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The Death of Semprini the Great

A 10-Minute Play

by Greg Freier

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The Death of Semprini the Great

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CHARACTERS

ANTHONY MARTELLO: *40's, dressed in a black suit; obviously from New York.*

ANNA MARIA MARTELLO: *40's, dressed in polyester; also obviously from New York.*

SETTING

. A funeral home; early 1960's

The Death of Semprini the Great by Greg Freier

SETTING: *A funeral home; early 1960`s.*

AT RISE: *ANTHONY and ANNA MARIA are seated center stage in a pew. Both of their lower halves are blocked from view by a small wall. ORGAN MUSIC plays lightly.*

ANNA MARIA

Will you look at all the magicians?

ANTHONY

It's like being in a Twilight Zone episode hosted by Ed Sullivan.

ANNA MARIA

I think it's kind of nice.

ANTHONY

Nice? The only thing nice about this is that magical idiot is finally in a box he can't escape from.

ANNA MARIA

Be nice to him just for this once. He is dead after all.

ANTHONY

And it's about time too. I still don't see how you can forgive that bum for what he did to your mother that one time.

ANNA MARIA

What, you mean the time he made her disappear?

ANTHONY

(Sarcastically) Yeah, that time.

ANNA MARIA

Well she did finally turn up.

ANTHONY

That she did. Bangor, Maine, living in tree house with a small monkey.

ANNA MARIA

At least it was in the fall. Ma said the colors of the foliage were beautiful.

ANTHONY

I'll give you foliage. That was all she stinking talked about all the way back in the car.
(*Imitates her mother*) The reds were so red. The yellows so yellow. The blues were so blue.

ANNA MARIA

Blue? Blue leaves?

A stuffed bunny rabbit pops up from below and lands on ANTHONY's lap.

ANTHONY

What in the hell?

ANNA MARIA

Look at the cute little bunny.

ANTHONY

All right, who's the wise guy?

ANNA MARIA

Here, let me hold it. (*Takes the bunny*)

ANTHONY

This is exactly why I hated Semprini. (*Another bunny lands in his lap*) Mother of God.

ANNA MARIA

It must be mating season.

ANTHONY

(*Stands and looks around*) That's it, who wants to go outside?

ANNA MARIA

(*Pulls him down and smacks him*) You sit down this instant Anthony Martello. We're in a church for God's sake.

ANTHONY

(*Sits*) But they're throwing fluffy little bunnies at me. What am I supposed to do?

ANNA MARIA

Well it could be worse.

Another bunny lands in ANTHONY's lap. He gives ANNA MARIA a dirty look.)

ANNA MARIA, *Continued*

Fine. Next time Semprini dies we'll go to a Yankees game instead.

ANTHONY

Next time Semprini dies I'm going to be the one to kill him.

ANNA MARIA

Could you try to show just a little respect?

ANTHONY

And what kind of putz dies by getting hit over the head with a water balloon?

ANNA MARIA

The water balloon was frozen. Apparently it was a magic trick gone bad.

ANTHONY

(Hands her the bunnies) Here, do something with these stupid rabbits will you?

ANNA MARIA

Fine. *(Removes a large duffel bag from under her seat)* We'll just put them in here.

ANTHONY

Why in the hell do you have a duffel bag?

ANNA MARIA

You never know when you might get to leave with some leftovers.

ANTHONY

Unbelievable.

A LOUD POP is heard.

ANTHONY, *Continued*

What now?

ANNA MARIA

(Point across ANTHONY's body) Will you look at that?

ANTHONY

(Slight pause) What are those, penguins?

ANNA MARIA

And look at the cute little bowties.

ANTHONY

That's it. I've had enough. We're leaving.

ANTHONY starts to stand, then gets hit with another bunny. He tries to remain calm as he sits. He hands ANNA MARIA the bunny.

ANTHONY, *Continued*

I think they're going to need a few more coffins here in a minute.

ANNA MARIA

(Slightly excited) Maybe we're on Candid Camera.

ANTHONY

What we are is in hell.

ANNA MARIA

Well at least it's entertaining.

ANTHONY

(Shakes his head) And what time is this stupid service supposed to start anyway?

ANNA MARIA

4 o'clock.

ANTHONY

What time is it now?

ANNA MARIA

(Looks at her watch) Quarter till.

ANTHONY

I don't think I can make another fifteen minutes without killing someone.

ANNA MARIA

I've got Lifesavers.

ANTHONY

What does that have to do with anything?

ANNA MARIA

I thought maybe if you had something to suck on you might stay calm.

ANTHONY

That only works at home.

ANNA MARIA

(Smacks him in the arm) Anthony Martello.

ANTHONY

What? What did I do?

ANNA MARIA

You're awful you are.

ANTHONY

(Slight pause) Is it getting hot in here or is it just me?

ANTHONY removes a hanky from his inside jacket pocket, the hanky ends up being attached to numerous multicolored ones. When he's done removing all the hankies, a bunny lands on his lap.

ANNA MARIA

I don't think God likes you.

ANTHONY

(Sarcastically) Whatever gave you that idea?

ANNA MARIA

Well at least now you won't need any hankies for Christmas.

ANTHONY

Oh yeah. Hysterical, a regular laugh riot you are.

ANNA MARIA

(Slight pause) I think when it's all said and done I'd like my funeral to be like this.

ANTHONY

Oh you would, would you?

ANNA MARIA

Absolutely, this one's kind of fun.

ANTHONY

Well then you'd better start planning it yourself, because I'm probably going to stroke out and die before the end of this one. *(Scratches his arm)* What the heck? *(Pulls some flowers out of his sleeve)*

ANNA MARIA

And to think I thought you'd forgotten our anniversary.

ANTHONY

(Hands her the flowers) Me? What? Forget? No. Here. Have some fake flowers.

ANNA MARIA

(With some mean sarcasm) It's not really our anniversary.

ANTHONY

Good, then give me back the flowers. I might need them to beat someone with.

ANNA MARIA

The only one here you're going to need to beat is yourself.

ANTHONY

(Shoots her a look) How much longer?

ANNA MARIA

(Looks away) I'm not talking to you anymore.

ANTHONY

I'm sorry then.

ANNA MARIA

(Without looking at her watch) Seven minutes.

ANTHONY

How do you know that, you didn't even look at your watch.

ANNA MARIA

I just know, that's all. *(Slight pause; points up to the front)* Oooh, what are those two magicians doing up there with that big saw.

ANTHONY

(Somewhat happy) I think they're going to cut him in half.

ANNA MARIA

Won't that hurt him?

ANTHONY

He's already dead. And if not, who cares.

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes