

DEATH IN 3 TO 5 BUSINESS DAYS

Written by

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SAMPLE

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CHARACTERS

GRACE (60's) The dying matriarch of the family.
TOM (40's) Grace's son.
EMMA (40's) Tom's wife.
PATRICIA (40'S) Tom's sister.
GWEN (40's) Tom's sister.
ROSA (20's) Patricia's Mexican daughter-in-law.
JAKE (20's) Hospice nurse.

SETTING

The dining room of Tom and Emma's home.

TIME

The play is set in the present and spans a month of time.

SCENE ONE

The dining room of Emma and Tommy's home. The dining room and kitchen are connected to each other only separated by a counter with bar stools.

Tommy is seated at the dining room table sifting through some papers. He is deep in thought.

Jake the hospice nurse enters from the man-cave and sits at the table with Tommy.

JAKE

She's sleeping pretty comfortably for the time being. Not too many changes. Your sister Gwen is sitting with her now.

TOM

Good.

JAKE

I'm sorry to say this but I really think the end is coming quickly.

TOM

Nice. Very good.

JAKE

Not really hearing a word I'm saying, are you?

TOM

I know.

JAKE

Tommy? You all right? Tommy?

Tommy snaps into focus. He looks at the catalogues in his hands almost trying to remember what he was reading.

What?

TOM

Are you okay?

JAKE

Yes. Sorry. I was kind of lost in all this. What did you say?

TOM

Just that you're mom is sleeping comfortably. Not much time left. Her heart is just fading pretty quickly.

JAKE

Shit. I can't believe all this is happening.

TOM

It's never easy. No matter how hard you prepare, you're never truly ready for this. What are you reading?

JAKE

Just some catalogues. The room she's in was supposed to be my man-cave.

TOM

Oh.

JAKE

But as you can see, that's been put on hold for obvious reasons.

TOM

Right. The old, mother dying in hospice, delaying the man-cave routine. Seen it a million times.

JAKE

Really?

TOM

Absolutely. People have big plans for a den or something fun and then I wheel in this big hospital bed. Next thing the guys know, all plans are on hold.

JAKE

Right.

TOM

JAKE

You'd be shocked how many guys find that deep inside they are sad about the family member passing, but deeper inside they are even more upset about the room being put on hold.

TOM

Really? How sad. I mean what kind of person would put material things before the chance to help their mother pass on? Right? My goodness, I mean they would be total and complete assholes. Right?

JAKE

Well. I guess it would depend on a lot of things.

TOM

Right. But it's probably normal for them to wish they could finish the room?

JAKE

Sure. But I think it would be more normal to wish for their family member to have a peaceful and loving end to their life.

TOM

Makes sense. Because that's exactly how I feel. I mean my mother is far more important than a stupid man-cave.

JAKE

I'm sure she is. Just remember the more you guys talk to your mother, and show her love, the longer she will try and hang on. It gives all of you a perfect chance to say your good-byes.

TOM

That's wonderful. Saying our good-byes.

JAKE

Making the best of a sad situation.

TOM

Very sad.

JAKE

If you do things right for your mother, the room will have more meaning to you when it's done.

TOM

I can see that. Not only will it be my man-cave, it will also be the cave my mother died in.

JAKE

True.

TOM

It was going to be nice though.

JAKE

Well, it still will be right? This hospice situation won't be going on forever.

TOM

It does make me sad that she won't be able to see it.

JAKE

Your needs are important too Tom. It's just that they need to wait a minute or two. That's all.

TOM

Do you want to see what I'm thinking about doing in there?

JAKE

Sure.

Tommy grabs a pen off of the table and draws on a piece of paper what he describes.

TOM

I was thinking about a 80 inch LED TV right over here on the wall across from her bed. Then, right here by her left foot, would be the corner of a full sized, granite top pool table with red felt.

JAKE

Red felt. Sounds beautiful. So much classier than green.

TOM

I agree. It's going to be amazing. Then over there by her heart monitor, I want a full wet bar. I want it to be stocked with the finest booze on the planet. When the guys are here for game day, I want them to feel like they are truly in a sports bar.

JAKE

This is incredible.

TOM

Right? Next to her oxygen tank, I want a movie theatre popcorn maker. You know the kind that you scoop the popcorn out into bags? The real deal.

JAKE

Nice.

TOM

I was also thinking about a cotton candy machine right here by the cart where you keep her bed pans and shit. But the popcorn thing is a must.

JAKE

Totally agree.

TOM

I also want a dart board over here by her stand with the bag of morphine and a couple of vintage pinball machines against the far wall over here by the cart with all the pills on it. What do you think?

JAKE

Sounds amazing.

TOM

That's what I'm shooting for.

JAKE

Also, sounds pretty expensive.

TOM

Money is no object, Jake. Not with this. Not now. I have waited years for this room. I can almost taste it.

JAKE

I like the fact that you are so motivated.

TOM

I mean with all this going on with my mom, it taught me that life is too short.

JAKE

It truly is.

TOM

By the way, how much longer do you think mom will last?

JAKE

That's hard to say. Your mother is a fighter.

TOM

But, how long do you think?

JAKE

Really hard to say Tommy.

TOM

You can't even take a guess?

JAKE

I don't feel comfortable making guesses about things like this.

TOM

It's not like I'm going to hold you to it, Jake.

JAKE

Fine. I would say somewhere between two days and a week. However, if she lasted a month I would not be surprised.

TOM

A month? Jake? Fuck. What?

JAKE

You asked me to guess.

TOM

A month. I thought this was supposed to be quick.

JAKE

It most likely will be quite quick.

TOM

But you're telling me that there is a chance she could last an entire month?

JAKE

I get it. Tom, listen, don't get your hopes up.

TOM

Oh my God.

JAKE

You should know that if she should wake up, and get out of bed--

TOM

What the fuck? That can happen? Out of bed?

JAKE

I'm saying that if it does happen. If. Do not expect it to last more than a few weeks. Because it won't. I don't want you to end up even more broken hearted.

TOM

I was told that she was going to be in a coma and then die. I was told she would die quickly. I can't fucking believe this. I mean, I'm so happy. I mean, holy shit. I'm so fucking happy to hear this.

JAKE

It most likely won't happen and if it does it's just a quick moment before the death.

TOM

Look me in the eyes.

JAKE

What?

TOM

Look me in the eyes.

JAKE

Okay.

TOM

She is going to die and soon, right?

JAKE

Right. I just pray I didn't get your hopes up for any type of recovery. Because it won't happen.

Jake packs up his things and moves to Tom.

JAKE

You have my cell. Call me for any reason. Any time.

TOM

I was thinking. You should give her more morphine.

JAKE

What? Why?

TOM

More morphine. You should give her more.

JAKE

Be strong Tommy. Just remember that she is all but dead.

TOM

Morphine. See, I'm afraid that if she wakes up I will be so filled with false joy that I may never recover.

JAKE

Don't be afraid. You'll be fine. Turn to your family for support.

TOM

Thank you Jake. You're... Just, thank you.

JAKE

Tom, it's my pleasure and my job. Make the most of what time she has left.

TOM

Time. That's all we have. Time.

JAKE

I will be back this afternoon.

Jake gathers his things and exits as Rosa enters. Rosa carries a small gift wrapped package.

ROSA

Tom?

TOM

Rosa? What the hell are you doing here?

ROSA

I'm dropping my mother-in-law off, and I brought a present for Grandma Grace. I wanted to give it to her. I wanted to give it to her personally.

TOM

Rosa, no. You know that's not possible.

ROSA

I just want to see her.

TOM

You're not supposed to be here and you know it. Emma would blow a gasket. You've got to go.

ROSA

It's not fair Tommy. You know it's not. Your wife is wrong about me.

TOM

Look, all I know is that I have a lot on my plate right now and I don't need the added stress of this kind of bullshit.

ROSA

Sorry, Tommy.

TOM

You and Emma need to talk on the phone and work this shit out.

ROSA

You know this isn't my fault.

TOM

To tell you the truth Rosa, I don't even know what all this shit is about between the two of you. But what I do know, is that I have no time to deal with this kind of thing at this time.

EMMA

(Off Stage)

Tommy? Is Patricia here yet?

TOM

Holy shit. She's coming. I'm out of here.

ROSA

What do I do?

TOM

You're on your own. I never saw you.

Tom exits out the back just as Emma enters. She sees Rosa.

EMMA

You have got to be kidding me.

ROSA

Hello Emma.

EMMA

What the hell are you doing in my living room?

ROSA

I was bringing Grandma Grace a present.

EMMA

Set it on the table and please go.

ROSA

Why do you have to be like that?

EMMA

We had an understanding. You're not welcome here. I don't want this to escalate. Goodbye.

ROSA

I have done nothing to you.

EMMA

I'm tired of arguing. You've insulted me. You've insulted my family. You've insulted my people. There is nothing left to say.

ROSA

I've done nothing. You're imagining all of it. I am a good person. It was an honest mistake.