOL PLAYGROUND. DAYTIME.

Children playing playground games

SANDRA

(VO) When they started school within a week they were separated into different classes. With the arguing and fighting we were lucky they weren't permanently excluded.

Thomas and Michael wearing similar but different school uniform (Short sleeve/Long sleeve shirts. Shorts/Trousers) wrestling on playground floor.

INT. VARIOUS OFFICAL LOOKING ROOMS/OFFICES. DAY.

SANDRA

(VO) We tried everyone. Their health visitor, the local GP, Social Services, even child behaviour experts. No one could help. Individually the boys are perfect. Together they are chaos.

MONTAGE:

Thomas and Michael separately visiting their Health Visitor. Both boys act sweet and innocently. Wide smiles all around from everyone.

Thomas and Michael separately visiting their GP. Both boys act sweet and innocently. Wide smiles all around from everyone.

Thomas and Michael separately visiting their Social Worker. Both boys act sweet and innocently. Wide smiles all around from everyone.

Thomas and Michael separately visiting a Child Behaviour Expert. Both boys act sweet and innocently. Wide smiles all around from everyone.

Thomas and Michael visiting their Health Visitor together. Children's books ripped, toys thrown. Health Visitor cowering in the corner.

Thomas and Michael visiting their GP together. Paper towel which is normally on medical bed wrapped around the room. One of the boys is strangling the other with the blood pressure cuff tubing. Doctor is under the desk.

Thomas and Michael visiting their Social Worker together. Social Worker has one of the boys in a headlock and holding the other back with one arm.

Thomas and Michael visiting a Child Behaviour Expert together. Office is wrecked, papers everywhere, Child Behaviour Expert is screaming at the boys to stop.

EXT. STREET. DAY.

The family are in car driving along street. Car brakes suddenly.

JEFF

(VO) Sandra and I decided to take the boys on a caravan holiday. Try to regain some control. See if a change of environment would change things.

Jeff gets out of car and opens Michael's door. He lifts Michael out of the car seat and takes him round the back of the car to Thomas' side. He takes Thomas out of the car seat and puts Michael in it. Thomas and Michael try to hit each other as Jeff is strapping Michael in. He goes back around and put Thomas in Michael's now empty car seat.

INT. CAR. DAY

Thomas starts kicking the back of Jeff's seat.

EXT. HOLIDAY PARK. DAY.

Car pulls up by Reception.

INT. CAR. DAY

Thomas still kicking the back of Jeff's seat.

EXT. HOLIDAY PARK. DAY.

Jeff exits car. Stops. Feels his back. A twinge. He sits back down. Sandra exits car and undoes Thomas and takes him into Reception to check in. Jeff and Michael remain in the car.

INT. RECEPTION. DAY

Staff love Thomas. Give his hair a ruffle. Give him vouchers and discount tickets. Sandra is given the keys to the caravan.

SANDRA

(VO) Jeff and I seem to spend more time apart,
separating the boys, than we ever spend together.
Surely parenthood shouldn't be this hard.

INT. CARAVAN. DAY

Montage:

Boys at table. Michael is colouring peacefully. Thomas knocks over beaker of milk that goes over Michael's work.

Thomas is lying on the floor face down reading a book. Michael walks over to him and pretends to trip. Elbows Thomas in the back.

The boys are fighting. Cushions, newspaper, colouring book strewn around caravan floor.

Jeff with Thomas at one end of the caravan. Jeff is shouting.

Sandra with Michael in the boy's bedroom. Sandra is shouting.

EXT. BEACH. DAY

JEFF

(VO) They were relentless.

Montage:

Sand thrown in faces.

The boys fighting with driftwood swords.

Seaweed down t-shirts and slapped around faces.

Crab picked up and Michael is chased.

Dog faeces on stick and Thomas is chased.

INT. CARAVAN. NIGHT.

Jeff and Sandra are in bed, holding hands. They look exhausted. There is the sound of arguing from the boys coming from a different bedroom.

SANDRA

This isn't working. The boys are worse here than they are at home.

JEFF

I know. I don't understand it. I thought the sea air would tire them out; instead it's given them an energy of malevolence.

SANDRA

What are we going to do? I miss you so much.

JEFF

I miss you too.

(goes in for a kiss)

There is a loud bang from the other bedroom and then crying.

JEFF

(stops his kissing motion and slams his head back onto his own pillow in frustration)

I think we should go home tomorrow. I can't take this anymore. We're going to have to do something about them. They can't keep doing this.

SANDRA

It's not fair. Why can't they just get on, or even just ignore each other. It's driving me insane.

JEFF

This sounds horrible but sometimes I wish we just had one. Even if he was a shit it would still be better than the constant battles.

SANDRA

I think that too... Sometimes.

Sandra gets up and pulls a suitcase on the bed, she starts throwing items in there angrily.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. CAR. DAY.

Family in car. Parents in front, children in their car seats in back. Radio playing.

MICHAEL

Mum, Thomas won't let go of my hand!

SANDRA

Thomas let go of your brother's hand. Just leave each other alone.

THOMAS

I'm not doing anything. It's Michael who won't let go. He's pulling my arm.

MICHAEL

Mum, he's pulling my arm. Stop it Thomas!

THOMAS

Owwwww it hurts! Mum, help!

SANDRA

Jeff, I think we need to pull over to deal with this.
I know we're not supposed to put car seats in the
front seat but I can't take this anymore. I'll swap
with one of them.

JEFF

(shaking his head)

Ok, I'll pull over when it's safe.

EXT. MOTORWAY. DAY.

Car driving along motorway in overtaking lane. Indicator
starts flashing. Motorway is not too busy.

INT. CAR. DAY

Sandra undoes her seatbelt and turns around in her seat to
look at the children.

SANDRA

(screaming)

JEFF STOP NOW!

EXT. MOTORWAY. DAY.

Car swerves into inside lane and then onto the hard shoulder.
Brake lights are shown.

INT. CAR. DAY

Montage:

Jeff undoes his seatbelt and turns to look behind him.

The boys are strapped in their car seats.

Their outstretched arms are joined at the wrist.

Their hands are melting into one.

The boys straining against their restraints towards each other.

Jeff leans forward to undo Thomas' seat belt.

Sandra opens car door.

EXT. MOTORWAY. DAY

Occasional speeding cars on motorway rush past.

Sandra exits car via passenger door and pulls open the back door violently and reaches in.

INT. CAR. DAY

Montage:

Sandra reaches around Michael starts fighting with the seat belt lock.

Button depresses and seat belt is released.

Jeff undoes Thomas' belt.

The boys fly out of their seats and come together.

Bodies touching.

Clothes tear and fall as body parts combine.

Everyone is screaming.
Boys faces edge closer.
Noses touch and melt together.
Chests combine.
Sandra turns and vomits out of the door.
Jeff shuts his eyes.

INT. JEFF'S CLOSED EYES POV.

VOICE (childlike and innocent)

It's ok Mum and Dad. We're together now, this is how
it was supposed to be.

INT. JEFF'S OPEN EYES POV.

Jeff's eyes open. Vision is blurry. He blinks and shakes head.

Vision clears and there is a child on the back seat between
the car seats. A kind smile on his lips.

JEFF

A- a- are you Thomas or Michael?

VOICE

We are both. We are us. Please don't cry Dad. It's
good. We're not fighting now.

He reaches out to Sandra's hand. With his other hand he
reaches for Jeff's.

CHILD

We love you Mum and Dad.

FADE OUT.