

The Viewing
By Herb Isaacs

At lights up we see a plain room with 3 people Viewing a Body In a Casket:

Wife, Late 30s, In A Plain Black Dress

Mistress, Early 30s, Attractive Dress With a String of Pearls, carrying a large purse.

Man, 40s, Dressed All in Black With a Black T-Shirt And Black Leather Jacket

Wife

Sam does look peaceful.

Mistress

How can you say that? His face is in agony!

Man

Oh, yeah. That's from when he realized I was going to shoot him.

Wife

No, no. This really is his peaceful look. When Sam was in agony, his mouth was way more distorted and his eyes would be wide open.

Mistress

Well, I suppose you would know. You used to keep him in agony all the time.

Wife

Yes. But that's a wife's job, after all. Just like your job was to make him feel better.

Mistress

Then I must have done my job pretty well. Sam always felt better when he was with me.

Man

Everybody has got a job to do, and I must say, I do mine pretty well too.

Mistress

Why are you here, anyway? I would have thought you'd be long gone by now.

Man

No, I never go till later. It's a principle of mine. I always pay my respects to the family first.

Mistress

Isn't that dangerous? The police might find you here.

Man

Nah. They're not that smart. And besides, how would they know it was me?

Wife

I certainly wouldn't tell.

Man

(laughs) No, that would not be in your best interest.

Mistress

(sighs) I suppose it's not in my best interest either.

Man

You got that right, sweetheart.

Mistress

Yet I am just a wee bit disturbed by your shooting my lover.

Man

Well that's certainly a natural feeling, but you'll get over it in time. They all do.

Wife

Really, dear. You should realize Sam was never going to leave me, except this way.

Mistress

That's not what he told me. He was going to confront you the very weekend before he was shot by this man.

Wife

Oh he told me, all right. My husband was always true to his word, an admirably honest man.

Mistress

So he was going to leave you!

Wife

As I said, the only way he was going to leave me was by passing out of this world. And here he is, lying there, so peaceful and ready for the next one.

Mistress

(to Man) How convenient that you should just drive by and randomly shoot him.

Man

Nothing random about it, lady. Like I said, I got a job to do, just like everybody else.

Mistress

A job? You mean you get paid for this sort of thing?

Man

Oh sure. Going rate for an unfaithful husband is 25 big ones.

Mistress

Is it usually the wife who pays you?

Man

Ninety-nine per cent of the time. The only time I can remember that the wife didn't hire me, it was a jilted lover.

Mistress

I don't think Sam ever had another lover, much less a jilted one.

Man

That's right, sweetheart. He was a ninety-nine percenter.

Wife

You and your big mouth! I thought I paid you enough to keep you quiet.

Man

Sorry, I'm just a sucker for a beautiful babe playing Twenty Questions.

Wife

Well now she knows for sure. You'll have to make sure she keeps quiet.

Man

She knows what would happen to her if she ever went to the cops.

Mistress

Oh, you can be sure I would never go to the cops.

Wife

Really? How can I be so sure?

(Mistress pulls a gun out of her purse and points it at wife.)

Mistress

Because I wouldn't want to have to explain this.

(Mistress shoots wife, who falls to the floor dead.)

Mistress

(to Man) How about you, big boy? You got anything more to say?

Man

Yeah, sweetheart. I sure could use a partner with your...talents.

(She puts the gun away)

Mistress

Well, I do need another lover. No jealous wife around, is there?

**BLACKOUT
END OF PLAY**