

Death Expectancy

By

Elisa Herrmann

Elisa Herrmann
WGA-West Registration
Number: 1682219

Elisa Herrmann
802 W. Walnut St, #2
Carbondale, IL, USA
62901
+1(773)574-5602
elisasherrmann@gmail.com

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

It's 2033, AMELIA JOHNSON, a hypochondriac, 125-year old, lilac haired lady lies on a hospital bed, surrounded by futuristic machines. The decoration of the room is a clear attempt to make it more homey, but pathetically failing at it. Everything looks too sterilized: there is a couch, but it's covered by a white hospital looking fabric that is most likely replaced by a new one every day; a vase with plastic white flowers with an animated "get well soon" ipad/halmark card sitting next to it; a holographic projection of a Van Gogh painting on the wall.

In front of Amelia, a real human-sized, super-duper-flat screen TV. The image is so crisp that it almost looks real. Amelia's DOCTOR (male, 50) is talking to her as if in a video conference. This seems to be the normal procedure.

DOCTOR

Miss Johnson, after analyzing the results of your full body scan, I can guarantee that you are as healthy as an 80-year old!

AMELIA

Are you sure? My great-great-grandchildren sent me a get well card... That can't be good.

DOCTOR

That's probably because you told them you had a brain tumor. Those are pretty rare nowadays, I told you that before.

AMELIA

Well, you cannot expect me to remember everything with my advanced age.

(under her breath)

Imbecile...

The doctor clearly heard that, and looks rather annoyed.

DOCTOR

(dryly)

The nurse will get you checked out.

The video chat turns off, and immediately a hospital commercial starts. It's an advertising for the longevity wing of the hospital.

INT. LONGEVITY WING OF HOSPITAL - COMMERCIAL - DAY

The ANNOUNCER, a beautiful 35-year old woman, is walking around and showing the facilities of the longevity wing.

ANNOUNCER

Who doesn't wish to live a long, full life? Here at the Longevity Wing of the International Hearts Hospital, we can make your wish come true. With our technological advanced facilities and top of the line research in life expectancy, you can live up to 200 years old!

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Amelia is all dressed and ready, and NURSE SANDERS (30-year old male) is with her, helping her sign the papers. The announcer can still be heard in the background.

AMELIA

Who would want to live 200 years? I don't even know what I'd do with another 75 to live.

NURSE SANDERS

(tenderly)

Oh Amelia, you always say that, but yet you pay us a visit at least once a month. At that rate, you will never die.

Amelia looks a little embarrassed by his statement.

NURSE SANDERS (CONT'D)

(gives her a wink)

And we don't want you to.

Amelia smiles like a teenage-girl.

AMELIA

Oh, you have a way with the ladies, Sanders!

Amelia and Sanders leave the room. The GRIM REAPER, wearing the traditional black cloak and carrying his scythe, is revealed in a corner of the room. It's unclear how long he has been there for. He has a black old-fashioned notebook in his hand, and is writing with the tip of his skinny finger. Inexplicably, black ink flows through it as if his finger is a feather pen. The Grim Reaper has a nice calligraphy.

(CONTINUED)

INSERT: CU OF NOTEBOOK

On that page of the notebook there is a list called "Past Due", followed by names and a number of days. Amelia Johnson is one of the names on the list, next to her name, the following information "32 years, 6 months and 3 days". The Grim Reaper magically erases the 3 and writes 4 in its place.

He looks angrily at the commercial that is looping, snaps his finger and disappears.

INT. ETHEREAL MEETING ROOM - UNDETERMINED TIME

An oval meeting table has several biblical characters sitting around it: SAINT PETER, LUCIFER, ARCHANGEL GABRIEL, MARY, JESUS, and the Grim Reaper. They all look like the way renaissance artists represented them.

GRIM REAPER

(Exasperated)

This matter is getting out of hand.

ARCHANGEL GABRIEL

You have to stop summoning us all the time. They are called "emergency meetings" for a reason, you know...

GRIM REAPER

Nobody asked you to come, Gabriel.

ARCHANGEL GABRIEL

Well, the Boss asked me to write the minutes.

LUCIFER

(devilish ironical)

Doing some secretarial work, aren't we?

Gabriel doesn't seem affected at all by the mean comments. His demeanor is blasé. He flaps his beautiful white wings, making everyone's clothes and hair move delicately. He pulls a feather out of his wing, squinting his beautiful blue eyes as a response from the pain. From his pocket he grabs his papyrus and ink and is ready to start. Everyone watches his elegance. The Grim Reaper is getting impatient.

GRIM REAPER

Can I please start?

(CONTINUED)

The group answers in unison, but some enthusiastically, others sounding bored, and others impatient.

GROUP

YES!

GRIM REAPER

Very well.

The Grim Reaper starts an old fashioned slide presentation in an ancient transparency projector. It looks like he had plenty of time on his hands, as he made charts, bullet points, graphs, etc. He seems a little confused handling the "new" technology.

GRIM REAPER (CONT'D)

As you can see here in chart number 1, in the early 2000's I used to work 40 hours a week, taking alone more than 50,000 souls a day to the other side. There were three of us working at the time, in different shifts.

St. Peter nods agreeing with the Grim Reaper, Lucifer is filing his nails. Mary listens attentively, Jesus seems to be falling asleep, and Gabriel takes notes.

GRIM REAPER (CONT'D)

In 2015, the cure of cancer and the distribution of vaccines to poor countries, caused our number of deaths to decrease 45% in only one year.

The Grim Reaper pauses to see if the information sinks in, but nobody seems too surprised with the data he collected. He looks disappointed that nobody gasped.

GRIM REAPER (CONT'D)

As you can see in the next pie chart, in 2018, with the invention of the longevity pill, the daily death toll dropped to 15,000 people a day, and that number keeps going down.

Jesus interrupts.

JESUS

So what? Now you have less work to do, what are you complaining about? Maybe it's because you have nothing better to do than working...

(CONTINUED)

St. Peter interjects.

ST. PETER

You say that because you are the Boss' son. You can't get fired.

LUCIFER

Nepotism... Tsk, tsk tsk...

JESUS

Hey, Drama Queens, nobody is getting the sack... Geez...

The Grim Reaper shows another slide.

GRIM REAPER

That's what The Angel of Death and The Dark Angel were told before they got kicked out of payroll.

LUCIFER

Oh yeah... Whatever happened to those guys? They were good fellas.

MARY

I heard they are living in the Purgatory out of unemployment benefits until the Boss finds them a new position.

St. Peter seems desperate, he gets up and slams his fist on the table.

ST. PETER

I can't live out of unemployment benefits! I am used to a certain lifestyle, you know! Running the gates of heaven is a position of status and I need to keep my robes tight, get my beard trimmed weekly, be presentable!

The Grim Reaper notices Lucifer doesn't seem to care.

GRIM REAPER

(to Lucifer)

Aren't you going to say anything? Your army must be getting smaller by the day!

LUCIFER

Whatevs, man! You stress out too much!

(CONTINUED)

(Punny)
It's not like it's a matter of life
or death.

Gabriel chuckles, Jesus LOLs, and Mary looks disapprovingly
to both of them.

GRIM REAPER
(angry)
This is not a laughing matter! We
need to take action now!

St. Peter seems to be the only one taking the Grim Reaper
seriously.

ST. PETER
(concerned)
What do you suggest, Reaper?
Unionize?

Jesus rolls his eyes.

GRIM REAPER
No... But there is this lady...

He is interrupted by Jesus.

JESUS
Oh, of course, there had to be a
lady in the story!

Mary scolds at him.

MARY
Let him talk!

JESUS
(As a reprimanded child)
Fine...

The Grim Reaper cleans his throat and continues.

GRIM REAPER
As I was saying, there is this old
lady, Amelia Johnson. She is way
past due, she is 125 now. She
voiced the will to die so...

Mary cuts him.

MARY
Did she actually say that?

GRIM REAPER

Well, not exactly with those words...

Mary looks at him suspiciously, but shakes it off.

GRIM REAPER (CONT'D)

Anyways, the boss gave them free will to do as they wish, therefore, if she wishes to die...

St. Peter interrupts.

ST. PETER

But suicide is a cardinal sin!

GRIM REAPER

Well, I'm not talking about suicide, I'm suggesting that perhaps we can give her a little hand...

Lucifer seems to be getting interested, as destruction and chaos are his favorite hobbies.

LUCIFER

(excitedly)

Like push her off a bridge?

Everyone looks intently at the Grim Reaper now, expecting his answer.

GRIM REAPER

Well... Something like that...

INT. AMELIA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Amelia, wearing yoga clothes, is cooking dinner in her modern looking kitchen, however, because of her advanced age, there is a mix of old kitchen appliances and newer ones. The kitchen is very crammed. She seems to be a little bit of a hoarder.

GRIM REAPER (V.O.)

We can use Amelia as an, let's say, experiment...

Her door bell RINGS. Amelia looks puzzled but heads to the living room.

INT. AMELIAS'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

The living room is not too different from her kitchen. There is a huge ultra-flat TV on the wall, a very modern looking lamp on an ancient side-table, a grandfather's clock on another wall, and a wood and glass cabinet filled with cat collectibles. All around the living room there are digital picture frames of her family members. There is a small crucified Jesus statue on top of her cabinet, next to it, a bible.

She reaches the door, pushes a button and it slides open. Jesus is on the other side, but dressed as a Chinese Food delivery guy.

JESUS
Delivery for Amelia Johnson.

AMELIA
I didn't order any food.

JESUS
It seems like someone ordered for you then.

He looks at something written on his hand.

JESUS (CONT'D)
Carrey Johnson. And paid for it.

Amelia looks suspiciously at Jesus.

AMELIA
Hummm... Don't I know you from somewhere?

INSERT: CU OF THE CRUCIFIED JESUS STATUE

Jesus sinks his hat in his head and tries change his voice a little, giving it a deeper tone, as if she knew what he would sound like.

JESUS
(faking voice)
No, I don't think so...

Amelia fixes her glasses and tries to get a better look at him.

AMELIA
I know! You are that actor that played Jesus in the Easter play!

Jesus looks relieved.

(CONTINUED)

JESUS

Oh, yes, yes, that's me...

AMELIA

Oh well, then come on in! I will
get my purse to give you a tip.

Jesus comes in and notices the weird looking room. Amelia goes somewhere inside to get her purse.

Jesus stares that his crucifixion and cringes. Amelia comes back and notices he looks ill.

AMELIA

Are you OK?

Jesus recovers his composure.

JESUS

Oh yes, I was just... admiring your
collectibles. I can see you like
cats... a lot.

AMELIA

Oh yes! I love them! Too bad I
can't have any...
(she points to her nose)
Allergies...

She gives Jesus a tip, he hands her the boxes, and heads to the door.

AMELIA

Well, thank you very much, Mr...

JESUS

Jes... Jones.

AMELIA

Mr. Jones! I hope to see you at the
play again next year.

Jesus looks puzzled, but then remembers.

JESUS

Oh, yes, the play... of course. I
can't wait to be crucified again...

As he says that, his face contorts. He manages to transform it in a weird grin. Amelia looks uncomfortably at him and just pushes the button to close the door.

(CONTINUED)

AMELIA
(to herself)
Actors...

INT. SURVEILLANCE VAN - DAY

All the celestial gang is inside of a surveillance van in front of Amelia's house. Jesus enters the van looking a little green.

GRIM REAPER
Why do you look sick? You didn't
eat the food, right?

Mary checks his temperature.

JESUS
Of course not... She had the most
gruesome image of me in her
house...

Mary embraces him.

MARY
Oh, my poor baby! Was it you
carrying the cross?

JESUS
Mom! I don't wanna talk about it!
Can we please go home? I did my
part.

LUCIFER
(under his breath)
Mommy's boy...

MARY
(to Lucifer)
I had it with you, Satan! One more
snarky comment and I will report
you to the Boss.

Lucifer cowers in a corner of the van.

MARY (CONT'D)
(to all)
And we are leaving now.

Mary snaps her fingers and both disappear in thin air.

(CONTINUED)

LUCIFER

Finally! Those guys are buzz
killers.

The Grim Reaper, St. Peter and Archangel Gabriel look disapprovingly at him but say nothing.

GRIM REAPER

Gabriel, turn it on. I wanna see
when I need to take action!

Gabriel pushes a button on a panel and several monitors light up, they are different views of Amelia's house. She is in the kitchen.

INT. AMELIA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Amelia left the package unopened on the top of the counter. She is finishing to prepare a salad.

When the salad is ready, she goes to the counter and opens the containers. It's orange chicken and rice. Amelia smells it and it looks delicious.

INT. SURVEILLANCE VAN - DAY

The celestial gang looks attentively to the monitors. They seem very anxious watching what is about to happen.

INT. AMELIA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Amelia is salivating. She puts the food down, grabs a spoon and is about to put some orange chicken in her plate. But she sees her reflection on the spoon and changes her mind. Her expression changes, she looks determined.

AMELIA

Oh, no, no, no! I need to watch my
figure!

She gets the container, and without thinking twice, throws it untouched in the trash can.

INT. SURVEILLANCE VAN - DAY

The group looks shocked. Gabriel gasps, St. Peter closes his eyes so he won't see it.

(CONTINUED)

GRIM REAPER

Nooooo!

LUCIFER

I knew it was a stupid idea!

The Grim Reaper goes ballistic on Lucifer.

GRIM REAPER

Shut up, Lucifer! What are you even doing here? You know she is not for you, Peter will take her. Just go to hell!

Lucifer seems hurt by the comments.

LUCIFER

Fine! I just wanted to hang out with you guys, but I can see when I am unwanted!

He snaps his fingers and disappears. Gabriel, St. Peter and the Grim Reaper are left in the van.

ARCHANGEL GABRIEL

Well, maybe I should go too... I got a lot of reporting to do and, you know... The more I see, the more I have to tell... Maybe it's better if I'm not here.

He snaps his fingers and disappears as well. The Grim Reaper gives St. Peter a cold stare.

GRIM REAPER

Don't tell me you want to leave too! Your job is on the line, just as mine!

ST. PETER

Reaper, we tried... it didn't work... Wasn't that what this was supposed to be? An experiment?

Grim Reaper seems exasperated.

GRIM REAPER

We can't give up so easily!

ST. PETER

Sorry, Reaper...

St. Peter snaps his fingers and disappears, leaving the Grim Reaper all alone in the van. He looks defeated.

(CONTINUED)

He looks at the monitors and sees Amelia all alone in her living room, looking at the pictures of her family. She seems sad.

GRIM REAPER
Yeah... I know how you feel...

INT. AMELIAS'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Amelia is sitting on her couch, staring at one of the pictures of her great-great-grandchildren... She sighs. She picks up her modern looking phone and dials a number.

It goes to voice mail.

AMELIA
Hello Carrey, It's granny here... I just wanted to thank you for the Chinese... It was delicious... Maybe you can come visit me sometime? Well, call me when you are free...

She hangs up her phone and looks down.

INT. SURVEILLANCE VAN - DAY

The Grim Reaper seems sad at the scene he is watching.

GRIM REAPER
(to Amelia in the monitor)
Well, Amelia... Maybe I can't take you now, but I think it's time we meet.

He fixes his clothes to look more presentable, grabs his Scythe and snaps his fingers.

INT. AMELIAS'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

He appears behind Amelia. She is still staring distractedly at the pictures. He opens his mouth a couple of times attempting to say something, but gives up... He takes a step forward to touch her shoulder, but realizing it's a bad idea, takes a step back. But at this moment, Amelia sees his image reflected on the frame she is holding.

She immediately jumps up from her seat, dropping the digital picture frame on the floor. At the sight of the Grim Reaper, she screams and falls cold dead on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

AMELIA
AHHHHHHHH!

THUMP!

GRIM REAPER
Oh, no...

Amelia's soul gets up from her cold body on the floor, and confusedly stares at the Grim Reaper and at her body.

AMELIA
What the?!? You scared me to death!
Literally!

GRIM REAPER
(apologetically)
I'm sorry! I didn't mean to! I came
in to try and be your friend.

AMELIA
My friend??

She takes a moment to understand what he is saying. Amelia seems calmer now.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
It looks like you are not very good
at making friends, son...

The Grim Reaper looks disappointedly to the floor.

GRIM REAPER
I guess I am not.

Amelia feels sorry for him. She stares at him for a few moments.

AMELIA
(resigned)
Well... What now?

GRIM REAPER
I guess I have to take you to St.
Peter.

AMELIA
What if we hang out for a little
bit? There is a nice park across
the street. I was planning to go
for a walk before this.

She points to her dead body. The Grim Reaper smiles.

GRIM REAPER
Yeah, I'd like that.

Amelia and the Grim Reaper walk through the door without the need to open it. We see them through the window walking towards the park.

GRIM REAPER (V.O.)
Thanks, Amelia...

AMELIA (V.O.)
What for?

GRIM REAPER (V.O.)
Now I know exactly how to solve my problems.

ROLL CREDITS.

INT. TV NEWS - DAY

A TV ANCHOR reports:

TV ANCHOR
A death rise in centenarians has been reported in the last few weeks. Doctors have been calling it the "Scare Attack", in what seems to be a heart related disease thought to have been eradicated over a decade ago. The information that all the dead have a fearful look on their faces is now officially confirmed. Panic has led many people to look for the longevity wings of hospitals...

FADE TO BLACK