

BAREBOARDS 2019

A MUMMY'S BOY

Written by Jonathan Solomon

JOCELYN

Edmund: Yes, Mum told me to wear this. Cassie, I'd like to introduce you to my mum. Mum this is Cassie, my fiancée.

Jocelyn gives Cassie a once over look up and down and gives out a big sigh. Cassie was on her way to give Jocelyn a hug but is stopped by Jocelyn's reaction.

Edmund: Mum? Aren't you going to say something.

Jocelyn: Edmund, dear, I know you can do so much better.

Cassie: But we've only just met.

Jocelyn: I trust my intuition. I can read you like an open book. Edmund can do a lot better.

Cassie: So much better in what? Do you have some criteria you're measuring me against?

Jocelyn: Of course I do. Let's start. The first criteria. What type of school did you go to?

Cassie: Thirteen years in the public school system and proud of it. I attained my higher school certificate.

Jocelyn: Strike one. You didn't go to a private school. The second criteria. Do you have a property portfolio?

Cassie: No, I don't have a property portfolio. There's more to life than acquiring properties that I don't need. I'm a proud renter. I get to live in the areas of Sydney I like and not be hit by rapidly rising council and strata rates. It's also outside my control that it's hard to break into Sydney's property market.

Jocelyn: Strike two. I don't feel comfortable about my son associating with a renter. Such poor financial acumen. Throwing money away is not a good habit. The third criteria. Do you have a symmetrical face? Hmmm *(Steps forward to analyse Cassie's face.)*

Cassie: What does that have to do with anything?

Jocelyn: I would like my grandchildren to be pleasing to the eye. But I'm afraid your face is not quite as symmetrical to my liking. *(Steps back.)* Looks like it's three strikes and you're out.

Cassie: Edmund, your mother is being awfully rude to me.

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Edmund stays silent.

Jocelyn: Let's be clear about something. I'm the headline act. You're just the supporting act. By the way Edmund, is this your third fiancée?

Edmund: Yes, after Ashley and Daisy.

Cassie: Despite your concerns, I know for a fact Edmund loves me.

Jocelyn: Yes, but Edmund loves me more, isn't that right, Edmund darling?

Cassie: I want to be first.

Jocelyn: I want to be first too.

Cassie: Edmund, your mother is clearly not treating me nicely. Would you like to give her a word or three about how to be civil to other people?

Edmund: Sorry Cassie, I need to ask Mum for some advice. Mum, who do you think I should choose?

Jocelyn: Why, me of course. I didn't set up that trust fund for you so that I would have an ungrateful son.

Jocelyn then faces to talk to the audience.

Jocelyn: Yes, mission accomplished. I now get to have my son all to myself. All this competition is frankly quite exhausting. It was bad enough with the first fiancée Ashley. She was beautiful but I wanted to see my Edmund more often. And then there was the second fiancée, Daisy. She was very smart but made a mistake when she tried to get Edmund to leave Sydney for Perth. I just adore the attention I get from Edmund, oh the attention! His beautiful eyes, when they alight on me, is like the sun on my skin on a freezing day.

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EDMUND

It is night-time at Cassie's home. Edmund is wearing pyjamas and appears to be asleep on a sofa. He is feeling restless and the audience can tell he is not sleeping well.

Edmund: No, not again! Not this nightmare!

Edmund: Mummy! Mummy! Mummy! Save me!

Cassie enters in the dark.

Cassie: Edmund, What's all this noise? Do we have a burglar? Edmund, where are you?

Cassie: Edmund? Are you alright? What's happening?

Edmund is in shock.

Edmund: Oh Cassie. I had a really bad dream. If only I could still share the same bed with you.

Cassie: We've been through this before, Edmund. I can only tolerate being "accidentally" kicked out of the bed so many times. Your thrashing around, whilst in your sleep, is the reason I'm still visiting the physiotherapist.

Edmund: Well, I'm sorry that I have such sharp reflexes. At least you're here now. Oh Cassie, I don't want to go back to sleep!

Cassie: You and your nightmares! You've been having them a lot since you moved in with me. And you've only been here for several months ago. What was the dream about this time? Did you get stuck in a glass lift in a fifty-storey skyscraper?

Edmund: No, it was worse than that.

Cassie: Were you chased by zombies, vampires, and/or ghosts?

Edmund: No. More horrendous than that.

Cassie: Were you holding onto the edge of a sail at the Sydney Opera House? Just clinging on, first with both arms then holding on with just one, before descending into frightening free fall?

Edmund: Stop, stop stop! Cassie, you're more making me even more nervous. No it was even more unbearable.

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Cassie: Is it the one about escaping the tsunami?

Edmund: No, it was even scarier.

Cassie: Oh, I know. I think I've got it. All your teeth and hair started falling out.

Edmund: That's already started. No. It was about the brides.

Cassie: The brides? They made a return, did they? What did they do to you this time?

Edmund: They were chasing me around and muttering things to me. I didn't understand what they were saying.

Edmund: No. Cassie, please don't leave me here all by myself. All alone. *(Pause.)* You know what, I'll call mum.

Cassie: At 3.44 in the morning?

Edmund: Yes, Mum won't mind. She's always been there for me, regardless of what time zone she's in.

Cassie: But Edmund, you're my fiancée. Let's not get your mother involved. We're both adults here and can solve whatever problems life throws at us. How about we play a game? The game is you can't mention your mum at all. I'll start the conversation.

Edmund: As long as I don't fall asleep, I'll play anything.

Cassie: Ok, let's get started. Are you excited about our upcoming wedding?

Edmund: Oh yes. I'm getting on in age and don't want to be a bachelor for the rest of my life. Mum wouldn't approve.

Cassie: Edmund, you failed! You weren't supposed to mention your mum at all.

Edmund: Sorry, let's try again. Yes, I'm excited about the wedding. I'm very happy to have met you.

Cassie: Very good. And the wedding reception will be really enjoyable, what with all the dancing and gourmet food. I also can't wait to go to the honeymoon.

Edmund: Yes, I'm also looking forward to the honeymoon. Although Mum questioned why we were going to New Caledonia and not to France instead.

Cassie: Edmund, you did it again! And we're on a budget by the way, which is why we're not going to France.

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Edmund: But I could maybe ask mum for financial assistance.

Cassie: Can't we get through a conversation without talking about your mother?

Edmund: But I love my mum.

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CASSIE

The scene is outside the front of Jocelyn's mansion in Bellevue Hills, on a large lawn. Cassie is nervous about meeting Jocelyn for the first time. Cassie is dressed up like she is attending a cocktail party. She is hoping to impress Jocelyn. She is talking to herself, in a bid to muster up her courage.

Cassie: Yes! We've finally met each other. And you're so lovely in person. It's so, so wonderful to meet you. *(Pause.)* No, that sounds a bit too over the top. I'll try again. Jocelyn, I've heard so much about you, especially about your amazing charity work. You've given away so much money to medical research and the performing arts. *(Pause.)* No I think I'm sounding a little too pretentious. I know. How about I just don't go to this birthday function? Yes, that's a great idea. Let's do that.

Cassie is about to leave but the front door opens. Jocelyn and Edmund appears.

Edmund: So here's the big moment. *(sees Cassie leaving.)* Hey, Cassie where are you going?

Cassie spins around.

Cassie: Hello Edmund. *(Gives Edmund a kiss and a hug).* Nowhere. I was just stretching my legs. You're wearing a very bright shirt.

Edmund: Yes, Mum told me to wear this. Cassie, I'd like to introduce you to my mum. Mum this is Cassie, my fiancée.

Edmund: Mum? Aren't you going to say something.

Jocelyn: Edmund, dear, I know you can do so much better.

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Edmund stays silent.

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Jocelyn: Yes, but Edmund loves me more, isn't that right, Edmund darling?

Cassie: I want to be first.

Jocelyn: I want to be first too.

Cassie: Edmund, your mother is clearly not treating me nicely. Would you like to give her a word or three about how to be civil to other people? (*Edmund just stands there.*)

Cassie: You're just going to let this bad behaviour continue? (*Edmund looks at his shoes.*)

Cassie: Edmund, who's going to be your priority. We can't both be your number ones. You're going to have to choose.

Edmund: You both know I hate making decisions.

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Cassie tosses her hands up in the air.

Cassie: Well, happy birthday, Jocelyn. I concede defeat. You've won. Clearly I don't want to ruin your birthday so I'll just stay out of your sight. *(Cassie turns to Edmund, when she sees him being apologetic.)* It's ok, Edmund. I can make my own way back to the train station. Yes, all by myself. Did you hear that, Edmund? All by myself! We're going to have a very long conversation when you get back.

Jocelyn: Oh and Cassie, before you go, by the way, bitterness is not such a great look on you.

Cassie: *(Says to herself quietly as she leaves the stage.)* Don't engage, don't engage, don't engage.

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DAISY

Scene 4

Cassie, Ashley and Daisy (all former fiancées of Edmund) are seated on a picnic blanket at a beach. Cassie is pouring champagne into glasses.

Ashley: I've never been invited to a pity party before.

Cassie: It's more like a convention on the rights of future daughters-in-law.

Daisy: I've been to neither. Usually, I try to let things go and move on with my life. The key word here is "try". Having said that, I can't explain why I'm actually here.

Cassie: Because that Jocelyn person is a monster and you need to vent.

Ashley: So you've contacted us to exact revenge?

Daisy: Oh! I so don't do revenge. I don't condone anything involving negative energy. *(Pause.)* But what did you have in mind Cassie?

Cassie: We've got to somehow get Edmund to wake up. To the realisation that he's a grown man and needs to make his own decisions.

Ashley: I totally agree. He needs to cut the strings, cut the crap and deal with life's problems like everybody else. But, I'm not sure that will ever be achieved.

Daisy: Yes, I'm with Ashley. In a way, he's still like a child.

Ashley: So Cassie, how are you coping with the break-up?

Cassie: It's still painful to think about. I have all these "what-ifs" floating about in my head. Did me and Edmund not have enough relationship glue?

Daisy: That's a sticking point. Having Jocelyn involved just turns everything into a sticky situation.

Ashley: Well, I got unstuck with Edmund and totally happy to keep it that way. Jocelyn and I just do not stick. There is not enough gaffer tape in the world to fix up my relationship with Edmund.

Cassie: Speaking of which, Ashley, why did you break up with Edmund?

Ashley: Look, don't get me wrong. I thrived in my relationship with Edmund. Everything was great. Great except for his mother. Then I had a massive fight with Edmund in Darling Harbour. Yes, that's right, just laid it all out in public.

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We had an audience of easily a hundred people. They all thought we were theatre actors busking. Edmund and I were arguing about the way Jocelyn treated me and Edmund was coming up with all these excuses. Then I dumped him, in front of all those people.

Cassie: And what about you Daisy?

Daisy: Oh it was the weekly dinners with Edmund's mother that did it for me. We often ate at these very formal and expensive restaurants. I felt like I was being watched, analysed and judged relentlessly. I couldn't relax and then I couldn't breathe and that led me to having a panic attack at Le Chateaux Charbon. I had two ex-prime ministers, three Hollywood actresses and several CEOs all looking at me as I hyperventilated by the fish tank. That same evening I told Edmund I couldn't take it anymore and broke up with him then and there.

Cassie: That sounds awful.

Daisy: And there was that time Jocelyn called me a dimwit gold-digger. I have a bachelor's degree, three graduate diplomas, two master's, and a Ph.D. I'm not a dimwit.

Ashley: So you are a gold-digger?

Daisy: Do you know how expensive higher education is? Oh and the unannounced visits. (*starts crying*) the unannounced and constant visits. She criticised my housekeeping.

Ashley: Well believe me, Daisy and Cassie, we dodged a bullet.

Daisy: But I do miss kissing him. I adored kissing him.

Ashley: What? You thought you could turn him into a prince?

Daisy: Well, you never know.

Ashley: Well for me he stayed a lizard

Cassie: I thought he was more of a crocodile.

Daisy: I think you're both being way too harsh. He's definitely more the eel variety. He can get slippery.

Ashley: Well I know what he most definitely is. He's a mummy's boy.

Daisy: Oh! Absolutely. It's mum, mum, mum all the way.

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Ashley starts wailing out 'mummy'. Daisy joins in and soon all three of them are wailing 'mummy' to comic effect.

Cassie: Sounds like we are all in unanimous agreement!

Ashley, Daisy and Cassie clink their glasses.

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