

THE AFTERLIFE RUMMAGE SALE

by  
Kris Thompson

Kris Thompson  
1710 S. Main St.  
Georgetown, TX 78626  
281-253-3488

[kriskt@outlook.com](mailto:kriskt@outlook.com)  
[www.kristhompsonplaywright.com](http://www.kristhompsonplaywright.com)

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### Cast of Characters

- MIRIAM: 40s – 50s dead, snooty, rich, selfish woman who wears designer clothes and carries a designer purse and wallet, has fancy jewelry on etc...
- LORETTA: 40s – 50s dead, simple, kind, easy to please country woman, mild country accent, wears inexpensive or handmade clothes that aren't stylish and appear well worn. Wears a simple gold wedding band.
- ZEEN: Any age, any gender Afterlife Rummage Sale Coordinator dressed in crazy mismatched clothes from the rummage sale. Roams around tries on items, takes selfies but is actually facilitating important moments.

### Synopsis

Two recently deceased women from different walks of life learn about each other and themselves as they begin their transition to the afterlife at the Afterlife Rummage Sale.

### Setting

The Afterlife Rummage Sale in The Afterlife.

### Time

Current day.

ACT I  
Scene 1

SETTING: Rummage sale w/tables, bins, bags and a covered sign with “The Afterlife Rummage Sale” written in magic marker, and a checkout table. Among the junk there are items referenced in the dialogue.

AT RISE: ZEEN trying on items, taking selfies.

(MIRIAM and LORETTA enter arm in arm looking bewildered.)

LORETTA

Ohhh...a rummage sale! I love a good rummage sale, don't you?

MIRIAM

(Becomes aware of LORETTA'S arm in hers, quickly pulls away, offended.) Excuse me! Do I know you?

LORETTA

Oh! Dolls! (Runs over to checkout some dolls on a table.)

MIRIAM

(Looking around.) What in God's name is going on?

LORETTA

I think we're having a dream 'cause this (Holds up doll.) is a Bessy doll and my daughter had a Bessy doll 25 years ago. Seems like somethin' that'd show up in a dream.

MIRIAM

Absurd. Why in the world would I dream about you and your ridiculous doll? (To ZEEN.) You there! What is this place?

ZEEN

Hold on. (Takes one more selfie, heads to sign.) Welcome to your afterlife. This is your first stop, the-

MIRIAM

Afterlife? What do you mean by afterlife?

LORETTA

Oh, Hunny. (Puts down doll, goes to LORETTA.) Afterlife means after your life. Like...when it's over. It's one of those compound words. After. Life. Afterlife! Get it?

MIRIAM

Excuse me! Do you think I'm an idiot?

ZEEN

Well, you didn't know the meaning of afterlife so...

LORETTA

(Pats MIRIAM.) Oh, Hunny. You just don't get it like I do, 'cause I had the benefit of foreknowledge.

MIRIAM

Foreknowledge?

LORETTA

Knowing somethin before it happens. Fore. Knowledge. Foreknowledge. Get it? Sadly, I do 'cause I got my diagnosis in January. Stage 4 lung cancer. Never smoked a day in my life, hand to heart. Maybe your death was a surprise! Hit by a bus? Or murdered! Or lightening! Do you remember a storm?

MIRIAM

This is absurd. I refuse...REFUSE!!!...to believe I am dead!

ZEEN

But you ARE dead Miriam Crain. You too Loretta Jones. And me? I'm Zeen. I'm here to help you navigate your first stop in the afterlife. (Pulls cover off a magic marker written "The Afterlife Rummage Sale" sign.) The Afterlife Rummage Sale!

LORETTA

Well, there's our proof Miriam. Right there. Written in magic marker. I guess it's official. We're dead.

ZEEN

Find what you really want to take with you. The afterlife can last a long time. Maybe forever, depending on capacity.

LORETTA

(to ZEEN) I'm afraid my credit card is pretty much maxed out.

ZEEN

No, no. Credit cards are no good here.

MIRIAM (smug)

You're wrong there, (sarcastically) Zeen. I have all the best cards. Amex Black, World Silk, Royale Mastercard which has (Looks for credit cards.) a diamond embedded in the center of the card. (beat) My credit cards are gone! I've been robbed!

LORETTA

(Checks wallet.) Yup. My credit card's gone too. It was a Visa debit card...Red I think. (Counts cash.)

ZEEN

No one's been robbed. We just don't allow credit in the afterlife. It's an evil plot used to terrorize the living and sway them to the dark side. Cash only.

MIRIAM

Who carries cash?

LORETTA

Don't worry Miriam. I've got 29 dollars and 52 cents. We'll split it. Here's 15. (Hands bills to MIRIAM.)

ZEEN

Enough chit chat. You've got a long day ahead of you. In fact, if you don't hurry, you're going to be late for your appointments at the Afterlife Salon-

LORETTA

Ooh. A salon! Do they do acrylics?

ZEEN

-where you'll be fitted for new skins.

LORETTA (disgusted/shocked)

New skins?

ZEEN

Let's be honest...the skins you're in aren't going to last forever, now are they?

MIRIAM

Hmmm... (Stretching her face, touching her neck, thinking facelift.) Maybe this won't be so bad after all.

ZEEN

Then the Afterlife Entertainment Center. Movies, music, books, games. The afterlife can be quite boring.

MIRIAM

Want to know the best cure for boredom? A well-made vodka gimlet.

ZEEN

After which you'll make your drink selections and choose a meal plan at the Afterlife Diner and-

LORETTA

Ooh. I hope they have chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes, and collard greens cooked in bacon grease!

MIRIAM

That sounds dreadful. Have you never heard of trans fats?

ZEEN

-and finally you'll stop at the Afterlife Real Estate Office to select your afterlife home and roommates.

LORETTA

Can Miriam and I be roomies seein' as we already know each other?

MIRIAM (offended)

I haven't had to deal with a roommate since Vanderbilt.

(ZEEN pulls out 2 bags w/Amazon logos and text “your partner in the afterlife”.)

MIRIAM

(to ZEEN) Amazon? Really?

ZEEN

Oh, come on. You know they’re literally everywhere. (Hands bags to MIRIAM & LORETTA.) I suggest you get rummaging.

(During dialogue excited LORETTA and disgusted MIRIAM rummage. ZEEN tries on things, takes selfies, listens to women.)

MIRIAM

I see absolutely nothing of value here.

LORETTA

(Opens watch box.) Wowie! How ‘bout this watch? Fancy, just like you Miriam. (Hands MIRIAM box.)

MIRIAM

A Rolex Cosmograph Daytona!? This is a six hundred thousand dollar timepiece! (Looks around and quickly puts box in bag.)

LORETTA

Oh. A recipe box. (Opens box.) Gammy’s Magic Meatloaf?! I haven’t seen this recipe box in years. Always thought my cousin Jamie took it. She swore she didn’t, but her cooking sure improved after Gammy passed. (Puts in her bag.) Mine now.

MIRIAM

(Opens shoe box, pulls out strappy red heels, and gasps.) Oh. My. God. I’ve never actually seen these in person. Stuart Weitzman’s “Wizard of Oz” Ruby Stilettos...and they’re my size! 1.6 million dollars!

LORETTA

For shoes? That’s nuts.

MIRIAM

That’s fashion. (Puts the shoes in their box and the box in her bag.)

LORETTA

(Opens ring box.) An engagement ring. I’ve got a weddin band but I always wanted a proper engagement ring with a diamond and all. Howard, that’s my husband, said we’d eventually get one but then we started having kids, jobs were hard to keep, rent was always goin up, and then...(Painful memory stops her.)

MIRIAM

(Not paying too much attention, rummaging.) And then what?

LORETTA

(Collects herself.) Well, just never seemed like the right time. (Puts ring on.) What 'cha think?

MIRIAM

With diamonds, the only thing that matters are the four C's. Carat, clarity, color, and cut. (Examines.) This one is not a showstopper in any category. (Resumes rummaging.)

LORETTA

I don't care. I love it! (Puts ring in box, box in bag, and rummages.) Miriam! This locket has your name engraved on it!

MIRIAM

(Takes locket on long chain from LORETTA.) Oh! I haven't seen this in years. (Opens locket. Has emotional reaction, points to locket picture and shows LORETTA.) That's me and my Nan.

LORETTA

You're so cute. But she's not old enough to be your grandma.

MIRIAM

Nan is short for nanny. Growing up Nan was my only friend. Then I left for boarding school and... (Bags locket.)

ZEEN

(As though through a loud speaker.) The Afterlife Rummage Sale is closing soon. Please make your final selections.

LORETTA

Oh! The Bessy doll! (Rushes to the doll table, picks up doll, pulls open the back of doll's dress.) I knew it! Look here Miriam! Lottie, my daughter, wrote her name on the back with a permanent marker. She got in so much trouble for that but, after (beat) well, it seemed so unimportant.

MIRIAM

(Quickly rummaging.) Why do you want some old doll your kid played with 25 years ago?

LORETTA

(Bittersweet smile fussing with the doll's clothes.) Just in case she didn't see it when she came through.

MIRIAM

(Stops rummaging, turning toward LORETTA, slow realization.) When she...when she came through?

LORETTA

(Bittersweet smile fussing with the doll's hair.) Little Lottie...she was just five when we lost her.

MIRIAM

(First sign of compassion, goes to LORETTA.) I'm so sorry.

LORETTA

(Nostalgic, sad smile, still fussing with doll.) It was my fault. I'm the one that wanted the above ground pool. Howard never wanted it. I insisted. (beat) He never forgave me. He said he did, but he didn't.

MIRIAM

(Puts a comforting hand on LORETTA'S shoulder.) Oh, Loretta.

LORETTA (hopeful)

I'm hopin I'll see her here, you know, tell her I'm sorry. She's got to be here somewhere, right?

MIRIAM

I'm sure.

ZEEN

Times up you two. If you could bring me your bags.

LORETTA

You go ahead. I'm gonna wrap up Bessy real quick.

(MIRIAM brings bag, hands to ZEEN, worriedly looks back at LORETTA who's carefully wrapping the doll.)

ZEEN

(Looks in the bag.) That will be \$15.50.

MIRIAM

I only have fifteen.

ZEEN

I'll take the shoes you have on and we'll call it even.

MIRIAM

For 50 cents? You realize these are Jimmy Choos right?

ZEEN

Take it or leave it.

MIRIAM

Fine.

(MIRIAM takes off shoes, hands to ZEEN who hands bag over. LORETTA gives her bag to ZEEN. During dialogue MIRIAM puts on red shoes, watch, and locket.)

ZEEN

(Pulls ring out of bag.) The ring is four dollars.



(LORETTA hands money to ZEEN and puts ring on.)

ZEEN

(Pulls recipe box out of bag.) The recipe box is four dollars.

LORETTA

(Giggles to Miriam.) I guess everything is four dollars! (Hands money to ZEEN who gives recipe box.)

ZEEN

The doll is seven dollars.

LORETTA

I have (Counting.) six dollars and fifty-two cents?

MIRIAM

I went over too. Gave up my shoes and we called it even.

LORETTA

Alright. How 'bout my shoes?

ZEEN

No can do.

LORETTA

My shoes, my purse, and my jacket?

ZEEN (genuinely)

I'm really sorry Loretta.

MIRIAM

For heaven's sake, why not? She's only 48 cents short.

LORETTA

It's fine. Here, (Tries to return ring.) I don't need the engagement ring. The doll's more important.

ZEEN

Sorry. No give-backs.

MIRIAM

No give-backs? What is this? Fifth grade? Just give her the Goddamn doll!

ZEEN

I don't make the rules!

LORETTA (desperate)

Please. I just need the doll. I'll give you everything I have.

ZEEN

There's nothing you can do. (beat) But there is something she (Gestures to MIRIAM.) could do.

MIRIAM

What? You already have all my money and my shoes. You want my rings? My earrings?

ZEEN

Everything you have. Down to your underthings. We don't accept used bras, slips, panties, stockings. Sanitary reasons. You understand.

LORETTA

No, Miriam, it's too much. You can't.

ZEEN

Don't worry. She won't. Miriam has too many selfish bones in her body.

MIRIAM

(sarcastically) Zeen, you don't know me.

(MIRIAM removes everything except slip, new shoes, watch, and locket and throws on table in front of ZEEN who motions for watch. MIRIAM reluctantly gives up. ZEEN motions for shoes. MIRIAM reluctantly gives up. ZEEN motions for locket. MIRIAM takes off, looks at it wistfully, and adds to pile, grabs doll and hands to LORETTA.)

LORETTA

Oh, Miriam. I don't know what to say.

MIRIAM

Come on roomie. (Hooks arms with LORETTA, same as entrance.) We don't want to be late for our new skins appointment!

(LORETTA and MIRIAM head toward exit, ad-libbing about rooming as lights fade.)

THE END