

The Death of Edward Fox

A short play

by Jeremy Sony

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### Characters

FITZ M. 20s-30s A surly guardian angel ready to retire

CAROLINE F. 20s-30s Special investigator for Internal  
Affairs

EDWARD M. 40s-50s A recently murdered husband

MARILYN F. 40s-50s Edward's wife. Also recently deceased.

Note: Ages are flexible. A "ready to retire" angel is not necessarily an older looking man. The above is simply a guide. Ages could be easily flipped, however.

### Setting

Internal affairs office. Heaven.

### Time

Is not important here.

THE DEATH OF EDWARD FOX

The use of acting blocks or just chairs would do fine here. We're in a stark room. An interrogation office.

Lights comes up on a man, FITZ, looks like he's been waiting for something.

For a while.

CAROLINE enters. SHE has a clipboard and file. SHE keeps her distance, not out of fear, but to observe.

FITZ

You got my coffee?

CAROLINE

Coffee?

FITZ

The new gal, the one that chucked me in here, I asked her for some coffee. Maybe a water. A smoke.

(No response from Caroline.)

FITZ (cont'd)

C'mon, don't be like this. I'm supposed to be retiring. You should be throwing me a party, not harassing me.

(CAROLINE writes something on her file.)

FITZ (cont'd)

What was that?

(SHE doesn't answer.)

FITZ (cont'd)

You gonna at least tell me why you got me pinned?

CAROLINE

You know why you're here, Mr. --

FITZ

Caroline, I swear to -- you need to drop with the protocol before I get angry.

CAROLINE

Have it your way. Fitz.

(beat)

You are here for the sole reason that you're here.

FITZ

Aww, what kind of circle-jerk is that? 'I'm here 'cos I'm here?' No, see that ain't how it works. I'm here because somethin' bad happened, only I don't know what. You're gonna tell me. If you were ever my friend --

CAROLINE

Do you know a mortal by the name of Edward Fox?

FITZ

Ah... shit.

(CAROLINE takes another note.)

FITZ (cont'd)

Oh, c'mon -- I can't swear in here? That wasn't in the manual last I checked. Call up Gabe. Or Gloria. You call them up and tell 'em what's goin' on here. They'll clear up this mess.

CAROLINE

Gabe and Gloria are on assignment.

FITZ

So you call them back, it's not that hard.

CAROLINE

They're on assignment.

(LIGHTS UP on the other half of the stage on the next line. A kitchen table with two chairs. EDWARD is seated.)

(This is a visual replay of CAROLINE'S narration.)

CAROLINE (cont'd)

Seven a.m. in the Fox household. Edward Fox, husband of Marilyn, is, as he is on every weekday, reading the morning paper.

FITZ

I know what happened.

(MARILYN enters with coffee and cereal -- SHE places the bowl in front of him, and sits with her coffee.)

(EDWARD continues to read the paper, not paying attention to MARILYN.)

FITZ (cont'd)

Why are you showin' me this?

EDWARD

How's your breakfast?

(SHE looks at her coffee, annoyed.)

MARILYN

Delicious. How's your coffee?

(HE discovers that SHE only gave him cereal. SHE smiles coyly.)

EDWARD

Delicious.

(EDWARD takes a bite. HE notices a bad taste, takes another bite. Then reacts to the poison in it. A subtle twitch.)

(Then HE keels over dead.)

MARILYN

I added something a little special.

(MARILYN pulls out a compact. SHE checks her hair, applies lipstick -- perhaps humming the tune "I'm in Heaven" -- and when ready, pulls a GUN from her robe and puts it to her head.)

CAROLINE

Hold.

(The kitchen area freezes. CAROLINE walks over into it and surveys the scene. SHE gestures a "Well?" to FITZ.)

FITZ

What? She poisoned the bastard and then shot herself.

CAROLINE

Do you see the problem with all this?

FITZ

That she didn't do it sooner?

CAROLINE

(getting tough)

Where were you? Huh? Here's my problem -- and it's your problem now -- we have no record of your whereabouts in the moments leading up to this murder-suicide. You, who swore and oath to protect Edward Fox, disappeared when he needed you most.

(The FOX's move on EDWARD's next line,  
EDWARD sitting up and MARILYN lowering  
the gun.)

EDWARD

It's an appalling situation, truly. It's the reason I've decided to seek legal recourse.

FITZ

Recourse?

CAROLINE

Mr. Fox, please.

MARILYN

(overlapping to CAROLINE)

Call him Edward -- there's no reason to be formal.

FITZ

What's he barkin' about, recourse?

CAROLINE

I was getting to that. Mr. Fox is suing you.

FITZ

Suing --

MARILYN

-- for gross negligence in the capacity of your care.

FITZ

You gotta be fuckin' kiddin' me.

EDWARD

Oh no, I've never kidded a day in my life, and you would know that if you had been watching me as you were assigned.

FITZ

We guard. We don't "watch" -- can he do that? Do WE do that here?

EDWARD

As my guardian angel, it's clear that you have failed in your responsibilities and --

FITZ

(overlapping)

Do you know how many times I saved your ass, you ungrateful --

EDWARD

(overlapping)

-- I would still be alive if you hadn't disappeared!

FITZ

You'd still be alive if your psycho-bitch wife hadn't poisoned you!

(MARILYN extends her hand towards FITZ.)

MARILYN

Marilyn Fox. So pleased to finally meet you.

(FITZ completely ignores her. SHE is not pleased.)

FITZ

He can't do this. I mean, what -- what is he suing me for? Huh? You're new here, Eddie, so I'll spare you the surprise. We don't have money. Angels don't get paid, this ain't some swank gig -- it's a fuckin' callin'.

EDWARD

I don't need your money, or lack thereof. You have something much more valuable; and I may indeed be new, but I know what I want and what I'm after. And I always win, you know that.

FITZ

What's he --

CAROLINE

He wants your wings, Fitz.

FITZ

Excuse me?

CAROLINE

He's suing for your wings.

FITZ

He can't -- he -- you can't do that to me, Eddie. After what we -- Caroline, please, this whole thing can't be dogma. You can't tell me that the big guy would allow --

CAROLINE

I'm sorry Fitz. My wings are as pinned as yours on this one. Under new guidelines established immediately before you were posted to Mr. Fox, certain loopholes were created that --

(reading from her file)

-- "allow victims of violent deaths to sue if there is proof of negligence."

(FITZ tries to look at them, but SHE puts them away.)

CAROLINE (cont'd)

These guidelines were designed to --

FITZ

I don't care what they were "designed" to do. That world's a land-mine and ain't no guardian up here has a perfect track record. Violent deaths happen. It all simply comes down to good guys and bad guys, and as long as mortals exist, there will always be bad guys. Eddie's walkin' proof of that -- an ambulance chaser hoofin' it after his own hearse. And we're lettin' him do it. Us, Caroline. The guardians -- maybe we've been watchin' 'em too long. Lettin' them pollute us, fill us with their corruptions. We're angels, Caroline! 'Was a time the Oath was nothin' more than a mortal's name on a scroll and an angel's mark. Now it's rhetoric and guidelines, asinine loopholes. Is that we've become? Them?

MARILYN

So on Earth, it will be in Heaven.

FITZ

Screw that!

CAROLINE

Why don't we all sit down?

FITZ

So this shark can -- can -- cast me down?

MARILYN

Hell's not so bad, from what I hear. Dry -- very dry, which I'll deal with in time. Don't get me started on the lotion sanctions. As if this skin's gonna keep without maintenance.

FITZ

Would somebody shut her up?

MARILYN

You can be testy all you want with me, but it doesn't change the fact that you were less than reliable to my husband.

FITZ

You murdered him! What's she even doin' here?

(to EDWARD)

How can you even look at -- you're dead because of her.

EDWARD

I'm dead because of you -- and whatever my wife did, I have to assume that it was my actions that drove her to it.

FITZ

Eddie, aside from keepin' long hours at the high-paying job that lined her purse with cash, what actions would justify what she did? You were the most boring, pedantic, weasel of a man whose only true passion was ruinin' people through litigation. Certainly not noble, but hardly cause for a murdering-suicidal spouse.

MARILYN

He would urinate in the shower.

CAROLINE

(bursts out laughing; through  
a fit of hysterics)

...the shower!

(The others watch until CAROLINE calms  
herself, realizing her inappropriate  
outburst. EDWARD is glaring at MARILYN.)

MARILYN

He wanted to know, I'm telling him. What? I'm lying  
here? I mean, you must have known that having watched  
him since he was born -- but it was always a habit I  
frowned upon.

(to CAROLINE)

I first caught him doing it on our honeymoon. Here I  
was, ready to surprise him in the shower -- to pick up  
where we'd...left off -- and as I pull back the curtain,  
there it was, like Niagra Falls at sunset. Not the  
honeymoon I'd dreamed of, that's for sure. I told Edward  
on more than one occasion that if he kept it up, I'd  
have to just kill him one day.

EDWARD

She was always true to her word.

FITZ

That still doesn't explain why she's here. Or where her  
guardian is.

MARILYN

Sweetest man! He was... put off a bit by the murdering  
and such, but once we talked, he still wanted to help me  
settle in. He's trying to smooth things over for me --  
down there. Maybe get me that lotion.

FITZ

Smooth things over? Did we stop caring about murdering  
of innocents?

CAROLINE

Mrs. Fox will be punished for her role in Mr. -- in her  
husband Edward's death, but until such time, she has  
been deemed evidence.

FITZ

Evidence?

EDWARD

It's very simple. Had you been paying attention to my surroundings, keeping an eye out for danger at every turn --

FITZ

What danger? She was your wife.

EDWARD

-- At. Every. Turn. You would have seen her slip the poison into my drink and found a way to stop me from taking it.

FITZ

Wait, let me get this straight -- I'm being punished because I didn't pay enough attention to your surroundings?

EDWARD

You're being punished because you. Weren't. There.

FITZ

The number of you little dirt rats I've loved and cared for cannot be fathomed by that tiny speck of gray matter inside that smug head of yours. I'm on the steps of retirement here -- Gabe would never let this happen.

CAROLINE

Gabriel's not here.

(FITZ stops ranting and looks at  
CAROLINE.)

CAROLINE (cont'd)

Neither is Gloria. Stop looking for them to save you. Tell us where you were. That's what this is all about. We can't verify your location that morning. If you can place yourself in the Fox home, in the room with Edward, on the morning of his death, then this all goes away.

MARILYN

Does it matter? Even if he was there, I still poisoned my husband.

CAROLINE

But if he was in the room, watching over Edward, then he's not accountable for negligence. Violent deaths happen. We can only intervene so much.

EDWARD

You've done the review and there was clearly no sign of my guardian angel. I daresay, it's quite embarrassing. For your organization. For an angel to -- vanish -- off the grid. Makes you wonder what he was doing.

FITZ

I'm done with skippy here. And the happy poisoner.

EDWARD

So it's settled then? I get your wings.

FITZ

Not on your life.

EDWARD

We're talking about my death, in point of fact.

FITZ

Caroline, you cannot let this happen. You gotta do somethin'.

CAROLINE

You signed a contract, Fitz. You were on assignment. Why won't you just give me some proof that you were there?

EDWARD

He can't. I've spent my life "chasing ambulances" but what I've really been doing is looking for people to make a mistake. I can spy the holes in a story -- like spots on a dalmatian. And you've got a big spot. Tell me you were in the kitchen. Tell me you were there, that you saw everything. Come on, lie to me.

FITZ

(HE starts to laugh)

You know what...? Screw it. You got me.

(beat)

I was in the shower.

MARILYN

Our shower?

FITZ

I wasn't on the damn grid because I'd become corporeal --

CAROLINE

You took human form?!

FITZ

-- for a few minutes! I'm not the first angel to do so.  
But I did.

MARILYN

Why?

FITZ

(beat)

To take a piss in Eddie's shower.

EDWARD

You left your post to -- I hope my death was worth it.

FITZ

Well, shit, Ed... did you expect to live forever? To  
tell you the truth, I'm glad she poisoned you. Life with  
you, Eddie was Hell on Earth. One. Damn. Trudging.  
Sentence. I had a track record that spanned Millenia --  
not a one of you dropped! One last assignment before  
retirement. One little indulgence and --

(HE throws himself across the kitchen  
table.)

FITZ (cont'd)

Take 'em. Find a sword. Do it.

(CAROLINE, MARILYN, and EDWARD look at  
each other. A sly grin spreads over  
EDWARDS face. When EDWARD and MARILYN  
speak from here on out, there is a  
difference in their voice to indicate a  
shift in persona.)

MARILYN

I honestly don't know what's better. This. Or the look  
on his face when he walked in and saw you slumped over  
your paper and me with my brains in your cereal.

(FITZ knows that voice.)

EDWARD

(mocking)

'So you call them back. It's not that hard.'

(FITZ's realization is apparent --)

FITZ

Gabriel, you ol' son of a bitch -- is that you in there?!

EDWARD

Now you didn't think we'd send you off to retirement that easy now did you?

FITZ

The whole ti -- the whole time?

(MARILYN sings out an angelic chord, then laughs with delight at pulling it off.)

CAROLINE

I told you they were on assignment.

FITZ

Assignment, yeah. Son of a -- aw, man you guys... I'm just, I can't... Gloria! C'mere!

MARILYN

Ah, Fitz --

(THEY share a good hug)

MARILYN (cont'd)

-- it's good to see you again. On a level playing field.

(EDWARD comes over.)

EDWARD

Find a sword!

FITZ

Wait, so the litigation for negligence, the new guidelines --

CAROLINE

What new guidelines?

MARILYN

I told you he'd buy it.

EDWARD

Come on, old friend. We have a lot of catching up to do and, I believe, a retirement to properly celebrate.

(THEY all start to exit. These next lines are said as they head off stage.)

FITZ

You guys know I was just kiddin' about that whole shower thing?

MARILYN / EDWARD / CAROLINE

(overlapping)

Right, yes. / Absolutely. / Of course, completely kidding.

(LIGHTS fade to black. END OF PLAY.)