

"Professor Hoyt's Remarkable Elixir"

by
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WGA Registered

BILL NICHOLSON, a tall man in his late 30s, parks his car and gets out. He sees PROFESSOR THOMAS HOYT, an older gentleman, in the distance, standing among the headstones.

HOYT

(calling)

Mr. Nicholson, over here!

Nicholson walks toward Hoyt.

NICHOLSON

(approaching him)

Well, well, well. Professor Thomas Hoyt. I never thought I'd see you again.

HOYT

Nor I you.

(beat)

I'm sure you've had ample opportunities to regret firing me from Consumer Pharmaceuticals.

NICHOLSON

To tell you the truth, no.

HOYT

(astounded)

No?

NICHOLSON

What did you *expect* me to do? You left me no choice when Ms. Patterson filed that sexual harassment suit against you.

HOYT

That was a crock, and you know it.

NICHOLSON

(sighs)

Professor, I didn't come out here in the middle of a workday to rehash old news.

HOYT

Why *did* you come here, Nicholson?

NICHOLSON

It was your mysterious appeal to meet me and show me something that you said, and I quote, "will make us both rich."

HOYT

I *knew* that would get you here. You're the same greedy SOB you've always been.

NICHOLSON

I also didn't come here to be insulted!

HOYT

But you won't leave, will you? You won't leave because you want to see how I can make you rich.

NICHOLSON

Can we skip the mutual admiration society and get on with this?

(beat)

Why'd you want to meet in a cemetery anyway?

HOYT

You'll understand shortly.

NICHOLSON

Hurry up. Graveyards give me the creeps.

HOYT

The sun is shining. It's 12:30 in the afternoon.

NICHOLSON

It doesn't matter. They've always creeped me out, and they always will.

(beat)

What do you want to show me?

HOYT

Notice this gravestone.

Hoyt points to a certain gravestone. We see it as Nicholson reads from it.

(CONTINUED)

NICHOLSON

James F. Rigg. Beloved husband.
Sorely missed.
(beat)

So?

HOYT

Did you notice the date of his
death?

NICHOLSON

Yes: about six months ago.

HOYT

Exactly! *That* is the maximum.

NICHOLSON

Maximum? What are you getting at?

HOYT

Observe. I remove this from my
coat pocket. *Voila!*

Very ceremoniously, Hoyt pulls a thermos from his coat
pocket.

NICHOLSON

I've seen a thermos before, Hoyt.

HOYT

But you've never seen the like of
what's *inside* of this thermos.

NICHOLSON

(chuckles)
Coffee?

HOYT

Far from it. Watch this.

Hoyt unscrews the top of the thermos and pours its liquid
contents on the gravesite.

HOYT

There it is done.

NICHOLSON

Did you know this guy?

HOYT

I never met him before in my life.

(CONTINUED)

A low sizzling sound is heard. Nicholson looks down at the gravesite and sees that the earth is turning bright green.

NICHOLSON

What's that stuff of yours doing?

HOYT

The elixir is working its magic.

NICHOLSON

But the earth is turning. . .
green.

HOYT

That is to be expected. Green is such a lovely color. The color of money, isn't it? Doesn't everyone want to be green nowadays?

The sizzling sound fades to nothing.

NICHOLSON

What's happening?

HOYT

You shall soon see.

We hear the voice of RIGG.

RIGG

(very muffled from
six feet below)
Get me out of here!

NICHOLSON

(alarmed)
What was that?

RIGG

(likewise muffled)
Get me out of this box!

HOYT

I believe it was the late Mr.
Rigg.

DISSOLVE TO:

2

EXT. CEMETERY - MOMENTS LATER

2

RIGG
(still muffled)
Get me out of this thing! *Anyone!*
Help!

NICHOLSON
It *can't* be!

HOYT
It is.

NICHOLSON
But he's. . .

HOYT
Not any longer.

NICHOLSON
It's a trick.

HOYT
Trick?

NICHOLSON
To get back at me for firing you.
It must be a trick.

HOYT
How am I tricking you?

RIGG
(still muffled)
Help me *please!*

NICHOLSON
Ventriloquism. You're throwing
your voice.

HOYT
Do I look like Edgar Bergen?

NICHOLSON
You're trying to make me look like
a fool - embarrass me.

HOYT
Nothing of the kind. My Remarkable
Elixir has brought Mr. James F.
Rigg back to life. Now, are you
going to help me dig him up?

(CONTINUED)

NICHOLSON

(aghast)
What?

RIGG

(muffled)
Help me!

HOYT

We have to get him out of there
before it's too late. I have two
shovels in my trunk.

RIGG

(muffled)
Anyone! Help!

NICHOLSON

(chuckles uneasily)
You're joking.

HOYT

Have you ever known me to jest?

NICHOLSON

That's grave robbing!

HOYT

Only if the person in the grave is
dead. Mr. Rigg is very much alive.

NICHOLSON

No. I refuse to be involved in
such a thing. I'm getting out of
here.

Nicholson starts walking away.

HOYT

Fine. You've obviously forgotten
about that money that is to be
made from my elixir.

Nicholson stops in his tracks and turns to Hoyt.

NICHOLSON

I'll have *nothing* to do with
digging up a grave.

HOYT

Fine. I'll do it myself.

(CONTINUED)

NICHOLSON

You do that. I have to get back to the office.

Nicholson starts walking away again.

RIGG

(still muffled)

Help me. *Please!*

HOYT

Of course, it will likely be too late.

Nicholson stops walking and turns to Hoyt.

NICHOLSON

Late?

HOYT

Working alone, by the time I'm able to get the rejuvenated Mr. Rigg out of his casket, he will likely be dead again, this time from suffocation. There's only so much air down there, and with the way he's been calling out for help, he's likely expended most of it.

RIGG

(muffled)

Get me out of here. Help. *Help!*

NICHOLSON

But I. . .

HOYT

A man, the only example of the power of my Remarkable Elixir, is about to pass away because of your refusal. Can you live with yourself for allowing this beloved husband to die again?

DISSOLVE TO:

Hoyt and Nicholson have dug down to Rigg's casket, which is corroded around the edges. Nicholson's suit shows signs of dirt from his digging.

(CONTINUED)

HOYT

Phew! Finally!

NICHOLSON

What happened to the casket? It looks. . . *burnt*.

HOYT

Corroded actually. That's an effect of the elixir. It seeps through the casket to get to the corpse. Don't touch it with your hands. It may burn you.

RIGG

(still muffled, but
not as much)

Help me!

NICHOLSON

How am I supposed to open it?

HOYT

Try to get the blade of your shovel under the lid. Pushing down on the handle should pop open the casket.

NICHOLSON

I can't believe I'm doing this!

With an uneasy shrug, Nicholson gets the shovel under the lid and begins pushing down on the handle. The lid creaks loudly.

HOYT

Is it working?

NICHOLSON

(exerting himself)
It *seems* to be. Just a little more.

After a bit more struggling, the lid of the casket pops open with a crash. Rigg quickly sits up in his coffin.

RIGG

(gulping air)
Oh, thank God! Thank you so much.

DISSOLVE TO:

4

EXT. CEMETERY - MOMENTS LATER

4

Nicholson and Hoyt have removed Rigg from his casket.

RIGG

Thank you both so much! It was getting tough to breathe down there.

HOYT

You're welcome.

NICHOLSON

(confused)

Same. . . Same here.

RIGG

This has got to be Eddie's doing.

HOYT

Eddie?

RIGG

Eddie Morse, my best friend. He's a *big* practical joker. He's probably laughing his butt off now. What a kidder!

NICHOLSON

Mr. Rigg, I don't think you understand what -

RIGG

Boy, will I get him back.

HOYT

Mr. Rigg, I think we owe you an explanation.

NICHOLSON

Agreed.

HOYT

Have you seen this tombstone?

RIGG

Yeah, I saw it. Eddie went all out on this one. Must have set him back a pretty penny.

HOYT

But it's not -

(CONTINUED)

RIGG

Thanks again, guys, but I have to be heading home now. Brenda must be worried about me. Boy, am I gonna catch flack for this!

NICHOLSON

But you can't just walk in the house after six -

RIGG

Sure I can.

HOYT

Well, at least let us *drive* you home.

RIGG

No thanks. I'd rather walk. I know the way. My legs are kind of stiff.

NICHOLSON

You don't know the half of it.

RIGG

I could use the exercise.

Rigg looks down at his bare feet.

RIGG

Hey, where are my shoes? Oh, that Eddie.

(beat)

The Mrs. and I are only a few blocks away, over on Murdock Street. Thanks again, guys.

FADE OUT.

Rigg walks down a tree-lined street towards his home. Some passers-by look at him strangely.

RIGG

Good. The car's in the driveway. Brenda's home.

Rigg walks up the steps, opens the front door, and enters his house. He walks to the kitchen, where his wife, Brenda, is washing the dishes.

(CONTINUED)

RIGG
Hi, honey. I'm back.

BRENDA
(screams loudly)

BRENDA drops a dish, which shatters on the floor.

RIGG
Geez, Bren. I'm sorry. I didn't
mean to scare you.

BRENDA
(aghast)
Jim! How could you. . .

RIGG
I know, I know. I'm sorry. I
didn't mean to worry you. It
wasn't my idea.

BRENDA
But you're. . .

RIGG
That Eddie pulled a pip of a
practical joke on me, but I'll get
him back. He won't know what hit
him.

BRENDA
This *can't* be happening.

RIGG
If it's OK with you, hon, I'm
gonna take a shower and grab some
Zs.

BRENDA
(disbelievingly)
Sure, that's. . . that's fine. . .

RIGG
I can't remember ever being so
tired. Geez, I'm dead on my feet.

DISSOLVE TO:

Nicholson and Hoyt are seated at a table having a bite.

(CONTINUED)

HOYT

May I assume you're intrigued by what you saw?

NICHOLSON

Intrigued isn't the word. *Amazed* is more like it.

HOYT

(proudly)
Thank you.

NICHOLSON

All that was the result of the stuff you poured on that guy's grave?

HOYT

Yes, my elixir.

NICHOLSON

Is that what you call it?

HOYT

I was thinking of a more grandiose name - maybe Professor Hoyt's Remarkable Elixir.

NICHOLSON

You created it?

HOYT

All by myself. Interested?

NICHOLSON

Of course.

(beat)

How does it work?

HOYT

You saw it yourself: You simply pour the proper amount of the elixir onto the gravesite. It sinks through the soil, seeps into the casket, and rejuvenates the corpse within.

NICHOLSON

(amazed)

You brought a dead man back to life.

(CONTINUED)

HOYT

We did.

NICHOLSON

But shouldn't he have been. . .

HOYT

Go on.

NICHOLSON

After six months in a casket,
shouldn't he have started to. . .
decompose?

HOYT

I have no doubt he had. The elixir
fixes that. It even turns
embalming fluid into blood.

NICHOLSON

At the graveyard, you said
something about six months being
the maximum. What did you mean by
that?

HOYT

My findings show that the elixir,
in its current form, cannot work
its magic on anyone who has been
dead for longer than six months.
Of course, with the proper backing
and research facilities, I should
be able to extend that maximum.

NICHOLSON

(with sudden
realization)

You want Consumer Pharmaceuticals
to rehire you.

HOYT

It would be in your best financial
interest to start making and
marketing Professor Hoyt's
Remarkable Elixir. Of course,
you'll probably want to give it
some more peppy, consumer-friendly
name like. . . oh. . . "Welcome
Back, Jack" or some such thing.

NICHOLSON

What did Mr. Rigg die of?

(CONTINUED)

HOYT

I have no idea. Before today, I never met him. I just happened to notice from his gravestone that he had been dead for almost the six-month maximum. The elixir can revive people who have died from a number of diseases.

(beat)

Think of the money that's to be made, Nicholson.

NICHOLSON

Believe me, I am.

HOYT

Everyone will buy it. After all, who wouldn't want the opportunity to bring back a deceased love one?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RIGG HOME - LATER

An anxious Brenda is on the phone, pacing. We hear the other end of the conversation filtered.

EDDIE answers the ringing telephone.

EDDIE

Eddie Morse.

BRENDA

Eddie, it's. . . it's Brenda.

EDDIE

Hi, doll. I didn't expect to hear from you. I can't tell you how much I'm looking forward to tonight. I can taste that -

BRENDA

(emphatically)

Tonight's off.

EDDIE

What? I've been looking forward to dinner. All I had for lunch was a soda and some stale chips from the vending machine. Why is tonight off?

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA
Are you sitting down?

EDDIE
Yeah.

BRENDA
He's back.

EDDIE
Who's back?

BRENDA
Ryan Seacrest - who do you think?

EDDIE
Well, I don't know.

BRENDA
Jim's back.

EDDIE
(beat)
That's impossible.

BRENDA
I wish it were.

EDDIE
He's been dead for almost six
months.

BRENDA
Don't you think I know that? I got
the life insurance settlement.

EDDIE
It has to be a joke. It's an
imposter.

BRENDA
Oh, no. It was him.

EDDIE
What happened?

BRENDA
He walked into the house, as sweet
as you please, like nothing ever
happened and said hello.

EDDIE
It *has* to be a joke.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA

Honey, he was in the suit we buried him in!

EDDIE

Where is he?

BRENDA

He's upstairs in the shower. He said he was going to clean up and take a nap.

EDDIE

I'll be right over.

BRENDA

I don't know if you should.

EDDIE

You don't want to face this on your own.

(whispering)

Need I remind you of everything we went through to get rid of him so the two of us could be together?

BRENDA

I know.

EDDIE

(whispering)

I dropped a nice chunk of change to get the medical examiner to overlook the poisons in Jim's blood and draw up a fake toxicology report.

BRENDA

(growing teary eyed)

Money, money, money! Is it always about money with you?

EDDIE

Calm down, baby. I'll be right over.

BRENDA

But what if Jim gets suspicious?

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE

Why would he be suspicious? I'm just his co-worker stopping by to say hello.

FADE TO:

Nicholson and Hoyt are at the same table, talking.

HOYT

So what do you think, Nicholson?
Am I hired?

NICHOLSON

Definitely. I'm going to push the big shots to devote a lot of the company's resources to your elixir.

HOYT

What about my accuser, Ms. Patterson?

NICHOLSON

This is too good of an opportunity to pass up. I'll figure *something* out.

(beat)

Let me make a quick call.

Nicholson takes out his cell phone and dials.

NICHOLSON

Monica, it's Mr. Nicholson. I'll be back in the office in about thirty minutes. I want you to call everyone together for a meeting in the main boardroom - department heads, board members, everyone . . . Yes, I know it's Friday afternoon and they might not be happy. Tell them the meeting is mandatory. That ought to do it . . . What's that? . . . What's the meeting about? Why, the very future of Consumer Pharmaceuticals - that's what!

DISSOLVE TO:

9

INT. RIGG HOME - LATER

9

Eddie enters, closing the door behind him.

BRENDA
(teary eyed)
Oh, thank God you've come. I don't
know what to do. I. . . I. . .

EDDIE
Easy, honey, easy. Where's Jim?

BRENDA
He's up in bed.

EDDIE
Do you think he's asleep?

BRENDA
Probably. It's been quiet up
there.

EDDIE
Let's go up and have a look.

BRENDA
But we don't want to wake him.

EDDIE
We won't. We just want to be
certain it's him.

BRENDA
(surprised)
You don't believe me?

EDDIE
Did I say that? I only want to
know what we're dealing with so I
can figure out what to do next.

DISSOLVE TO:

10

INT. OUTSIDE THE BEDROOM DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

10

Brenda opens the door a bit. Eddie and Brenda stare in at
the sleeping Rigg.

EDDIE
(whispering)
Sure looks like him.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA

(whispering)

It *is* him.

(longish beat)

I hadn't seen that earlier.

EDDIE

(whispering)

What?

BRENDA

(whispering)

You can see the birthmark on his neck. It's him, I tell you.

EDDIE

(whispering)

I think you're right.

BRENDA

(whispering)

But how. . .

EDDIE

(whispering)

I don't know. I think we need to go for a drive.

In the bedroom, Rigg begins grumbling as he starts waking up.

BRENDA

(whispering)

He's waking up!

RIGG

(calling out
groggily)

Honey?

BRENDA

(whispering)

What am I gonna do?

EDDIE

(whispering)

Go talk to him.

RIGG

(calling out
groggily)

Is that you, Brenda?

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA
(whispering)
Me?

EDDIE
(whispering)
*You're the one he's asking for.
Tell him you need to go run some
errands. Just don't tell him I'm
here.*

Eddie ducks out of sight as Brenda opens the bedroom door
and walks in.

BRENDA
(nervously)
Y-yes, honey?

RIGG
(still groggy)
I thought I heard you.

BRENDA
*I'm sorry I woke you. I was. . . I
was putting some things away in
the linen closet. Are you still
tired?*

RIGG
(yawns)
*And how! I think I'll catch a few
more winks, if that's OK.*

BRENDA
*It's fine. I have to run some
errands.*

RIGG
Where to?

BRENDA
*Oh. . . the market for one. I'll
be back before too long. You just
rest.*

RIGG
(yawns)
Good idea.

Brenda starts walking out of the bedroom.

(CONTINUED)

RIGG
(calling)
Bren?

Brenda stops in her tracks.

BRENDA
Yes?

RIGG
Aren't you forgetting something?

BRENDA
I don't think so.

RIGG
(yawns)
How about my kiss goodbye?

BRENDA
(nervously)
K-kiss?

RIGG
Sure. It'll help me sleep.

Rigg points at his lips.

RIGG
Plant one right here.

DISSOLVE TO:

Many man and women are clustered around a meeting table in the windowed boardroom. They are none too pleased with this impromptu Friday afternoon meeting and are complaining among themselves. Two of the older board members are MR. WALDORF and MR. STATLER (who has a Southern drawl).

NICHOLSON
(speaking loudly to
be heard over the
hubbub)
Please! May I have some quiet?

The talking slowly fades out.

(CONTINUED)

NICHOLSON

I want to thank you all for coming to this impromptu meeting.

STATLER

This had better be good, Nic.

NICHOLSON

I assure you it is.

STATLER

I'm not used to Friday afternoon get-togethers.

NICHOLSON

I think you'll find it worth your while.

WALDORF

I hope so. Let's get on with it.

NICHOLSON

Well, as you all know, for some time, Consumer Pharmaceuticals has been searching for new products to bring to the buying public. We do a respectable business in the kind of pharmaceuticals that sell well, but we have never been able to develop a unique product that everyone needs - a must have. I believe that product is finally upon us.

WALDORF

Indeed? Well, don't keep us in suspense.

NICHOLSON

I'd like to present the man who is going to bring our company into undreamed-of realms of profitability.

(calling)

Come in, Professor.

Hoyt opens the doors and walks into the boardroom. He is met with a chorus of chuckles and even some boos.

WALDORF

Him? You must be kidding. We *fired* him.

(CONTINUED)

NICHOLSON

I know that, but if you'll let me explain.

STATLER

I'm sure that Ms. Patterson won't be too thrilled that Professor Hoyt is in the building.

WALDORF

We should get her down here.

NICHOLSON

I know of the Professor's history with this company as well as anyone. Do you honestly think I would bring him here if he didn't have a *remarkable* product for all of us?

WALDORF

Well. . .

HOYT

Since you're all here, shouldn't I be allowed the opportunity to speak?

The hubbub starts up again, briefly.

STATLER

I *suppose* that makes sense, but don't dilly dally, Hoyt, or I'll have you tossed out on your ear.

HOYT

Understood, Mr. Statler.

(beat)

The reason I am here today is to tell all of you about my Remarkable Elixir.

WALDORF

What does it do?

HOYT

(nonchalantly)

It brings the dead back to life.

All those assembled chuckle.

NICHOLSON

He's telling the truth.

(CONTINUED)

The laughter fades out.

NICHOLSON

I've seen it work.

STATLER

Have you?

NICHOLSON

Yes, earlier today.

STATLER

Tell us what you witnessed, Nic?

NICHOLSON

The Professor poured some of the elixir onto a gravesite. It seeped through the ground and into the casket below, bringing the dead man inside back to life.

WALDORF

Balderdash!

NICHOLSON

I saw it happen. I helped dig up the rejuvenated man. This dirt you see on my suit is from his grave.

STATLER

What did he look like? A skeleton?

HOYT

Not at all. My elixir is capable of repairing any deterioration that has happened to a corpse. Until further research can be done to increase the abilities of the elixir, it is currently capable of rejuvenating someone who has been dead for six months or less.

WALDORF

I can't believe you ruined our Friday afternoons for this *fiction!*

NICHOLSON

It's true!

(beat)

I've worked here for years, and I've *always* given this company my absolute best.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NICHOLSON (CONT'D)

Have you ever known me to joke
where the future of Consumer
Pharmaceuticals is involved?

WALDORF

But a magic elixir that brings the
dead back to life. . .

NICHOLSON

I've seen it work!

(beat)

I can understand that you don't
believe me. I didn't believe it
myself at first. All I can tell
you is this: With the proper
research and development, this
elixir can make us *millions*. If we
don't take this chance, one of our
competitors will - why, Clint Mann
over at BioPharm would *jump* at
this opportunity.

STATLER

Might you take your offer to
BioPharm, Professor?

HOYT

It would be tempting.

NICHOLSON

Of course we would.

WALDORF

We?

NICHOLSON

If you turn the Professor down,
I'd have no problem walking out of
here today for good. Maybe
Professor Hoyt and I would start a
new company solely for the
development of the elixir. That
might be the way to go. Why,
within two years you'd be eating
our dust.

(longish beat)

Well, what do you say?

DISSOLVE TO:

12

EXT. CEMETERY - LATER

12

Brenda and Eddie are standing by what was Rigg's gravesite.

EDDIE

Look at this. Someone dug him up!

BRENDA

Why would anyone do that?

EDDIE

No idea. I'm more curious as to how Jim came back to life.

BRENDA

Look at the dirt around the grave. It's bright green!

EDDIE

And the casket looks corroded around the edges.

BRENDA

What could do that?

TONY, an old man, shabbily dressed, approaches them.

TONY

(calling)
Mrs. Rigg! Mrs. Rigg!

EDDIE

Who's that?

BRENDA

That's Mr. Marconi, the groundskeeper.

Tony reaches them.

TONY

Mrs. Rigg, good afternoon.

BRENDA

Good afternoon, Mr. Marconi.

TONY

Please. Everybody calls me Tony.

BRENDA

You remember Edward Morse, my husband's co-worker.

(CONTINUED)

TONY

Yes, I do. Good day, Mr. Morse.

EDDIE

(nods)

Tony.

TONY

I'm so sorry you had to see this without warning, ma'am. I just discovered what happened a few minutes ago. I tried calling you, but there was no answer.

BRENDA

(alarmed)

You called the house?

TONY

Yes, but after a few rings, the answering machine kicked on. I didn't want to leave a message about this on the phone. It didn't seem right.

EDDIE

Do you have any idea who did this?

TONY

Unfortunately not. I think there were two of them.

BRENDA

Why do you think that?

TONY

There are two shovels there on the grass.

EDDIE

So there are, but there are *three* sets of footprints in the dirt - one of the guys was in bare feet.

TONY

(beat)

You're right! I hadn't noticed that. Maybe one guy kept a lookout while the other two dug.

EDDIE

Are there any clues, Tony?

(CONTINUED)

TONY

I'm afraid not, but there soon
will be.

BRENDA

What do you mean?

TONY

The police are on their way.
They'll figure out what happened,
find the culprits, and get your
late husband's body back to its
eternal rest.

BRENDA

The *police*?

TONY

Sure. I hung up from them just
before I saw you and Mr. Morse.
Grave robbing is a crime, you
know.

(beat)

Did I do something wrong?

EDDIE

(quickly)

No, not at all.

TONY

Oh good.

EDDIE

Brenda, we'd better be going.

TONY

You can't stay? The police might
want to talk with you.

BRENDA

I'm afraid we have a very
important appointment to keep.

TONY

I'll let them know. If they need
to speak with you, I'll send them
over to the house.

BRENDA

(worried)

Send the police?

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (3)

12

TONY

You're only over on Murdock
Street. They could walk there from
here.

FADE TO:

13 INT. EDDIE'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

13

Eddie and Brenda are driving away from the cemetery.
Eddie is behind the wheel.

BRENDA

The police, Eddie! The *police*.

EDDIE

I heard the man.

BRENDA

What are we gonna do?

EDDIE

We have to kill Jim and hide the
body somewhere.

BRENDA

But we killed him months ago.

EDDIE

I know that. I guess it. . .
didn't take.

BRENDA

But the police are bound to find
out.

EDDIE

Not if we're careful.

BRENDA

(beat)
How are you thinking about killing
him?

EDDIE

A gun.

BRENDA

But the cops. . .

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE

We're the only ones who know Jim is alive. We can't kill a man who everyone believes is still dead.

BRENDA

(growing teary eyed)
I'm so messed up.

EDDIE

Here's the plan: I'll drop you at your house -

BRENDA

(hurriedly)
We'd better swing by the market first. I told Jim I was going to the market.

EDDIE

OK. After I drop you at home, I'm going to go see a friend of mine.

BRENDA

What friend?

EDDIE

You don't know him. It's better that way.

BRENDA

What are you seeing him about?

EDDIE

He owes me a big favor. I can get a gun from him, no questions asked. We'll kill Jim and take care of the body. The police will never find him. As far as they're concerned, it will be an unsolved case of grave robbing, and we'll be in the clear. No one else will ever know about Jim coming back to life.

BRENDA

But what about the two men at the cemetery - the guys with the shovels? They know!

EDDIE

That's right.
(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE (CONT'D)

We'll have to find them and see
that they. . . don't talk.

BRENDA

You mean. . . kill them too?

EDDIE

If we have to.

(beat)

The market is right down this
street. Get some milk and bread or
whatever, and I'll drop you home.

BRENDA

But. . .

EDDIE

What is it?

BRENDA

I don't know if I can be home
alone with Jim.

EDDIE

Why not? You were before.

BRENDA

Right, and I was scared to death
until you showed up.

EDDIE

It won't be for long. I'll be back
as soon as I can.

(beat)

Here's the market.

Eddie pulls into a parking space.

BRENDA

But what if Jim. . .

EDDIE

(growing aggravated)

What?

BRENDA

What if he wants to. . . well, you
know. . .

EDDIE

Snuggle?

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA

Or worse. You didn't kiss him
before we left. He lips were. . .
like *ice*. If he wants to get
friendly, what will I do?

EDDIE

I don't know. Haven't you ever had
a headache before?

DISSOLVE TO:

STATLER

Would you *really* leave here and
start your own pharmaceuticals
company, Nic?

NICHOLSON

Like a shot! You're not
considering the profit potential
of the Professor's elixir. I am.

WALDORF

I, for one, am certainly
considering it.

(beat)

Professor, you said you have
successfully used this elixir to
bring a man back to life?

HOYT

Yes, not long ago.

WALDORF

Where is he?

HOYT

He. . . uhm. . . he went home.

STATLER

Home? You let him get away?

NICHOLSON

He just. . . walked away.

STATLER

I'll want to speak with him before
I consider manufacturing the
elixir. What say you, Mr. Waldorf?

(CONTINUED)

WALDORF

I'd say that's reasonable, Mr. Statler.

NICHOLSON

But I'm not sure where he is.

WALDORF

Well, find him, Nic. He's the key to this whole deal.

DISSOLVE TO:

Nicholson and Hoyt are walking and talking.

NICHOLSON

Now what do we do?

HOYT

We find him.

NICHOLSON

How?

HOYT

We know his name from the headstone: James F. Rigg.

NICHOLSON

That's a pretty common name.

HOYT

We could ask to see the cemetery's records or call their office for the information.

NICHOLSON

That would only get the authorities suspicious.

(longish beat)

Wait a minute! Rigg told us the street he lives on.

HOYT

He did?

NICHOLSON

At the graveyard. Remember? He mentioned he was going to walk home because he lived so close.

(CONTINUED)

HOYT

That's right. He did! What was that street name. . . "Mur" something, wasn't it?

NICHOLSON

Yes. . . Mur. . . Mur. . .
Murdock!

HOYT

That was it! James F. Rigg on Murdock Street. Where are the white pages? We'll look him up.

NICHOLSON

We can bring him back here and get production of the elixir approved.

HOYT

We're going to be *rich!*

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RIGG KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Brenda enters with a bag of groceries.

RIGG

Hi, honey.

BRENDA

(lets out a little
scream)

Brenda drops the bag to the floor.

RIGG

I'm sorry I startled you. I'm two for two today.

BRENDA

You're awake?

RIGG

Yeah. That's how sleeping works: You go to sleep and then you wake up.

BRENDA

Do you feel. . . *better?*

(CONTINUED)

RIGG

Oh, much better. Let me get that bag for you.

Rigg picks up the grocery bag and places it on the counter.

RIGG

(chuckles)

I hope you didn't get eggs.

BRENDA

(chuckles nervously)

No, no eggs.

RIGG

Milk? Why'd you buy milk? We've got plenty.

BRENDA

We. . . we do?

RIGG

Sure. I just had a bowl of cereal. Boy was I hungry! I felt like I hadn't eaten in months.

BRENDA

Sorry.

RIGG

No problem. I love a nice big bowl of cereal in the morning. I'll use the milk up before it goes bad.

BRENDA

(quickly)

That's good.

RIGG

(seductively)

Say, I'm not home this early often. How about you and me. . .

BRENDA

(quickly)

I'm afraid I can't right now.

RIGG

Sure you can.

BRENDA

I have a *lot* to do.

(CONTINUED)

RIGG

Can't you add one more thing to
your list?

BRENDA

It's tempting, but not right now.
Besides, I'm not feeling too well.

RIGG

I'm sorry. I didn't know. What's
wrong?

BRENDA

It's nothing terrible - just
stuffed up and headachy.

RIGG

A cold?

BRENDA

(quickly)
Yeah, that's it. I'm not feeling
myself.

RIGG

What you need is to. . .
(seductively)
. . . go to bed.

Rigg puts his arms around Brenda. She pushes them away.

BRENDA

Jim!

RIGG

You can't blame a guy for trying.

BRENDA

Besides, Karen is coming over
soon.

RIGG

Well then, maybe later.

BRENDA

Yeah. Maybe.

RIGG

Oh, will I get that Eddie Morse on
Monday.

BRENDA

Get him?

(CONTINUED)

RIGG

Oh, that's right. I didn't tell you about the gag he pulled on me.

BRENDA

No, you didn't.

RIGG

He had me buried down at St. Joseph's - fake headstone and the whole nine yards. It must have cost him a pretty penny.

BRENDA

How'd he do that?

RIGG

I'm not sure. He must have slipped something in my drink. You know Eddie - nothing too expensive for a joke.

BRENDA

How'd you get out?

RIGG

Whatever he doped me with must have worn off. I woke up in a casket six feet underground.

BRENDA

How horrible!

RIGG

Fortunately, there were two guys up top who got me out.

BRENDA

What two guys?

RIGG

I don't know; never saw them before in my life.

(beat)

Are you sure you don't need my help with your chores?

BRENDA

No thanks.

RIGG

OK then. I'm gonna go to my den to plan my revenge on Eddie.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (4)

16

RIGG (CONT'D)
I'm going to dream up a practical
joke that'll knock him dead.

FADE TO:

17 INT. RIGG HOME - LATER

17

The doorbell rings.

Brenda answers the door. Nicholson and Hoyt are standing
outside.

BRENDA

Yes?

HOYT

Excuse me, ma'am. We're looking
for James F. Rigg. Would he be
home?

BRENDA

Is this some kind of sick joke?

NICHOLSON

Not at all. Why?

BRENDA

Because he. . .
(with sudden
realization)
Wait a minute. Two guys, he said.
(beat)
Yes, he's home.

HOYT

Is now a bad time?

BRENDA

Not at all. Now is the *perfect*
time. Please come in.

Hoyt and Nicholson enter the house. Brenda closes the
door behind them.

HOYT

Thank you.

NICHOLSON

Much obliged.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDA

You must be the two men from the graveyard.

NICHOLSON

Yes. So your husband told you what happened?

BRENDA

As much as he remembers.

NICHOLSON

Memory loss, Professor?

HOYT

It will pass. The brain cells are always the last to rejuvenate. I anticipated that on my tests of the elixir.

BRENDA

The what?

NICHOLSON

Ma'am, my name is Bill Nicholson. This is Professor Thomas Hoyt. We're from Consumer Pharmaceuticals.

BRENDA

And you somehow brought my Jim back to life?

HOYT

Yes. I have developed an elixir which can do just that.

BRENDA

You're joking?

HOYT

Certainly not. I have some with me.

NICHOLSON

It's very important that we speak with your husband.

BRENDA

Well, he -

Rigg approaches.

(CONTINUED)

RIGG

Hey, we meet again.

NICHOLSON

Glad to see you, Mr. Rigg.

HOYT

You're looking well. How are you feeling?

RIGG

Not bad now. I was pretty tired and hungry when I got home.

HOYT

That's to be expected.

RIGG

Honey, these are the guys I was telling you about. Thanks again, guys, for getting me out of there. It's a good thing I don't suffer from claustrophobia, huh?

HOYT

You're very welcome.

(beat)

What do you remember from before we dug you up?

RIGG

Just waking up, but I've been getting these little flashes in my head. I can't quite make them out.

HOYT

That would be your memory returning. It's a good sign.

RIGG

Sign of what?

NICHOLSON

Mr. Rigg, would you have the time to come downtown with us? There are some friends of ours we'd like you -

Nicholson is interrupted as Eddie walks in. He closes the door behind him.

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE

Well, it's a regular convention in here.

RIGG

Eddie, you pain in the butt. That was quite a trick you played on me, but I'll get you back.

EDDIE

No you won't.

Eddie pulls a gun from his pocket.

RIGG

What's going on, pal?

BRENDA

Eddie, these are the guys we've been looking for - the two from the cemetery.

EDDIE

Well, if that don't beat all. Here I was afraid that we'd need a manhunt to find you two, and you come to us. Couldn't ask for better luck, could we, honey?

BRENDA

No, we couldn't.

RIGG

(surprised)
Honey?

BRENDA

Yes, Jim.

(beat)

Eddie, the older guy has something on him he calls his elixir. He used it to bring Jim back to life.

EDDIE

Did he? Well, you'd better hand that over, old man.

HOYT

I will not.

Eddie points the gun at Hoyt.

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE

Here are your choices: You give it to me willingly or I kill you and take it.

NICHOLSON

You'd better give it to him.

HOYT

(beat; reluctantly)

Here.

Hoyt hands Eddie the thermos. Eddie puts it down on the table.

EDDIE

Great. Now we'll get to the business at hand.

NICHOLSON

Which is?

EDDIE

Killing the three of you.

RIGG

What are you talking about, Eddie?
Put down that gun.

BRENDA

He said he doesn't remember too much since he came back to life.

EDDIE

You never were that bright, Jim.
That's how Brenda and I were able to carry on our affair right under your nose.

RIGG

(astounded)

What?

BRENDA

You didn't *really* think I was always out with my girlfriends.

RIGG

(incredulously)

The two of you. . .

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE

It was easy. And now we're going
to kill you. . . again.

RIGG

I was really. . . *dead*, guys?

HOYT

Yes, for almost six months. We
revived you.

NICHOLSON

The two of you killed him?

EDDIE

That's right, and Brenda got a lot
of insurance money when Jim died.

BRENDA

Which I'm *not* about to give up.

EDDIE

And now, with the only three
people here who can cause us any
trouble, I'll finish the job.

(beat)

You first, Jim. Stay dead this
time.

Eddie and Rigg struggle over the gun.

RIGG

(struggling)

Drop the gun, Eddie.

EDDIE

(struggling)

Not until you're dead, old pal.

In the struggle, the gun fires, hitting Brenda.

BRENDA

(screams)

Brenda drops to the floor.

The struggle ends with Eddie still holding the gun.

RIGG

Brenda!

Rigg starts toward Brenda. Eddie aims the gun at Rigg,
Hoyt, and Nicholson.

(CONTINUED)

EDDIE

Keep away from her, Jim. All of
you, keep away! I still have more
bullets.

Eddie bends beside Brenda's body, moving the hair from
her face.

EDDIE

Brenda?. . . Brenda?

(longish beat)

Oh no! She's dead. You killed her,
Jim!

RIGG

I killed her?

Eddie rises to his feet.

EDDIE

If you hadn't struggled with me,
you'd be lying there dead now and
not her.

(longish beat)

Wait a second! Where's that
thermos. . . Ah, got it.

HOYT

What are you going to do?

EDDIE

You said this stuff brings people
back to life, right? Well, I'm
gonna bring Brenda back.

NICHOLSON

You can't do that.

EDDIE

Sure I can.

Eddie grabs the thermos and unscrews the top.

EDDIE

What do I do, old man?

HOYT

I wouldn't advise you -

EDDIE

Pour it on her?

(CONTINUED)

NICHOLSON

Eddie, you have to listen to -

Eddie pours the thermos's contents on Brenda's body.

EDDIE

There! It shouldn't be long now.

The sizzling sound starts. The elixir begins eating away at Brenda's skin, revealing her bones and hanging organs.

EDDIE

(urgently)

What's happening? What's going on?
Your stuff ain't workin'.

HOYT

I tried to tell you that you
shouldn't pour it right on her
body. You wouldn't listen. It's
not meant to work that way!

The sizzling sound dies out. Brenda is now nothing but a skeleton with hanging human organs.

EDDIE

(crying)

I'm sorry, Brenda. I'm so sorry!
(beat)
Well, *I* can still use the money.
It's time for you three to die.
Line up.

BRENDA

(faintly)

Eddie?

EDDIE

Brenda?

BRENDA

I must have slipped. I'm OK. I'll
get up now.

As Brenda moves, her bones rattle together. Her jawbone clacks open and shut with every word she speaks.

Brenda starts walking toward Eddie. With a ding, the bullet falls from her "body" and onto the floor.

EDDIE

(terribly frightened)

B-B-Brenda. . .

(CONTINUED)

RIGG

Mother of God!

EDDIE

(very frightened)

Brenda, no. Stay away from me!

Brenda stops walking.

BRENDA

Honey, what's wrong?

EDDIE

(very frightened)

Don't come any closer!

BRENDA

Don't you love me anymore?

EDDIE

(grunts in great
pain)

Eddie grabs at his heart and drops to the floor.

Brenda rushes to his side.

BRENDA

It's his heart! Help him!

Hoyt kneels down beside Eddie and checks for a pulse.

HOYT

(longish beat)

I'm afraid he's dead.

BRENDA

(teary eyed)

Why was he acting so strangely?

What could have scared. . .

Brenda looks up and sees what remains of her in a mirror.

BRENDA

(screams loudly a few
times at the sight)

DISSOLVE TO:

18

INT. CONSUMER PHARMACEUTICALS' BOARDROOM - EVENING

18

Only Hoyt and Nicholson are now present. Hoyt is on the phone.

Hoyt hangs up the phone.

HOYT

That was Mr. Rigg. Brenda's in the hospital. The doctors say that she's in a severe state of shock.

NICHOLSON

I can imagine.

(beat)

Will they be able to do anything for her? Reconstructive surgery, maybe?

HOYT

It would be a *big* job. She doesn't have a sliver of skin left on her. I don't know what the future holds for her. If only Eddie hadn't. . .

NICHOLSON

You tried to tell him. He wouldn't listen.

HOYT

That doesn't make me feel any better.

NICHOLSON

Me neither.

(beat)

What will happen to Jim Rigg?

HOYT

He'll continue to live until he dies a natural death. My so-called Remarkable Elixir doesn't make anyone immortal, just alive again.

(beat)

Is Consumer Pharmaceuticals still interested in the elixir?

NICHOLSON

Their interest has. . . *waned*.

HOYT

Maybe with some more research. . .

(CONTINUED)

NICHOLSON

Maybe. They're not sure there's a
market for it anymore.

HOYT

Why not?

NICHOLSON

Remember how you said who *wouldn't*
want to bring a dead loved one
back to life?

HOYT

Yes?

NICHOLSON

Our first customer didn't.

FADE OUT.