

Façade Of Deceit

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1 Corinthians 10:12-13:Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY HALL- NIGHT

A YOUNG MAN stands, impatient. He glances anxiously from side to side, nervously rubbing his hands together. His attention shifts to his phone.

YOUNG MAN
(murmurs)
Forget this.

A man emerges from the shadows, his silhouette the only discernible feature.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)
I was able to scrap a few things
together. it's not much but it's a
start.

The YOUNG MAN gestures outward, holding a wad of cash.

Silence blankets the scene.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)
Please just take it. I'll get you the
rest soon.

The UNKNOWN MAN extends a hand, gripping a deadly firearm. He fires. The YOUNG MAN crumples to the ground, lifeless.

INT. FAMILY HOME- LIVING ROOM- DAY

MAYA, 54, grins widely and dances side to side. A birthday sash over her right shoulder, wearing an expensive necklace. The room is filled with birthday decorations. DARREN, 24, walks in with a birthday cake.

DARREN
Happy birthday mum!

MAYA

This is all truly amazing.

She laughs.

MAYA (CONT'D)

I'm serious though. All of this is..

DARREN

It's just cake. If you're already getting teary-eyed over it, you might want to hold off on opening the gifts.

MAYA

I told you that I didn't want any fuss.

DARREN

You are the best mum among all mums out there, and you truly deserve all the love and appreciation in the world.

MAYA

That's lovely, I appreciate all your kind words, but don't you think you can get out of doing the washing up that easily.

They laugh.

DARREN

Wouldn't dream of it. Lemme go upstairs quick, bring you the gifts. You're going to love them, trust me, mum.

Darren runs up to bring the gifts.

Maya looks at her birthday cake. It's a big cake. Maya proceeds to cut the two slices.

Darren enters the room carrying bags of gifts. Maya approaches him up a plate of cake, offering it to Darren.

She smiles.

MAYA

I feel fortunate to be a mother and have a son like you.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE- DAY

Darren walks into the office room, halfway in the office he raises a fist in the air grinning warmly towards colleagues.

He walks in and closes the door behind him. Now facing his employer. He takes his seat.

DARREN

Hey boss, you wanted to see me?

EMPLOYER

Good morning Darren, I'll just get straight to it. However it is not good news. Just a quick question. Do you feel you have given your 100% effort to the company?

Darren grin begins to fade away.

DARREN

Well yes, I would say so. I always complete the workload set. I get along well with my colleagues and..

EMPLOYER

At the cost of your discipline and poor time management. Darren, I will not deny your work ethic. You work well under pressure. But let's get real here. The absenteeism issues, along with your unreliability. Has truly forced my hands. You'll receive your last pay at the end of the month.

A moment of pause.

DARREN (V.O.)

This marked the beginning of the end.

INT. FAMILY HOME- LIVING ROOM- DAY

In the living room, you can see family photographs of both Darren and Maya on the shelves, including an old birthday

card. Maya is sitting at the table, having a bowl of cereal.

Darren enters the living room holding two cups of tea. He places one cup on a coaster near Maya and the other one on the table beside him.

MAYA

Thank you, are you not getting anything to eat Darren?

DARREN

Nope, I'll grab a bite down at the office. Got to be in earlier today.

MAYA

Just something small before you go.

DARREN

Mum, It's fine. Honestly I am not that hungry.

MAYA

Are you sure?

Darren chuckles as he hugs Maya.

DARREN

I'll see you later mum.

Maya sighs, she gives a slight smile.

MAYA

See you soon Daz.

Darren smiles as he leaves home.

EXT. CITY HALL- DAY

As Darren steps outside, his demeanour suddenly shifts. His face falls, and he looks crestfallen.

He sighs.

Darren walks in the direction of the city. His steps becoming more confident as he approaches the location for the meetup.

Matthew(31) approaches Darren with a confident smile and extends his hand for a handshake. they greet warmly. Matthew maintains strong eye contact.

MATTHEW

Darren! Long time no see. I hope I have not kept you waiting long?

DARREN

No, not at all. I was going to do some light errands today anyways.

Matthew chuckles and nudges Darren playfully.

MATTHEW

Always staying busy. That's what I like to see.

DARREN

You know me. Always active.

Matthew nods, still smiling.

MATTHEW

How's the family?

DARREN

Great, thank you again for that.

Darren reaches out in his coat pocket, takes out a small package. He hands it over to Matthew.

Matthew inspects the package, holding it up and shaking it gently. He furrows his brow. He opens the package his eye widens. He takes a breath and grins warmly.

MATTHEW

This feels a bit light Darren, is everything ok?

Darren looks up at Matthew. Darren gathers his courage.

DARREN

Sorry about that Matt. Had an little emergency I needed to tend you. You Understand right? I'll get you the rest as soon as I can.

MATTHEW

Ah mate, what happen?

DARREN

my mum had a fall. She's been unable to work. So I got to do my bit.

MATTHEW

That's terrible mate, just terrible.
Any way I can help?

DARREN

Well I wanted to borrow more funds. If
it's ok with you.

Matthew, nods in agreement. He puts his arm around Darren.

MATTHEW

I've got you bro. Now I should say
given the circumstances, you are quite
a bit behind.

DARREN

yeah but I'm good for it.

They both chuckle.

Matthew reaches in his bag and hands over a large sum of
cash.

MATTHEW

It was lovely catching up with you.
I'll be seeing you soon. Please give
your mum my love.

Matthews draws Darren in for a bear hug. flashes another
smile as he confidently walks off.

INT. FAMILY HOME- LIVING ROOM- AFTERNOON

Maya is on foot standing beside the table, typing away on her
laptop.

Darren walks in both hands full of takeaway bags he grins
widely and lays them on the table.

Maya's brow raises slightly she is confused.

MAYA

What's all this for?

Darren's brings plate out and utensils.

DARREN

Just wanted to treat ourselves today.

Maya shakes her head dismissively and looks back at her
screen.

MAYA

Its seems like a waste if you ask me.
If you were going shopping you could
have told me.

Darren raises his head up in embarrassment.

Maya faces her direction of the screen and faces Darren.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Besides I've already eaten. How was
work today?

DARREN

Work is work.

MAYA

They must be treating you nicely.

Maya is eyeing the takeaway with contempt.

DARREN

How about you mum. What did you do
today?

MAYA

Same old stuff really. Did some work.
Bit of writing still working on my
novel.

DARREN

Amazing stuff mum. Really proud. How
far along now then?

MAYA

I've nearly completed chapter 10 and
feeling good about the progress.
Always got to keep in mind that I got
to push through.

Darren starts to head upstairs. Holding the bags of takeaway

DARREN

It's been a long day. I'm just going
to take these upstairs before they get
too cold, you sure you don't want any?

MAYA

Very sure. Enjoy.

Darren flashes a smile as he strides ahead to his room.

MAYA (CONT'D)
(Jokingly To herself)
Greedy pig.

INT. FAMILY HOME- DARREN'S BEDROOM- AFTERNOON

A calendar has been marked off with a red X. Today's date marked with 'Payday'.

"beep beep" "beep beep" Phone is rested on the desk. Darren is looking out of his window slightly in cover.

"Beep beep". Darren turns around and walks with caution towards the phone.

DARREN
Hey Matthew, how are you bro?

MATTHEW
Hey mate, I'm not too good. Not good at all. Do you know why I am not feeling too great?

DARREN
If it's about the money I've got a bit of it to give to you.

MATTHEW
Woke up with a bad cold actually.

Matthews cackles.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
Totally forgot all about that. See you soon then.

Darren takes a moment. he puts the phone against his head, as he looks up to the ceiling.

DARREN
Sure thing Matt. but I can only give you...

MATTHEW
We will discuss all this when we met.

Phone call ends.

EXT. CITY HALL- DAY

Darren walks to meeting point. His strides are slower. He

glances from side to side. He waits.

Matthew moves to a rhythm, his body is swaying and his feet are tapping to a beat. He approaches Darren. Matthew puts his arm around Darren.

MATTHEW

Hey buddy, I hope I haven't kept you long?

Matthew smacks his lips loudly.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

I am so very thirsty. You could do with a drink too right?

Darren is taken aback. He awkwardly tries to pull from Matthew's grip. Matthew does not budge.

DARREN

Sure thing Matt.

Matthew flashes a warm smile.

INT. CAFE- DAY

Seated at a table in the café, a MISSING POSTER of The Young Man looms on the wall between them.

Matthew leans forward, elbows on the table, gaze fixed unwaveringly on DARREN. A coffee cup rests by his side.

Darren, seated across from Matthew, initially maintains eye contact but eventually looks away.

MATTHEW

You sure you don't want anything? A sandwich maybe?

DARREN

No I'm good thanks.

MATTHEW

Alrighty then. Let's get straight to business. You owe a considerable amount my friend.

Darren fishes through his coat pocket and outstretches his hand to hand over the small package.

Matthew stares directly at him. He remains still. He is not

reaching to accept the package.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

(CONTD)

Now, unless there's a check in there.
I don't think this covers our
agreement.

Darren laughs.

It is met with agonising silence.

DARREN

Yeah, it is just a start. I have a lot
more coming soon.

MATTHEW

How's your mother?

DARREN

she's fine.

MATTHEW

Do you want her to remain fine?

Darren leans back, while Matthew leans forward.

DARREN

What?

Matthew chuckles, then shifts his gaze toward the poster. His
eyes return to lock onto Darren.

MATTHEW

Some people need a little nudge. My
friend here

Matthew gestures towards the poster.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Well, just like you, he struggled to
settle his debts. As a friend, I would
hate to see you and your mother facing
a similar fate. It just doesn't feel
right.

Darren stands to his feet, face buried in his hands.

DARREN

I promise I'll get you what you want I
just need a little more time!

Matthew gestures as if talking to a baby for Darren to sit down again.

Darren sits.

MATTHEW

Why are you shouting? I know you will.

.

He clicks his finger and grins.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Hey! I believe in you buddy.

Matthew sits closer to Darren as he wraps his arm around whilst cradling him.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Tomorrow, everything will be resolved.
You'll repay the full amount owed, and
then we'll part ways

Matthew gets up straightens himself off and walks away.

Darren rocks in his seat, pounding his fists against the table. "Bang, bang, bang." He wipes his eyes and starts to scratch the back of his head. After a moment, he composes himself, sitting alone.

INT. FAMILY HOME- LIVING ROOM- DAY

A roar of laughter is heard, Darren get's up from his bed and listens besides the door. his eye widen he quickly puts on his shoes as he walks to the living room.

INT. FAMILY HOME- LIVING ROOM- DAY

Darren's POV Matthew and Maya are sat at the dining table drinking hot beverages.

Matthew grins widely as Darren starts to tremble.

MATTHEW

Good Morning Darren, you just getting
up now?

MAYA

That's Darren for you!
(to Matthew)

DARREN
Good morning mum.

Maya looks at Darren eyebrows raised. She notices something is off.

MAYA
Are you alright Darren?

MATTHEW
I tell you Mrs Thomas, your son is very hard-working man.

MAYA
I wasn't talking to you; I was talking to my son.

Maya starts to look at Matthew and back at Darren.

Darren is bracing a smile, his eye wells up.

DARREN
Yeah mum, just wasn't expecting Matthew here so soon.

MATTHEW
Ah, I did say I was coming. Seeming as you are not ready. I'll head off to work without you. will catch up later.

Thank you for the tea Mrs Thomas.

MAYA
Hold it. What's going on here?

DARREN
nothing, Mum.

MAYA
What's going on?

Maya scans both Darren and Matthew.

DARREN
I quit the job. Didn't want to worry you. Matt and I are going in for a job interview.

Maya's face is blank

MAYA
So you couldn't have simply told me
that.

DARREN
Sorry, Mum.

Maya does not answer.

MAYA
It was nice meeting you, Matthew.

Maya walks off.

MATTHEW
Darren could you walk me out?

Matthew heads toward the door, followed by Darren.

EXT. FAMILY HOME- OUTSIDE FRONT DOOR- AFTERNOON

Matthew grabs Darren and pushes him against the wall his arm
pressed on Darren's throat.

Darren gasps for breathes.

MATTHEW
Do not mug me off. I have been very
patient with you. Very lenient. But
there's a limit.

He grins.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
6PM no later. I swear on your mum's
life that I'll kill her. Then I will
kill you too. I'll see you soon.

Matthew lets go of his grip and he walks swiftly off.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY HOME- MAYA'S BEDROOM- EVENING

Darren is rummaging through Maya's things. Eyes scowling the
room. He finds Jewellery box. Maya onlooks from a distance.

MAYA
What on earth are you doing Darren?

Darren squints his eyes tightly and stands to his feet, not facing Maya.

DARREN

You alright mum? I can't tell you just
A little surprise.

MAYA

Spare me your lies. For once tell me
the truth.

An alarm reminder alerts. Darren checks his phone: "5:45 PM" and puts it in his pocket. He picks up the box, walking towards the door, finally facing Maya.

DARREN

You'll won't understand. I can't let
you ruin it for yourself.

He flashes a smile. Maya's face remains blank.

MAYA

Put my box down, Darren. You must
think I am some fool to believe that
garbage. Did you even go to a job
interview?

Darren grips the box more tightly.

DARREN

Mum, I'll explain later.

Darren walks closer to the room exit. Maya stands in his way.

MAYA

No, you will explain now. Clearly,
something has gone terribly wrong.
What is it? Money issues?

She buries face in hand. She looks up quickly, pleading.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Matthew wasn't a colleague was he? Is
he blackmailing you? He came to this
home, Darren! What is it, what did you
do?

Darren grows more tense.

DARREN

Get out the way mum! Get out of my
(MORE)

DARREN (CONT'D)

way!

He gets choked up.

MAYA

I'm calling the police!

Maya turns around and heads off.

DARREN

Mum, no!

Darren drops the box, swings, and hits Maya at the back of the head. He weeps. Maya crumples in pain, laying flat. Blood emerges.

Darren watches his mother motionless, checks for a pulse, his breathing becoming increasingly rapid. He clasps his hand over his head, looking into the distance. A speck of blood is on his face.

DARREN (CONT'D)

Mum, mum, mum, breathe! Please.
Please!

A moment of pause.

DARREN (V.O.)

(pitiful)

This marked the beginning of the end.

Darren looks off to the corner of the room. "6:00pm".

FADE TO BLACK.