

MORTALITY

A PLAY BY

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CAST:

Brenda – mother, middle aged to older

Paul – son of Brenda, 30's

Georgia – Daughter of Brenda, 20's

Celeste – Next door neighbour – any age

John – son of Brenda – 20's

Pete – son of Brenda – 20's

David – Doctor – any age older than thirty

SCENE 1: BRENDAS' LIVING ROOM

BRENDA, GEORGIA, PAUL AND CELESTE, ARE SEATED AROUND A TABLE. THERE ARE ASTROLOGY CHARTS SPREAD OVER THE TABLE. CELESTE IS SCRIBBLING SOMETHING ON ONE OF THEM.

CELESTE:

There we go.

PAUL:

What does it say ?

CELESTE:

It looks very good. It says you will make a discovery of great personal importance.

BRENDA:

Let me guess. He was adopted and his real parents were bisexual.

PAUL:

They were not !

GEORGIA:

A pity. They would've straightened you out a bit more.

PAUL:

Very droll. You know you remind me of a pet my friend had.

GEORGIA:

Really !

PAUL:

Yes. I always hated cane toads.

CELESTE

Now yours, Brenda.

CELESTE LOOKS AT BRENDA'S CHART.

CELESTE:

Uh, Oh.

BRENDA:

Aey ?

GEORGIA:

What do you mean, Uh Oh ?

CELESTE:

It means it's not very good.

BRENDA:

How bad ?

CELESTE:

I wouldn't make any long term plans. You're not going to be around to see them.

EVERYONE LOOKS AT BRENDA. PAUL IS SMILING. BRENDA GLARES AT HIM.

SCENE 2 :BRENDA'S LIVING ROOM EARLY MORNING.

JOHN IS ON HIS WAY OUT HE IS LATE AND DRINKING COFFEE, CHECKING HIS BRIEFCASE AND LOOKING AT HIS WATCH WHILE ON THE WAY OUT. HE TRIPS OVER PETE DOING PUSH-UPS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM

JOHN:

JESUS !

PETE:

You Okay ?

JOHN:

Do you have to do that here ?

PETE:

Only spot with plenty of space.

HE TRIES TO HELP JOHN WITH HIS BRIEFCASE AND COAT, . BUT THE TWO OF THEM ONLY GET IN EACH OTHERS WAY, AND GET TANGLED. AS THEY TRY TO GET UNRAVELED, PAUL FLOATS PAST THEM HOLDING A SILVER TRAY AND A COMPLETE BREAKFAST. HE GOES UPSTAIRS.

JOHN:

What does he think he's doing ?

PETE:

(Shrugs) He's going into mum's Room.

JOHN:

You're kidding.

THEY HEAR A LOUD SCREAM AND A CRASH. JOHN AND PETE RUN UP. JOHN AND PETE ENTER TO SEE PAUL SPRAWLED OUT ON THE FLOOR WEARING THE BREAKFAST HE WAS CARRYING. BRENDA IS IN BED COVERING HERSELF WITH THE SHEETS. WITH ONE HAND AND HOLDING A FORK DEFENSIVELY IN THE OTHER.

JOHN:

What happened ?

BRENDA:

I thought he was a burglar.

PETE:

Serving Breakfast ?

BRENDA:

I'm very sensitive to traumas.

JOHN HELPS PAUL TO HIS FEET. PAUL PICKS A SLICE OF TOAST FROM HIS HAIR.

BRENDA:

What were you trying to do, give me a heart attack ?

PAUL:

No, serve you coffee.

BRENDA:

Why ? What are you after ?

PAUL:

Can't I guy do something nice, for no reason.

BRENDA:

NO.

JOHN:

(To PAUL) What's the matter, you got a death wish ?

BRENDA:

THAT'S IT !

PETE:

(To PAUL) A Death wish ? (Looks at the mess PAUL IS IN) Hell of a way to go.

BRENDA:

This is about that stupid prediction of Celeste's, isn't it ?

PAUL:

Uh..

BRENDA:

You're trying to get on my good side so I'll write you into the will.

PAUL:

Uh....

BRENDA:

Hah ! I thought so. Well, I've got news for you. There is no will and

there never will be and even if there was you'd be the one listed as the person LEAST likely to be remembered. NOW GET OUT !

PAUL STUMBLES OUT AND IN HIS HASTE STEPS IN WHAT IS LEFT OF BREAKFAST. PETE FOLLOWS HIM OUT. STEPPING OVER THE FOOD.

JOHN

Is that true ?

BRENDA:

What ?

JOHN:

All this property and you haven't made out a will, at your age.

BRENDA.

What about my age ?

BRENDA THREATENS HIM WITH THE FORK.

JOHN

Nothing....look I'm running late. We'll talk about this when I get home.

JOHN MAKES A QUICK EXIT. SLIPS ON FOOD THEN GETS TO HIS FEET AND EXITS WITH JAM STAINS ON HIS BUM.

BRENDA:

Just like a man. Always leaves when you're about to start and never cleans up the mess.

SCENE 3 : BRENDA'S LIVING ROOM EVENING

BRENDA ENTERS AFTER A HARD DAY AT WORK. SHE LAYS DOWN ON THE COUCH AND REST HER EYES. GEORGIA COMES IN AND SCREAMS. BRENDA NEARLY JUMPS OUT OF

HER SKIN.

GEORGIA:

Oh, thank God you're alright.

BRENDA:

JESUS ! What are you trying to do? Scare me to death ?

GEORGIA:

Oh No. It's just I saw you laying there andand I thought you were dead.

BRENDA:

I've had a long day but don't bury me for it.

GEORGIA:

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to scare you.

BRENDA:

It's that damn Celeste, isn't it ?

GEORGIA:

Well. She sounded like she knew what she was talking about. For once.

BRENDA:

Georgia. Celeste is a fruitcake. There is no chance in the world any of that Astrology garbage she preaches is true. Hell would freeze over before any of her predictions happen.

SCREAMS FOR JOY OFF SCREEN. THEN PAUL RUNS IN AND DANCES ACROSS THE ROOM.

BRENDA:

What happened? -You finally learn how to mix beer.

PAUL:

Even better. Look.

PAUL SHOWS BRENDA AND GEORGIA A PHOTO. GEORGIA SHRUGS

PAUL:

That is a Photo of me and Cate Blanchett

BRENDA:

You met Cate Blanchett ?

PAUL:

Of course, I was quite a socialite in my younger days. This photo has great sentimental value.

GEORGIA:

A discovery of great personal importance.

BRENDA:

What ?

GEORGIA:

(Points to photo.) That's what Celeste said, remember.

BRENDA;

She also said Pete was going to fall in love with a tall, dark gorgeous stranger. Called Gina. Are you going to believe that ?

PETE BURST IN THROUGH THE DOOR. A GREAT BIG SMILE ON HIS FACE AND SINGING.

HE GRABS GEORGIA AND DANCES.

PETE :

(Sing song) I'M IN LOVE !

GEORGIA:

Who ?

PETE:

A seven foot, Amazon, I just met.

GEORGIA AND BRENDA LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

PETE:

Her name is (holding the moment) Gina.

BRENDA:

(To Georgia) It's just a coincidence.

GEORGIA:

Two Coincidences ?

BRENDA:

Rare Photos don't count.

GEORGIA:

You've got to admit it's pretty uncanny.

BRENDA:

I never admit to anything. Except when I'm right.

JOHN ENTERS FROM WORK. LOOKING A LOT TIDIER EXCEPT FOR THE JAM STAIN ON HIS BUM.

BRENDA:

JOHN. I NEED TO KNOW SOMETHING.

JOHN:

No, I do not lust after Sally in my dreams.

BRENDA:

Why should I care, you change your own sheets. What I want to know is do you believe in Astrology ?

JOHN:

Na, it's all trash. That dim wit Celeste made up my chart the other week. Said I was going to come into a lot of money. Ha, do I look rich ?

***BRENDA GRINS AT GEORGIA AS IF TO SAY "I TOLD YOU SO."
THE PHONE RINGS, JOHN ANSWERS IT.***

JOHN:

Yeah, this is John HOW MUCH ?! Before or after tax ? O.K. O.K. Thank-you, Thank-you very much.

JOHN HANGS UP THE PHONE

JOHN:

I'm Rich.

GEORGIA:

What do you mean ?

JOHN:

That Henderson deal came through. I got a twenty thousand bonus up front.

BRENDA FALLS INTO HER CHAIR. PAUL GRABS A WHISKEY FLASK FROM BEHIND A VASE.

PAUL:

Sounds like we both got lucky. This calls for a celebration .

PAUL GRINS AND OFFERS IT TO BRENDA. SHE PUSHES IT AWAY.

PAUL:

Maybe later.

BRENDA LEAVES.

JOHN:

(To Brenda) So, why were you interested in Astrology It's not exactly my field.

BRENDA:

No reason. Forget it, it's stupid.

JOHN:

What's up ?

GEORGIA:

Celeste. She said Brenda was going to die.

JOHN:

Aw, what would she know.

PAUL:

Do we have to point out the obvious.?

HANDS THE FLASK BACK TO JOHN HE TAKES A SWIG AND GOES AFTER BRENDA.

JOHN:

Mum ! Mum, We need to talk about that will.

BRENDA COMES OUT AGAIN WITH A BEER TIN.

BRENDA:

No ! I'm not discussing any will.

JOHN:

Look at it this way. If something should happen to you....

BRENDA:

Nothing is going to happen.

PAUL:

Hey ! People get run over by buses every day. You just never know.

JOHN:

Exactly. And where would that leave us?

BRENDA:

You'd survive. You just got Twenty Thousand Dollars.

JOHN:

That's beside the point. Mum. Seriously Think about it.

BRENDA:

I don't have to. I intend to live to a ripe old age.

PAUL:

That shouldn't take long.

BRENDA:

Probably outlive most of you.

THE REST OF THEM ARE SKEPTICAL.

BRENDA:

Alright I'll prove it. I'll ask David, a doctor friend, who does house calls to give me the once over.

***THIS RAISES A FEW EYEBROWS AND SURPRISED LOOKS.
EXCEPT PAUL WHO CONTINUES TO FUSS OVER HIS PLANT.***

BRENDA:

Jeez. Get your minds above your waist.

SCENE 4 : BRENDA'S BEDROOM DAY:

BRENDA AND DAVID ARE FACING EACH OTHER.

DAVID:

Are you sure you want to do this ?

BRENDA:

Yeah, I'm sure.

DAVID:

Positive ?

BRENDA:

Get on with it, will ya.

DAVID SLIPS A RUBBER GLOVE ON. IT SNAPS INTO PLACE.

DAVID:

Right. This is going to hurt you more then it will me.

BRENDA GLARES AT HIM.

DAVID:

Just kidding.

BRENDA ALMOST JUMPS WHEN DAVID POSITIONS HIS HAND.

DAVID:

Right. A little higher I think.

BRENDA CRINGES.

DAVID:

A little more.

BRENDA CRINGES AGAIN.

DAVID:

A bit more.

BRENDA GROANS.

DAVID:

Now cough.

BRENDA HAS A COUGHING ATTACK.

DAVID:

Good.

BRENDA CRINGES AS DAVID MOVES HIS HAND UP.

DAVID:

Again.

BRENDA HAS A COUGHING FIT.

DAVID:

That's fine.

HE PULLS Off THE GLOVES.

DAVID:

I can't understand why you wanted me to wear gloves.

BRENDA:

Because I know where your hands have been.

DAVID:

But I sterilize them.

BRENDA:

I don't care. I don't want you feeling my chest with your grubby paws.

DAVID:

Honestly, Brenda.

DAVID PUTS ON HIS STETHOSCOPE AND PLACES IT ON BRENDA'S CHEST.

BRENDA SCREAMS AND DAVID FALLS BACK. WHEN HE RECOVERS HE GLARES AT BRENDA.

BRENDA:

What did you do ? Put it in the bloody freezer ?

DAVID:

Let's try it again shall we ?

BRENDA:

(YELLS) JESUS CHRIST !

DAVID PULLS THE STETHOSCOPE FROM HIS EARS.

DAVID:

How am I supposed to hear anything if you keep whaling like a fog horn.

BRENDA:

How am I supposed to shut up with an Ice cube on my tits ?

DAVID IGNORES THIS. HE TAKES OUT A POCKET LIGHT AND SHINES IT IN BRENDA'S EAR.

BRENDA:

No cracks about seeing through the other end.

DAVID:

You take the fun out of everything.

DAVID MAKES SHAPES WITH HIS HAND ON THE OTHER SIDE OF BRENDA'S HEAD. BRENDA TURNS TO HIM AND HE STOPS.

DAVID:

Now the eyes.

BRENDA:

They're bloodshot. I can tell you that without looking.

DAVID SHINES THE TORCH IN BRENDA'S EYE. SHE PUSHES IT AWAY AND PUTS ON SUNGLASSES. DAVID TAKES THEM AWAY.

DAVID:

Brenda, you're worse then a child.

BRENDA:

Don't tell me you blind kids as well ?

DAVID PRESENTS A THERMOMETER.

DAVID:

You know where this goes, don't you ?

BRENDA:

You bloody try it and I'll have your balls for earrings.

DAVID:

Stick out your tongue.

BRENDA POKES HER TONGUE OUT. DAVID STICKS THE THERMOMETER IN BRENDA'S MOUTH.

DAVID:

Don't chew it.

DAVID TAKES HER PULSE. BRENDA SWIRLS THE THERMOMETER AROUND IN HER MOUTH,

SHE IS ABOUT TO SPIT IT OUT.

DAVID:

Don't even think it.

BRENDA DECLINES. DAVID TAKES THE THERMOMETER OUT TO BRENDA'S RELIEF.

BRENDA:

Can't you get those things flavoured ?

BRENDA OPENS HER MOUTH AND DAVID SHOVES IN A WOODEN STICK. BRENDA GAGS ON IT BITES IT AND SPITS IT OUT. DAVID PICKS UP THE HALF EATEN STICK AND GLARES AT BRENDA.

BRENDA:

Sorry.

DAVID:

How am I supposed to examine you if you don't cooperate ?

BRENDA:

Well if you stop pulling and prodding and poking, we might get some where.

DAVID:

I'm a doctor. I'm supposed to pull and prod and poke. And If necessary I'll poke some more. And I'll keep on poking till you choke. And I'm completely satisfied.

BRENDA:

Just like a man. Only thinking of yourself.

DAVID SHOWS BRENDA A SAMPLE BOTTLE.

DAVID:

See this ? I want it filled and brought to my office tomorrow morning.

BRENDA:

What for ?

DAVID:

What do you think ?

BRENDA:

Jeez, I've heard of recycling but this is ridiculous.

SCENE 5 : LIVING ROOM DAY:

PETE JOGS INTO THE LIVING ROOM AND DOES STAR JUMPS, COUNTING IN TIME TO THE BEAT. JOHN ENTERS FROM HIS BEDROOM DISPLAYING HIS BRAND NEW SUIT, WATCH AND BRIEFCASE. HE STOPS IN FRONT OF PETE AND DELIBERATELY PREENS. PETE IGNORES HIM, HE'S TOO CAUGHT UP IN HIS EXERCISE. JOHN CLEARS HIS THROAT AND STANDS WHERE PETE IS SURE TO SEE HIM AND CHECKS HIMSELF IN THE MIRROR. PETE STILL DOESN'T ANY NOTICE. FINALLY JOHN LAYS ON THE FLOOR UNDERNEATH PETE

JUST AS HE IS ABOUT TO DO PUSH UPS.

PETE:

Gee, mate. You shouldn't lay on the floor, you'll get your new coat dirty.

JOHN:

Then I'll buy a new one.