

THE WRONG RING

by

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INT. FUNERAL PARLOR - EVENING

Two Friends BERNICE, age 90 and PATSY age 87 are at a Funeral Parlor saying their final goodbyes to their mutual best friend 'Bette' who rests in the coffin.

Bernice starts fiddling with a ring on Bette's finger.

PATSY
What are you doing Bernice?

BERNICE
I'm just...just looking at it.

PATSY
That's Bette's ring.

BERNICE
Will you relax?

Bernice struggles to remove the ring.

PATSY
You're...you're...stealing her ring?

BERNICE
Does it look as if she cares?

PATSY
It's what she has asked to be buried with!

BERNICE
Listen Patsy, we all ask to be buried with 'things'. Things, things things! You know Pat, we were friends for years. If there was anyone that she would have wanted to wear this ring, it would've been me. She couldn't stand that selfish daughter of hers, nor could she fathom good old Bob, who left for Arizona for a whole year to live on a ranch with horses! And he knew she couldn't stand horses—

PATSY
Will you shut up?! That's not the point Bernice! She has stated clearly in this letter that she's wanted to be buried with it.

BERNICE

She stated many things that she never meant. She was a pathological liar. Let's not forget!

Bette's husband BOB enters the Parlor and begins to walk toward the 'girls'.

PATSY

Bob is coming!! Hide the ring, hide the ring, put it in your bag!

BERNICE

I can't, I can't get it off! It's stuck on my finger.

PATSY

Bernice! (swiftly) OH Hi Bob...!

BOB

Hello.

PATSY

Having a good day so far?

BOB

What, are you crazy?

PATSY

Oh...I don't mean, I mean...do you feel the presence of God in the room? (she darts a look to Bernice)

BOB

I do. I do Patsy.

PATSY

You do??

BOB

Yes, I've come to give Bette the ring she deserved.

PATSY

You've what?

BOB

I have it here, the real diamond. I took out a mortgage on our house and...

Bernice burns with anger.

BERNICE

You mean the ring she was wearing
all these years wasn't real?

BOB

Yes, that's correct.

BERNICE

What are you saying Bob? I almost
don't believe it?

BOB

I...I couldn't afford a real one at
the time.

PATSY

Oh dear Mother in heaven.

BERNICE

You couldn't afford— (Bernice has
trouble controlling herself) Bette
wore that ring to every beauty
pageant throughout the years, she
wore it to the diamond girl beauty
pageant at 60!!! She picked up
that award with your ring on Bob!!
She wore it to Sheila's wedding,
to Donald's Barmitzvah, To Elena's
100th, TO HAROLD'S DEATH BED!! She
wore it! She wore it and we star
gazed over this DAMN RING!

Bernice holds up her hand to prove her point, revealing the
shiny big diamond ring on her finger.

BOB

You witch!

Bernice gasps.

Bob turn to address the crowd in the funeral parlor.

BOB (CONT'D)

She's, she's got the ring on.
Bernice has Bette's ring.

The crowd claps in approval.
(to Bernice) Why in the damned
hell are you wearing Bette's ring?

BERNICE

Patsy gave it to me.

PATSY

Uhhhhh—

BERNICE

Patsy's getting senile Bob, she's nearly as old as me. Here is what happened. Bette told Patsy that she wanted to give me the ring as her last dying wish.

BOB

But I read in the letter Patsy showed me that she wanted to be buried with it on.

BERNICE

I will tell you now Bob, that wasn't her real wish. okay? She verbalized it to Patsy cause she had a change of heart and could no longer write! Now if you give her that ring, she'll hate you forever. You know how she loved me Bob?

BOB

I know...she mentioned it once...but...where is the letter?

BERNICE

I'm telling you now it doesn't matter. She told Patsy on her deathbed that she wanted me to have the ring. Patsy gave me the ring and I've had it on since!

BOB

Is that true Patsy?

Patsy smiles weakly and 'sort of' nods.
That can't be, I could have sworn I saw the ring on her finger this morning!

BERNICE

Oh will you stop causing such an ugly stink.

BOB

...Well, here it is Bernice, all 10 carets of it. If that was her last dying wish, so be it.

Bob puts the other ring on one of Bernice's fingers.
Would you mind handing me back the other ring?

BERNICE

Sure, Bob.

Bernice hands the ring to Bob. Bob walks away in haste.
But where is he going in such a
rush?

PATSY

He's always been a strange man.

SHEILA approaches Bernice and Patsy.

SHEILA

Ello ladies, where is Bob going?
I went to say hi and he rushed
right past me?

BERNICE

Who cares?

SHEILA

He still owes my son money for the
ring. I hope he's not avoiding
me.

BERNICE

For what?

SHEILA

He came by the shop just last week
and I helped him choose a ring,
nothing expensive really, we let
him take it out of the store but
he is yet to come back and pay us
for it.

PATSY

He bought a ring?

SHEILA

Yeah, he wouldn't say for what but
who knows.

Patsy and Bernice look at one another in disbelief.

BERNICE

This wasn't the ring was it?

SHEILA

Oh my! I don't believe it. That
looks like the very one!

PATSY (TO BERNICE)

I just put two and two together.
I think Bette's ring was the real
ring all along and Bob planned on
switching them. He gave you the
fake and he's got the real ring
now!

BERNICE

It can't be?

SHEILA

Can't be what?

PATSY

Bob pulled a switch-a-roo!

BERNICE

I am gonna ring his neck!

Bernice takes off walking and Patsy follows her in hot
pursuit.

SHEILA

Ring whose neck?? Why is everyone
rushing away from me??