

Jack, Wanda, and Ben

by Mike Mariano
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mikemariano@hotmail.com
www.mikemariano.com

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(JACK walks into the house carrying the groceries. He smiles and looks around.)

JACK:

Wanda! Wanda!

(He waits; no response.)

Wanda?

(Slowly, WANDA steps out of the kitchen. She looks terrified and confused.)

WANDA:

Jack?

JACK:

Wanda! Are you OK?

WANDA:

Oh, Jack!

(She hugs him tight, nearly in tears. JACK, confused, squirms underneath her and the groceries.)

JACK:

Wanda... is everything all right?

WANDA:

(She releases him and looks lovingly into his eyes.)
Oh yes, yes Jack... Everything's fine, now that you're here.

(JACK puts the groceries on a chair and scratches his head.)

JACK:

What, is there a spider in the kitchen; you want me to...

(He trails off. WANDA continues to stare.)

Well, I'm back from the supermarket... back from the bank...

WANDA:

Oh, Jack, you've been gone so long...

JACK:

Well, I was an extra five minutes at the bank...

WANDA:

Oh Jack, for me it was so much longer! It was a lifetime!

(She looks up.)

Why, Jack? Why did you leave me for so long?

JACK:

Well honey, I wasn't gone for more than forty-five minutes. It's 10 minutes there, ten minutes back, and then the time for shopping; I think I made pretty good time, actually...

(He looks at her. He is at a loss.)

I- I missed you...

WANDA:

Oh Jack, I missed you! I more than missed you, I-

(She stops and holds her hand to her face.)

Oh.

JACK:

What?

WANDA:

Jack... Jack, things have changed since you've been gone.

JACK:

I know; Detroit got a field goal. I was listening in the car.

WANDA:

No, things have changed for me; for... us.

JACK:

Wanda, what are you getting at?

WANDA:

It's so hard to say, I... Jack, you were gone!

JACK:

For 45 minutes!

WANDA:

You were gone, and I didn't know if you'd be back...

JACK:

Wanda, I'm really confused. I was gone, but now I'm back. What does all this mean?

WANDA:

Oh Jack, I don't know how to tell you this, but-

BEN:

(From offstage:)

Wanda? Wanda, are you there?

JACK:

(Looking up:)

Who's that?

(BEN walks onstage. He puts his arm around WANDA.)

BEN:

Who's that?

(JACK is reeling. WANDA gasps.)

WANDA:

Oh, Ben...

JACK:

Ben?!

WANDA:

Ben, this is Jack... my first husband...

JACK:

First?! Wanda!

BEN:

Oh... I thought he disappeared.

WANDA:

He did!

JACK:

I didn't!

WANDA:

Ben, I thought he was gone; you knew that!

BEN:

I know, Wanda, I know...

(He hugs her and eyes JACK. JACK explodes.)

JACK:

Wanda! An hour ago we were sitting in the kitchen, eating dinner! Together! Are you trying to tell me that in 45 minutes you had me declared missing, then dead, then remarried?!

WANDA:

Well I never declared you remarried, though for all I knew...

JACK:

Wanda! You married...?

(He motions to BEN.)

BEN:

Ben?

JACK:

(Picking up his question:)

Ben?!

WANDA:

Jack, what else could I have done? You were gone, and I couldn't stay a widow forever...

JACK:

Forever?! It was FORTY FIVE MINUTES!

(He puts his hands on his knees and his head down, and takes a deep breath.)

Wanda, I'm sorry, but I'm just so confused...

WANDA:

I know Jack, so am I...

JACK:

I don't understand what could make you think I wasn't coming back... I don't understand...

(Frustrated, he motions to BEN.)

Him!

WANDA:

Ben?

JACK:

Ben! Where did he come from?

WANDA:

Well... Jack... Ben helped me deal with your disappearance. He was there for me when no one else was. Jack, one thing led to another, and...

JACK:

One thing led to another?! Wanda, I barely had one thing lead to another! I went from the bank to the store!

WANDA:

Jack, Ben is my husband now...

JACK:

Forty five minutes... Wanda, our wedding ceremony alone was longer than 45 minutes!

BEN:

Jack.

JACK:

(Still to WANDA:)

This makes no sense to me, Wanda. I have no idea-

BEN:

Jack.

JACK:

-how you could come up with a new husband in an hour. That's like getting a pizza-

BEN:

Jack!

(JACK turns. BEN slaps a hand on his shoulder.)

Let up a little, OK?

JACK:

Yeah, I'm sorry, Wanda. I just...

(He looks at WANDA in total desperation. WANDA is very uncomfortable.)

BEN:

Wanda, why don't you finish up in the kitchen? I'll talk here with Jack.

(She nods.)

WANDA:

(To JACK, with sadness:)
It's just been so long...

(WANDA exits. JACK slowly turns to BEN.)

JACK:

Ben, Ben, this is insane...

BEN:

It must seem that way, Jack.

JACK:

Yeah, I don't think you know how confused-

BEN:

I think I do, Jack. You seem as confused as Wanda was when I first met her.

JACK:

(Sighs:)

When you first met her. Fort- Forty-five minutes ago...

BEN:

Granted, it was a whirlwind romance. But when I first saw her, standing there so helpless... I just fell for her immediately. She's just got those eyes. And when she smiles...

(He snaps back into focus.)

BEN: (cont.)

Well, I guess you would know.

JACK:

(With contempt:)

Yes, the memories are fresh in my mind...

BEN:

Jack, it's tough! But she had it tough, too.

JACK:

She had it all spelled out for her! I told her I was going to the store! I told her I'd be back in half an hour!

(Beat.)

I told her I loved her.

(He sighs.)

How... how's she been?

BEN:

Excuse me?

JACK:

Wanda. You said she was distraught before?

BEN:

Yeah. She really missed you. But she got over it, and...

JACK:

She's... she's happy with you?

BEN:

(Hesitant:)

Yeah.

JACK:

So... where do I fit in?

(BEN exhales.)

BEN:

To tell you the truth, Jack, I don't really know...

JACK:

I know... I know this seemed like forever for Wanda, but Ben, you've got to understand; this is all happening so fast for me.

BEN:

It must be...

JACK:

I didn't expect so much to happen in the time of one car trip. And then to come home and... I really don't know if I'm coming or going...

(He looks around and sighs.)

I... I guess I'm going...

BEN:

(Nods:)

That's what's probably for the best. She's got her life.

JACK:

Ben, take good care of her. For me.

BEN:

These things happen, Jack; good luck...

(JACK nods and heads for the exit. He takes one last look before going offstage. BEN shakes his head.)

Poor guy...

(WANDA reenters. She goes to BEN.)

WANDA:

Ben?

BEN:

Jack just left.

WANDA:

Ben, oh my God...

BEN:

What?

STEVE:

(From offstage:)

Wanda? Wanda are you out there?

(STEVE enters and puts his arm around WANDA. BEN is numb.)

WANDA:

Ben, I have something to tell you...

(BEN stares as the lights fade.)

THE END