

# Being dead isn't always so bad

By Julia Averbeck

Smashwords Edition

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For Lyn

**Author's note:**

If someone performs this play on stage or wherever you can perform a play, please make a video and send it my way. I would love to watch it.

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**Characters:**

**Felicity**, an elderly woman

**Maude**, her sister

**Princess Anne**, their cat

**Eddie**

**Police officer**

**ME**

**Photographer**

**Constable**

**Settings:**

Everything takes place in Felicity's and Maude's living room. There you can find an open fireplace, an old sofa, an armchair and a small table. The room is lit by firelight and a standard lamp. It's getting dark outside.

## Act one

*Felicity opens the door and walks into the room. In the dim light, she can see a dark shape on the floor under the open window.*

**Felicity** Awe (*shrieks*)

*Maude runs into the room and stops next to her sister.*

**Maude** What is it? Is something wrong?

*Felicity points at the shape and Maude takes a step backwards as she sees it and puts her hand on her bosom.*

**Maude** Gosh! Is that a man?

*Maude bends over the shadow and feels for a pulse.*

**Felicity** (*shaky*) Is he dead?

**Maude** Seems like he is. What is he doing in our living room? Have you left the window open?

**Felicity** No. I closed it before we went to the church. What shall we do now?

*Maude rises.*

**Maude** I think we should call the police. I hope they will clean up this mess.

*Maude leaves the room to make the phone call. You can hear her in the distance. Felicity sinks into the armchair. Princess Anne comes into the room through the open door and sits down beside the dead man.*

**Anne** What is your name stranger?

**Eddie** I'm Eddie.

*Eddie tries to move his hand but he can't.*

**Anne** Why are you lying in my living room and bleeding onto the carpet?

**Eddie** I don't know. I can't remember where I was before I found myself lying here. Am I bleeding?

**Anne** No, not longer. But I think that's normal when you're dead. (*licks her paw*)

**Eddie** (*puzzled*) Dead? I can't remember that I was dead before.

**Anne** That's because humans have, instead of cats, only one life so you probably weren't dead before.

**Eddie** (*sighs*) I'm totally confused now. So... you don't know why I'm dead?

**Anne** No, not yet but we will probably find out soon. My owners phoned the police and maybe you can remember what happened to you soon. You can't count on the humans to solve the case.

**Eddie** Hey, I'm human too. Anyhow... maybe it's better to say I was.

**Anne** Yes, I think that's suitable. Here she comes again.

*Maude returns to the room.*

**Maude** They will be here as soon as possible. That's probably not very soon.

**Felicity** But we can't let him lie on the floor like this. I don't want to look at him anymore.

**Maude** We have to leave everything as it is. They want to take pictures and all that stuff to find out how he died. I think I need a drink. You don't have a dead man in your living room every day. A drink for you too, darling?

**Felicity** Yes, please. Maybe my hands stop shaking then.

*Maude leaves the room to fetch the drinks.*

**Eddie** It's a bit cold in here, isn't it?

**Anne** No. Death is always as cold as ice.

**Eddie** Please don't speak in riddles. I didn't like riddles when I was alive. So the police are coming?

**Anne** Yes.

*The doorbell rings.*

**Maude** *(from another part of the house)* It's alright. I'll open the door.

*Maude returns with the Police officer, the ME, the photographer and the drinks. She hands one drink to her sister.*

**Police officer** Good evening. So, that is the dead man you talked about on the phone.

**Maude** Can you see another dead man in this room?

**Police officer** Well...no. So, the ME will look at the body and I ask you some questions.

*Felicity sips her drink slowly. Maude downs it in one gulp and leans against the fireplace.*

**Police officer** Who has found the corpse?

**Felicity** That was me.

**Police officer** Was something not normal when you came into the room?

**Maude** I don't think a dead man on the floor is normal.

**Police officer** *(irritated)* Hmm...no. So was there anything else that was not normal?

**Felicity** The window was open and I'm sure it was closed when we left the house earlier today.

*Police officer walks over to the window. ME examines the dead man. Photographer takes pictures of everything.*

**Police officer** Looks like the window was forced open. Maybe it was him. *(points at dead man)*

**ME** I don't think so. He was dead before he fell onto this floor. There isn't enough blood so it wasn't him who broke the window.

**Police officer** Right. That sounds logical. Can I have a picture of this window?

*Photographer takes a picture of the window.*

**Maude** Maybe we can close the window now? It's getting cold.

**Police officer** Sure. I don't think we will find fingerprints here. It doesn't look like they used a weapon to break the window open. I would like to know who he is.

*Police officer closes the window.*

**Eddie** I think my driving licence is in my pocket.

**Anne** Not bad. You start to remember what has happened.

**Eddie** But how shall we tell them? I am dead and you can't talk either.

**Anne** Let that be my problem.

*Anne stalks over to Felicity and rubs herself at her legs.*

**Felicity** What is it sweetheart? Have you seen something?

*Anne walks back to the dead man and scratches at his pocket.*

**Felicity** (*exited*) Maybe he has something in his pocket.

**ME** Yes, there's a driving licence. His name is Eddie Franken.

**Police officer** Does that ring a bell?

**Felicity** No, I don't know that name. Do you know the name Maude?

**Maude** No, I never met someone with that name.

**Eddie** It was a try. Good work.

**Anne** Thank you.

*ME bends over the body again. The Police officer watches him.*

**ME** Can you help me to turn him over?

*ME and Police officer turn the dead man onto his back.*

**ME** I can't see stab or bullet wounds.

**Police officer** So he wasn't stabbed or shot.

**Maude** I think that's what he wanted to say with it. (*points at ME*)

**Police officer** Do you know how he was killed? He was killed, wasn't he?

**Maude** Even to me it doesn't look like a natural death.

**ME** He was definitely killed. I don't know how yet but I'll find out.

*Police officer turns to Maude and Felicity again.*

**Police officer** Do you know if something was stolen from this room?

**Felicity** (*looks around*) No, I think everything is in place. We don't have a lot of things in here.

(*To Maude*) Do you think anything is missing?

**Maude** I think he doesn't look like he was in a condition to steal something.

**Felicity** No, you're right. So, how could he come in when the window wasn't forced open with a weapon?

**Police officer** That's a good question.

**Eddie** My head feels like it could kill me again if I wasn't already dead.

**Anne** Maybe you opened the window.

**Eddie** How could I open the window when I was already dead?

**Anne** Not with your hands, with your head.

**Eddie** My head?

**Anne** That would explain the open window. Maybe you were thrown of the roof and fell through the window.

*Anne walks to the dead man's feet and sees the rest of a rope under his trousers. ME's glance meets Anne's and he looks down at the feet.*

**ME** There's a rope.

**Police officer** A rope?

**ME** Around his feet.

**Police officer** Whose feet?

**Maude** Of the dead man, you idiot.

**Police officer** Oh, of course. Why is there a rope?

**Felicity** Maybe he was thrown of the roof.

**Police officer** Why should someone throw this guy of a roof?

**Maude** I don't think you would keep a corpse in your house.

**ME** Look if you can see the other part of the rope outside. *(Police officer looks at him puzzled)*  
Just lean out of the window and have a look.

*Police officer opens the window and leans out of it.*

**Police officer** I can see something hanging over the gutter. Yes, that's a rope. So, he was thrown of the roof with a rope around his feet and fell through this window. Where did they fix the rope?

**Maude** The chimney would be an opportunity.

**Police officer** So, he was thrown of your roof but we still don't know who has done it.

**Eddie** My wife! I think my wife has something to do with my death.

**Anne** Your wife? That's interesting.

**Eddie** Yes, but I can't remember what happened. Damn, this pain in my head is horrible.

**Anne** Calm down. Everything will be alright.

**Felicity** *(to ME)* Maybe you should search his other pockets for some hints.

**ME** Yes, you're right.

*ME searches the other pockets of the dead man.*

**ME** Here is something else. It's a part of a document but it was torn.

**Maude** Give it to me. I have a good knowledge of documents and maybe I can say what it is.

*ME gives torn document to Maude.*

**Anne** Has this something to do with your wife?

**Eddie** I don't know, maybe.

**Maude** This looks like a last will.

**Police officer** Whose last will?

**Maude** I think the one of the man on our carpet. Here is a part of his name on the document.

**Felicity** Can you see anything else on it?

**Police officer** Who is in his will?

*All gather round Maude, while she's reading the document.*

**Maude** You can't see enough of the document to say that but I think it was changed lately. And here is a Mrs Franken mentioned but she isn't in his will anymore.

**Police officer** So, he excluded his wife of his will. Why should he do that?

**Felicity** Maybe she has betrayed him.

**Maude** That's possible.

**Eddie** Now I know it.

**Anne** You know what?

**Eddie** My wife had an affair. (*Tries to slap his forehead with his hand*) I always forget that I can't move.

*Anne comes closer to Eddie's head.*

**Anne** She had an affair?

**Eddie** Yes, with the milkman. I saw them together last week when I came back from work early. After that, I went to my lawyer to get a divorce and to change my will.

**Anne** Oh, that's good. Now we have the motive. Well, it's not that good for you because you're dead but at least we know why you're dead. Your wife killed you.

**Eddie** But how?

**Anne** Well, you were dangling from our roof. Maybe she threw you out of something.

**Eddie** Out of what? A hot-air balloon. (*Thinks for a moment*) Hey, that could be right.

*ME looks closer at dead man's eyes.*

**ME** Look at this. (*Points to the eyes*) He has little red points in his eyes. That's normally a sign that he was choked by someone. And here is a feather. (*Holds it up*)

**Police officer** What's so special about a feather?

**Maude** Because maybe he was choked with a pillow.

**Police officer** Oh. That's possible.

**Maude** (*soft-spoken to Felicity*) I really don't know how he got his job. He is so stupid.

*Felicity nods.*

**Anne** So I think they finally got it. They just have to catch your wife and everything is fine. Well maybe not everything. You're still dead.

**Eddie** Well, I don't think being dead is so bad. I think I can go to the next level when they found my wife and be out of here. It's better than seeing my wife with another man and this way she will serve a sentence.

*The doorbell rings.*

**Maude** I'll go and look who's there. (*Goes out*)

**Police officer** Who can be that again?

*Maude comes in with a police constable.*

**Constable** Sir, we found a woman in a hot-air balloon who told us she has murdered her husband.

**Police officer** Oh, really?

**Constable** She's totally crazy if you ask me. Threw her lover right out of the balloon but he fell into a haystack so he's all right.

**Police officer** What's her name?

**Constable** Mable Franken, Sir.

**Police officer** That would fit.

**Maude** Of course it fits. You better believe a woman who killed her husband. So, she had an affair.

**Felicity** And he wanted a divorce and excluded her from his will. Poor guy. She just killed him for that.

**Police officer** But how did you know we were here? (*Turns to Constable*)

**Constable** Oh, she told us where she threw him out and I found out the address and came here. I heard of the dead man you found here before we found her. Or she found us.

**ME** Alright. We can bring him away now.

*Constable, photographer and ME lift the body and bring it out. Police officer follows.*

**Eddie** Look. I can move again. (*Stands up*)

**Anne** I see that. So you're free now.

**Eddie** Yes, I am. Thanks for your help though. Didn't know what to do without you.

**Anne** Oh, that's alright. I help where I can. See you around then. Not too soon, I believe. I still have five lives to live but it won't be such a long time for you I think.

**Eddie** Alright, see you then.

*Anne walks out.*

**Maude** I think I'll go to bed now. Too much excitement for one day. You're coming, too?

**Felicity** In a minute.

*Maude leaves the room.*

**Felicity** Mr. Franken?

**Eddie** (*astonished*) You can see me?

**Felicity** Well, I could always see ghosts but I can't say that in front of my sister. She already thinks I'm a bit mad. I don't want to give her another reason.

**Eddie** I can understand that.

**Felicity** Well, I just wanted to say I'm really sorry you're dead. My grandmother always said 'Life ends when it ends and you cannot say when this will be'. I think she was right in this point.

**Eddie** True words. So, I think I'll go up now. See you around then sometime.

*Eddie waves and vanishes.*

**Felicity** Nice guy. He would have been a good father if he had married another woman. To bed then and to everyone a good night. (*Nods to the audience and goes out*)



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