

O'MALLEY'S WAKE

by

Kim Kelln

O'Malley was a dirty rotten scoundrel, a malefactor, an asshole, if truth be told. This story isn't about him, because he's dead. It's about two people that have been conned, cheated, finagled and outright swindled by O'Malley in the past. They've come to gloat at his wake and ultimately to find a way to screw over O'Malley one last time.

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Second Draft

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1 INT. MISSION HALL - DAY

1

MISSION HALL

We're in a low-ceilinged nondescript hall of moderate proportions. It's clean but its best days are behind it. There are plastic stacking chairs lined up along one wall. In front of a shuttered serving area on the opposite wall, there's a table covered in a long, white tablecloth. On the table is an urn of coffee, a flat of plain coffee mugs, and a couple of small plates of store bought cookies.

There is a (very) plain, wooden coffin laying across a couple of rough saw horses in the middle of the hall. There's a place card on top of the coffin instead of a plaque. Also on top of the coffin is a bottle of Bourbon, one measure down, and an empty, but used coffee cup.

It's silent in the hall except for the hum from the ballasts from the fluorescent lighting. One of the lights in the corner is on its last legs and is flickering annoyingly.

Over all this we hear:

NEWS READER (V.O.)

Infamous businessman, Seamus O'Malley (75), collapsed suddenly at his Brentwood mansion this week. He was rushed to the UCLA Health Centre but was pronounced dead on arrival.

O'Malley is well known, and equally despised as the king of the hostile takeover. He has been the target of numerous legal actions over the years relating to possible irregularities in almost all of his business transactions.

At the time of his death he was embroiled in a lawsuit brought by the Internal Revenue Service.

...

O'Malley disposed of his ex-wives as often as he shed business partners.

(MORE)

NEWS READER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

His current wife, Melanie Carr, is believed to have fled the country in advance of being questioned about O'Malley's fraudulent dealings. She is currently a person of interest in that on-going criminal investigation.

...

2 INT. MISSION HALL - LATER

2

PETER'S ENTRANCE

PETER MCCARTHY (75) comes in through the main doors. He sees that there's no one in the room. He registers the coffin. He goes back out and looks at the sign on the door to make sure he's in the right place. He comes back, closes the door and stands there looking at the coffin.

Peter is handsome and fit. He is well turned out in business casual sports coat and tie. He's a little unsteady on his feet because he spent a couple of hours in a bar weighing the pros and cons of showing up at the wake.

He walks directly over to the coffin. He scans the room in case he missed something. He picks up the bottle, looks at the label. He approves. He's about to shout out "Anybody here?" when...

3 INT. MISSION HALL - CONTINUOUS

3

LOUISE'S ENTRANCE

We hear the muffled sound of a toilet flushing over the humming of the lights. The door to the washroom opens and out walks LOUISE ARCHER (65), drying her hands on paper towels. She looks around, finds a bin and chucks the towels into it.

Louise is good looking but she's showing her age. She's wearing a bright, floral print dress and high heels. She's carrying a large, leather handbag. As she walks she looks uncomfortable and struggles to adjust her pantyhose. She mumbles something to herself before she realizes that she's not alone. She smooths out her dress.

LOUISE
Well. Hello there.

PETER

Hello.

Louise continues to her side of the coffin.

4 INT. MISSION HALL - CONTINUOUS

4

INTRODUCTIONS

Louise holds out her hand for Peter.

LOUISE

Louise Archer. What brings you to this... this affair?

PETER

(laughs)

Peter McCarthy. Curiosity? To gloat, maybe. Too see who else would show up. I suppose I was intrigued by why he'd hold his wake in Skid Row. What about you? Why are you here?

LOUISE

Same as you. Different reasons, though.

PETER

Really?

LOUISE

Yeah, unless you're an ex-wife!

PETER

(laughing)

No. Ex-business partner.

LOUISE

Me too. It's complicated.

PETER

Always was with O'Malley.

Awkward silence. They take each other in.

LOUISE

Drink?

PETER

Sure. Why not. Seems appropriate, this being a wake and all.

Louise waves her hand in the direction of the cups supply.

LOUISE
Cups over there.

She pours a healthy shot into her cup while she waits for Peter to come back. He returns and stands on the same side of the coffin as Louise and holds out his cup. Louise nods at the bottle.

LOUISE
Help yourself.

Peter smiles. He picks up the bottle and pours a full measure for himself. Louise registers that and smiles. Peter raises his cup to make a toast.

PETER
(Clearing throat)
I'm not even sure where to begin,
but here goes. To O'Malley, this
is where he belongs, and if there
is a hell, that's where he's
going. May I never run into
another asshole like him as long
as I live.

LOUISE
Here-here. To O-Malley's demise.

They both slam back their drinks and plunk down their cups on top of the coffin. They're both starting to feel their drinks. Never-the-less, Louise pours another measure for both of them.

5 INT. MISSION HALL - CONTINUOUS

5

EX-WIVES' STORY

Peter looks around, running his hand along the rough wood of the plain coffin.

PETER
So, why this? He was filthy rich.
Why settle for a pauper's funeral?

LOUISE
A final poke in the eye from wife
number seven, no doubt. She must
have arranged this before
absconding with his money.

PETER

Number seven? Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the man was busy. You know her?

LOUISE

In passing. The wives only get to know each other after they become exes.

PETER

Sort of an ex-wives club?

LOUISE

Yeah. Sort of, I guess. We get together for bitch sessions whenever something about him hits the news. All of the exes except wifey number one. She's the only one that came out ahead.

PETER

That doesn't seem much like O'Malley.

LOUISE

No, but he never let it happen again. I think it made him more vindictive and mean when it came to settling up after discarding us and moving on to greener pastures.

PETER

I'm sorry. I take it you didn't leave with a piece of his fortune.

LOUISE

Nah. Worse than that, actually. Want me to bore you with the details?

PETER

Sure, but I'd like to propose a toast first.

LOUISE

Why not.

Peter raises his cup. Louise raises hers too.

PETER

Here's to the ex-wives, then. May they prosper now that the demon spawn is in hell.

LOUISE
I'll drink to that.

They chug their drinks and slam the cups onto the lid of the coffin. The drink is fuelling the chemistry between them. Peter refills both their cups. Louise nods approvingly.

PETER
So? What's your story?

LOUISE
Not much of a story, really. He was still married when we met at an investors conference. I had a chain of twenty-five tire stores across the south-western states and I was looking for someone to help me take it national.

Peter does a low whistle, in awe.

LOUISE (CONT'D)
Even though it pains me grievously to say this, I have to give him credit. He was a smooth, sweet talker. He talked me into the bridal suite with an iron clad pre-nup, and right out of my company, eventually saddling me with so much debt that I had to declare bankruptcy. When he sucked me dry, when I was no use to him anymore, he dumped me.

PETER
You doing OK now?

LOUISE
Nah. Not really. The lawsuits did me in and I never had the energy to start over. I own one tire shop in the city. It's a living, but not much. It keeps me in booze though.

Peter lifts his cup to make another toast.

PETER
Well, then. Here's to booze. The grease that keeps the wheels of commerce, and romance, rolling.

(MORE)

PETER (CONT'D)
And to the lovely Louise, may she
live long and prosper.

Louise smiles, lifts her cup in recognition, and they down
their drinks.

6 INT. MISSION HALL - CONTINUOUS

6

PETER'S STORY

Peter grabs the bottle of bourbon and fills Louise's cup
and starts to fill his, but the bottle runs dry. He looks
into the bottle.

PETER
Oh-oh!

LOUISE
Not to worry my friend. Not to
worry.

Louise bends over to grab her purse but accidentally bumps
her head into Peter's crotch. She pops up again.

LOUISE
(Giggling)
Oopsy-daisy.

She goes down again, holding onto the inside of Peter's leg
to steady herself. She rummages in her bag and pulls out
another bottle of bourbon. She stands up, brandishing her
bottle.

LOUISE
(Pseudo-serious)
I always come prepared for
situations like this.

Peter takes the bottle from her, opens it and pours a
measure into his cup.

PETER
For wakes?

LOUISE
Not particularly, but wakes too, I
guess. In case the bar runs dry,
you know. Only for sharing with
good friends. And really cute men.

She fingers the lapel on Peter's jacket, seductively. Peter notices.

LOUISE

So. I told you my sad story. What the hell are you doing here? What did he ever do to you?

PETER

(Chuckling)

This oughta make you laugh. I must be his only mark that he rolled twice.

LOUISE

Twice? Really?

PETER

Yeah. Twice. It all started when we were apprenticing back in the old country. He fucked up and somehow managed to cast the blame on me. Couldn't prove otherwise and the owner threw me out.

I emigrated, switched careers and started building up quite the business here. Well, on the other coast -- not here. Here was later.

Out of the blue, or so I thought, O'Malley approached me, all apologetic-like, more-or-less admitting what he did, and saying he wanted to make it up to me.

Fool that I am, I was talked into one of his ventures. I should have suspected something was wrong with the deal, but, like you said, he was an awfully sweet talker.

I thought I had him over the barrel but I wound up losing everything, including my reputation. I moved here and reinvented myself, again. I've been simmering a grudge against O'Malley for forty years.

LOUISE

That's rough? You doing OK now?

PETER

Same as you. Getting by. Losing money hurt, but the hit to my reputation killed any ambitions I had of getting ahead.

Louise raises her glass.

LOUISE

Well, I raise my glass to all the poor suckers in the world! May they get their comeuppance. Eventually. At least they should get to keep their heads above water.

(beat)

Twice! Un-fucking-believable!

They tap their cups together, splashing some bourbon onto the floor. They gulp it back and pound their cups down onto the coffin lid.

7 INT. MISSION HALL - CONTINUOUS

7

DIMMING SCHADENFREUDE

Peter fills both their cups, spilling some more in the process. They stare at the spilled booze on the coffin lid. They look around. Peter sighs. Awkward silence.

LOUISE

Now what?

PETER

Don't know. It doesn't feel right. I'm not even sure what I was expecting, but it wasn't this.

LOUISE

I don't know why I showed up either. Kind of a big letdown. Maybe I just needed to get drunk and curse him.

PETER

All those wasted years. I wanted revenge. I didn't want it to end with me gloating at his wake. I don't know how I would have done it, but I waited too long to screw him over. Obviously.

LOUISE

Same.

8 INT. MISSION HALL - CONTINUOUS

8

THE IDEA

Louise starts giggling. She looks at Peter.

LOUISE

I have a devilishly, funny idea.

PETER

What?

Still giggling, she crooks her finger conspiratorially, seductively at him.

LOUISE

Comhere, comhere, comhere.

Peter moves closer. She grabs one of his lapels and puts an arm around his neck. She looks furtively around the hall then leans in further to whisper in his ear. Peter pulls back, shocked. Louise continues holding onto his lapels.

PETER

Oh! I don't know about that. I hardly know you.

LOUISE

Yeah, but we have a common enemy.
(nodding at the coffin)
And we're drinking buddies.
Definitely
(nodding at the bottle)
We've poured out our life stories to each other, sort of. Of course we know each other. How much more intimate can you get, for fuck's sake.

She laughs at her pun.

9 INT. MISSION HALL - CONTINUOUS

9

QUICK SEDUCTION

Louise is standing close to Peter, fingering his lapels and shirt collar.

LOUISE
 (Seductively)
 Come on. I know you wanna do it.
 (Matter-of-factly)
 This is literally going to be your
 last chance. I really want it
 because it'll be the one thing I
 can do to poke a stick in that
 bastards eye even if it is
 posthumously.

She pouts. She rubs her breasts against him and fondles his crotch.

LOUISE
 (Giggling)
 Come on. You definitely wanna do
 it.

Peter considers. Feigning reluctance, then he grins.

PETER
 Oh, all right. But only because
 you insisted.

10 INT. MISSION HALL - CONTINUOUS

10

FINAL ACT

Louise giggles and reaches under her skirt and removes her pantyhose. She playfully holds them up, teasing Peter with them.

LOUISE
 Hoist me up on the old bastard,
 will ya?

Peter takes the bottle of bourbon and the two cups and puts them on the floor. He then helps her on top of the coffin. She lays on her back and hikes up her dress. She looks over at Peter.

LOUISE
 Well, what are you waiting for?

Peter shrugs, sheepishly. He climbs up and positions himself between her legs. He's on his knees, frantically unzipping his pants. He pulls them down and lays between her legs.

PETER

(Laughing)

I knew screwing over O'Malley
would be gratifying, but I didn't
think it would be this much fun.

FADE OUT.