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**It was me who was doing her the favour**

Theme music

Patreon opening solicit

Title credits

SFX: Kitchen atmos

I knew Danielle was my cousin but we’d never, you know, mixed. Something to do with something her father said to my mother about a will and then thirty years go by, don’t they? So I’d never known her. Anyway, she was 17 years younger than me as well so she was a different generation. Then out of the blue her mother died and she invited me to the funeral. Well, I couldn’t say no, could I?

SFX: Kitchen atmos out

SFX: Cafe atmos in

So I got to know her. We went for ‘coffee’ and ‘lunches.’

SFX: Cafe atmos out

SFX: Courtroom atmos in – big, echoey room

She heard about my difficulties - which were nothing to do with my judgment, I might add, I just went into business with a maniac and ended up losing everything

SFX: Courtroom atmos out

SFX: Kitchen atmos in

- and she offered me a job. She was kicking me when I was down if I’m quite honest. She only did it so she’d look good and anyway it was pin money she was paying.

SFX: Kitchen atmos out

But I took it and because of me her business skyrocketed.

SFX: Busy office – phones, keyboards

It was me who was doing her the favour.

I never saw an extra penny, obviously.

SFX: Christmas party atmos under the next line

I mean, she gave me a Christmas bonus but it was more of an insult really.

SFX: Christmas party atmos out

SFX: Event-style music in, with applause – a bit like a product launch kind of atmos. Something to symbolise Public Relations

She’s works in Public Relations. Public Relations! Makes you laugh, doesn’t it. Signed her name Dani with an ‘i.’ That kind of woman, you know. Pretentious. Or ‘affected.’

SFX: Public Relations atmos out

SFX: Kitchen atmos in

That’s what my friend Linda calls her. I mean, she’s not met her but she knows the type.

SFX: Kitchen atmos out

SFX: Claustrophic feel under the next few lines – as if the room’s got smaller, the ceiling lower

And then Danielle announced she was getting divorced.

(Very subtle reverb under next two lines)

Said he hit her. Said he raped her.

Back to claustrophic atmos

Blubbered and wailed when she told me. I went along with it because you do, don’t you?

SFX: Kitchen atmos in

Why didn’t you say anything, I said. And she said nothing. Just looked at me with her face. I didn’t think anyone would believe me, she said later. Yes, I thought.

SFX: Kitchen atmos out

Anyway. I became indispensable.

SFX: Airport atmos in, planes

Without me she wouldn’t have been able to go off ‘on business’ to wherever she went off gadding with God knows who -

SFX: A couple laughing, chinking of glasses

she wasn’t behind the door with moving on with her life, put it that way -

SFX: Kitchen atmos back in

and I offered to look after her children sometimes - paid, obviously. I mean, my time’s valuable and I’m no mug.

SFX: Two small children playing

She had two children under five so you can imagine how hard it was for me. One was autistic and didn’t speak so it was easier actually.

*(under the following, in quick succession)*

SFX: Supermarket

SFX: Old folks’ home

SFX: Car

SFX: Television

I used to take them when I did my shopping and to see my mother to save me having to go at weekend. She gave me a car because I said I didn’t want to put the miles on mine. They used to watch the television while I did the ironing.

SFX: Kitchen atmos in

They had a whale of a time with me.

SFX: Kitchen atmos out

SFX: Music in, to signify the wider family – a sense of melancholy and yearning

Danielle was always on at me to meet up with the rest of the family. Mithering. She wasn’t in our circle and she didn’t know any of the others and I said they were busy in any case. Asked me for their phone numbers. Asked if they were on Facebook.

She was needy, you know. Went to ‘counselling.’ Said she meditated to ‘breathe through the moment.’ I mean, I ask you. But a job’s a job, isn’t it?

SFX: Family music out

SFX: Claustrophic atmos in, under the following down to ‘respond’

And then Graham, my husband died. He was my second husband but he was a nice man. I got my sister-in-law to ring Danielle to tell her.

*(Under the following, in quick succession)*

SFX: Smartphone dialling

SFX: Doorbell

SFX: Text alert

SFX: Letter box flapping, letter falling onto mat

I didn’t want to speak to her and deal with her questions. And then there were flowers. And texts. And cards and letters.

She bombarded me. I didn’t respond.

SFX: Kitchen atmos in

I was obviously going to take time off work. Anybody would. And then one day about two weeks later she caught me on the hop when the rest of the family were round and rang me.

SFX: Small group talking in background

SFX: Landline ringing

SFX: Phone being picked up

(*Phone EQ*) Asking how I was doing, if I needed anything.

*(Back to normal)* No, everyone’s been fantastic, I said, looking after me. I don’t need anything.

(*Phone EQ*) Then she said I didn’t need to rush back to work, to take all the time I needed.

*(Back to normal)* ‘Oh no,’ I said. ‘Work’s the last thing on my mind, Danielle. I can’t even think about coming back to work. It’s too soon.’

*(Phone EQ)* And I put the phone down.

SFX: Phone going down

SFX: Claustrophobic atmos in, as if we’re in a suburban living room

Of course, the rest of the family heard what I’d said to her.

‘She wants you back at work before the funeral?’ said my brother.

‘That’s terrible,’ said my sister.

‘Well I won’t be having anything to do with her,’ said my other sister, who, frankly, has always been a pain in the arse but on this I had to agree with her.

SFX: Churchy vibe

SFX: Funereal music

But Danielle came to the funeral, didn’t she. Rocked up in a hat. A hat! I didn’t speak to her. I didn’t look at her. Nobody really spoke to her. But at the wake my friend Audrey gave her a piece of her mind and without even saying goodbye, Danielle swanned off. It was my husband’s funeral.

SFX: Churchy vibe out

SFX: Funereal music out

SFX: Office atmos in

After another couple of weeks or so I went back to work. I just turned up one day - I didn’t need her approval. And then everything carried on but we weren’t pally.

SFX: Office atmos out

SFX: Luxury room atmos in – large, vaulted ceiling, plush upholstery

She moved house. Invited me round. Wanted to know what I thought of her new furniture. That was her, always showing off. ’I hate nests of tables,’ I said. That shut her up.

SFX: Claustrophobic atmos in

Anyway sixteen years had gone by and I was still working for her. By then her kids had grown up - the other one had learned to talk and was actually reasonably bright - and she’d ‘restructured the business’ and then she announced she didn’t need me any more.

SFX: High heeled footsteps on a wooden floor

I just got up and walked out.

SFX: Door slam

I never heard from her again.

SFX: Claustrophobic atmos in – old folks’ home-ish

But then my mother died - she was 93 with a filthy flat and a lot of clutter so you can imagine what I had to deal with - and there was going to be a funeral that needed sorting, obviously.

SFX: Claustrophobic atmos out

SFX: Pub atmos in

We all got together at a convenient pub to arrange everything and I’d booked a table for six, when out of the blue my other brother turned up. (We’re not in contact. He has a wife who’s a model). And suddenly we had to find a seventh chair.

SFX: Wooden chair scraping on a wooden floor

You can imagine the uproar.

SFX: People shifting about on chairs – no talking (no uproar)

Said he’d seen we were meeting up on WhatsApp.

SFX: WhatsApp ‘ding’

So he sits down.

‘Have you told Danielle about mum?’ he said. ‘Mum was her godmother.’

Nobody said anything. Eventually my youngest sister said ‘we don’t speak to her. She’s been horrible.’

‘Why?’ he said.

And then it all came out.

SFX: Family music in – maybe slightly pacier here?

I said ‘she wanted me back at work straight after Graham died. Demanded it. With me in a state on tablets and everything. She was cruel and thoughtless and very very inappropriate and we are all in agreement.’

SFX: Family music out

SFX: Claustrophobic atmos in

He leaned forward on the table and I could have hit him. He put his hands in a steeple and if there’s one thing I can’t stand it’s that.

SFX: Claustrophobic atmos out

SFX: Pub atmos in

‘That’s not how I heard it,’ he said. ‘I was there when she spoke to you on the phone. I was with her in the room. I heard exactly what she said. And she didn’t say that. In fact, quite the opposite.’ And then he said: ‘As you well know.’

SFX: Pub atmos out

SFX: Claustrophobic atmos in

Fancy saying that to me in front of everybody, with my mother fresh dead and not yet buried?

SFX: Claustrophobic atmos out

SFX: Pub atmos in

‘She should be included,’ he said. ‘She was good to you.’ I laughed at that. ‘And now she’s very seriously ill.’

‘What’s wrong with her this time?’ I said.

SFX: Pub atmos out

SFX: Sinister, sly music in

He said she’s got Stage 4 breast cancer. But I think she’s only saying that for attention. Couldn’t be Stage 2 or 3, could it? Couldn’t be six months to live, could it? No. It always has to be worse. She was always dramatic. And if there’s one thing I know about her, it’s that she is a liar.

SFX: Sinister music out

Theme music in

Closing credits

Closing Patreon solicit

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