

Denial of Death

By Don Demarco

Scene 1: *(An emergency room in a highly active urban hospital. Tons of ill, wounded people are coming in. It's a circus. We see a handsome, forty-something blue-eyed, blonde male, Denis, having an alcoholic seizure. Anthony goes into cardiac arrest. Doctors "code blue" him. It's no use. Anthony dies and the medical team looks **sober/somber** and distraught.)*

Scene 2: *(Renia, an actress who's moonlighting as a medical secretary, is off to the side of the medical team, almost in tears. She is staring at Anthony on the table.)*

Renia: We see this all the time. There's nothing we can do. *(Focus back on Anthony's face on the table. His eyes are open.)* Look at those bright blue eyes. There seems to be so much life in them. *(She begins to cry. She turns away and walks into a doctor's office connected to the emergency room. The office belongs to a young Doctor, Dr. Peter Jordan, who is in the office looking just as solemn.)* We can't get through to them. He's been here six times before.

Dr Jordan: I know how you feel. I've treated him here before. As far as we know, only one relative has ever come to see him.

Renia: Let's go to the funeral. We owe him that much.

Scene 3: *(A cemetery. It's Anthony's funeral and the only people present are Dr. Peter Jordan, Renia, a relative and an official. Few words are said. The service is over very quickly. Close-up on the casket.)*

Renia: I can't get those blue eyes out of my head. He was always so kind. *(They start to walk away. Renia looks back at the casket.)* If Anthony could've seen this maybe he's have stopped drinking, but he could never get through that wall of denial.

Dr. Jordan: They never do. It's a rare person that comes to terms with their addiction, whether it's drugs, alcohol, food, or otherwise. The majority of people we see have self-inflicted illnesses. Heart disease, diabetes (*his voice trails off.*) It's becoming an epidemic and the tax payer has to pay for that in the future.

Renia: I know this is going to sound silly, Peter, but if any person who died from an addiction could come back, do you think they'd change?

Dr. Jordan: Good question. I don't know.

Renia: What if there was a way to simulate death. Maybe, you know, scare them enough so that they'd give up their addiction? (*Dr. Jordan looks to Renia, perplexed. He says nothing.*)

(Note: Renia begins to think out loud about how she was just in a play where someone died needlessly. She wonders if a real life play would help a person sick with an addiction, like Anthony, through a reality-based simulation of death, embalming, and burial.)

Scene 4: *Denis is sitting in the living room with his wife and children. The telephone rings, and Renia is seen on the phone with a script in hands, reading. She tells Denis's wife on the phone that as of 6 o'clock this evening, right now, he is dead. The death's simulation starts right now. Tell Dennis to lie down on the floor. The ambulance arrived at this moment with stretcher and other equipment. The medical attendant cautions everyone to be quiet and serious. They simulate resuscitation and the KPR and the medical person announce that there is no chance and Denis is gone. They lift Denis on the stretcher, cover his body with a sheet, and take him to the funeral parlor for embalming.*

(Note: the camera has a close up of the body simulating the embalming.)