

A LESSON IN REVENGE

by Richard A. Booth

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STORY OF THE PLAY

High school students Jolene, Amber, and Mary are in a graveyard at midnight as part of their senior dare. When Jolene offers booze to the other two, they start discussing the car accident a year ago which killed their friend, Jennifer.

Jolene was with Jennifer who was supposedly drinking and driving. But when Jennifer's ghost appears we learn the truth ... that it was really Jolene who was at fault. And the facial injuries Jennifer suffered now appear on Jolene. The supernatural ending shows the ultimate effects not only of drinking and driving but prejudice, too.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 w)

JOLENE: Toughest of the three girls.

AMBER: Most upset over the dare and the death.

MARY: Suspects Jolene caused the accident.

JENNIFER: Indian ghost, wears white dress.

SETTING: Present day, spring time. A graveyard, near midnight.

PROPS: Electric lantern. Paper bag from local quick stop market containing a large, plastic-lidded cup.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

The scars are accomplished by a simple staging technique. When Jolene moves upstage to pout, she places her face against a tree upstage left in such a manner as to allow a makeup person to apply scars with pencils and brushes. Also, a large latex scar prepared ahead of time can be fixed to her cheek with spirit gum. A black tormentor is pulled to the tree upstage to allow the makeup person to get into place. It need not be a tree. A building edge or perhaps a stone arch as found in some cemeteries would serve just as well. Care should be taken to not let the hands of the makeup person be seen from any sight line in the audience. Scars must be large with good contrast in order to be seen. Another (*optional*) effect is some fog around Jennifer, achieved by using dry ice fog or a good special effects light.

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(AT RISE: LIGHTS up half. JOLENE, AMBER, and MARY enter from SR with an electric lantern. The stage LIGHTS come up as they enter. Night SOUNDS are heard.)

JOLENE: Well, here it is, kids. This is as good as any. Our home away from home for the whole evening. *(Carries small sack from a local quick stop market.)*

AMBER: *(Apprehensive.)* I don't like this very much, Jolene.

JOLENE: You don't like anything. For sure.

MARY: Mellow out, Amber. There's nothing in a graveyard at night, that's not here in the light of day. *(Moves LIGHT around.)*

JOLENE: Hey, we all agreed this was our pick for senior dare night.

MARY: Right. Spend one night in a real graveyard of your choice.

AMBER: I know that, Mary. Why did we pick this one?

MARY: No special reason.

JOLENE: What's the diff? It's a graveyard, isn't it?

MARY: It seems to be.

AMBER: I feel like someone is watching us.

MARY: Come on, Amber. No one here can see anymore.

JOLENE: Do you know how many people are dead in this cemetery?

AMBER: *(Sits on the slope.)* No. How many?

JOLENE: All of them.

AMBER: Very funny.

MARY: At least it's better than that creepy old abandoned house. I hate old dirty houses. Spiders, dust, cobwebs. It's grody.

AMBER: I'm not so sure. At least those girls are warm. *(Hugs HERSELF.)*

JOLENE: I'm not a bit cold. I think it's totally neat to the max. *(Sits by AMBER and takes the cup from the sack. Takes a sip and hands it to Amber.)* Here, take a swig of this. It'll warm you right up. For sure.

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AMBER: *(Takes the cup, lifts it to HER lips, then stops)*

This has whiskey or something in it.

JOLENE: Sure does, sweetie. Good ol' J.D.

AMBER: J.D.?

MARY: *(Sitting.)* It's Jack Daniels. Like everybody drinks Jack Daniels in a Big Gulp.

AMBER: *(Sharp.)* Not everybody. I don't drink booze in a Big Gulp.

JOLENE: Oh, don't lay that goody-goody act on me, man. Who did I see takin' some merry-jay-wanna in the girls' john between classes last week?

AMBER: It wasn't my joint, it was Mary's.

JOLENE: And she just forced it on you, right?

MARY: Hey, come on, grass is not as bad as alcohol. It's not habit forming, doesn't eat up your liver and has no hangover.

JOLENE: Oh, right. And it's at least two hundred bucks if you get busted. That's a lot of money for a little ciggy.

MARY: What's the tab for drunk driving?

JOLENE: What?

MARY: Never mind.

JOLENE: No, you said it, now what did you mean?

MARY: Drop it, Jolene.

JOLENE: You think the accident was my fault, don't you?

MARY: I didn't say anything.

AMBER: What's the difference whose fault it was? Jennifer is still just as dead. Nothing can bring her back.

JOLENE: *(Stands, angry.)* I don't believe this! Can't we just spend one night together without Jennifer? She's been dead for over a year. Let her die.

MARY: I still miss her.

AMBER: So do I. *(Looks down at the name plate near where SHE is sitting.)* She was so full of life - OH CHRIST! LOOK!

MARY: *(Looks.)* I can't believe it! It's Jennifer's grave!

JOLENE: Oh hell! This whole place and we had to stop here. By her!

AMBER: You didn't even go to her funeral. How would you know where she was buried! Or care.

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JOLENE: Watch it, Amber.

AMBER: You could have at least gone to her funeral.

MARY: Yeah. Why didn't you Jolene?

JOLENE: I didn't want to. Just drop it.

MARY: What are you hiding?

JOLENE: Nothing. Don't put your guilt trip on me.

MARY: I always liked her. We got along fine. But you were supposed to be her big friend. She looked up to you.

JOLENE: She liked my style.

MARY: And you liked having her around to hit on.

AMBER: (*Moves SR.*) I loved her. She was so pretty. Dark brown hair, big brown eyes. Everyone liked Jennifer.

JOLENE: (*Sharp.*) She was an Indian!

MARY: (*Realizing.*) An Indian? My God, you didn't like her!

AMBER: What a two-face.

JOLENE: I don't want to discuss it.

AMBER: Why not? Maybe it's time we got this out in the open. You didn't like Jennifer because she was an Indian, and was so pretty. All the boys liked her. You were jealous!

JOLENE: Jealous? Of what? What did she have?

AMBER: She had dignity, and good looks. She was in your way. The boys liked her better than you.

JOLENE: She was a damn flirt!

MARY: (*Loud.*) And for that she's dead, smashed through your windshield.

JOLENE: (*Flaring.*) You're not going to give it up, are you? OK, so let's talk about it. Go ahead, get it off your chest, Amber. What are you getting at?

AMBER: I'm not sure. I only know that Jennifer didn't drink that much.

JOLENE: AND -

MARY: I've always thought it was strange that she was so drunk and driving. Why was she driving your car?

JOLENE: Because I was all burnt out. I let her drive my car a lot. She liked to drive. You're just all torqued out of shape because you don't have a car. Can't get a date without a car.

AMBER: (*Stands.*) That's a lie!

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JOLENE: Oh really? Is that why you had to borrow Rhonda's car, so you could go out with Erick Johnson on Sadie's Night?

AMBER: *(Moves up to HER, angry.)* What's Erick got to do with anything?

JOLENE: Come off it, Amber, we all know you've got hot panties for Erick Johnson. You can't stand still when he saunters down the hall.

AMBER: YOU LIE!

JOLENE: Oh? That's not what Erick told me.

AMBER: *(Controlled anger.)* Just ... what did Erick tell you?

JOLENE: You know very well, Miss-One-Night-Stand! It's all over school. It must have been really steamy in the back seat that night. How many times did you make it?

AMBER: *(Losing all control.)* YOU WITCH!

(SHE jumps on JOLENE, and they fight in front of MARY who is still sitting, holding the lantern. They then tumble on Mary, and the LIGHT goes out. Stage LIGHTS go out. JENNIFER enters in the black and sits by her grave marker.)

MARY: The light! You knocked out the light! Now stop it!
(THEY stop fighting.)

JOLENE: I'm sick of her holy attitude!

AMBER: At least I'm not a drunk!

JOLENE: It's better than being a pot head!

MARY: Hey, I found the light.

(MARY switches it on and the stage is the same, except now JENNIFER is seated by her grave. She wears a long white dress, Indian jewelry and braids. Her face is disfigured with large scars. She is smiling. Fog is swirling around her and over her grave.)

AMBER: *(HER back to JENNIFER.)* Let's go home, I don't like this anymore. *(Turns and sees JENNIFER, gasps.)*

MARY: *(Turns.)* Oh my God!

JOLENE: JENNIFER!

JENNIFER: Hi gang. Yes it's me, your Jen.

End of Freeview

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