

# DEATH WARMED OVER

by Ken Bradbury



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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

Morgan - a funeral director

Marsha - the widow

Mark - the deceased

*(Soothingly boring organ music is heard and the lights come up on the viewing room of a funeral home. A man, Mark, is in a casket, tipped slightly up so that we may see him. He looks perfectly funereal, with suit, boutonniere, and hands carefully folded. Marsha, Mark's widow, comes into the room after a moment, similarly mournful. She looks at Mark for a moment, then tenderly places her hand over his.)*

**Morgan:** *(entering)* Mrs. Lyle? I'm sorry. I didn't mean to startle you.

**Marsha:** Is it time?

**Morgan:** No, no. Take all the time you wish. I'm not rushing you.

**Marsha:** Are they ... I mean are people ...?

**Morgan:** The pallbearers are right outside. Just let me know when you're ready and I'll come back to close the casket.

**Marsha:** Thank you. *(Morgan nods and leaves.) (to Mark)* Oh, Mark. Mark, Mark. *(moves to the other side of the casket)* I ... I've never known what to say to you. Today's no different. *(another long stare, then)* I guess I'm done. *(she begins to leave)*

**Mark:** *(opening his eyes)* Stay a moment.

**Marsha:** Why?

**Mark:** You leave too soon, they'll think you don't care.

**Marsha:** Oh. I guess so.

**Mark:** Have a chair. You look tired.

**Marsha:** There's no seat.

**Mark:** Want mine? *(Marsha smiles)* How've you been?

**Marsha:** I don't know. It hasn't really hit me yet. I wish I had you to help me through all this.

**Mark:** I'm dead, Marsha.

**Marsha:** I know.

**Mark:** Dead.

**Marsha:** I know you're dead, Mark.

**Mark:** Wishing we'd had time to say good-bye?

**Marsha:** No. If we'd had time, that means you'd have suffered. We can't have it both ways. Massive coronary has its advantages.

**Mark:** It hurt.

**Marsha:** For long?

**Mark:** It seemed so. Probably not. Things were a bit of a blur, I'm afraid. How are the kids?

**Marsha:** Jeanette made it back for the funeral, Kyle had an emergency then couldn't get a flight until tomorrow, and we still can't find Billy.

**Mark:** Same old thing.

**Marsha:** I miss you, Mark.

**Mark:** That's good, isn't it?

**Marsha:** I suppose it is. You know, it's funny. This is longest we've been to church together in years.

**Mark:** That was funny?

**Marsha:** I thought so. And for once, you didn't squirm during the sermon.

**Mark:** Don't think I wasn't tempted.

**Marsha:** That would have given the mourners a thrill. (*pause*) I sat there and kept thinking about the all phases we've been through together.

**Mark:** You were daydreaming during my eulogy?

**Marsha:** A little.

**Mark:** Marsha!

**Marsha:** Only in the slow spots ... the part about your life. (*she smiles, he smiles*) Sorry. I couldn't help it, Mark. Anyway ... you know I always daydream in church. Remember our Methodist stage?

**Mark:** I always liked the Methodists. They take anybody.

**Marsha:** Then our Presbyterian period.

**Mark:** Methodist without the meetings. Then you got that wild hair about the Pentecostals.

**Marsha:** I'm a radical by nature. And I thought about Episcopal, but flower children do not become Episcopalian, Mark. You can't burn your bra in the sixties then suddenly turn Episcopal when arthritis sets in.

**Mark:** I always thought you'd make a good Catholic.

**Marsha:** I think it was the term "Good Catholic" that kept me from becoming one.

**Mark:** I thought you'd get off on all that incense they throw around. (*she smiles*) So ... what was the meaning of that funeral?

**Marsha:** Oh.

**Mark:** (*not in anger, he says*) How dare you!

**Marsha:** I'm sorry, Mark.

**Mark:** Baptist, Marsha! Dear God, you gave me a Baptist funeral. What were you thinking? Trying to make me respectable at the last minute?

**Marsha:** I was playing it safe, Mark. Look, I'm sorry. But everybody dies a Baptist.

**Mark:** You're crazy, you know that? I may be dead, but you're crazy.

**Marsha:** I have this theory, Mark. Fool around all you want with high church, low church, charismatic, traditional, whatever ... When it comes down to it, it's the foxhole theory of religion. When times get tough and you're breathing your last ... that old-time-black-and-white-no-exceptions religion ...

**Mark:** ... was good enough for me?

**Marsha:** I thought you'd be pleased.

**Mark:** I was shocked. Did you see him pounding on my coffin?

**Marsha:** The pulpit must have missed a flight, too. It didn't arrive in time. He was Baptist. He had to pound on something. (*checks her watch, looks off*) Mark, we only have a few moments more. We've got to finish this.

**Mark:** In case you haven't looked closely, I've finished everything already.



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