

# **MEETING MERYL**

**a short comedy**

**by Jim Curtis**

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FADE IN:

INT. LIVING ROOM- DAY

There is a couch on one wall and a bar next to it. There is a front door and a side door.

EMMA, 20s, stands on her head in the middle of the room.

JIM, her Dad, 50s, enters through the side door. He wears pajamas and a bathrobe.

EMMA

AAHH! DAD! You're supposed to be dead!

She collapses onto the floor.

JIM

And you're supposed to be at the audition.

He looks around the room.

EMMA

What are you doing here?

JIM

I came to see you.

EMMA

But you've been dead for like ten years!

JIM

So figure it out.

Jim attempts to stand on his head. He falls and Emma helps him get up.

JIM (CONT'D)

So you can think of someone besides yourself!

EMMA

You never could--and I sure as hell don't want to be like you.

Jim looks at the couch.

JIM

What happened to the couch I died on?

EMMA  
Mom got rid of it.

JIM  
Without telling me?

EMMA  
You were like dead.

Jim lies down on the couch.

JIM  
Good point.

Emma's mother, Barbara, 50s, comes in. She goes to the bar and takes down a glass.

Jim rolls over.

Barbara looks for ice, doesn't see any, and goes out.

Emma stands up and heads for the bar.

Barbara comes in carrying an ice bucket.

EMMA  
I hate you!

Barbara puts some ice in a glass.

BARBARA  
Oh...You're just saying that...

EMMA  
NO I'M NOT!

BARBARA  
Here--have a drink.

Barbara pours Emma a drink of scotch and hands it to her.

EMMA  
That's your solution to everything,  
isn't it?

Emma dances around the room, holding the glass of scotch high in the air.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
"Have a drink! Have a drink!"

She stops in front of a plant.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
Oh...sweet plant!

Emma bends over and caresses the plant.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
Have a drink, sweet plant!

She empties the glass onto the plant.

BARBARA  
Emma! You just killed that plant!

EMMA  
You gotta start somewhere...

Jim fidgets on the couch.

Barbara pours herself a glass of scotch and takes a sip.

BARBARA  
You'll do anything to keep from going  
to the audition, won't you?

EMMA  
DON'T SAY THAT!

BARBARA  
Lots of young actresses would give  
their left breast to audition for  
Meryl Streep, but not you--oh no!

EMMA  
STOP IT!

Emma throws the glass and the front door opens. It sails  
through the front door.

Barbara smiles and takes another sip of scotch.

JIM  
Will you two hold it down? I'm trying  
to get some rest here!

EMMA  
You don't need to rest--you're dead.

JIM  
Being dead takes a lot of energy.

EMMA  
How much?

There is a knock at the door.

JIM  
A lot.

BARBARA

Come in--whoever you are.

BARRY, 20s, enters. He carries a cup of coffee in a cardboard container. He and Emma don't see each other at first.

BARRY

It's me, Barbara.

Barbara lifts her glass in greeting.

BARBARA

Welcome to the party!

BARRY

(to Emma)

Hey!

EMMA

I'm tired, and I'm not even dead.

Emma lies down on the floor.

BARRY

Really?

Emma turns to look at Barry.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Yeah--really.

BARRY

You make love like you're dead.

EMMA

So do you.

(beat)

EMMA (CONT'D)

Dad, meet Barry. Barry provided some assistance when I wanted to lose my virginity.

BARRY

Like who are you talking to?

EMMA

My dad.

Jim sits up and looks at Barry.

BARRY

Your dad died ten years ago.

EMMA

He's here, and he's as alive as I am--  
which is not very.

BARRY

You're weird, you know that?

BARBARA

Emma's not going to the audition.

BARRY

The audition with Meryl Streep?

EMMA

I'm not going.

BARRY

That's what you said when we were  
supposed to go see The Devil Wears  
Prada.

Barry puts the ear buds from his iPod into his ears and  
fiddles with the controls. Finally he finds the song he  
wants and smiles.

BARRY (CONT'D)

Then you went anyhow.

Emma turns on her side away from Barry.

EMMA

So?

BARRY

So you must be the only person in  
the world who cried during The Devil  
Wears Prada.

EMMA

Meryl was so great that she brought  
tears to my eyes.

BARRY

Why are you not very alive?

EMMA

I'll die when Meryl rejects me, so I  
might as well get it over with.

Jim points to Barry.

JIM

Is he the best you could do?

EMMA

You'd criticize anybody I slept with!

JIM

Did you practice safe sex?

EMMA

Sex is never safe.

JIM

What?

EMMA

It was physically safe, and...

JIM

And...?

EMMA

Emotionally unsafe.

BARRY

You cried! I didn't know what to do.

JIM

Do men come and go in your life?

EMMA

I take after Mom.

BARBARA

Don't start with me, young lady.

EMMA

You're the one who's starting--you're starting early, even for you.

BARBARA

And I don't even like the taste of Scotch.

Barbara pours out her drink and throws the bottle into the wastebasket.

EMMA

And anyhow...

BARBARA

Anyhow what?

EMMA

I'm not starting anything--I'm ending something.

BARBARA

Ending what?

Barry takes out his earbuds.

BARRY

Yeah--ending what?

EMMA

Yes...ending what? There must be something that I can end. Let me see...

Emma sits up.

LINDA, 30s, an angel dressed like a high-fashion model, enters.

In one hand Linda carries the glass that Emma threw. In the other she carries a handbag. She puts them both down on the table.

Emma, Barbara, Jim, and Barry freeze for a moment, and then resume whatever they were doing.

BARBARA

You have so much to live for.

EMMA

I bet Lindsay Lohan hears that from her mom all the time.

Emma pounds on the floor with her fists.

EMMA (CONT'D)

So even screwed up Lindsay Lohan, could sort of hold her own with Meryl in A Prairie Home Companion...

BARBARA

So?

EMMA

So I could never do that.

Linda steps back from Emma.

LINDA

Arise and walk!

Linda motions for Emma to get up, and she does.

Linda stands up, dusts off her hands, and turns as if to leave.