

JULIA

Floor it? What? Do you have drugs in the trunk?

MARGIE

Why would you say something like that? No. It's the paperwork.

The POLICE OFFICER approaches the vehicle. Julia gets her wallet out and lowers the window.

POLICE OFFICER

License and registration.

Julia presents her license.

JULIA

May I ask why we were stopped?

POLICE OFFICER

You have a broken tail light and your inspection has expired. Registration?

JULIA

It's not my car, Officer. Margie, where's the registration card?

MARGIE

That's the problem.

POLICE OFFICER

What's the problem?

MARGIE

I don't have it. That's where we're going.

POLICE OFFICER

You're on your way to the DMV?

Margie leans across the front seat to explain.

MARGIE

No, you see, my husband Don passed away. They said he "expired" what kind of word is that? Like he was an inspection sticker. Don took care of all the car things and the paperwork and the bills. He was very good about it all. Really, the man was like a saint. But, I can't find it. You know, the registration card. So we have an appointment with a Medium to contact my deceased husband so he can tell me where it is. And then I can get the car inspected.

POLICE OFFICER

Ma'am, have you been drinking?

MARGIE

I did have a second cup of coffee this morning.

POLICE OFFICER

May I see some identification please?

Margie rummages through her purse. She pulls out a card.

MARGIE

No, this won't do.

More rummaging. She produces another card and hands it to the Officer.

POLICE OFFICER

Ma'am, this is a membership card for Costco.

MARGIE

It has my name and picture on it.

POLICE OFFICER

Wait here please.

The Police Officer goes back to their vehicle.

JULIA

This is why we're going to a Medium? To find the car registration???

MARGIE

That and you know ... other things.

JULIA

Did you look in the glove compartment?

MARGIE

We always kept it there but then a bunch of cars in the neighborhood were getting broken into and Don said he wasn't going to keep it there anymore.

JULIA

He didn't tell you where he put it?

Margie is on the verge of tears.

MARGIE

No. He never told me.

Margie is having a tough time keeping it together.

JULIA

Okay. It's okay. (a beat) What other things?

MARGIE

What do you mean?

JULIA

What other things do you want from this, this Medium?

MARGIE

You know, I want to know if he is at peace. (a breath) I want to know if our dog Scooter is there with him. (a beat) I want to know if he loved me and ... and, if I was a good wife.

JULIA

Save your money. He is at peace. No, no, stop with the dog nonsense. And, you were a wonderful wife to him.

MARGIE

Maybe I wasn't.

The Police Officer returns to the car window.

POLICE OFFICER

Ma'am, was your husband Donald Dunham?

MARGIE

Yes.

POLICE OFFICER

And are you still at the Revere Street address?

MARGIE

Yes, Officer.

POLICE OFFICER

I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to let you go today. Here's my card.

They hand her a card.

POLICE OFFICER

I'm on day shift for the next 10 days. I want you to get the registration, get the tail light fixed and have the car inspected. Then, come to the police station and show me that everything is in order.

MARGIE

Oh, thank you! Thank you! Yes, yes, I will. You have my solemn word.

POLICE OFFICER

If I don't see you by the 15th, I will come to your house and I will impound the vehicle.

MARGIE

Oh, Officer you're a doll. I will take care of everything, just like you said.

POLICE OFFICER

Okay, ladies, drive careful and have a good day.

MARGIE

You too! And we don't have any drugs in the trunk!

POLICE OFFICER

Put your hands where I can see them and step out of the vehicle.

LIGHTS OUT.

Scene 2

Lights up on the "communication room" of the Medium, decor has a Middle Eastern flair.

There is a round table in the middle of the room covered with a fringed tablecloth. A large, unlit candle is in the center of the table. There's incense in censers.

Margie and Julia stand off to the side of the room behind a "please wait to be seated" sign on a stand, like you'd see in a restaurant.

MARGIE

I hope nobody saw us. It was humiliating. Spread eagle over the car on the side of the road. Like we were drug dealers! I mean, it was only Celebrex.

JULIA

I'm sure by this afternoon we'll be an internet sensation.

MARGIE

The "frisking." That was excessive.

JULIA

Best part of my day.

MADAME BARBU theatrically enters and stands behind the table. She wears colorful, flowing clothes.

BARBU

Good afternoon ladies.

Margie and Julia start to approach the table.

BARBU

Stop! Stay where you are.

They return to their original spots. Madame Barbu lights the candles and incense with flourish.

BARBU

I welcome you. I am Madame Barbu. I am a Medium. You come here to communicate with those who have crossed over to the other side. But, they are the ones to decide if they want to communicate with you. I cannot guarantee we will be successful in our efforts. Or, that the person you wish to hear from will come forward. Do you understand?

MARGIE

Yes, Madame Barbu.

BARBU

At times, people you do not wish to communicate with may want to be heard. In these cases, should you desire, we can block those spirits.

MARGIE

I did not know that, thank you.

BARBU

Again, I do not control the spirits. There is no guarantee and no money back.

MARGIE

I want to speak to my husband. It's very important. The police are involved.

BARBU

Quiet! Say nothing. Did you understand what I have told you?

MARGIE

(to Julia)

She said to be quiet so I don't know if I should answer.

JULIA

We understand.

BARBU

Good. Now, one at a time. Please cross over to my table and take a seat.

Julia, all business, walks to the table and sits. Margie follows, slowly, tries to imitate Madam Barbu. Sits.

Barbu claps loudly, lights dim, she sits.

BARBU

Your names?

JULIA

Julia.

MARGIE

Margie. It's short for Marjorie. Marjorie Dunham. Middle name Myrtle, after my grandmother on my father's side.

BARBU

Enough! Now, breathe slowly and deeply.

They do as told.

BARBU

Spirits! We welcome you! We come in peace. Julia and Marjorie Myrtle have come here today in hopes of communicating with you.

MARGIE

Everyone calls me just Margie.

BARBU

Silence, just Margie!

There is silence.

BARBU

Spirits! Let yourselves be known.

There is silence.

BARBU

Spirits, we will wait until you are ready. But I have a hair appointment in an hour.

The candle flickers. Julia and Margie react as if chilled.

BARBU

Julia and just Margie, please set your minds on the souls you wish to hear from. We'll leave the rest in their hands. Not literal hands of course.

There is silence.

BARBU

Oh. So soon. Someone is anxious to be heard. ... I'm getting the letter D.

MARGIE

Don! Oh, Don! I miss you so much!

BARBU

Shush. He knows that. Let him be heard.

A beat.

BARBU

He says ... He says ... it's in the glove compartment.

Margie crosses both hands over her heart.

MARGIE

It's him! It's really him! Ask him whether....

BARBU

Shush. Let him speak.

A beat. We're listening.

BARBU

He says ... something about ... is it a garden?

MARGIE

No. No, we don't have a garden.

BARBU

That what he says.

JULIA

What about Don's vegetables? At the community garden?

MARGIE

Oh no! I forgot all about that! I'm sorry, Don! Oh hon, I'll take care of it. It's just that there's so much, with the bills and the car and the tile is loose in the bathroom. I'm just ...

Margie drops her head into her hands.

BARBU

He says he ... he forgives you.

MARGIE

He grew the best eggplant.

BARBU

He forgives you for having an affair.

MARGIE

What?

BARBU

That's what he said. (Shrugs) I'm just the messenger.

MARGIE

It's just ... I mean ...

JULIA

You had an affair??

MARGIE

We were going through a rough patch.

JULIA

You? Cheated on Don? You?

MARGIE

I ... I ... I. He forgives me. He just said that.