

MOM!

A Short Play

by Jean Blasiar

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DOORBELL

DOORBELL again.

Lights up on the living room of Jack and Mary Livingston.

A towel-draped JACK LIVINGSTON (age 30) comes out of the bedroom, stage left, goes to the door and opens it.

MARTHA LIVINGSTON (age 65), Jack's mother, is standing at the door, two suitcases, hat, coat, galoshes.

JACK

Mom!

MARTHA

Pay the cabbie twelve dollars and sixty cents, Jackie, and don't give him a tip. He took the long way.

Martha picks up the suitcases and enters, looking around.

JACK

What are you doing here?

MARTHA

The meter's still running.

Jack looks down at the towel around his waist.
Resigned, he walks into the bedroom, door stage left.

Martha checks out things in the living room, Jack returns in a robe and slippers.
He goes to the front door and exits.

During the minute that Jack is gone, Martha looks at the mail on the entry table, holds it up to the light, checks out the magazines, walks over and sits down.

Jack returns.

MARTHA

You make coffee yet?

JACK

Why didn't you tell us you were coming?

MARTHA

I phoned from the airport. Where were you?

JACK

We were... It's Saturday. I don't have to go to work. We were...

MARTHA

Having sex.

MARY LIVINGSTON (age 30), in a robe and slippers, enters from the bedroom, stage right.

MARY

Jack... who are you...?

(stops when she sees Martha)

Martha?

MARTHA

I hope you're not on the pill.

MARY

What?

MARTHA

Every time I call Saturday mornings, nobody answers.

Now I know.

JACK

I frequently work on Saturdays.

Martha checks her watch.

MARTHA

You're late.

(to Mary)

Not you. Him.

JACK

I'm going to work.

But Mary grabs him by the robe as he tries to walk past her to the bedroom.

MARY

Oh, no, you're not.

MARTHA

I could use a cup of coffee. I been up all night.

MARY

Martha... why didn't you tell us you were coming?

JACK

(picks up one very heavy suitcase)

How long are you staying?

MARTHA

Maybe one year, maybe ten. However long I got.

MARY

What do you mean, however long you've got?

MARTHA

I could drop dead tomorrow. Sooner if I don't get coffee.

JACK

Mary... put the coffee on. Sit down, mom.

Mary, in a daze, goes into the bedroom, stage right.

MARTHA

Where are you going? You don't have to get dressed to make coffee.

Mary exits anyway.

JACK

Mom... are you sick?

MARTHA

I had a cold. And a colonoscopy.

JACK

I know. The doctor said you were fine. I talked to him myself.

MARTHA

I could have divertic...you... something.

JACK

Only if you eat nuts.

MARTHA

Or seeds. You don't read the fine print. Seeds!
Like in raspberries. I eat raspberries when they're on sale.
Where'd she go for coffee?

JACK

What else did the doctor say?

MARTHA

He said I could go any minute.

JACK

What?

MARTHA

I could go! Pffffft! Like a light. Out!

JACK

He said that? He didn't say anything like that when I
talked to him.
He said you were strong as a horse.

MARTHA

He said I eat like a horse. You got a Starbucks yet?

JACK

Mary makes good coffee.

MARTHA

When?

MARY

(re-enters)

All right! I'm making coffee.

MARTHA

You got any sweet rolls?

JACK

Why don't I go to the market?

MARY

No! You're not going anywhere.
I turned on the coffee.

MARTHA

You push a button? Maybe you could get a remote and never have to leave your bed.

JACK

You know they do have those remotes. Maybe next Christmas...

MARY

Jack! Your mother was just about to tell us how long she's staying.

MARTHA

Till I croak, which may be any minute. I run on caffeine.

Mary leaves to check on the coffee.

MARTHA

(calls out to Mary)

You got that pink packet?

MARY

(calls back o.s.)

I've got Splenda.

MARTHA

I use the pink packet.

JACK

I'll go to the market.

MARTHA

Get some sweet rolls while you're there.

MARY

(as she re-enters)

Sit down, Jack. I've got some pink packets from the last time she was here.

Mary hands her mother-in-law a mug of coffee and several pink packets.

MARTHA

You make your own marmalade?

