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The Misery
of Happiness

A One Act Play in Two Scenes

by

Greg Freier

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The Misery of Happiness
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CHARACTERS

3W / 4M

DR. ROBERT HOLIDAY: Late 50’s
TIM BOXLEY: 30’s
ELISE BOXLEY: 30’s
MEL EASTMAN: 40’s
SHARON EASTMAN: 40’s
WYATT MAXWELL: 45
LINDA MAXWELL: 40’s

SETTING

A large, tastefully furnished summer cottage someplace in New England

ETC.

WARNING: This play contains multiple gunshots
The Misery of Happiness
by Greg Freier

SCENE ONE

SETTING: A large, tastefully furnished summer cottage someplace in New England. An entrance doorway at upstage right leads into the living area, with a staircase just along that back wall. On far stage right are two large windows that are adorned in fashionable and very expensive curtains. The living room consists of a couch center stage, with matching chairs on each side. A nice, dark wood, coffee table sits directly in front of the grouping. Upstage left is a well stocked bar, which in front of sits a dining room table that seats 8. The table is immaculately set; with large candelabra placed in the center. Next to the bar on the back wall is a closet door. Far stage left is the door to the kitchen. A large banner that says, Happy Birthday WYATT, is hanging from the back wall.

AT RISE: The stage is devoid of people, music is playing quietly in the background. Voices can be heard off stage as the lights come up.

ELISE, Offstage
I don’t care what you say we still should have brought a present.

TIM, Offstage
The invitations specifically stated not to bring a present.

ELISE, Offstage
That still doesn’t mean you don’t bring a present.

TIM, Offstage
Of course it does. Why else would they put it in writing if they didn’t want you to bring a present?

ELISE, Offstage
They put it there so you don’t feel obligated to bring one.

TIM, Offstage
Then why don’t they just say bring a present if you want to? How difficult is that?

ELISE, Offstage
You know what your problem is, you’re too literal. Now ring the bell.

TIM, Offstage
What’s wrong with being too literal? It’s how humans understand things.

(SFX: DOORBELL; in response, onstage, knocking is also heard.)
ELISE, Offstage
Well then next time a human invites us to a party that says not to bring a present show me the invitation ahead of time so we can bring a present.

TIM, Offstage
If there’s any type of God, there won’t be a next time.

ELISE, Offstage
Ring the bell again, I don’t think anyone heard.

(SFX: DOORBELL; once again, knocking is heard onstage.)

TIM, Offstage
Maybe they’re all out back.

ELISE, Offstage
If they were all out back they would have told us to come out back. Try the door.

TIM, Offstage
I’m not going to try the door. I’ll ring the bell again.

ELISE, Offstage
Just try the door.

TIM, Offstage
I’m not going to try the door.

ELISE, Offstage
Try the door.

TIM, Offstage
Fine I’ll try the door.

(The handle turns on the unlocked door and TIM and ELISE enter. TIM is dressed in khaki’s, white shirt, and blue blazer; preppy, but not too over the top. ELISE wears a nice summer dress with just enough jewelry not to be too pretentious. Both would be described as rather good looking.)

ELISE
See, the door opened, now how hard was that?

TIM
That’s not the point…the point is that what we just….

(From somewhere onstage, knocking is heard again.)
Did you hear that?

ELISE
By that I’ll assume you mean the knocking?

TIM
Of course I meant the knocking.

ELISE
Well it’s not the front door, we haven’t closed it yet.

(The knocking continues.)

TIM
(Points towards the closet) It’s coming from over there.

ELISE
(Beat) Do you think we should call someone?

TIM
To what, open a closet door?

ELISE
What if it’s someone who shouldn’t be in there?

TIM
Of course it’s someone who shouldn’t be in there.

ELISE
Don’t be such an ass…you know exactly what I meant.

TIM
Of course I know what you meant…but think about it…if you were someone that wasn’t supposed to be in there you wouldn’t be knocking now would you?

ELISE
(Beat) I suppose not.

(The knocking resumes, this time more violently.)

TIM
(Beat) Do you think I should open it?

ELISE
Well if you don’t we’re going to have to call someone.
TIM

(Beat) So I should open it?

ELISE

Unless you feel the need to call someone.

TIM

(Beat) I’ll open it then…you might want to stand by front door… (Picks up a cordless phone off the coffee table)...and here’s a phone in case something goes awry….

ELISE

Who should I call if it does?

TIM

The police…who else would you possibly call?

ELISE

I don’t know…I’ve never done this before.

(The knocking continues.)

TIM

And put your index finger on 9 just in case…and then remember the 1, 1 after it.

ELISE

Are you sure you still want to do this?

(Dr. ROBERT Holiday enters through the open front door. He’s a very distinguished gentleman, impeccably dressed in summer wear. He has a nicely wrapped present under his arm.)

ROBERT

Are you sure he still wants to do what?

(ROBERT’s entrance takes ELISE off guard. She screams mildly.)

ELISE

You startled me.

ROBERT

I’m sorry. I thought you heard me come in.

(The knocking continues.)

ROBERT

Where’s that knocking coming from?
ELISE
That closet…we think someone’s in there.

TIM
We’re just not sure if we should let them out or not.

ROBERT
Nonsense, if they didn’t want to be let out they wouldn’t be knocking like that.

ELISE
But what if it’s someone in there that we shouldn’t let out?

ROBERT
Then my guess is they wouldn’t be knocking. Last thing you’d want to do is attract attention to yourself if you’re someplace you’re not supposed to be.

TIM
So you think I should open it?

ROBERT
This is ridiculous… (Hands ELISE the gift) here, hold this. (Crosses to closet) I’ll open the door…you stand over by your wife…

TIM
You think I should grab something to hit them with just in case?

ROBERT
(Beat) That might not be a bad idea…we don’t know what kind of idiot we’re dealing with yet.

TIM
(Looks around) What should I get?

(The knocking continues.)

ELISE
How about a lamp?

TIM
Linda would make us pay for it if it broke.

ROBERT
Grab one of the dining room chairs…

TIM
They look kind of heavy.
ROBERT
(Mimes holding chair over his head) ...and then hold it like this.

TIM

What if I drop it on my head?

ROBERT

Then we’ll have one less idiot to deal with.

(TIM lifts the chair over his head with some difficulty.)

Everyone ready?

(TIM and ELISE nod.)

ROBERT

On three...one...two...three....

(ROBERT opens the door. WYATT steps out. He is a very fit man, dressed in a tennis shirt, boxers, white socks and sneakers.)

TIM and ELISE

(With surprise) Wyatt?

ROBERT

What in God’s name are you doing in there?

WYATT

That damn bitch locked me in here...again... (Immediately crosses to stairs)...I tell you one of these days...one of these days she’s going to push me too far...and when she does...something bad...something I can get away with...something violently legal....

(WYATT exits up stairs clutching his fists.)

ROBERT

(Claps his hands) Well at least the parties off to a great start.

ELISE

No worse than the last one I suppose.

TIM

(Crosses to bar) I don’t know about you two, but I think I need a drink.

ROBERT

Might as well...make mine bourbon.
TIM
Elise?

ELISE
(Puts the present on the coffee table) Anything white I guess.

TIM
(Looks through the bottles) Chardonnay or Pinot?

ELISE
With one do I usually have?

TIM
Merlot.

ELISE
(Beat) Why don’t we start with a Pinot then and see how that goes.

(LINDA Maxwell enters from the front door. She is striking woman, but has that look that says, don’t ever mess with me. She is casually dressed in shorts and a blouse. Upon entering, she immediately notices the closet door is open.)

LINDA
(With attitude) Who in the hell opened the closet door.

ELISE
(Surprised) Linda…we didn’t hear you come in.

TIM
(Begins mixing drinks in a cocktail shaker) Funny thing about the closet…I’ll bet you’ll never guess who was in there.

ROBERT
(To TIM) Twenty bucks says she does.

LINDA
(With anger) Where is he?

TIM
I’ll assume you mean Wyatt?

ELISE
(Quickly) He’s upstairs.

LINDA
(Beat) Alone?
TIM
He was the only one in the closet if that’s what you mean.

ROBERT
He wasn’t wearing any pants if that helps.

LINDA
(Crosses to stairs) That’s because I shredded them…but you three just enjoy yourselves…and if you hear any screaming…ignore it until the party starts….

(LINDA exits.)

ELISE
I don’t know about you two, but I’ve got a feeling this is going to be a complete disaster.

ROBERT
Professionally speaking, I’d have to agree…personally though…I’m staying…I have a feeling this is going to get good….

TIM
I’m sure it’ll all be fine…I mean it’s not like it’s never been a disaster over here before.

ELISE
Yes, but she locked him in the closet…and on his birthday.

ROBERT
I’m sure she’s locked him in worse places.

TIM
What I’d like to know is how she got him in the closet…again.

ELISE
(With some jealousy) With that body, she probably just asked.

TIM
True…I could see me falling for that one.

ELISE
Have you ever heard the phrase, “There are some things that are best left unsaid?”

TIM
Hey, it’s not my fault she looks like that.

ROBERT
(To TIM) That would have been one of those things.
ELISE
Ignore him, he’s an idiot, it can’t be helped.

ROBERT
(To TIM) In that case, you want to hurry it up over there…I’ve got a bourbon with my name on it that’s overdue.

TIM
(Pours his drink) One second…a perfect martini is a skill all its own.

ELISE
(With disgust) And one that he’s more than perfected.

TIM
(To ROBERT) She’s just jealous; the only skill she has she can’t perform in public.

ELISE
(To ROBERT) Actually I do, it’s how I get my spending money.

TIM
(Pours, then hands ROBERT his drink) There you go; bourbon, no rocks, poured to perfection, just like you asked.

ROBERT
Thanks.

WYATT
(Enters from stairs, completely dressed) Sorry about all that…but you know how she’s gets sometimes.

ELISE
Is everything okay?

WYATT
Never better. Linda’s locked herself in the bedroom with her priceless vase collection and said to start without her…(Notices they have drinks)…which I see you already have…

ELISE
Don’t you think it might be best if we rescheduled this for another night?

WYATT
Why because Linda locked me in the closet and threatened to disembowel me …nonsense…this kind of thing happens all the time…she’s insane, what can I say.

TIM
(To WYATT) So what’s it this time?
We think I’m having an affair.

And who exactly are we having this affair with?

We’re not sure as of yet.

What seems to be the hold up?

I’m not actually having one so she hasn’t been able to figure out who it is I’m not having it with.

That’s got to be kind of tough on her.

You have no idea. She spends half her day threatening, calling me a liar, and then other half trying to lock me into places.

(Points to the closet) You might want to give some thought to putting a chair and maybe some books in there. That would at least give you something to do when it happens again.

(Looks in closet) Probably need a lamp in here of some type though…lighting’s not too good…would be quite the strain on the eyes.

(Matter-of-factly) Or you could just not get locked in there anymore.

That would be the best option, but you know how she gets.

Honestly, I don’t see why you put up with it.

Easy…everything I’ve got is hers.

Her family is worth billions from what I’ve read.
Wyatt
Twice that actually… and an eighth of which is all hers.

Elise
You’re kidding me?

Wyatt
(Nods) Even misery gets a standard of living.

Tim
(Points to Elise with his drink) That’s why we’re lucky…we don’t have a standard of living.

Wyatt
(To Tim) Pour me something on ice over there, will you?

Tim
Anything specific?

Wyatt
Whatever causes me to blackout the fastest.

Tim
That would be Gin.

Wyatt
Fine…Gin…tall glass…but put a little tonic in there for safeties sake.

Elise
(To Wyatt) You’re sure you don’t want us to come back another Time?

Wyatt
Of course not, it’ll be fine…plus it’s not like I don’t black out most nights anyway.

Tim
In your shoes, who wouldn’t?

Elise
(To Tim) Why don’t you just shut up?

Tim
What for? I’m just trying to keep the conversation flowing.

Elise
Well don’t. You stink at it.
ROBERT
So what’s the plan of attack when Linda enters the fray?

WYATT
Personally…I was leaning towards shooting her.

TIM
If we’re going to do that, then it might be best if we all drank until blackout mode. One would think that would get us off on some legal technicality.

ROBERT
Why don’t we just try being nice to her. It might confuse her for a change.

ELISE
I still think we should do this whole thing another night.

TIM
What, the shooting or the party?

ELISE
(Matter-of-factly) You’re going to be an ass all night, aren’t you?

TIM
It can’t be helped; it’s all part of my puckish charm.

WYATT
Why don’t we all just pretend she’s not here for the moment and try and have a nice time?

ROBERT
And if that doesn’t work, we can always revisit the shooting.

TIM
We can make that part of Wyatt’s birthday present. Nothing says surprise more than an unplanned shooting.

(ELISE gets her wine glass from the bar.)

ELISE
(To WYATT) Happy birthday by the way.

WYATT
Thanks…to all of you.

TIM
(Hands WYATT a large gin) A toast…to Wyatt. May happiness follow without a life sentence.
ELISE and ROBERT, Together

(With glasses raised) To Wyatt.

(They ALL drink.)

ROBERT

(Staring at his glass) I forgot just how much I miss bourbon.

WYATT

Been awhile, has it?

ROBERT

(Shakes his head) Last Saturday…it’s just one can never tire of something this good.

TIM

(Beat) So what time do you think she’s going to come down?

WYATT

I suppose it just depends on how much she hates me today.

ELISE

And which way does that usually go?

WYATT

If it’s a lot, she’ll be right down…if it’s only total disgust…maybe ten more minutes.

TIM

So either way we’re screwed.

WYATT

Pretty much.

(A door is heard slamming upstairs.)

WYATT

I think the Belle of the ball is on her way.

ROBERT

Everyone put on their happy faces.

TIM

That and I suggest chugging where applicable.

(WYATT, ROBERT and TIM down their drinks.)
Wyatt

(Hands Tim his glass) Refill…quick.

Tim

Doc?

Robert

(Looks at this empty glass) Oh why not…it is a party after all.

(Linda enters from the stairs. She is wearing a black cocktail dress, stiletto heels, and looks about as stunning as a woman could.)

Wyatt

(With sweeping gestures) Ladies and gentlemen…the Belle who owns my balls.

Linda

(Grabs the present on the coffee table) I thought we said no presents.

Wyatt

No, you said no presents, I never said anything.

Tim

(With pompous pride) Elise and I didn’t bring any presents. We read the invitation.

Linda

That’s nice, but I don’t remember inviting you.

Robert

I don’t know about you people, but I can certainly feel the love.

Tim

Almost makes you want to break out in song.

(SFX: Doorbell.)

Wyatt

I’m guessing that’ll be the Eastmans.

Linda

The Eastmans…I don’t recall seeing their name on the list.

Wyatt

You’re the one who sent out the invitations.

Linda

But you’re the one that addressed them.
Wyatt

(Beat) Then I guess I invited the Eastmans.

Linda

But I hate the Eastmans.

Wyatt

(Crosses to front door with a big smile) I know…that’s why I invited them.

Robert

(To Tim) It almost makes you wonder who’s going to get shot first.

Wyatt

(To Linda with sarcasm) And try to be nice…it is my birthday after all.

Linda

(With disgust and a look of death) I’ll be in the kitchen…supervising dinner.

Wyatt

(With sarcasm) Good idea…nothing Cook loves more than unwanted people in the kitchen.

(Linda exits kitchen.)

Wyatt

(Loudly) And while you’re at it, why don’t you see if he can make some room in the oven and find a nice place to stick you…it’d be the best present I ever got…

(Wyatt opens front door. Mel and Sharon quickly enter. They are wearing over-the-top yachting clothing. Mel is a tad on the verbose side.)

Mel

I’ve never had worse directions in my life…four hours…four hours to get here…and to top things off I got a ticket for going the wrong way on a one way street.

Sharon

(To Others) The street was clearly marked, it said one way.

Mel

But it didn’t say which way. I’m not a mind reader.

Robert

Normally you just follow the arrow on the sign.
MEL
I did, but apparently it was backwards. *(To WYATT)* Happy birthday by the way, we would have brought a present but the invite said not to. Plus what I’ve got to pay for this stupid ticket more than makes up for what I didn’t have to spend on you.

SHARON
*(Kisses WYATT on cheek)* Happy birthday.

WYATT
Thanks…come in, please…make yourself comfortable…Tim why don’t you make Mel and Sharon something to drink.

MEL
Vodka rocks….light on the rocks.

SHARON
Chardonnay if you’ve got one.

WYATT
So how did you manage to get lost, you’ve been up here I don’t know how many times.

MEL
I used the GPS this time, screwed up the whole trip.

SHARON
He could never figure out if left meant his left or the car’s left.

ROBERT
They’re both the same.

MEL
But not if you’re in front of the car looking at it…then the car’s left is right, so then what do you do.

ROBERT
Turn off the GPS and come the way you normally do.

ELISE
*(With sarcasm)* That would defeat the entire purpose of technology I would imagine.

MEL
Exactly…oh yeah, and before I forget, you got a couple of dead deer in your driveway.

SHARON
Actually they’re off to the side, and I think only one was dead.
ROBERT
That would have been the one I hit coming in.

ELISE
The other one’s probably just there for moral support.

SHARON
Where’s Linda by the way.

WYATT
(Matter-of-factly) In the oven if we’re all lucky.

TIM
(Crosses from bar with the drinks) One vodka, light on the rocks…

MEL
Thanks.

TIM
…And one chardonnay in a nice expensive glass.

SHARON
I’ll try not to drop it.

MEL
(Beat) I hate to be rude here, but I’m getting kind of hungry…any idea what it is we’re having for dinner?

SHARON
Knowing Linda, it’s no doubt something gourmet.

WYATT
Gourmet and ridiculously expensive.

TIM
(With sarcasm) Or it could just be some of that fresh venison from out front…you know lightly seasoned, sautéed in spite, basted in the juice from what’s left of Wyatt’s soul.

WYATT
Unless of course we got lucky and cook found a way to stick Linda in the oven.

SHARON
(To ELISE) Why don’t you and I go into the kitchen and see if we can be of any help.
ELISE
Let me grab the bottle of wine first…it’s about the only way I’m going to get through another one of these.

(ELISE grabs the bottle from the bar and they BOTH exit.)

MEL
I’ve never eaten anything basted in one’s soul before.

TIM
It’s amazing, takes moist to an entirely new level.

(SFX: DISTANT GUNSHOT.)

MEL
Was that gun?

WYATT
(Nods) Afraid so, but nothing to worry about…just my next door neighbor…he likes to shoot skeet after he’s had a few.

MEL
Isn’t that kind of dangerous?

TIM
I would imagine only if he hits someone.

WYATT
He’s shooting towards the ocean, and since we’re not in a boat…drink and forget about it. You’ll get used to it after awhile. Always do.

LINDA
(Enters from kitchen) Would you go tell that idiot next door to quit shooting before I call the police?

WYATT
I’d love too, but he’s the chief of them if you remember.

LINDA
Well then tell him I’ll call my father. He owns the police around here.

WYATT
Why don’t you go and tell him. You have a much scarier voice than I do.

TIM
He’s right. You do.
LINDA

Screw all of you.

(\emph{LINDA exits back to kitchen.})

MEL

\emph{(To WYATT)} She got any sisters? I’ve got a few single friends I hate that I’d love to set them up with.

WYATT

I’m afraid not. Her father declared her perfect then became a eunuch.

TIM

Smart man.

MEL

\emph{(To WYATT)} I’d love to meet him sometime. You’ll have to invite him to the next round of festivities then.

\emph{(SFX: GUNSHOT.)}

WYATT

\emph{(Smiles)} I will…I’ll have him come in by boat.

ELISE

\emph{(She enters)} Dinner’s about done, so why don’t you finish up your drinks and find your place at the table…same seating as always Linda said.

TIM

Which means birthday boy here gets to sit by his beautiful wife.

ROBERT

It’ll be like a dream come true.

TIM

Minus all the happy parts.

WYATT

\emph{(Claps his hands)} Then on that note…if anyone needs me…I’ll be at the children’s table…

\emph{(WYATT crosses to the closet and gets in. LIGHTS OUT.)}

\textbf{END SCENE}
SCENE TWO

SETTING: Same; two hours later after dinner.

AT RISE: SHARON, ELISE and LINDA in various places on stage, ALL drinking wine.

SHARON
Dinner was delicious by the way.

ELISE
I have to agree. That was unbelievable.

SHARON
And was that bird ever moist. I don’t think I’ve ever had anything that moist before.

ELISE
Especially for a Cornish game hen…the few times I’ve had them…nothing but dry.

SHARON
Same here; that cook of yours is amazing.

LINDA
(Matter-of-factly) Daddy bought him for me for Christmas.

SHARON
I’ve got to give your father credit then; he has impeccable taste in gifts.

ELISE
You’ll get no argument from me, because nothing says Christmas more than getting a human being under the tree.

(The front door opens. WYATT, TIM and MEL enter. THEY are carrying on a conversation. ALL hold drinks.)

WYATT
I think I got him to stop shooting for the night, but that just depends on if he remembers or not.

MEL
He’s slightly intoxicated to put it mildly.

LINDA
(With attitude) I should have just called my father.
WYATT
Quit worrying about it. We handled it. It’s done and over with.

LINDA
I seriously doubt you handled anything...you never do.

MEL
Wyatt’s right, I’m sure he’ll be passed out in no time.

TIM
And if he’s not...I’ll go over and drink with him.

ELISE
Why don’t you be proactive and go drink with him now?

TIM
Because I might miss something over here...plus that live deer, the Robert didn’t kill, is roaming around out there.

MEL
He looks kind of pissed too.

TIM
You could see it in his eyes.

MEL
(To WYATT) Bathroom...does it matter which one?

WYATT
Use the one through the kitchen, less blood in there.

MEL
(Hands TIM his glass) I’ll take another vodka rocks; light on the rocks, if you don’t mind.

TIM
Why don’t I make it a martini this time...nothing screams vodka like a great martini. (Crosses to bar)

MEL
Martini it is then. (To WYATT) Through the kitchen and to the left, right?

WYATT
No left. go right.

MEL
That’s right, upstairs is left.
WYATT
Downstairs is left, upstairs is straight ahead.

MEL
I thought upstairs was around the corner.

WYATT
No, that’s the guest house that’s around the corner.

MEL
(Beat) Screw it, I’ll just find a tree in the backyard.

SHARON
(To ELISE) Now you know why we only have one bathroom at our place.

MEL
(As starts to exit kitchen) And have that perfect martini ready when I get back….those last three regular vodka’s are starting to wear off.

TIM
Then you’re in for a treat. Just go and handle yourself, and when you come back prepare to enter happy land.

(MEL exits.)

SHARON
Just don’t make him too happy. The last time he went there was at my parent’s 40th wedding anniversary. And I’d still like to kill him for that one.

ELISE
Wasn’t that the one where he kept calling your mother his white Jamaican Mama?

SHARON
That would be the one.

LINDA
God was he a horse’s ass that night.

SHARON
Horse’s ass would have been a step up.

TIM
So should I gather from all this insightfulness that I should pass on creating his perfection?
SHARON
Just give him some water with a little vermouth…and then toss in one of those little cocktail onions…he’ll never know the difference.

TIM
(Mixes drink) How about I just make it a straight vodka with extra ice…easier that way.

SHARON
(Matter-of-factly) Water, vermouth, onion, or I’ll stab you with an ice pick…

TIM
(Smiles) A little attitude, I like that in a woman.

SHARON
(To WYATT) And I hate to ask, but how did Mel handle himself next door?

WYATT
He was fine for the most part…

TIM
…With the exception of his massively animated anti gun tirade.

WYATT
Which I got to say, caught me rather off guard.

TIM
Although it was kind of funny the way he was waving his arms around to make a point. 
(WYATT gives him a dirty look.) Well it was…made me giggle.

SHARON
(Gives TIM a dirty look as well) Mel’s not a big fan of guns anymore.

WYATT
He made that rather obvious.

SHARON
(Beat) I probably shouldn’t say anything, but a few years back…Mel’s father accidentally shot his face off.

ELISE
(With surprise) He shot his face off?

SHARON
Not completely…just parts of the left side…but enough to trigger Mel’s disdain for guns.
WYATT
I’m surprised he never mentioned that before. That’s not the kind of thing Mel usually keeps to himself.

SHARON
I think he’s more embarrassed about it than anything.

TIM
What for? With half a face his old man would be a real hit answering the door on Halloween. He could scare the crap out of the little kids without even trying.

LINDA
You’re a dick. You know that Tim?

TIM
(Matter-of-factly) Yeah, but at least I don’t have an extra hole in my face.

MEL
(Enters) You were right…it was to the right…

SHARON
You asked the cook, didn’t you?

MEL
Of course I asked the cook. I sure as hell wasn’t going to pee on a tree.

LINDA
Our gardener would have killed you if you had.

WYATT
He would have too. I saw him disembowel a bunny once after it peed in the yard.

MEL
(To TIM) So what’s up with my drink? Is it perfect or not?

TIM
(Hands him drink) About as perfect as I was allowed.

MEL
And that’s all one can ask for. (Holds up glass) Cheers. (Takes a long sip) Certainly smooth, I’ll give you that.

SHARON
And for a change I’ll let you have a few more.
MEL

(Studies his drink) Its water, isn’t it?

TIM

(Unconvincingly) Of course not, why would I make you a water drink?

MEL

(Looks directly at SHARON) Because I was starting to have fun…and every time I start to have fun…the more sober I seem to get with each drink…

TIM

Which when you think about it, is an alcoholics wet dream.

You’re still a dick, you know that.

LINDA

ELISE

(To LINDA) I wouldn’t waste your breath if I were you. He is what he is.

TIM

And besides, if you’re trying to hurt my feelings…you’re going to have to do a lot better than the totally obvious.

MEL

He’s right, even his mother thinks he’s a dick.

TIM

(Smiles) And she loves me.

LINDA

(Stands) I’m going for a walk.

(LINDA quickly exits through the front door with a nice slam to announce her leaving.)

WYATT

(With sarcasm) How I’m going to miss her.

TIM

Of course you will. We all will.

ELISE

(Shakes her head in disgust) Linda had it half right, you’re both a bunch of dicks…I need another drink.

(ELISE crosses to the bar.)
SHARON
(Beat) Where’s Robert by the way? I thought he went over there with you.

MEL
He did. But once that chief guy found out he was a doctor with the last name Holiday, he forced him to look at his antique gun collection.

TIM
One of the great disadvantages of being Doc Holiday I would imagine.

(SFX: GUNSHOT.)

WYATT
Apparently our little talk with the chief didn’t take.

TIM
Unless it was just the Doc shooting him.

LINDA
(Enters in a rage; crosses to kitchen as she speaks) I told you, you couldn’t handle that idiot… I’m calling my father and having him killed…and if he won’t do it…I’ll do it myself…. (Exits)

TIM
(Beat) Do you think her father will do it?

WYATT
Doubtful…the chief’s his illegitimate son… that’s why Linda hates him so much.

TIM
So her father’s only an implied eunuch?

MEL
I wondered how he could afford a place like that on a cop’s salary.

WYATT
Bought and paid for, one hundred percent.

SHARON
Just like the chief apparently.

(SFX: GUNSHOT.)

MEL
The chief hasn’t actually ever shot anyone—has he?
Not outside of work as far as I know.

TIM
So no one recreationally is what you’re saying.

(LINDA enters.)

LINDA
(Irate) He’s in Switzerland…can you believe that…Switzerland…that’s not even in this country…and if that’s not bad enough…I got his voicemail…he wouldn’t even take my call…

TIM
I wouldn’t fret over something as trivial as that. He’s probably just off buying some cheese…or possibly the Alps.

LINDA
(Beat) I need to kill you too.

WYATT
No one’s going to kill anybody. I’m sure that last shot was the end of it.

(SFX: GUNSHOT CLOSER.)

ELISE
You’re sure he’s still shooting towards the ocean, because that one seemed closer than the other ones?

WYATT
I’m positive. The louder is all just in your imagination.

ELISE
It’d better be, because getting shot wasn’t on my agenda today.

WYATT
Just everyone quit worrying about it. This happens every few weeks. Let’s just all settle down and go back to the miserable time we were all having.

MEL
Well if I’m going to stay miserable I want a real drink…(To SHARON)…and I don’t care what you say. Because if there’s a chance I’m going to get shot, I’m going to get shot being happy. And by happy I mean real drinking happy.
SHARON
(With anger) Fine, you want to be happy. Then get as happy as you want. But if you do… I’m leaving… and this time for good.

MEL
(To TIM with attitude) Fill me up.

(SFX: GUNSHOT CLOSER.)

ELISE
I don’t care what you say, those shots are getting closer.

WYATT
I promise you, they’re not. It’s just when the tide changes, the sound changes with it. He’s still as far away as he was before.

ROBERT
(Enters front door somewhat panicked) If you’re not already armed you might want to think about it—that guy’s totally insane.

LINDA
See, what did I tell you? He needs to be killed, and he needs to be killed right now.

WYATT
No one needs to be killed. For the last time he’s shooting at the ocean. Everyone will be just fine.

ROBERT
I hate to tell you this, but he quit shooting at the ocean about five minutes ago… that one deer charged him and he started shooting at it.

LINDA
Oh that’s just great… (To WYATT) I’m so glad you handled it like usual…

WYATT
Why don’t you shut the hell up for a change?

LINDA
Don’t you talk to me like that?

WYATT
Or what, you’re going to call your father who won’t take your calls.

LINDA
I hate you.
WYATT

(Emphatically) I hate you too.

(TIM and MEL applaud. LINDA gives them a look of death.)

TIM

Sorry…just got caught up in the moment.

(SFX: NEARBY GUNSHOT.)

MEL

I’ll be drinking behind the bar if anyone needs me.

(MEL joins TIM behind the bar.)

SHARON

(Quickly crosses over to MEL) I’ve changed my mind; drink all you want…and make some room for me back there.

(MEL and SHARON duck behind the bar.)

ROBERT

What are we going to do? There’s got to be somebody close by we can call.

WYATT

We could call the locals but they don’t like to get near the chief on Saturday night’s either.

ROBERT

What about the state?

WYATT

That would take too long.

ELISE

Certainly you’ve got some guns around here some place.

WYATT

(With disgust) Afraid not; Linda doesn’t think it would be safe to have guns in the house.

LINDA

Oh, so now this is all my fault?

ROBERT

At this point it doesn’t matter whose fault it is, we’ve just got to figure something out before that idiot gets any closer and starts shooting this way.
(SFX: CLOSE RANGE GUNSHOT/GLASS BREAKING; an upstairs window shot out.)

TIM
Too late.

ELISE
That sounded like an upstairs window.

LINDA
Oh dear god...my vase collection.

(LINDA races upstairs.)

ROBERT
Anyone kept track of the number of shots so far?

TIM
(In all seriousness) I’ve had at least four.

Gunshots you idiot.

TIM
Oh…right…sorry…

WYATT
He keeps an extra clip on him so it wouldn’t matter if we had.

ELISE
What are we so worried? I mean it’s not like he’s going to storm the place and start shooting us—is he?

WYATT
I wouldn’t think so. He’s harmless for the most part…It’s just that his aim isn’t all the great.

(SFX: CLOSE RANGE GUNSHOT.)

TIM
At least that one didn’t hit the house.

(TIM exits from behind bar. MEL stands up from behind the bar; his hair is a mess.)

MEL
You’re almost out of vodka back here, you got anymore?
SHARON
(From behind the bar out of sight) Forget it Mel...I found one behind a bucket of golf balls.

MEL
(Looks down, smiles, and then at WYATT) Great party by the way. (Ducks back behind bar)

LINDA, Offstage
(Screaming) My vases...he shot my beautiful vases...oh my God...even the crappy ones...there are pieces everywhere...I’m going to kill him...kill him and then I’m going to kill again...that miserable bastard...

(LINDA continues with her ranting but it grows quieter as she seethes.)

WYATT
(Smiling) Well at least something good’s come out of all this.

ELISE
I think I’d better go check on Linda. (Crosses to stairs)

WYATT
I’d knock first and then stay on the outside. My guess is she finally snapped.

(ELISE exits.)

(SFX: GUNSHOT followed by LOUD EXPLOSION.)

TIM
That can’t be good.

ROBERT
I know that sound...that was a car....

WYATT
(Rushes to front door and opens it) Holy crap, you are right. There’s car everywhere.

TIM
Whose car?

WYATT
Looks like Mel’s.

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