



A MOST AWKWARD FUNERAL

By Bill Roddey

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A one act play

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CHARACTERS

REVEREND STERN-A preacher in his 40's presiding over the funeral. Casually dressed.

JIMMY POWTER- 35 year old Sheriff brother of the deceased older Johnny Powter. Casual, with a denim jacket, with a flask in the side pocket.

HORATIO AUGUSTUS POWTER- Uncle, retired Colonel in his 60's of Johnny Powter dressed in a suit and tie, with a small bottle of water inside his jacket pocket. And a small bottle of water in his pant's pocket.

SALLY POWTER- 30 year old widow of Johnny Powter, dressed in jeans and a tank top.

JASON a 40 year old bar mate of Johnny's from the VFW.

Cheer Laundry Detergent Box- Featured Extra

SYNOPSIS- The funeral dishonoring the memory of Johnny Powter, who managed to drink himself to death at the relatively young age of 31 and the bad memories that his short soused life brings from his brother Jimmy and widow Sally. This funeral gives his uncle, Horatio Augustus, and the Reverend Stern an opportunity at self aggrandizement, which jars second thoughts about the deceased from Jimmy and Sally in this break from the pandemic.

SCENE ONE

Facing the audience, that is in attendance for the funeral as both loved ones and witnesses, is centered a podium, a lectern or a music stand substituting for a podium, two folding chairs on one side of the podium stage left, where Jimmy Powter and Sally Powter are seated. And two chairs stage right where Horatio Augustus Powter and Reverend Stern are seated on the other side. Rev Stern holds some papers. Off to the side, stage right, is a folding chair with a box of Cheer detergent sitting there with an S added spelling CheerS. Taped to the box under it is a hand written piece of paper with Johnny! on it taped to the box making it say CheerS Johnny!. The box contains Johnny Powter's ashes.

(Reverend Stern stands and walks to the podium, arranges his papers and looks over the audience.)

REV STERN

We are assembled here today to place in eternal rest John E. Powder...

JIMMY POWTER
(Interjects)

Powter.

REV. STERN
(Stops and looks back at Jimmy.)

What?

JIMMY POWTER

Powter.

REV. STERN

That's what I said... Powder.

JIMMY POWTER

Powter...It's Powder.

REV STERN

Yes, John E. Powder.

JIMMY POWTER

Johnny Powter...Oh, never mind. Padre. Go on.

REV. STERN

(Turns to face the audience, then continues.)

Luckily, there's a pause in this pandemic, where we can pray again and tithe in God's house. Where we can start conducting funerals and not to have to break into our kids' piggy banks AGAIN for a Happy Meal or four... Ah, umm ashes to ashes and dust to dust, for our brethren John E. Powder... As you may notice (gestures to the right) a chair with a leading laundry detergent box on it. The Belly Up to the Bar Boys at the VFW on Front Street gathered up a collection to have Mr. Powder cremated, but didn't manage to raise enough to buy an accompanying urn for his ashes. So this CheerS Johnny! container, they concocted during Happy Hour, will have to do... to shuffle Mr. Powder off this mortal coil into eternity. Let us pray.

(Rev. Stern bows his head, but doesn't say anything. While Jimmy, Sally and Horatio Augustus just stare straight ahead.)

REV. STERN

Amen. (Looks up) John was preceded in death by his twin brothers, Billie and Joe, whose last words were "Hey, look. Look at this!" as they jumped off the Tallahatchi Bridge. (Continuing) I would like to say that John E. is in a better place, that he died doing what he loved to do. Drinking beer while riding his Harley in a state that didn't require a helmet. He is one with the road kill now, rocking his soul in the bosom of Abraham for infinity and beyond...But alas, there is no record of him ever attending a church anywhere... Nor was he baptized. (Remembering) Although his friends at the VFW swear he always carried a church key...whatever that is. So where his eternal soul now resides, I dread to conjecture... Let us pray.

(Again Rev. Stern bows his head in silence.)

REV. STERN

Amen. (Looks up) Although I didn't know him personally... and pray that the check clears for this viewing... I've collected some fond memories of the deceased. From all accounts he was ah, a pretty good baby...And ... well actually. .. that's all I've got. Amen.

(He bobs his head down briefly and brings his head back up.)

REVEREND STERN

Amen... You should all be concerned about your eternal soul. That this life and all its temptations, turmoil and triumphs are temporary. That this is the time to save yourself...before it's too late... Also know that we have Ham Bingo on Wednesday nights at the 8 Days a Week Adventists' Church where the grand prize is a Honey Glazed Spiral Cut Ham and some baked goods... This Sunday's sermon concerns the benefits of a reverse mortgage and that a happy wife is a happy life. Feel free to attend...Please. I left my card on the windshields of your cars in the parking lot as to the address and times of services... Now, if anyone would like to say something about John E.

(Jimmy Powter gets off his chair and walks to the podium. Rev. Stern sits down.)

JIMMY POWTER

(Glumly) I'm Jimmy Powter, Johnny's brother, and I'd like to say a few words. I haven't really had any contact with Johnny in the last 10 years or so, especially after he enlisted. The last real conversation I had with him was just after I graduated high school and was going off to college in the fall. I worked at Mickey D's all summer to make some money for my dorm room rent...And Johnny stole all of it ...over \$1,000 from my sock drawer, so I couldn't go in the fall... We had words and stopped talking. (Still Angry) Actually, I had to drop out, before I began, cause then mom died and ...well. That wasn't unusual for Johnny. If you left a dollar on your dresser at night, it wouldn't be there in the morning. It was like a reverse tooth fairy... And being the Sheriff it was always embarrassing to arrest him for drunk and disorderly and DUI's all the time...I just pretended, I didn't know him.

(Jimmy looks over at the Cheer's box of ashes, turns around and sits down Reverend Stern shakes his head, stands and walks to the podium.)

REVEREND STERN

Well, OK... Anybody else want to comment before we...

(Sally stands and walks over to his ashes and glares. Then turns and goes to the podium and stares stony eyed at the audience.)

SALLY POWTER

I'm Sally, the widow. Well Johnny, you're finally on time for something in your sorry life. Guess you didn't have a choice this time... In case you were wondering Johnny, your boys were too busy playing Halo to bother to come here today. But then YOU lost interest in them after conception, so they hardly knew you anyway... Don't see any of your girlfriends here. (Sally looks around.) I guess blood and Bourbon is thicker than water. Your VFW family of buds is here though. VFW-your home away from home. .. Hell, it WAS your home! (Gesturing at Johnny's CheerS' cremated ashes) You've finally reached your full potential...becoming ashes...as a burnt out camp fire.