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# I'll Miss Me When I'm Gone

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A comedy in two acts

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## FIRST ACT – SAMPLE

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CHARACTER NAME	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	AGE	GENDER
MARTIN	Husband of Cheryl, hypnotist and co-owner of Martin and Norm's Roofing Business	45-50	Male
CHERYL	Wife of Martin. A sales person	45-50	Female
SAMMY	Donna's boyfriend	30-40	Male
DONNA/DR. DEBRA (1 actor)	Twin sisters -- Donna is Norm's wife, (white trash) Debra, (classy sister)	30-40 30-40	Female Female
REV. . SUSAN GRAY	An attractive minister	30-40	Female
DOCTOR	E/R and Hospital room doctor	30-40	Female
POLICEMAN	At hospital	30-60	Male
NORM'S VOICE	Martin's business partner	40-50	Male
MALCOLM JONES VOICE	In body cast	30-50	Male

SAMMY also plays the POLICEMAN.

REV. . SUSAN GRAY also plays the DOCTORS.

FIVE ACTORS AND TWO READERS NEEDED WHEN DOUBLING.

NINE ACTORS IF NOT DOUBLING.

#### SETTING

LIVING ROOM -- FUNERAL HOME -- HOTEL ROOM  
HOSPITAL ROOM -- BEDROOM

ACT 1, SCENE 1

Time: Night.

Place: Martin and Cheryl's living room.

THE STAGE IS DIVIDED IN THE CENTRE

LIGHTS UP ON S.R., OUT ON S.L.

*A working man's living room -- lamp, sofa, sofa chair, TV on stand with a computer table and computer with telephone.*

*Two doors on the UC wall, one into the kitchen and one into the bedroom.*

*There is a S.REV. entrance door into the house.*

*MARTIN (45-50) sits on the sofa and reads from the newspaper.*

*CHERYL (45-50) reads from a novel in the sofa chair.*

*The phone by the computer rings. Martin answers it.*

MARTIN Martin and Norm's Quad-A Roofing. *(pause)* Yes, estimates are free. *(pause)* I can come by next Wednesday around noon. *(pause)* No, can't make it sooner. *(pause)* That's 75 Chestnut Street at noon next Wednesday. Thank you, Mr. Carson. *(pause)* Goodbye.

*Martin hangs up, scribbles on a pad by the phone and returns to and sits on the chesterfield.*

CHERYL Oh, I forgot. Edward called.

MARTIN *(frustrated)* I don't . . .

CHERYL He wants you to teach one of his college classes. He's booked more students than he can handle.

MARTIN . . . have time.

CHERYL You'll call him back?

MARTIN The idiot teaches hypnotism for dummies. The last time I didn't clear expenses! There's other dummies he can call.

*Cheryl smiles.*

He calls me first because he knows I'm the best.

CHERYL Does he think you're his best dummy or best idiot?

MARTIN Both. Quad-A's Roofing is booked solid. We've got two new crew starting tomorrow. Terry and Johnny. Isn't that a song?

CHERYL You're thinking of Frankie and Johnny.

MARTIN Right. *(sings)* If Terry and Johnny don't work out, Normie and Marty will go, *(sour face)* up up up up on the roof.

CHERYL Afraid of heights?

MARTIN I bring in business, he manages the physical side. I normally stay away from roof stuff.

CHERYL *(pleased)* You're afraid of heights.

MARTIN It's Norm. He doesn't want me on the roof.

*Cheryl sends a questioning look.*

*(pauses, embarrassed)* He thinks I could be a hazard.

CHERYL You?

MARTIN Nail guns are the handyman's machine gun!

*Martin checks his watch, turns TV on with a remote, watches it without sound.*

CHERYL Why watch TV with the sound off?

MARTIN When it comes to baseball, words get in the way. It's the Blue Jays.

*He watches. He reacts to the TV, throws a fist into the air.*

Yes!

CHERYL It seems to me . . .

MARTIN Cheryl, I've gotta watch this.

CHERYL . . . if you turned on the sou . . .

*Martin SNAPS HIS FINGERS. Cheryl freezes, stops talking mid-word. Martin watches the TV.*

MARTIN *(to the TV)* Yes!

*Martin jumps for joy.*

A grand slam! Yanks are going down again! Yes!

*Martin looks to Cheryl, who is frozen in place.*

*Martin SNAPS HIS FINGERS and Cheryl continues talking.*

CHERYL . . . nd you'd enjoy the whole experience, almost like being at the game. Is it the New York Yankees?

MARTIN They're the money team. The Jays have heart.

CHERYL The Toronto Blue Jays?

MARTIN       Of course! The Jays are all team spirit, full of heart. I love baseball. After I'm cremated, in my next life, I'm coming back as a professional baseball player.

*Cheryl EXITS into the US opening to the kitchen.*

*The phone rings. Martin turns off the TV with the remote and answers the phone.*

Martin and Norm's Quad-A Roofing. *(pause)* Oh, Norm. *(pause)* Problem? *(pause)* Sammy fell? *(pause)* A broken arm and possible concussion? *(pause)* We've got safety harnesses and procedures! The insurance will go up again! *(pause)* Okay, okay. I'll sort out our bookings. *(pause)* We'll manage with three crews. You reshuffle the crews; I'll reschedule and jobs. *(pause)* Norm, listen, I think we should get out of roofing, go into cement. I've studied it. Driveways and sidewalks are a cinch and the cost of insurance is less . . . *(pause)*

*Cheryl, wearing an apron, ENTERS from the kitchen with four letters.*

. . . Good. It's our plan. *(pause)* Once we finish up here, we'll go into cement. Thanks Norm. Goodbye.

*Martin hangs up.*

CHERYL       There's leftover meatloaf or frozen dinner.

*Cheryl hands the mail to Martin. Martin stands, goes through the mail.*

MARTIN       I've been looking forward to it.

CHERYL       Leftover meatloaf?

*Martin holds up one letter.*

MARTIN       My new health card!

*He takes out and inspects the card.*

It's got my change.

CHERYL       What change?

MARTIN       I'm donating my organs after I die. It's on the card.

CHERYL       You?!

MARTIN       Yes.

CHERYL       The most selfish person on the planet is making a donation?

MARTIN       Absolutely.

CHERYL       You wouldn't give a crumb to a starving man, now you want to give away your insides? *(confused, then new idea)* You'll sell them?

MARTIN If I sold my organs there could be enough for a week in the tropics, possibly a facial and spa, which I wouldn't need, being a pile of ashes. So, who'd be the one benefiting?

CHERYL I'd need to keep my spirits up.

MARTIN Marguerites have always lifted your spirits in the past.

*Cheryl jumps up.*

CHERYL Your organs could be making someone happy sooner than you think.

MARTIN When you remind me of me, it makes me love you more.

CHERYL Was that a compliment? or . . . but . . .

MARTIN I call it death insurance. I can sign you up.

CHERYL It was a prelude to a sales pitch.

MARTIN Can life insurance give one a new life if it is fatally damaged? No. Whereas, with death insurance, one gets exactly what one pays for.

CHERYL Why would anyone pay to die?

MARTIN I'll miss me when I'm gone, but my Dear, by having death insurance I reduce my chances to zero for waking up in a crematorium on fire! You're going for burial, right?

CHERYL There's a family plot.

MARTIN With my low cost, dollars a day, death insurance, one doesn't wake up in an oak coffin six feet under. Death is guaranteed before you go in.

CHERYL Martin, you can't be serious.

MARTIN I should be selling it door to door.

CHERYL I'll pass, thanks.

MARTIN I'm going into cement.

CHERYL Cement?

MARTIN Yes. Norm's going into cement too.

CHERYL I didn't know you could.

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF ACT 1, SCENE 1

ACT 1, SCENE 2

Time: Night.

Place: Martin and Cheryl's living room.

LIGHTS UP ON S.R., OUT ON S.L.

*Cheryl sits on the sofa. Martin ENTERS through the D.REV. door.*

MARTIN What a day.

CHERYL Roofing trouble?

*Martin moves to the computer. Types into it.*

MARTIN George Carson wants Quad-A to shingle his shed. Shed! We've got two churches and a half dozen houses lined up.

CHERYL I think it's a mistake.

MARTIN The shed?

CHERYL Going into cement!

MARTIN It's a modern world, Cheryl. I can go into cement, donate my organs, do anything I want. There are so many options.

*Martin turns on the TV with the remote, stands, watches it in silence.*

*(shouts)* Go, go, go!

CHERYL Why do you have to make so much noise to watch silent TV?

MARTIN The shortstop didn't run hard enough, got thrown out at third.

CHERYL Louder and you'd have him thrown in.

*He looks at her and shakes his head.*

Dinner in ten minutes.

*Cheryl EXITS into the kitchen. The phone RINGS. Martin answers it.*

MARTIN Hello, Martin and Norm's Quad-A Roofing. *(pause)* Oh, hi Donna. *(pause)* That's terrible. *(pause)* It's such a shock.

*Cheryl ENTERS from kitchen, senses the tension in Martin's voice, stands beside him.*

*Martin puts a hand over the phone.*

It's Donna.

CHERYL Donna?

MARTIN      Norm's Donna.

*Cheryl cringes and walks away.*

*(into phone)* Donna, hold on a minute. *(hand over phone)* Cheryl!

*Cheryl stops.*

Norm died in his sleep last night. They're not sure but, it could've been an aneurism or heart attack.

*Cheryl moves to Martin. He holds the receiver up for her to take. She cringes, backs away.*

Please.

*She takes the phone.*

I need a stiff drink.

*Martin leaves the room.*

CHERYL: *(into phone)* Hi Donna. It's Cheryl. Martin told me. I'm so sorry. It must be devastating. *(pause)* It's not so bad? *(pause)* He's never looked more relaxed? *(pause)* Yes, I would think . . . *(pause)* He wanted cremation. I understand. *(pause)* Martin wants the same. *(pause)* Are you sure he wanted his ashes scattered on the ocean at Peggy's Cove, Nova Scotia? *(pause)* Martin mentioned Norm wanted to go into cement. *(pause)* Martin wants to go into cement as well. *(pause)* Men need to feel secure even if they are just a pile of ashes. *(pause)* I'm sure the funeral home will accommodate Norm's last request.

LIGHTS OUT ON S.R.

END OF ACT 1, SCENE 2



ACT 1, SCENE 3

LIGHTS OUT ON S.R., UP ON S.L.

Time: A week later. Day.

Place: Funeral Home.

*Funeral music plays. A 18" w x 18" d x 18" h block of cement with a sturdy handle sits on a table. It has a gold plate with an engraving on its front.*

*DONNA (40) a well-proportioned woman, stands near the urn. She's dressed in a short, tight red dress that has a tonne of bling and she's heavily made up. Her top is quite revealing.*

*Martin and Cheryl ENTEREV. are shocked when they see Donna. They approach her.*

CHERYL We're so sorry for your loss Donna. If there is anything we can do . . .

*Martin goes to the urn, puts a hand on it, says a silent prayer.*

*(to Donna)* Norm and Martin were close.

*Martin joins Cheryl and Donna.*

MARTIN He was a good man. I relied on him to get the job done year in and year out.

*Martin looks to the cement urn.*

Donna, I've never seen an urn like this one. Are you sure it's what Norm would have wanted?

DONNA Norm told me he wanted his ashes spread on the ocean at Peggy's Cove, but I saw to it his last request was granted, to go into cement.

*Shock for Martin.*

MARTIN Into cement?!!

DONNA Cheryl said . . .

MARTIN My God!

DONNA Cheryl told me you want to join Norm in cement.

*More shock for Martin.*

*SAMMY (25), a rough looking, wiry, athletic male with a cast and sling over his left arm ENTERS, approaches Donna.*

*Donna and Sammy talk without sound. Sammy consoles Donna without sound.*

LIGHTS DIM ON SAMMY AND DONNA

*Martin and Cheryl move to the side.*

*LIGHTS UP ON MARTIN AND CHERYL:*

MARTIN Did you tell Donna Norm wanted a cement urn?

CHERYL I told her what you told me! That you and Norm wanted to go into cement!

MARTIN My God, Cheryl, I wasn't talking about ashes. I wanted a new business with Norm. A cement business! Sidewalks! Driveways!

CHERYL Oh oh.

*Donna and Sammy have light conversation without sound. Both smile, laugh.*

MARTIN We could see to it his actual last requested is granted, take him to the ocean and set his ashes free.

CHERYL It's the morally correct thing to do.

MARTIN Work's backed up. I don't know.

CHERYL What's the difference if his ashes are in cement or an ocean. They've got to be somewhere, right?

MARTIN Besides the loss of income there's the cost of getting there and getting the ashes out of the cement urn and into the ocean. Norm would understand.

CHERYL How about you?

MARTIN How about me what?

CHERYL If your ashes were where you didn't want them to be, and your friend decided to ignore your last request, and sink them into dark, cold cement, how would you like it?

MARTIN Ashes don't think.

CHERYL So they don't matter?

MARTIN Precisely.

CHERYL What does matter?

MARTIN We do, and the rest of the living world . . . but not as much as . . .

CHERYL Us? That's sweet. You've got a heart after all.

*Martin smiles.*

A tiny, cement heart, clunking along.

*Martin broad smiles.*

MARTIN You've inspired me to once more offer you my low cost, forever popular, death insurance. You'll get my today only spousal rate.

CHERYL Try it on your first wife.

MARTIN It doesn't speed up the process.

*Martin and Cheryl stroll to the side.*

LIGHT DIMS ON MARTIN AND CHERYL

LIGHTS UP ON SAMMY AND DONNA

*Donna and Sammy are at the urn. Martin and Cheryl, talk without sound.*

DONNA So, Sammy, have you been single long?

SAMMY A year ago I was devastated by my divorce, then Norm introduced me to Wanda. I was happy for a while, then I was devastated, depressed all over again when Wanda dumped me.

DONNA Norm told me he was sorry it didn't work out for you and Wanda.

SAMMY He said my depression would pass, but it didn't. I feel kinda responsible for Norm dying.

DONNA Nonsense.

SAMMY I was on the roof, feeling depressed so I decided to, you know.

*Sammy makes a jumping motion.*

. . . jump off the roof to end the pain.

DONNA Poor baby. Go ahead, get it off your chest.

SAMMY Norm tried to catch me, then we both went down hard. Norm broke my fall, saved me. Me landing on him mighta hurried Norm's death along.

DONNA *(smiling, empty-headed)* Feel better?

SAMMY A little.

DONNA Good. That's all in the past. Water over the bridge. We have to look to our future. You're okay now?

SAMMY Not my arm.

DONNA It looks serious.

SAMMY Broken in three places. All because I wanted Wanda.

*He holds up his broken arm.*

Damaged goods.

DONNA You're not ready for dancing, but you're okay for dinner and a show, right?

*He hesitates*

SAMMY Uhumm.

DONNA It's been pretty gloomy around the house. I could use some cheering up.

*Donna pulls out a business card and gives it to Sammy.*

The number's on the card.

*He looks at it.*

SAMMY It's Norm's card.

DONNA It'll work for me too.

*Sammy hesitates.*

Don't worry, Norm won't answer.

*Donna giggles, Sammy looks bewildered.*

SAMMY Good.

*She rubs up against him.*

You're refreshingly . . .

*He thinks for the right word.*

. . . uncomplicated.

DONNA Pick me up at 7.

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF ACT 1, SCENE 3

ACT 1, SCENE 4

LIGHTS OUT ON S.L., UP ON S.R.

Time: A week later. Night.

Place Martin and Cheryl's living room as before.

*Cheryl reads from a novel on the sofa.*

*The cement urn with Norm's ashes is on the TV or mantle.*

*Martin ENTERS through the D.REV. door, goes to the urn.*

MARTIN She didn't!

CHERYL She left Norm at the funeral home.

MARTIN Ditsy Glitzy Donna.

CHERYL The one and only.

MARTIN My God Cheryl, I know she's flaky, sort of absent minded, but she forgot Norm at the funeral home?

CHERYL Ditched him like a bad date.

MARTIN I've always wondered what Norm saw in her. Now I know. Thin air!

CHERYL Worse! A vacuum!

MARTIN Yeah.

CHERYL Give a gal ample bosom, a ton of Bling, caked on makeup and an exceptional tush and you've got every man's perfect woman.

MARTIN *(admonishing)* Now Cheryl.

CHERYL What?

MARTIN *(sarcastic)* You left out shopping.

CHERYL Ditsy Glitzy Donna. Her name suits her.

MARTIN Was it you or me who named her? I forget.

CHERYL At their wedding four years ago. You did the glitzy and I did the ditsy.

MARTIN Her low-cut wedding dress with the ridiculous amount of bling gave us glitzy, and her veil that swirled round and round her head like plastic wrap provided the ditsy.

CHERYL When the minister pronounced them man and wife then said you can now kiss the bride, it took five agonizing minutes to cut through the veil.

MARTIN Thankfully I had my utility knife. *(pause)* Something's been bothering me.

CHERYL What?

MARTIN The night before, at his stag, Norm got pretty drunk. He talked about Donna and Wanda. I'm sure he said he was marrying Wanda, not Donna. Why would he . . .

CHERYL *(shocked)* Wanda, Donna. They sound similar.

MARTIN *(shocked)* That explains the wide-eyed look on his face when the veil was removed.

*He married the wrong woman!*

CHERYL I thought he was overcome by her looks.

MARTIN He was in shock! Men on the rebound make stupid mistakes.

CHERYL It doesn't get stupider.

MARTIN Norm liked being married. It wouldn't matter to him.

CHERYL After the funeral home called about what to do about the urn, I called Donna. She said she didn't know what to do with them, so I had them sent over.

MARTIN She'd busted it open and flushed Norm down the toilet! I'm glad his ashes are here.

CHERYL Why?

*Martin goes to the urn.*

MARTIN It's been a week since the funeral.

CHERYL You're taking Norm's ashes to Peggy's Cove?

MARTIN Have to.

CHERYL Spread them over our lake here!

MARTIN I could, but then there's living with myself afterward.

CHERYL Norm was special.

MARTIN I couldn't have managed without him. I'll fly down, spread his ashes, and fly back.

CHERYL You hate flying. It makes you weird.

MARTIN I'll get over it.

CHERYL But . . .

MARTIN If you can take time from work, I'll stretch it to a couple days.

CHERYL I'll say there's a death in the family.

MARTIN Norm was like family.

CHERYL So, it'll be true.

MARTIN Absolutely.

CHERYL      We'll do it together.

*Electronic beeping comes from backstage.*

CHERYL      That's the leftover meatloaf calling us.

MARTIN      Norm would have been grateful for your leftover homemade meatloaf.

LIGHTS OUT.

End of Act 1, Scene 4

ACT 1, SCENE 5

LIGHTS OUT S.R., UP ON S.L.

Time: Morning.

Place: Halifax Hilton Hotel room.

*Two suitcases are by the door. The hotel room departure notice is on the UC door.*

*There is a bed.*

*Martin sprawls on the bed. Cheryl sits on the luggage, checks her watch.*

CHERYL The idiots are late.

MARTIN The idiot twins?

CHERYL Are you okay?

MARTIN Recovering.

CHERYL You tossed and turned the whole night.

MARTIN There was a ping pong ball bouncing around in my head and it's still bouncing.

CHERYL There was more turbulence than usual.

MARTIN Turbulence! That was a three-hour aerial roller coaster.

CHERYL It was turbulence!

MARTIN The Devil was driving that plane!

CHERYL Here we go again. You know it'll pass.

MARTIN I don't know what I know.

*Cheryl pulls a pamphlet from her purse, looks at it.*

CHERYL The Halifax Hilton has a lot going for it. You can get tours from the lobby.  
Martin sits up.

MARTIN My brain's not bouncing around as much as it was on the plane.

CHERYL Think about something else. Did you see the look on the woman's face at the airport?

MARTIN Airport? What airport? Oh, the airport. The baggage weigher or handler.

CHERYL Weigher.

MARTIN That was priceless. It took all my strength to get the luggage with Norm's urn off the cart and onto the scales.

CHERYL When she saw the weight her eyes swelled up.



MARTIN Her eyes screamed “possessed luggage”.

CHERYL I know she wanted to run screaming into the back.

*They chuckle.*

MARTIN And the baggage handler?

CHERYL Yeah. She was great, muscular, swinging luggage off the scales like pillows until . . .

MARTIN . . . she got to mine with Norm’s urn.

CHERYL Her body turned but her arm stayed with the bag.

*They chuckle.*

MARTIN It must have stretched a couple inches before she let go.

CHERYL Her little screech was cute.

*They chuckle.*

MARTIN Involuntary for sure.

CHERYL When we share these special times, it makes me think it’s all worthwhile.

MARTIN Really?

CHERYL Of course. Norm and Donna had their vacuum to share, and we have what we have. What do we have?

MARTIN What would you call it?

CHERYL Our superior sense of humor? You know . . . the baggage handler and weigher. They were so funny.

MARTIN Or sad.

CHERYL Probably both.

MARTIN Which makes it doubly funny.

CHERYL Or doubly sad.

MARTIN I don’t . . .

CHERYL *(interrupting)* Dumb people humor.

*She giggles.*

MARTIN That’s it. We’re hooked on dumb people humor.

CHERYL Do you think we’re normal?

MARTIN No.

*They laugh.*

CHERYL It was a big mistake to bring Donna and Sammy.

MARTIN I couldn't tell Donna she couldn't be at her husband's interment.

CHERYL They're not interested in what happens to Norm's ashes. They're here for a good time.

MARTIN When Norm introduced me to Donna, I hinted to him to avoid her, that she was bad news.

CHERYL How did you word it?

MARTIN Let me think. Yes, I said Norm, I'm sure Donna is more interested in the bag of Jango potato chips she's eating than you. I'm sure he never got past the word Jangos, thought I was saying they had Jangos in common.

CHERYL Jangos are a tasty, light snack.

MARTIN They necked all the way down on the plane.

CHERYL Most of the way.

MARTIN The rest of the time was spent in the bathroom . . . doing what two prehistoric, sex starved morons would do. They were in there for an hour.

CHERYL Passengers were crossing their legs, lined up down the aisle as far as I could see.

MARTIN When the first officer unlocked the lavatory and dragged them out screaming and half-dressed, people wanted to lynch them.

CHERYL I'm surprised they weren't arrested when we landed.

MARTIN They'll have to find another way home.

CHERYL No. The airline will fly them back.

MARTIN Cheryl, guys were pissing in bottles. They'll never let them fly back.

CHERYL The airline needs their business. Want to bet?

MARTIN Fifty.

*They shake hands.*

I saw them at the airline security counter after we got off the plane.

CHERYL Cheater. Once they get here, we'll go straight to Peggy's Cove for the interment.

*A KNOCK on the door. Martin opens it.*

*Donna and Sammy, lovie-dovie, ENTER.*

MARTIN Good morning.

DONNA Yeah.

SAMMY We're a little late.

*Martin checks his watch.*

MARTIN An hour and twenty-three minutes!

CHERYL We need to get to Peggy's Cove with the urn.

DONNA Oh, I had no idea.

CHERYL I've got to get back for work.

DONNA So, you want to do the ashes show at the ocean right away?

MARTIN Yes! It's an hour to the Cove, then we need to be back for the flight.

SAMMY We've got other plans.

DONNA We kinda planned to go to the magnetic hill.

SAMMY You've heard about it? It's where a car rolls up hill, all by itself?

CHERYL It's an optical illu . . .

*Martin snaps his fingers, stopping Cheryl in mid word.*

*Donna and Sammy stare blankly at Cheryl then to Martin.*

MARTIN Unidentified magnetic forces cause cars to roll up hill! UMF! The forces work on cars, trucks, all kinds of transportation, makes them roll up hill! Isn't that weird?

DONNA Oh, we gotta see that.

*Martin snaps his fingers.*

CHERYL . . . sion.

*Confused, Donna and Sammy look at each other.*

SAMMY Yeah, the magnetic hill.

DONNA Or maybe we should watch the ashes show.

CHERYL It's not a show. My God, woman, must everything be a show?

DONNA They'll fly through the air, won't they?

CHERYL Donna! It's not like fireworks!

DONNA In that case I'm pretty sure we'll be going to the magnetic hill instead.

SAMMY Yeah. The hill.

CHERYL The magnetic hill will be a better show. I guarantee it.

DONNA You're sure we should go to the hill?

MARTIN Go to the hill! Play with unidentified magnetic forces and let us know how it went. Some people think aliens control it.

DONNA Really?

MARTIN Yeah. Aliens.

SAMMY Wow.

MARTIN We'll see you both back home later in the week.

DONNA You're sure?

MARTIN Very sure.

*Martin checks his watch.*

If you leave now, you'll get there just in time to see unidentified magnetic forces pull a fire engine up hill. They keep one there for demonstrations.

SAMMY A fire engine moving up hill on its own?

MARTIN They turn on the siren and all the flashing lights. It's quite a show.

DONNA Will there be fireworks?

MARTIN During the day?

DONNA Yeah. I was hoping for fireworks.

MARTIN Sure. There's an amazing fireworks display.

*Donna looks bewildered.*

*(to Cheryl)* It boggles the mind.

*Donna and Sammy jump up.*

DONNA We'll get breakfast on the way.

*Donna and Sammy RUSH OUT.*

CHERYL Are you pleased with yourself?

MARTIN I boggled two half minds.

CHERYL That's my man.

*Cheryl kisses Martin.*

MARTIN I did it for every distressed bladder on the plane.

*Martin throws his right fist into the air.*

Justice!

CHERYL Maybe we should open the urn here, take the ashes in a bag.

MARTIN And leave half of Norm's ashes on the hotel floor? No, I'm not sweeping half of Norm up. He's going entirely and straight into the ocean.

CHERYL How can you . . .

MARTIN I brought my roofing hammer. We'll find a high point overlooking the ocean and let them fly from there.

CHERYL We could rent a boat.

MARTIN Cheryl, this trip is costing me an arm and a leg. We don't need any more expense.

CHERYL      You're okay with the roofing hammer, right?

MARTIN      It's the power nailers I'm not good with. I'm a pro with my hammer.

CHERYL      You won't bang your finger, right? It's just that . . .

*Martin snaps his fingers. Cheryl freezes, stops talking mid-sentence.*

MARTIN      My roofing skills have been handed down from generation to generation. It was my father's tool of choice, and now it's mine.

LIGHTS OUT.

END ACT 1, SCENE 5

ACT 1, SCENE 6

LIGHTS OUT S.L., UP ON S.R.

Time: Afternoon.

Place: Hospital room.

*A chair, wheelchair and a bed.*

*A hanging white hospital curtain divides a bed from another bed.*

*Martin sits in the wheelchair. A female doctor finishes bandaging his head. Martin also has a cast on his left arm and on his right leg.*

*A POLICEMAN is prepared to talk to Martin.*

*Cheryl sits and reads a magazine to the side.*

DOCTOR *(to Martin)* You've had a severe concussion. You'll need rest then have an MRI taken.

COP *(to Martin)* Were there witnesses to the fatality?

MARTIN Yes, my wife Cheryl. She's over there.

*Martin points to Cheryl. The policeman goes to Cheryl.*

COP Your husband said you witnessed the event.

CHERYL I saw every . . .

*Martin snaps his fingers. Cheryl stops talking. Martin wheels over to the policeman by Cheryl.*

*Frustrated, the doctor EXITS.*

COP *(to Martin)* How did you do that?

MARTIN Magic fingers.

*The policeman snaps his fingers. Cheryl remains mute.*

If you don't arrest me, I'll teach you.

COP Sir, your condition is unstable.

MARTIN I was high up, banging on cement with my hammer. I couldn't make a dent in it, then I slipped, and that's the last thing I remember until I woke on the ground.

COP Why were you banging on cement?

MARTIN I needed to set Norm free.

COP Where was Norm?

MARTIN Imprisoned.

COP A prison break?

MARTIN Cement is very hard.

COP *(confused)* Sir, I think you'd better rest. I'll talk to you later.

*Martin snaps his fingers again.*

CHERYL . . . thing from the car.

COP Weird! *(to Cheryl)* You saw everything from the car?

CHERYL I just said that!

*Martin wheels his wheelchair toward the officer, tries to move between him and Cheryl.*

COP *(to Martin)* Please move back. I won't arrest anyone unless I suspect a murder has been committed.

*The policeman pushes Martin's chair to the side.*

CHERYL Martin! The officer thinks the knock on your head has rearranged its contents.

MARTIN What was I doing on that high rock?

CHERYL Setting Norm free. Remember?

*A shrug from Martin.*

*(to the Cop)* They've lost their marbles!

SAMMY Uhhhhuuuu!

COP What was that?

SAMMY *(weakly)* Ahhhhuuuuuu. I'm Sammy. I know.

*Cheryl pulls a curtain aside.*

*A mannequin lays on a bed in a body cast, entirely covered in white plaster (Sammy speaks through it.)*

*The officer goes to Sammy.*

COP Sir, did you witness the accident?

SAMMY I waaaaas the accident! Uhhuuuu!

COP Of course. I'm sorry. You're in a lot of pain.

SAMMY Everyyyyyyything hhhurts reeeal baaad!

COP Can you tell me, from your point of view, such as it is, or was, what happened?

SAMMY Donna and I were looking for Martin and Cheryl. *(scream)* They were going to set Donna's husband free.

COP So I've heard. Who was her husband?

SAMMY Norm.

COP Why were you with Donna?

SAMMY We were dating.

COP You were dating Donna while her husband Norm was locked up. Is that it?

SAMMY We wanted to help set him free, (*scream*) but it didn't work out.

MARTIN I know one thing for sure.

COP What's that?

MARTIN Who's on first. Definitely. I'm sure of it.

COP So, what prison was this Norm in?

MARTIN On second. No, he's, let me think . . .

SAMMY . . . in a cement prison!

COP Did anyone set him free?

MARTIN No, I'm pretty sure he's still in there.

COP Good. He sounds like a dangerous offender.

MARTIN He'll be there until I get him out.

COP Breaking a prisoner out of a secure facility is a serious offence.

CHERYL My God, Martin, will you please shut up!

*Martin goes to snap his fingers and the policeman grabs his hand.*

COP I'll need backup on this one.

*The policeman reaches for his radio.*

CHERYL I'm the only one who wasn't injured. I know what happened.

MARTIN Cheryl, I think I was involved.

CHERYL Shut up! Who's on first? A lot of help you are.

MARTIN Well, he is, and I believe, don't quote me, but I believe Norm could be on second, third, or worse, maybe . . . still in cement?!

CHERYL Shut it!

*Martin goes to snap the fingers on his other hand. The policeman grabs that hand and holds both hands.*

COP (*to Cheryl*) Go ahead.

CHERYL Norm isn't in the slammer. He isn't a prisoner. He's a pile of ashes that was encased in a cement block because of a block head misunderstanding.

COP The one that did the damage?



CHERYL Yes. My husband, Martin, was on a high rock with his hammer and the cement urn.

COP Where were you?

CHERYL In the car waiting for my husband to set Norm's ashes free into the Cove. The wind was to blow them up and over the water.

*The policeman lets go of Martin's hands.*

MARTIN That's when I slipped! I remember slipping, then nothing. *(hesitates)*

COP *(to Cheryl)* Please go on.

CHERYL My husband, the one with the concurrent mouth and brain damage, fell off the rock with the cement urn just as Sammy and Donna wandered haplessly under.

*Martin starts to snap his fingers and the policeman warns him with a finger wag.*

COP Why were they there?

CHERYL I haven't a clue.

MARTIN They were supposed to be watching aliens work unidentified magnetic forces.

COP Aliens?

MARTIN They were performing tricks on cars . . . even a fire engine.

SAMMY Ohhhh my body. Ahhhha. They told me every bone's broken.

COP *(to Sammy)* Please tell me what you know.

SAMMY Every bone! *(scream)* Donna wanted to send Norm off with a bag of Jangos. *(scream)* It was their favorite food.

COP Jangos?

SAMMY A light, refreshing, tasty potato chip snack. *(scream)* She thought it would be cool to throw a handful of Jangos into the air *(scream)* with Norm's ashes.

COP It didn't work out that way, did it?

SAMMY No. Now she's dead *(scream)* killed by her dead husband. *(scream)* That's murder!

COP This Norm is a dangerous offender!

CHERYL Donna's head got in the way of the falling cement urn, then Martin landed on Sammy. Sammy broke my husband's fall, probably saved his life.

SAMMY That doesn't sound right.

CHERYL You saving Martin?

SAMMY *(scream)* A few days ago I was involved in Norm's death.

MARTIN You?

SAMMY *(scream)* Because I tried to kill myself by jumping off a roof.

MARTIN You?

SAMMY Norm died because he broke my fall, now Norm kills Donna by landing on her head?

MARTIN Norm was killed by you, a suicidal idiot?!

SAMMY Uhhhhh. I think so.

MARTIN Memo to self. Never hire depressed people when heights are involved.

COP How many murders are we talking about here? I'm definitely going to need backup.

*The policeman reaches for the radio.*

CHERYL There are no murders. A block of cement can't be charged with anything.

MARTIN *(to Sammy)* If you hadn't jumped off the roof, Norm would be alive and none of this would have happened!

SAMMY Yeah. *(scream)* It was Wanda's fault.

CHERYL How's that?

SAMMY I was wanting Wanda and well, you know.

MARTIN Wanda?

SAMMY My ex-girlfriend.

MARTIN Norm talked about wanting to marry a Wanda at his stag.

SAMMY Norm and Wanda were an item for a while. *(scream)* At Norm's wedding Wanda had a nail appointment she couldn't cancel, so had Donna take her place and marry Norm. *(scream)* Later Wanda and I were an item, then she dumped me, all because of Jangos.

COP Jangos?

SAMMY Norm and I ate Jangos in bed. Wanda didn't like Jangos in the sheets.

MARTIN Jangos killed everybody!

*The policeman has his pen and pad out.*

COP *(to Sammy)* Can you give me the last name and address of this Wanda?

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF ACT 1, SCENE 6

ACT 1, SCENE 7

LIGHTS OUT S.R., UP ON S.L.

Time: Night.

Place: Halifax Hilton Hotel room.

*Martin is in a wheelchair with arm and leg still in casts. Cheryl stands beside him. There are two suitcases and the bed.*

MARTIN I keep seeing an effervescent, amber glass of beer.

CHERYL That's nice.

MARTIN Millions of bubbles shoot up the length of the glass, through the marvelous amber liquid and pop out the top like magic. It looks like Heaven.

CHERYL Martin, you've had a concussion. You're bound to see strange things.

MARTIN This is real. More real than anything else.

CHERYL If you say so.

MARTIN When I see beer I don't see the glass. Only after the beer is drunk do I see the listless, lifeless glass.

CHERYL So?

MARTIN All glasses should be full to the top of bubbly people. Empty glasses scare me, everyone.

CHERYL We'll be home soon. Half an hour in the taxi, three to four hours flying and one driving and we'll be home.

MARTIN Good.

CHERYL Norm's ashes are now free and so are we. How are you coping?

MARTIN I keep thinking back.

CHERYL To the easy life of roofing? Remember how we'd relax in the whirlpool tub?

MARTIN I was thinking of another time.

CHERYL Oh?

MARTIN I remember not wanting to rent a boat because the trip was costing me an arm and a leg.

*He lifts his arm and leg in casts a little.*

What do you think?

CHERYL You still have them.

MARTIN But for how long?

CHERYL Martin!

MARTIN As soon as I said it, about costing an arm and a leg, I set unseen wheels in motion, wheels that took me here to this painful place.

CHERYL Unidentified magnetic forces?

MARTIN UMF?

CHERYL Alien forces.

MARTIN It's a concussion. I'm not brain dead.

CHERYL Just testing.

MARTIN Cheryl, we did set Norm's ashes free, didn't we? I vaguely remember seeing them fly over the ocean.

CHERYL Yes, we did my love.

MARTIN Was it a disaster like the rest?

CHERYL This time no-one died, but yes, there was a kind of casualty.

MARTIN Again?

CHERYL It didn't go as planned.

MARTIN Correct me if I'm missing something. It was my brilliant idea to drop the urn again onto a plastic sheet on the rocks, and this time nobody's head got in the way. We freed Norm from the cement and put him in a Mason jar.

CHERYL We did.

MARTIN We rented a skiff and set out to sea with the ashes in the jar.

CHERYL Anything else?

MARTIN We tested the wind, and when it was just right, I let them fly, and fly they did. Wasn't there a bag of Jangos?

CHERYL You insisted I throw an open bag into the air with the ashes.

MARTIN I did?

CHERYL You did.

MARTIN The cloud stretched at least twenty feet in the air.

CHERYL (*dread*) Then it moved.

MARTIN Yes, yes, I remember the cloud moved over a, a . . . old, crusty fisherman in his skiff . . . about a hundred feet away.

*Cheryl nods.*

Yes, I see it clearer now. When the cloud cleared the fisherman screamed an obscenity, jumped up, started the skiff.

CHERYL Wild eyed, with line trailing behind, he made a bee line for shore. We terrified an innocent fisherman.

MARTIN As he roared past, he held up the bag of Jangos, screamed something. What was it?

CHERYL It was . . .

MARTIN That's it! "Aliens eat Jangos"! I must have imagined that, right?

CHERYL No. He's probably on a newscast.

MARTIN Or in a mental institution.

CHERYL UMF in action.

MARTIN You know we've got to look for the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, to the silver lining in every cloud, to the bright side of every misery . . . right?

CHERYL What, in your sad state, could you possibly see as a bright side to all of this?

MARTIN We'll be able to use the bathroom on the plane on the way home.

CHERYL That's good to know.

MARTIN I hope it's an easier return flight. No Devil pilot, no ping pong ball roller coaster ride.

CHERYL I have some unsettling news.

MARTIN Give it to me. Better here than on the plane.

CHERYL We'll have to attend Ditsy Glitzy Donna's funeral.

MARTIN I'm not looking forward to it.

CHERYL Neither am I.

MARTIN Once that's over we'll get our lives back to normal.

CHERYL That would be nice.

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF ACT 1, SCENE 7

ACT 1, SCENE 8

LIGHTS OUT ON S.L., UP ON S.R.

Time: Two nights later.

Place: Martin and Cheryl's living room as before.

*Martin is in the wheelchair at his computer. The bandages and casts are gone.*

*Cheryl ENTERS from the kitchen. Martin hits a key with a flourish and turns to Cheryl.*

MARTIN That does it. I've wound up Norm and Martin's Roofing with one key stroke.

CHERYL We're out of business?

MARTIN With Norm dead and me and Sammy down east, the crews performed well. They got all the work done, made us some money, so I gave them the business.

CHERYL Martin, you shouldn't have given away the business. You're not well. Honey, you need to recover.

*Martin tentatively stands from the wheelchair.*

MARTIN See. I don't need this wheelchair or the business.

CHERYL That's good, but Martin, you've still got a concussion and you can't just get up from that.

*He walks around, carefully at first.*

MARTIN I'm fine. There's enough to start my cement business and the boys are ecstatic about having their own roofing company.

CHERYL Until one of them jumps off a roof when his Honey dumps him.

MARTIN That'll change their tune.

CHERYL The funeral is on Friday, at the Simmons Funeral Home.

MARTIN Things happen to me at funerals. I don't know if I can attend.

CHERYL You need to go.

MARTIN Thinking about it makes my head hurt.

CHERYL You won't be breaking open a cement urn on a rock far from home. It's just down the street.

MARTIN I don't think I've been the same since my fall.

CHERYL I find cornflakes in the fridge and ice cream in the cupboard, and you gave away the business! The doctor said you would need a six-month recovery period.

MARTIN I'm holding off on going into cement 'til I'm certain I've fully recovered.

CHERYL      Good idea. Rev. Susan Gray will perform the service.

MARTIN      For DGD?

CHERYL      Yes, Susan will conduct the service. She's a friend of mine from college. She knows you and I were friends with DGD and Norm, so she volunteered to conduct the service.

MARTIN      That's nice of her.

CHERYL      DGD didn't have any siblings. Her parents passed, and she and Norm had few friends. Rev. Susan said normally we'd be the only ones at the funeral since no one knew much about her.

MARTIN      The word "normally" scares me.

CHERYL      Susan said the church will likely be full because DGD was an organ donor. Relatives of the recipients will fill the church.

MARTIN      That's right. I convinced Norm to sign up for organ donation. He must have convinced DGD to do the same.

CHERYL      Death insurance in action.

MARTIN      Just by signing their organ donor cards. Simple. I sent her card with his. I'm pleased to know others would benefit from their tragic end.

CHERYL      You've had quite an influence on a lot of people.

MARTIN      Indirectly.

CHERYL      I'm feeling better about organ donation.

MARTIN      My brain won't be suitable for donating, will it?

CHERYL      Brain damaged people don't tend to donate. Rev. Gray said there will be a surprise mourner.

MARTIN      My love, after all I've been through, I'm surprise-proof.

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF ACT 1, SCENE 8

ACT 1, SCENE 9

LIGHTS OUT ON S.R., UP ON S.L.

Time: Night.

Place: Funeral Home.

*A ceramic urn is on a table and a chair beside the table. Five photos of young people are on and around the table.*

*Rev. Susan Gray talks to a woman in black at the casket. A black veil hides the woman's face.*

*Martin and Cheryl ENTER.*

CHERYL We're in time.

MARTIN Too bad.

CHERYL We owe Donna at least a visitation.

MARTIN I'll say a prayer and be on my way.

*Martin sits. Rev. Susan Gray turns away from the woman in black with a black veil, moves to Martin and Cheryl.*

REV. GRAY *(to Cheryl)* How nice of you to come.

*Cheryl checks her watch.*

CHERYL We weren't sure you'd still be here.

REV. GRAY The room was full of relatives of donor recipients from both Norm and Donna.

*She points to the photos.*

REV. GRAY Many people will live because of Norm and Donna's unselfishness.

CHERYL *(looks at photos)* They are so youthful.

*Martin mouths a silent prayer.*

REV. GRAY Lungs, kidneys, liver, even a heart have gone to give people new leases on life.

MARTIN Hallelujah and Amen.

*Martin jumps up.*

Cheryl, lets go.

*Martin moves toward the door.*

REV. GRAY Martin, someone who's come a long way wants to meet you.

*Martin stops, turns back. The woman in black moves to Martin and Cheryl.*

*The woman in black lifts her veil. She is THE IMAGE OF DONNA.*



WOMAN Hello, I'm . . .

MARTIN My God! DGD's back from the dead!

REV. GRAY No, you don't . . .

*Martin staggers into Cheryl.*

MARTIN *(interrupting)* With her bag of Jangos.

*Cheryl grabs him.*

Here to haunt me!

REV. GRAY Martin.

MARTIN I didn't kill you! It was Norm!

*The woman in black puts a hand on Martin's shoulder. Martin passes out. Cheryl brings Martin around. He's groggy.*

MARTIN What happened?

CHERYL You passed out.

REV. GRAY Martin, this isn't Donna's ghost. It's Debra, Donna's twin sister.

MARTIN Twin sister?

CHERYL Donna had a twin sister.

*Cheryl motions to Dr. Debra.*

Dr. Debra.

MARTIN Oh. I thought . . . I hope you understand. Norm didn't kill anyone. He loved Donna.

DR. DEBRA I understand completely. I owe you an explanation. I'm a pediatrician in California. My husband Henry is a surgeon, and we have two wonderful children.

REV. GRAY Dr. Debra has been looking for Donna for a month and has only recently tracked her down.

DR. DEBRA Donna and I were identical twins, separated at birth. My biological mother gave me up for adoption because of a bad marriage and money problems.

MARTIN You gave me quite a scare.

DR. DEBRA I see how you would assume I was Donna.

*Martin turns Cheryl to the side.*

MARTIN *(to Cheryl)* She's the complete opposite of DGD!

DR. DEBRA I was hoping you could tell me something about my sister.

MARTIN About DGD?

CHERYL Yes. We called her DGD because . . .

MARTIN . . . because she was . . . what was it?

CHERYL She was was . . . let me remember . . . Oh, right . . . Delightfully Generous Donna.

MARTIN She'd do anything for anyone.

CHERYL Very special.

MARTIN Actually, when we think of her, we think back and realize she was a, a, a sort of . . .

CHERYL . . . an angel?

DR. DEBRA That's commendable. I had no idea Donna even existed until my adoptive mother told me about her just before she passed away.

CHERYL So you set out to find your long-lost identical twin.

REV. GRAY It's unfortunate you had to find her when it was too late.

DR. DEBRA I felt a part of me had died when I saw the death notice.

REV. GRAY A tremendous shock.

CHERYL We'll tell you what we can about her.

MARTIN Sometimes we called her DGD, our special uhum, angel. Delightfully Generous Donna.

*Donna helped us and everyone she knew.*

CHERYL Ask us anything. We'll fill you in on how thoughtful and generous DGD was.

DR. DEBRA I heard there was a man with her when she had that unfortunate accident.

MARTIN No.

CHERYL I can't remember anyone.

REV. GRAY His name was Sammy, wasn't it?

CHERYL Oh, Sammy, right.

MARTIN He's long gone. I'm sure of it.

REV. GRAY I heard he's in the hospital; that he suffered some injuries.

MARTIN Oh, right, our Sammy, one of our staff.

CHERYL He was kind enough to escort Donna to the coast. He's in pretty bad shape in the hospital.

MARTIN I doubt if he'll survive.

DR. DEBRA I have to get back to LA today, but I'll be back as soon as possible to talk with him about my sister. He probably knew Donna very well.

MARTIN As I recall, they spent some quality time together on the plane.

*Cheryl kicks Martin without anyone noticing.*

DR. DEBRA In that case I'd definitely like to talk with him.

MARTIN We'll visit him together, right Cheryl?

CHERYL I'm sure he'll be taking visitors.

DR. DEBRA There's no need.

MARTIN No sense in giving him a heart attack when he sees you.

CHERYL Although, a good, old-fashioned heart attack could be in his future.

MARTIN He's sorta traumatized by the fall, so him having a heart attack isn't out of the question, is it Cheryl?

CHERYL Not at all. Poor man.

DR. DEBRA It's kind of you to visit him to let him know about how important Donna's memory is to me.

CHERYL It's important for us to see that Donna's memory is a pleasant one for you, your children, your whole family and everyone who knew her. Isn't it, Martin?

MARTIN Absolutely.

LIGHTS OUT.

END OF ACT 1 – END OF SAMPLE