

THE LAUGHTER OF OUR CHILDREN

Written by

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INT. WEDDING RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

Wedding guests are seated at their tables. At the head of the room the bridal party are seated at the top table. The whole room listens quietly as the GROOM makes his speech.

GROOM

... Lastly I would like to thank my Best Man for that wonderfully mortifying speech.

The guests laugh.

GROOM (CONT'D)

As many of you know neither my father nor my wife's father, I'll have to get use to that, my wife, sadly neither of our fathers could be with us here today. The day my father died was for me the worst day of my life. Little did I know that day that I had started down a road that would lead me to this the happiest day of my life.

INT. FACTORY OFFICE - DAY - 1981

A small office decorated with some tacky Christmas decorations. The manager's desk sits in the centre of the room. MR. HENDERSON sits in his chair on one side of the desk. SEAMUS, early 30s and JAMES, also early 30s, sit on the opposite side of the desk.

JAMES

He's not supposed to go out that gate! The whole reason we have two gates is so this sort of thing doesn't happen!

SEAMUS

He's an o'l man!

JAMES

His lot leave by the Anderson road entrance and our lot leave by the Argyle street entrance. Those are the rules and always have been.

SEAMUS

He was going to the doctor's on the Malone road, if he goes out onto Anderson road he has to walk the whole way round.

(MORE)

SEAMUS (CONT'D)

He should be able to go out onto Argyle street without getting jumped from behind.

(Nodding his head towards James)

He knows who did it.

JAMES

I don't know who did it.

SEAMUS

They're brave lads jumping a sixty five year old man.

MR. HENDERSON

Right, that's enough. This is ridiculous, its like managing a bunch of teenagers. We have to have two different gates for staff to leave by yet every Friday after work they all head down to the foot of the road to the same pub.

JAMES

That's different.

MR. HENDERSON

Do you think any of the managers over the water need to deal with this sort of carry on? And another thing, they don't have two shift supervisors either. The whole reason we have one from either side is so that this sort of rubbish isn't an issue. The incident occurred off this property so if there's a problem I suggest going to the police, otherwise I don't want to hear anymore about it.

James and Seamus get up from their chairs and head towards the door.

MR. HENDERSON (CONT'D)

And another thing, you two are on call with the alarm company over Christmas.

James and Seamus stop.

SEAMUS

Ah what.

JAMES  
We've got young kids.

MR. HENDERSON  
Well I have family coming over from  
Scotland and I'm as entitled to my  
Christmas as you two. Besides its  
ten pounds for being on call and an  
extra fiver if your called out.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Seamus and James walk along the corridor. The sound of  
arguing comes from the changing rooms.

MAN ONE (O.S.)  
Your hard men aren't ye!

MAN TWO (O.S.)  
You shut your mouth ye wee dick!

INT. CHANGING ROOMS - DAY

Two men stand by the lockers changing into their work  
overalls. Two other men get changed to go home. Seamus and  
James enter.

JAMES  
Right! What the hell is going on in  
here?

None of the men respond. James looks at the clock, 12:10.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
(To men putting on overalls) Your  
shift started at 12 o'clock so get  
out onto the floor and your being  
docked ten minutes pay.

SEAMUS  
(To men putting on overalls) Come  
on lads.

The men leave to start work.

JAMES  
(To the remaining men) Are you two  
finished? Well then sod off home!  
This isn't a social club.

The other men leave.

SEAMUS

That's not helping relieve tensions  
you know.

JAMES

I'm doing my job, you should try  
it.

James leaves.

EXT. FACTORY - DAY

Seamus leaves the factory gate. A car beeps its horn. Seamus  
gets in and the car drives off.

INT. CAR - DAY

PAUL, 30s, sits in the drivers seat.

PAUL

Alright mucker.

SEAMUS

What about ye. Did you ask the  
question?

PAUL

I did and they gave the go ahead.  
Can I ask is this for a legitimate  
reason or just because you don't  
like the man.

SEAMUS

It's because we have a known UDA  
man walking all over our people,  
docking their wages and shielding  
his own lot when they attack our  
ones and sing songs about the  
hunger strikers while they all  
laugh. The republican movement has  
already lost too much this year to  
let that go unanswered.

PAUL

We going to have a hard time trying  
to get him on his own so we can  
grab him up.

SEAMUS

Don't worry about that. I've had a  
better idea.

(MORE)

SEAMUS (CONT'D)

We're going to do it at the factory, the two of us are on call with the alarm company over Christmas. We'll set off the alarm and do it then.

INT. JAMES' LIVING ROOM - DAY

James' kids play with their presents from Santa. JIMMY, 9, plays keepie uppie with a new football, deck out in a Man Utd kit. EMMA, 4, sits on the floor playing with a doll. James walks in.

JAMES

Happy Christmas.

JIMMY

Look how many of these I can do da.

JAMES

Oh you'll be the next Georgie Best.  
(To Emma) And what did you get?

Emma stands up by a new bike.

EMMA

A bike, look.

James lifts Emma onto the bike. Emma begins to pedal round the room.

James' wife VICKY enters.

VICKY

Kids get ready for church. Jimmy your not wearing that football kit. James' will you get Emma dressed.

James lifts Emma off the bike.

INT. SEAMUS' LIVING ROOM - DAY

Seamus' wife AISLING sits on the sofa drinking tea. His sons Ronan, 7, stands flying a Millennium Falcon. Sean, 5, sits trying to build a Lego set on the ground. Seamus enters.

SEAMUS

Morning.

AISLING

There's daddy now Sean, he'll help you build it.

SEAMUS

Ah its too early for that.

AISLING

Go on, you help him build that and  
I'll make you a cuppa.

Aisling leaves. Seamus gets onto the floor beside Sean.

SEAMUS

Right Seany, lets have a look at  
this.

INT. SEAMUS' HOME HALLWAY - NIGHT

Seamus lifts the phone and dials.

SEAMUS

Hey, its me, we're on for tonight.  
Get it set up.

Seamus hangs up the phone again and sits down on the stairs.

INT. SEAMUS' HOME HALLWAY - LATER

Seamus sits on the stairs. The phone rings. Seamus answers  
it.

SEAMUS

Hello. (Pause) James, how's it  
going. (Pause) Ah balls, right I'll  
meet you at the factory sure.  
Alright, see you there.

Seamus hangs up the phone and then grabs his jacket of the  
hook. The living room door opens and Sean comes into the  
hall.

SEAN

Daddy, Mummy said to tell you The  
Two Ronnies is starting.

SEAMUS

Aisling.

AISLING (O.S.)

Yeah?

SEAMUS

The alarms going off at the  
factory. I have to go down.

AISLING (O.S.)

Okay.

SEAMUS

I might stop off for a pint on the way home.

Seamus opens the front door and leaves.

EXT. SEAMUS' HOME - NIGHT

Seamus gets into his car and drives off.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Seamus' car pulls in by the kerb, just down the road from the factory gate.

INT. SEAMUS' CAR - NIGHT

The passenger door opens and Paul jumps in.

SEAMUS

Have you got it?

PAUL

Yeah.

Paul takes a wrapped up cloth from his waist band and opens it to reveal a revolver. Seamus lifts the revolver and tucks it into his waist band.

SEAMUS

You get off home.

PAUL

What do you mean? I've to collect the gun again. You're going to have to call the peelers and say you found him dead.

SEAMUS

I'll just throw it onto the roof.

PAUL

Fuck that, you'll be shittin yourself for days incase they find it. I'll hide down behind the pallets. When its done you open the door and set the gun on the ground and I'll get rid of it.

SEAMUS  
Right, well make sure you stay out  
of sight.

Paul opens the car door.

SEAMUS (CONT'D)  
Which window did you smash?

PAUL  
What?

SEAMUS  
The alarm?

PAUL  
It was already going off when I got  
here.

SEAMUS  
Must be fate then.

Paul closes the door and Seamus drives off.

EXT. FACTORY - NIGHT

Seamus's car sits parked by the factory door. James pulls up  
in his car. Both men get out.

JAMES  
Alright? Did you have a good  
Christmas.

James jingles through keys.

SEAMUS  
Yeah, quite, I could do with out  
this hassle.

James opens the door.

JAMES  
Same as that.

INT. FACTORY - NIGHT

The factory is in darkness, lit only by the moon light coming  
through the windows by the ceiling. James walks along passed  
the machines towards the offices as Seamus follows him  
several feet behind.

JAMES  
I'll start checking the offices,  
you start down the back.

Seamus unzips his jacket and grabs the handle of the revolver. He lifts the gun from his waistband.

JAMES (CONT'D)  
Oh by the way, Merry Christmas.

James turns, gun in hand and fires.

Seamus gets it in the gut and falls backwards. The revolver fires.

The bullet hits James in the neck, blood sprays from the wound. James drops his gun and grabs his neck with both hands, choking on his blood.

Seamus drags himself along the floor, sitting himself up against the machinery. He looks at his blood soaked hands, his blood running onto the floor.

James lies on the floor, blinking slowly.

FLASHBACK - CHRISTMAS MORNING

James' kids playing with gifts from Santa. The only sound is of James' final breathes.

BACK TO SCENE

Seamus, pale from the blood loss and clutching his gut looks at James.

FLASHBACK - CHRISTMAS MORNING

Seamus sits on the living room floor building Lego with his sons. The only sound is of Seamus' final breathes.

BACK TO SCENE

Seamus and James lie dead on the floor of the factory. The factory is in complete silence.

Paul arrives to find both men dead, he grabs both guns and runs.

INT. SEAMUS' HOME HALLWAY - MORNING

The doorbell rings. Aisling comes down the stairs. She opens the door. Two RUC officers stand on the other side.

INT. JAMES' HOME HALLWAY - SAME

Vicky opens the front door to reveal two RUC officers. Vicky puts her hand over her mouth in anticipation of the coming news.

EXT. FACTORY - DAY

Aisling and Vicky stand on the other side of the fence watching the factory entrance. Both women's children cling to their legs. A handful of onlookers have stopped to see what is happening.

Mr. Henderson talks with the police inside the factory grounds.

RUC OFFICER

It looks like they broke in through a window at the back and ambushed them as they arrived to check the alarm.

A stretcher with a body on it is wheeled through the factory doors.

Tears stream down Aisling's face. Vicky's legs go to jelly. Aisling holds her up. The two women hug each other as the tears flow. Jimmy and Ronan grip the fence, watching as their fathers bodies are removed. Sean is still gripped tightly to his mother's leg, tears filling his eyes. He stares at Emma as she stands alone, crying her eyes out. Sean lets go of his mother's leg and walks over to Emma and hugs her.

INT. WEDDING RECEPTION ROOM - DAY

The Bride and Groom come together on the dance floor for their first dance.

DJ (O.S.)

And now in their first dance as man and wife, let's here it for Sean and Emma.

The wedding guests cheer.

FADE TO BLACK.