

The Girl Who Didn't Exist

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Cast of Characters

<u>Lucan</u> :	About 50, he is old and miserable
<u>Maria</u> :	Lucan's dead wife, she is now his imagination at about 20
<u>Jacob</u> :	Lucan and Maria's son
<u>Sandy</u> :	Lucan and Maria's daughter

Scene

Lucan's livingroom

Time

A morning

ACT I/SCENE 1

At Rise: LUCAN is waking up on his bed, and MARIA in a white gown is standing at his bedside. LUCAN sits up on the bed and reaches for the pills on his dresser, taking them with a glass of water. MARIA is smiling at him as he finishes the routine.

MARIA

Well done, Lucan.

LUCAN

Yeah, yeah.

MARIA

How do you feel?

LUCAN

Just as yesterday. Just as the day before. The day before that, and the day before that, for eight months now. And yet you ask me that every morning.

MARIA

It's because I care about you.

LUCAN

I know you do. That's why you put up with this wrinkled, old bag. I do feel like all my insides will one day pour out of me.

MARIA

Don't say that.

LUCAN

It's not a pretty picture, but the love of your life is beat up. I won't last long.

MARIA

You will, because you're strong. You've captained big ships. This is nothing.

LUCAN

This is nothing? I feel like a punching bag. I'll get tired of getting hit and just fall down. My sailing days are long over. Sorry Maria, but I'm one percent of the man I used to be.

MARIA

Let's not talk about dying. What about spring, and birds, and flowers?

LUCAN

I don't want to. I just don't.

MARIA

Why? Why do you always say things that depresses me?

LUCAN

Because I'm depressed.

MARIA

What will make you happy?

LUCAN

Nothing.

MARIA

What about me? Can't I make you happy?

LUCAN

You sustain me, Maria. If it weren't for you I'd be dead and buried. Be content that I'm alive to be miserable.

MARIA

The children should be here shortly.

LUCAN

Bah. You know how many times they've visited me in the last twenty years?

MARIA

Three times in the last year.

LUCAN

They're all after my money. I clothed them. Sent them to a decent college, and they forgot about me when I got old.

MARIA

It hurts, I know.

(MARIA helps LUCAN out of the bed.)

LUCAN

What would I do without you, Maria?

MARIA

You'd somehow make it.

LUCAN

What do you think I should have for breakfast?

MARIA

Something healthy, to give you strength.

LUCAN

How about cornflakes.

(LUCAN coughs.)

MARIA

I approve. But I think the kids are bringing you breakfast, just as they did last week.

LUCAN

They brought me take-out. They surely want to quicken my death.

MARIA

There, there, Lucan. Just see what they bring first. They should be here any minute. It's just about eight.

LUCAN

I don't want them to come see me. It's all pretense with them. For twenty years they abandoned me. Never called. Now that I'm dying they put me on a pedestal to be worshiped.

MARIA

I'm really disappointed in them. But they're still our kids.

LUCAN

They can have my money. The will is already written. If it weren't for you, Maria, I wouldn't give them a penny. Not one Penny! I'd give it all to the neighbors.

(There is a knock.)

MARIA

They're here.

LUCAN

My executioners have arrived!

MARIA

Please, Lucan, be friendly to our children. I'll not have you saying things like that to them.

LUCAN

I'm speaking out of bitterness.

MARIA

You will handle yourself appropriately in front of them.

LUCAN

I can't promise you anything. My bitterness has a mind of its own.

(The knock continues.)

LUCAN

Coming!

(LUCAN goes and escorts his children onstage.)

JACOB

How are you, father?

MARIA

Hello, Jacob.

LUCAN

Terrible. I feel terrible, okay.

SANDY

I hope you get better soon.

MARIA

(hands on cheeks, excited)
Sandy, my girl.

LUCAN

(To Sandy)
Really!? Really!?

MARIA

Calm down, Lucan.

LUCAN

How can I calm down?

JACOB

Who are you talking to?

LUCAN

I'm talking to myself. The effects of old age.

(LUCAN coughs.)

SANDY

What are your plans for the day?

LUCAN

Sulk. Roll around on my bed. Groan. And sulk. And roll.

JACOB

What if we take you out somewhere nice?

LUCAN

I only go out when necessary. People run away from my death coughs. I don't enjoy going out anymore.

JACOB

You used to enjoy fishing.

LUCAN

That was a long time ago, when we were a family.

SANDY

We're still a family.

LUCAN

You two showed up a couple of weeks ago, twenty years after your mother's death.

SANDY

But you never stop being our father, and we your children.

LUCAN

Words will not get you anywhere.

SANDY

We brought you something to eat. Have you had breakfast yet?

MARIA

(To LUCAN)

See, they did bring you breakfast.

LUCAN

They unwillingly did. (To SANDY and JACOB) What is it?

JACOB

Rice and grilled chicken.

LUCAN

Did you pour on the salt?

MARIA

Lucan...

LUCAN

I'm just asking a logical question. Who eats rice and grilled chicken at eight in the morning? Obviously they're up to something.

JACOB

We didn't add any salt.

LUCAN

I'll just have the rice. But only because your mom is giving me that stern look. You know what, I'm going to die anyway, so I'll have the chicken.

SANDY

Have you taken your medication?

LUCAN

Your mom breathes fire when I don't, so yes, I have. I have taken all ten of them. What a pain.

JACOB

The medication will help you to survive longer.

LUCAN

What if I don't want to survive any longer?

SANDY

Life is wonderful, father.

JACOB

Have you seen me at three in the morning squealing like a pig being slaughtered? Life is wonderful you say?

SANDY

I know your health isn't the best, and you're suffering. But we're here with you.

JACOB

Where were you twenty years ago? Huh? Enjoying this wonderful life?

MARIA

Lucan, please give the children a chance.

LUCAN

A chance to finish me off? Just hand them a pillow!

MARIA

Lucan, please.

SANDY

We have no excuse, father. We're sorry.

LUCAN

Hey, next time you guys come around, will you bring me a tub of strawberry ice cream?

JACOB

I don't know, father. That might not be the best thing for you now.

LUCAN

And grilled chicken at eight in the morning is?

SANDY

You're right, father. Tomorrow I'll bring you homemade porridge?

LUCAN

Porridge? Porridge? Porridge? I hate porridge!

SANDY

You do?

LUCAN

You would have known if you were around.

JACOB

Aren't we now?

LUCAN

In my last hour.

JACOB

Maybe we can make the best of it.

LUCAN

Just don't bring me any porridge. Anything but porridge.

(LUCAN coughs.)

MARIA

At least try the porridge. You may like it.

LUCAN

You know what, just bring the porridge. If I puke it, I puke it.

JACOB

(To LUCAN)

Are you going to die without a will?

LUCAN

Wouldn't you like to know.

SANDY

He's just being cautious, father. We don't want what you've worked hard for to go to waste.