

THE ILLUSTRIOUS INHUMATION OF A MR. BUGS TEED

Written by

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A quirky young man is forced to improvise his grandfather's burial after he learns they cannot afford any sort of funeral, all to the dismay of his grieving grandmother.

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EXT. TEED HOME - DAY (FLASH-FORWARD)

The muggy Floridian heat sticks to the cramped, one-story shack of a home. A dead lawn lines the property.

ELLIS OCTAVIAN, 22, a cornball of a man whose neck is turtled in black cashmere, is struggling to load the corpse of his grandfather, "BUGS" TEED, now deceased, into the back of his silver Fiat, which is marked with a broken headlight and a duct-taped window.

ELLIS  
(straining)  
C'mon Gramps.

He drops the feet of the body, Ellis' hands on his hips.

A shrill VOICE, that of his grandmother DELILAH, 87, a twee woman who wears an all-green jumper, calls him from the porch.

DELILAH  
Ellis, Honey, what are you doing?

ELLIS  
What?

DELILAH  
What are you doing over there?

ELLIS  
I'm moving Grandpa's body.

DELILAH  
What?

ELLIS  
I said, I'm moving Grandpa's body.

DELILAH  
I told you not to do that.

ELLIS  
I don't have a choice, Gramma.

DELILAH  
What do you mean?

ELLIS  
Gramma, I swear to-

INT. TEED HOME - BEDROOM - DAY (PRESENT TIME)

A slapdash master bedroom that has accumulated an abundant collection of oddities. Squarely in the middle lays Bugs, 89, now alive, barely. He's a cranky man dressed in matching pajamas. He's silent. He's dying.

Resting in a chair next to him is Delilah, reading a magazine. On the opposite side sits Ellis.

BUGS

I think I want to be cremated.

Delilah looks up sharply.

DELILAH

What?

BUGS

I want to be cremated.

DELILAH

I don't think so.

BUGS

Who are you to tell me what to do?

DELILAH

Your wife.

(a beat)

Why are you telling me this now?

BUGS

I don't know, I was just thinkin' about it.

DELILAH

I mean, it's ridiculous, Bugs. You spend your whole life telling me we're gonna get a nice little plot next to each other, and all the sudden, when you're about to croak it, you bail on me?

BUGS

I'm not bailing on you.

DELILAH

You are.

BUGS

I just think it'd be nice to be in a little pot for eternity.

DELILAH

Bullshit.

BUGS

Not bullshit. Why would I wanna be underground? It's dirty in there. A little pot seems much nicer.

DELILAH

No, it doesn't, Bugs. I want to be buried just like my mother and my mother's mother, and I expect you to join me.

BUGS

Well, it's not up to you cause we both know I'm gonna belly up in the next few days, and Ellis here is gonna cremate me.

Delilah looks to Ellis before storming out of the room.

ELLIS

(annoyed)  
Seriously?

Bugs waves a finger, calling Ellis over.

BUGS

I left some money in the closet for you. It should cover the cremation. You just have to convince your Grandma.

Ellis sighs, looking to Heaven for a moment.

INT. TEED HOME - ELLIS' BEDROOM - DAY

Ellis sits at his small desk in the cramped bedroom, struggling to count a stack of bills.

ELLIS

Sixty, eighty, one-hundred, one-twenty, one-forty, uh--

He accidentally lets two bills slip down.

ELLIS (CONT'D)

Fuck...

He restarts.

ELLIS (CONT'D)

Twenty, forty, sixty, eighty, one-hundred, one-twenty, one-forty, one-sixty, one-eighty, two-hundred, two-hundred-twenty.

He sets the twenties in a pile, next to a thin stack of hundreds.

ELLIS (CONT'D)

Okay, so that's...six hundred and twenty.

He opens the first tab on his computer: a local funeral home, comparing burial and cremation costs. Both are more than a thousand.

He switches to the second tab: a shady, old-school HTML website called "Pet Pyre" advertising pet cremation, and "more" under-the-table. Their fee is more affordable.

ELLIS (CONT'D)

(under his breath)

Fuck.

INT. TEED HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

Ellis and Delilah sit across from one another, each with a half-assed sandwich on a paper plate. Their eyes are red and puffy with tears.

ELLIS

Grandma, I think we should talk about what to do with Grandpa.

DELILAH

I made you bologna, your favorite, no?

ELLIS

I know it's only been a few days, but he said he wanted to be cremated. How do you feel about that?

DELILAH

Does it have enough mustard?

ELLIS

Grandma, I'm serious.

DELILAH

So am I.

A beat.

ELLIS  
I found a place that can do  
it.

DELILAH (CONT'D)  
It tastes alright to me.

ELLIS (CONT'D)  
They also do pets. It's low  
profile, kinda under the radar.

DELILAH  
I don't think Bugs would've liked  
that.

ELLIS  
It's called "Pet Pyre."

DELILAH  
Cute.

Ellis finally takes a bite of his sandwich.

ELLIS  
It's good.

DELILAH  
I'm not letting you take him.

ELLIS  
What?

DELILAH  
To that Pet Pyre place. Or  
anywhere.

ELLIS  
Grandma, we can't keep him here  
forever. It's...well, it's illegal.

DELILAH  
I don't care.

ELLIS  
Okay...well, what do you suggest?

DELILAH  
There's a nice cemetery in  
Escondido-

ELLIS  
Escondido? That's like an hour-

DELILAH  
I've already invited a few of our-

ELLIS

Friends? What friends? You guys haven't talked to anyone in like five years.

DELILAH

Ellis. We're going to bury your Grandfather. So you had better find a damn simple way to do it.

Ellis sits back in his chair, pushing the plate away from him.

EXT. TEED HOME - NIGHT

Delilah shuffles over to Ellis.

ELLIS

-God. To be honest with you, we can't afford this shit. We're broke. Hell, we're poor. There's no time for Escondido or some grand funeral-

DELILAH

-Ellis.

ELLIS

I know I don't have a plan.

A beat.

ELLIS (CONT'D)

But we can't just keep him in there. He's rotting. It's disgusting. We've kept all this other useless shit for fifty years, I'm not gonna let Grandpa become one of 'em.

DELILAH

Okay.

ELLIS

Okay?

DELILAH

You know, you're just like your Fatha', you never ask for help.

Delilah steps down from the curb, grabbing Bugs' feet.

DELILAH (CONT'D)

C'mon.

ELLIS

What?

DELILAH

I'll help you.

ELLIS

Grandma, I don't think that's a good-

DELILAH

If we can't pony up enough to have someone else take him, then we'll do it ourselves.

ELLIS

Yeah but-

DELILAH

No buts.

The two grab Bugs' body, starting to haul him out of the trunk.

EXT. TEED HOME - BACKYARD - NIGHT

Ellis is digging a hole, sweat dripping from his greasy forehead. Delilah watches him.

ELLIS

Maybe when you kick the bucket, I could bury you right here too, next to him, just as you wanted. Maybe by then I could afford a big funeral.

Ellis starts to drag Bugs' body, trying his best to lay it gently into the pit.

ELLIS (CONT'D)

What do you think?

DELILAH

As long as you're there, Ellis, I guess I'll be happy.

Delilah grabs a handful of dirt, pouring it over the grave site.

FADE OUT.