Bullets of the Wasteland

by

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Cast of Characters

MARGARET: 60's

BILL: 60's

Place
Margaret's home

Time
Evening

Setting: The play takes place inside the posh living room of Margaret's home. This is a place decorated with old money from generational wealth. The décor is old and traditional but polished and kept as if new.

At Rise: The play opens with Margaret and Bill sharing a drink together on the sofa.

MARGARET: They said I'm the devil, or what was it? As evil as the devil. That's the one, that's the phrase they used. What an insult. I have never been out to deliberately hurt anyone that didn't, you know, deserve what was coming. I more often than not, mind my own business. I try...but, there are situations that occur that go outside my control. Believe me when I tell you Bill, I do everything that I can to avoid the possibility of, you know, something bad taking place. I like peace. Don't you? Don't you just love peace and quiet? I love me some peace and quiet. I want peace. I devour peace, but unfortunately for some, peace isn't a word often used. There's something at play that feels it needs to, needs to put all this dark energy into this world. Every now and again, something comes along that's going to pounce on a little innocent rabbit, minding its own business, eating carrots and lettuce from the garden...the predator approaches silently, with full blooded intention to destroy and kill its prey, but just when it's about to make its move, this happy tiny bunny turns to its enemy with fire in its eyes and morphs itself into a wolf. The once confident predator encounters something so fierce it feels fear like it never felt, the kind of fear it never knew existed. I am that cute itty-bitty bunny, hopping along in my garden...wanting to be left alone...but, now they disturbed my peace and I may be forced to defend myself, if not for honor than certainly self-respect...wouldn't you agree?

BILL: Margaret –

MARGARET: Yes?

BILL: I don't think those Wilke boys meant you any harm.

MARGARET: You don't?

BILL: Not one bit.

MARGARET: Well, I do.

BILL: Let me explain.

MARGARET: What is there to explain? They've built a construction road across my land...I said no, they built one anyway, are we on the same page?

BILL: They aren't on your property.

MARGARET: Beside it, *inches beside it*..for miles on end, a monstrosity.

BILL: Let it go.

MARGARET: I will not let it go!

BILL: They approached you and offered to pay you a handsome sum of money in order to build that road, you refused, so they found a different route. Wouldn't you have done the same?

MARGARET: Perhaps.

BILL: You should be pleased.

MARGARET: Why's that?

BILL: Because when they are through the value of your land will rise exponentially.

MARGARET: So, what? Where's my peace and quiet? I have to listen to trucks barreling through all day long.

BILL: Margaret, do you really?

MARGARET: Why, am I the only one with ears? Do you think I would make such stuff up?

BILL: In fact, I do. You have always had a vivid imagination.

MARGARET: I hear those trucks moving about as if they were entering my living room.

BILL: Now, now, we both know that's an exaggeration.

MARGARET: I want it stopped!

BILL: They have the permits, there's nothing to be done.

MARGARET: The rumbling! The rumbling! All day long! It must come to an end!

BILL: One day it will.

MARGARET: NOW!!

(pause.)

Was that too much?

BILL: Yes, I'm afraid.

MARGARET: I'm sorry...felt good to exhale, if you will. Better than barging over there in the flesh and ripping out their lungs.

BILL: You have a way with words.

MARGARET: And I can back them up.

BILL: You sure can.

MARGARET: I'm a wicked witch if I choose to be.

BILL: This I know firsthand.

MARGARET: I've never directed my venom at you.

BILL: Never fully, but I've seen you in action.

MARGARET: And don't you forget.

BILL: I can never say I would.

MARGARET: I'll take that as a compliment.

BILL: I'll bet you will.

THEY both laugh.

MARGARET: You really are a dear friend Bill. How do you put up with me?

BILL: There's not much else to do.

MARGARET: *(laughs)*

BILL: You know I love you.

MARGARET: Do you?

BILL: Of course.

MARGARET: Then help me remove the Wilke boys.

BILL: Not again. Margaret, they mean you no harm.

MARGARET: I am their enemy.

BILL: Why do you say such things?

MARGARET: They could have built that damn road much further from here, you know it and I know it. It's like they are giving me the finger.

BILL: Is that what this is all about?

MAERGARET: What?

BILL: Your pride is stung.

MARGARET: Ha! Never! I would never allow two pipsqueaks the satisfaction.

BILL: They are under your skin.

MARGARET: Why is it so bloody hot in here? You think by now the fortune I've spent on installing a proper cooling system...ridiculous.

BILL: Honey, that's only your blood boiling.

MARGARET: I want revenge.

BILL: *(chuckles)* Revenge? You sound absurd.

MARGARET: Call it what you will, I am out for blood.

BILL: Have another glass of wine and cool off.

MARGARET: I will tell you...

BILL: Tell me, what?

MARGARET: I have a delivery for the Wilke brothers.

BILL: What sort of delivery?

MARGARET: There will be an abundance of oak trees blocking paths along that crooked road of theirs.

BILL: What? How?

MARGARET: Contacts, Bill, contacts.

BILL: Do you mean to tell me that you are going to place –

MARGARET: Oak trees will be planted into the Wilke brothers road...ten of them..throughout the night, with a talented crew of people who will make my extended garden look so lovely.

BILL: You will be sued.

MARGARET: Not so fast. I've purchased the land...I have the deed...ten acres with many more planted trees to come. It will happen fast. An entire garden built right before everyone's eyes. That'll shock 'em. That'll put an end to those blistering trucks!

BILL: How can you do such a thing?

MARGARET: How can I not?

BILL: But Margaret, surely you've thought over the repercussions of your actions.

MARGARET: And it feels great!

BILL: They will sue you by morning.

MARGARET: Excuse me, but what I am in the process of doing is within my legal right.

BILL: You are preventing the construction of a major building operation.

MARGARET: Excuse me again, but I don't see it that way.

BILL: It is the only way to see it.

MARGARET: Not from where I am sitting Bill.

BILL stands.

BILL: The Wilke boys have tremendous backing. They will fight you tooth and nail. They will stop at nothing.

MARGARET: Do I look soft to you?

BILL: It's not a question of – there you go again with your ego and pride. You are going to find yourself in one incredible mess!

MARGARET: Bill, I don't imagine I've ever seen you with such passion before. Where is all this coming from?

BILL: I am concerned for your well being.

MARGARET: Are you?

BILL: Most certainly.

MARGARET: Do you have a stake in this?

BILL: Stake? What do you mean?

MARGARET: Are you involved with the Wilke boys?

BILL: Margaret, why would you ask--

MARGARET: TELL ME!!

BILL: ...*(sighs)* I've made an investment for five percent of the business. *(beat)* Hold on, that's got nothing to do with you. I had no idea they would come anywhere near your land and I definitely never imagined you would be such a damn nuisance over the project to begin with.

MARGARET: I knew it!

BILL: Don't accuse me of anything. I'm innocent.

MARGARET: How could you not know where they planned to build?

BILL: I knew it was in the county and a mile up the road, had no idea they'd be entering your orbit. Had I known that I wouldn't have –

MARGARET: You know there's a history with the Wilke family. Why would you mix up with their interests?

BILL: Money. I have my two daughters to think about.

MARGARET: Hogwash.

BILL: No.

MARGARET: Malarkey!

BILL: Margaret--

MARGARET: Don't you Margaret me. You have enough money for three lifetimes. Don't try and paint a sad portrait. Both your daughters married into sound families. I'm not dumb.

BILL: That's the partial truth.

MARGARET: I know it.

BILL: I'm broke.

MARGARET: What did you say to me?

BILL: Overseas. I've made some terrible investments and lost ninety percent of everything I worked so hard to build. I made the investment with the Wilke boys because at least I can have enough to live on before I die. I won't have much to show for my life but at least I won't die in complete shame.

MARGARET: Whatever did you invest in?

BILL: Oh, I swam with the wrong sharks and...well, it's useless to..I can't even talk about it quite frankly...*(he sits)* After all my years of experience, I became careless because I didn't do my research, I didn't take the calculated risk, I went blind on it and paid the ultimate price...you are the first and only person to know of this, so please, keep this between us...I can't stomach the Wilke family any more than you do, but for a nominal investment with such a high yield return, I took the bait..at least we can agree that they are prosperous enough to trust on our homeland. There you have it...I'm sorry, but this is personal for me, I never wished to upset you.

MARGARET: I'm still planting them trees.

BILL: I wouldn't expect anything else.

MARGARET: Sorry Bill, but this is business.

BILL: I know it is Marge...I know it is.

END OF PLAY