

MISTER D'S CONUNDRUM

By

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EXT. PARIS - DAY - EST

Aerial view of Paris.

EXT. MADAME LAMBERT'S HOUSE - DAY

A clean, modern looking, two storey building with a large well tended garden.

A tall, dark figure walks past one of the downstairs windows

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The clean, almost clinical look to this room tells us that the occupant is a strong believer in the minimalist movement.

A six foot tall SKELETON dressed in a LONG BLACK ROBE and wielding a SCYTHE is sat on one of the chairs.

This is MISTER D. the Grim Reaper himself.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

So Mister D. Waiting again?

Mister D. looks up.

MISTER D.

What? Oh, yeah. Well it's okay this time. According to my notes this Madame Lambert character is a very punctual person.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

So no worries then?

Mister D. shakes his head.

MISTER D.

No I expect it all to go off without a hitch. Madame Lambert should be late on time.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

And exactly how long is that?

Mister D. looks up at a small clock hung on the wall.

MISTER D.

Well if that thing is accurate. About six and a half minutes.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
You said "without a hitch". Are
hitches normal?

Mister D. stands.

He walks over to the television set. His finger poised on
the POWER BUTTON.

MISTER D.
Well it never used to be. At one
time when people were supposed to
die they died. Now...

He turns on the TELEVISION.

It is a NEWS BROADCAST.

There is no sound, but the image on the Television clearly
shows a hospital OPERATING ROOM.

There is some text at the the bottom of the screen. it reads
TUMEUR OF 5 LIVRES ENLEVEE

SUPER

5 POUND TUMOUR REMOVED.

MISTER D.
This guy was supposed to have two
weeks left. Now he has another
twenty years.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
But that's good right? It means you
will be a little less busy in two
weeks.

MISTER D.
A little less busy? No I won't be a
little less busy. People are dying
all the time, it's none stop. Busy?
I invented the term.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
But surely one less person dying is
a good thing?

MISTER D.
Well to him and others? Yes I
suppose it would be. But to me it
is nothing but a pain.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Really? I would never have...

MISTER D.
Look we all know there is no such
thing as fate. Nothing is written
in stone so to speak.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
So how do you know when people are
going to die?

MISTER D.
It's complicated.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Try.

MISTER D.
Nothing is set in stone as I said.
But they are able to predict the
most possible outcomes with a
ninety nine point nine nine nine
per cent accuracy rate.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
They?

MISTER D.
They, them, him. The boss or bosses
depending on your religion.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
So God. You mean God.

MISTER D.
Yeah I suppose so.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

This room is just as minimalistic as the living room. The
only items of furniture are a big black, modern table and
six chairs.

Mister D. pulls out one of the chairs and sits down on it.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
But isn't God all knowing? Surely
he knows exactly when things will
happen.

MISTER D.
How could he?

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Well he is God.

MISTER D.
True. Look. God gave you free will
right?

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Yeah.

MISTER D.
This means you make your own
choices in life. God does not make
the choices, you do. If he knew
exactly what will happen that would
mean your life is a set path.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Okay.

MISTER D.
This is impossible if you have free
will. How would you be able to make
choices if your life is already
planned?

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
I think I understand.

Mister D. places a hand on the table then quickly takes it
off.

Using the sleeve of his robe he wipes the table.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
So what else do you know about this
lady?

MISTER D.
What else?

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Well she is punctual. But what else
do we know about her.

MISTER D.
Do you really think it is
appropriate to know? A bit morbid
under the circumstances don't you
think?

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Does that mean you don't know?

Mister D. sighs

MISTER D.
Well no. I, erm. Why would I want to know about people. It's not my job to...

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Are you worried that if you got to know them you wouldn't be able to do your job.

MISTER D.
Well actually. Yes. I mean no. I mean. Weather is nice for this time of year.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
So could you find out about her?

Mister D. shakes his head and takes a deep breath.

MISTER D.
Fine.

He pulls out a SMALL BLUE NOTEBOOK from the SLEEVE of his robe.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
I thought you had a black book.

MISTER D.
I do. This is my book of life.

He opens the book.

MISTER D.
Now lets see. Madame Lamb. No. Madame Lambe. No. Ha here it is. Madame Lambert.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
So?

MISTER D.
Well let me read it first. Says here she is a nurse at a local children's hospital. Does charity work and helps anybody who needs it. So quite the little saint really.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
So will it be a peaceful death?

MISTER D.
Depends on if you consider a bash
on the skull peaceful.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Accident?

MISTER D.
No actually. It'll be the guy who
sneaks in the house behind her.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
And you are going to let this
happen?

Mister D. slams the book down on the table

MISTER D.
Well it is not as if I have much
choice in the matter.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
But you said that nothing is fixed.
Does she really have to die?

MISTER D.
What would you have me do? Close
the door behind her so she can't
get attacked?

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Could you do that?

MISTER D.
Well yes.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Would you do that?

MISTER D.
No.
(pause)
Oh I don't know.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
Have you never considered it
before? Actually sparing someone.

MISTER D.

No one has ever asked me before. So no not really.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

Surely people ask you to spare them all the time.

MISTER D.

Yeah, you would think that wouldn't you. But no actually. They tend to ask whichever god they choose to believe. No one ever thinks of asking me.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

Well I am asking you. On behalf of the viewing public, will you spare this woman?

MISTER D.

I'll think about it.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

How long left.

MISTER D.

One minute.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

Sounds like Madame Lambert is going to have a bad day if you don't

MISTER D.

Bad day. Ha. Let me tell you what a bad day is. Did you have to take the souls out of all those dinosaurs that died when the asteroid hit?

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)

You reaped the dinosaurs?

MISTER D.

Of course. And it took me bloody hours to get them all out of the corpses. And what was worse, those stupid animals were so dense they didn't even realize they were dead. Bloody ghosts of dinosaurs running everywhere trying to eat each other.

Mister D. stands and walks toward the DOOR

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
 So what about Madame Lambert/ What
 will you do?

MISTER D.
 I'm not sure yet.

Mister D. opens the door and exits.

The door closes

Moments later there is the sound of a door OPENING

A THUMP followed by a THUD.

The door OPENS

Mister D. walks in.

He pulls out a CHAIR and SITS

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
 So?

MISTER D.
 (shocked)
 I couldn't do it. I really wanted
 to. But I couldn't.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
 You mean she is...?

Mister D. nods

MISTER D.
 Sorry. If I saved her why not
 others. I must keep the balance, I
 can't play favorites.

He holds up a hand.

MISTER D.
 Just turn off the camera. I don't
 want to talk anymore.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
 But why didn't...

Mister D. turns his head away.

INTERVIEWER (O.S.)
 Okay cut it

CUT TO BLACK