

How Ya Dyin'?

Episode One: Happy Endings

Script by Paul DiSalvo

BIFF:

Welcome back to W.X.D.T., your all inclusive destination for your celebrity fatality needs.

As always, I'm your host, Biff Bistro.

Running back Oscar Bronsley was found dead in an "Ian's Famous Ice-cream" packaging plant. He was found alongside thirty others whose families would prefer them to remain anonymous. The cause of death in all of these individuals was originally stated to be various combinations of malnourishment and heart attacks, as they had each been hiding inside the facility for several days, indulging in the various products found within.

Bronsley's death came as a shock to many of his loved ones who claimed that Bronsley's death was not due for thirty or so years. More intriguingly, Bronsley was the only individual in this facility whose date did not match up accordingly. It was not until the autopsy reports that traces of silicon were found grafted in his chest, evidence of a fraudulent, surgically altered date.

OOF, that's what we call a big mood, buddy. Sorry, but you're just like everyone else.

SFX:

(Click of radio being turned off)

SFX:

Rain pours down on trees and grass. Thunder crashes. From the distance running can be heard. It get's closer. As it reaches the listener, the perspective stays with the running. The running individual is panting and out of breath.

BUSINESSMAN:

(Horrorified)
Oh- oh god.

SFX:

Another pair of footsteps can be heard coming towards the first pair, at a faster and more consistent rate.

BUSINESSMAN:

P-please! Just- just leave me alone!

SFX:

The other pair of feet are upon the man now. A grunt can be heard, as one body collides with the other (via a tackle) and the two men fall to the ground.

JAMES:

(Stern)
Did you really think you could get away?

BUSINESSMAN:

(horrorified)
N- no- Please! Just give me a little more time!

JAMES:

Sorry to say, but we both know that time is something you don't have a whole lot of left.

BUSINESSMAN:

(horrified)

I- I don't want it to end. P- please!
Th- this- this- *sniffle*

BUSINESSMAN:

(jovial)

This has just been amazing!

SFX:

The two men hoist themselves off of the ground.

JAMES:

I'm happy to hear that you enjoyed yourself. All part of the job.

SFX:

One man is rifling through his wallet.

BUSINESSMAN:

You guys are old fashioned. Cash only, right?

SFX:

Sound of a wad of cash being handed from the BUSINESSMAN to JAMES. James thumbs through the stack of bills. There is a pause as the rainfall begins to lighten.

JAMES:

You're short.

BUSINESSMAN:

What? That should be eight hundred exact. The website said that it was eight hundred.

JAMES:

Dismemberments and decapitations are eight hundred. You ordered "The Most Dangerous Game Special." That's one and a half grand.

BUSINESSMAN:

But that's all I have with me! You're already here, can't you just finish up out of courtesy?

JAMES:

What you paid covered the hunt. Not your death. You don't pay, you don't get my services. Which is really quite a pity. What else would you get without me here? Cardiac arrest? Severe hypothermia? Not fun ways to go.

SFX:

One pair of footsteps begins to walk away. They are soon followed by the other pair.

BUSINESSMAN:

Please! Mr. Hunt! Just wait a second.

SFX:

The sound of paper being pulled out, unfolded, and trading hands.

BUSINESSMAN:

This is my wife's address. She'll pay you the rest. I swear.

JAMES:

Sighs Listen, I really prefer my money up front...

BUSINESSMAN:

Sniffle

JAMES:

...But I suppose I can make an exception. Just this once.

BUSINESSMAN:

Th- thank you so much! This means so much I can't even put into words how-

SFX:

James murders the man. He sighs and begins to walk through the grass. His footsteps transition to walking on pavement. There is the sound of a car door opening. He throws his belongings (a bag) in the car, and the jingle lightly. He closes the door, and unfolds the piece of paper.

JAMES:

Stella Clement. 205 Juniper Lane... great.

SFX:

James attempts to turn on the car. The engine sounds poor, and it has a few failed starts. James punches the dashboard and the car starts running. James clicks the radio dial as he begins to drive. The engine of the car hums as the radio ad plays, the wheels can occasionally be heard peeling as he takes turns.

AD NARRATOR:

Howdy there, little Tommy. Why are you looking so glum?

LITTLE TOMMY:

Well gosh darn it, misses. My date of expiration is coming up soon, and I just can't figure out a fun way to escape this mortal coil.

AD NARRATOR:

Why, that's just a shame there, Tommy.

LITTLE TOMMY:

If only if there was some kind of wonderful service that could help solve this dilemma cheaply and with great customer service.

AD NARRATOR:

Well now there is, Tommy! Introducing *Happy Endings!*

SFX:

Cheesy sound of kazoos, streamers, and cheering, "Yay!"

AD NARRATOR:

With *Happy Endings*, your life will never have an unsatisfying ending again! Our death dealing specialists will do everything in their power to make sure your last moments will be ones you'll treasure forever! Always wanted to be mercilessly hunted down through a steel mill? Or maybe forcefully thrown from atop your favorite skyscraper? *Happy Endings* can make that happen for you! So don't delay! Call now, and use the promo code "Robespierre" to get ten percent off your next decapitation!

SFX:

The radio is clicked off and the car engine stops as well. The door swings open, and JAMES steps out onto asphalt.

JAMES:

205 Juniper Lane... looks like the right place.

SFX:

James walks up the steps to the home. He knocks on the door a couple times.

STELLA:

(Muffled from other side of the door)
Coming!

SFX:

Stella can be heard walking towards the door from the other side of the house. The door swings open.

STELLA:

Hello there. Can I help you?

JAMES:

Uh... I don't really know how to put this. Mrs. Clement, we need to talk. It's about your husband.

STELLA:

Oh god, is he alright? Please- come inside.

SFX:

Static cuts the scene. James and Stella sit inside the Clement residence. A clock can be heard ticking loudly in the background.

STELLA:

(Sadly)

I knew this was coming. How could I not. It was right there on his neck. Clear as day. How could I not know?

SFX:

JAMES sips his water.

STELLA:

It's just... he always told me he'd always wanted his final moments to be us. The two of us. Together.

SFX:

JAMES places his glass on the table. He clears his voice as if he's about to speak, but Stella starts again.

STELLA:

I know that he's dead now. You don't have to tell me that. I just need to know one thing: What happened to my husband?

JAMES:

So, uh. Yeah. About that. I uh... I don't really know how to put this gently, because I usually don't need to talk with "the associated" like this, so I'll just be straight and to the point. I killed him.

SFX:

There is a long pause. All that can be heard is the ticking of the grandfather clock.

STELLA:

Why? Why did you take my husband away from me?

JAMES:

That's uh... that's actually a nice segue to why exactly I'm here.

PAUSE

JAMES:

Your husband. He paid me.

PAUSE

STELLA:

...What?

JAMES:

Well to be more specific, I have this thing. At my work, I mean. It's called "The Most Dangerous Game Special." Your husband ordered it. But it costs a grand and a half and your husband only gave me eight hundred.

PAUSE

JAMES:

He seemed like a real upstanding dude. I'm not just saying that. And I was already half done, we were there, and to top it all off he'd say you'd pay the remainder of his bill.

PAUSE

JAMES:

(Becoming painfully aware of the awkwardness and tension)
I know this is probably coming off as a big surprised. This guy coming into your house and telling you he killed your husband? Wild, right?

PAUSE

JAMES:

clears throat Well, uh, so if you could cover what your husband didn't pay, I'd really appreciate it. He said that you would.

PAUSE

STELLA:

(Slow, calm but seething)
So let me know if I have this correct. You took my husband's life. You deny my son the ability to say goodbye to his daddy. You don't even bring me his body so we can have a proper funeral. And you want *me* to pay *you*?

PAUSE

JAMES:

Look, I don't one of those fancy dates like you, so uh... it's kind of hard to relate. But uh... Wow. When you put it like that, it does sound rather unsavory, doesn't it?

SFX:

There is another pause. Halfway through the pause, the grandfather clock stops abruptly, and wind can now be heard. There is the sound of a door slamming.

STELLA:

(Muffled yelling from other side of the door)
Don't you dare to ever come back here, or I'll do things to you that you can't even imagine!

JAMES:

Your husband owes me seven hundred bucks! Should've let the fucker get mauled by a bear or something.

SFX:

James walks briskly back to his car and slams the door shut. He attempts to start up the car about three times before angrily punching it, causing it to both start, and loudly blare the horn.

NARRATOR:

Many people of this world think that the days have grown simple.

That the dates in our flesh are marks of clarity.

Without one to call his own, James Hunt found it hard to empathize.

BIFF:

The magma on his face isn't actually what did him in. He was so shocked that his face was melting, that he actually went into cardiac arrest and-

SFX:

Static. The radio dial clicks again.

EXPICO HOST:

No one had made it out of the convention center as it collapsed.

The families of the departed could not be more blessed than they have been with such an outcome.

Today's daily Expico convention came in with moderate numbers with the attending 2,452 each meeting their ends in very affordable fashion.

If you're interested in receiving a discount end, there are great deals across the nation at any of our pop-up locations. Rates are twenty dollars, with children getting in for ten. Pay in advance or bring cash or check! As always, our universal start times are 11:00 AM Eastern Standard, and 5:00 PM Eastern standard time-

SFX:

The radio clicks, and static is heard once again briefly before the radio is turned off.

NARRATOR:

August 2nd, 2054.

JAMES:

Ugh. Can't stand those guys.

SFX:

Sound of the car door opening, James stepping out, and the car door closing.

Cut to various sounds of phones ringing intermittently, dull conversations happening in the background, papers being filed, other office sounds, etc. James can be heard walking through the office.

MARTY:

James? Hey! James!

SFX:

Footsteps quickly approach the listener and by extension, James.

JAMES:

Oh. Hey Marty.

MARTY:

How was your first order? Heard you got to do a "most dangerous game special." Not bad, not bad. Oops, dude, you gotta little leftover client on your shirt there, dude. I got you bro-

SFX:

Marty rubs James's shirt

MARTY:

Just... let me get that for you... perfect!

JAMES:

Uh... thanks. Don't you have clean up crew duty to attend to?

MARTY:

Ha! Good one, dude! Haven't been doing that for like, two weeks. My morning was pretty "cash money" as the kids like to say, in case you were wondering. There was this group of frat dudes who ordered "The Battle of Waterloo," so I got to dust off the old bayonets and give the kids a history lesson. You know. Historical accuracy matters.

JAMES:

(dryly)

That's just fantastic, Marty. -Hey, you wouldn't happen to know where Vince is, would you you?

MARTY:

I think he should be in his office. Why? Asking for "more interesting work" again?

JAMES:

Shut up, Marty. I just need to talk to him about this job.

SFX:

Footsteps begin as James begins to walk away from Marty.

MARTY:

Hey! Before you go- can I get your opinion on something? I gotta go do this job, right? And this chick ordered from our discount menu and wanted the "Slasher Experience." But like, knives are kinda gross and messy, dude. Do you think I could get away with using a hammer or bat or something?

SFX:

James sighs and walks away. Marty can be heard yelling to James from a distance.

MARTY:

Thanks dude! I'll take that as a yes!

SFX:

James walks through the office, overhearing various conversations happening across the large sea of cubicles.

COWORKER 1:

Why would it cost extra? Ma'am, I don't know how to tell you this, but once we electrocute you, anything else would be pretty redundant.

COWORKER 2:

Oh, I'm sorry, we actually can't do any of our services off shore, but we can try to have a shark transferred to a smaller, freshwater location. Just give me a moment while I get your estimate.

COWORKER 3:

If you and your husband looking for something more budget friendly, we're actually having a buy one get one free on this thing we call "The Eviscerator."

SFX:

A coworker can be heard revving a chainsaw.

COWORKER 4:

Hey James.

SFX:

Sound of chainsaw starting to rev can be heard in the back ground. James continues to walk for a moment before stopping. He knocks on a door. There is a brief pause. There is the sound of a door opening.

JAMES:

Hello sir. I was wondering if I could speak to you regarding my recent-

VINCE:

James, my boy! Come in! Come in! Have a seat.

JAMES:

Thank you, sir.

SFX:

James enters the room, and sits in a leather chair. Vince sits in a chair as well.

VINCE:

How've things been my boy? Did you hear those clowns over at Expico are offering twenty dollar deals for mass group expirations? They think they can put us out of business with that garbage. Talk about a lack of taste. I mean, have some artistry in your work.

JAMES:

I couldn't agree more, sir.

VINCE:

Good, good. Now what was it you wanted, James?

JAMES:

Yes, well... as you may understand, this morning I was to cary out a client's expiration.

VINCE:

Ah, yes! A most dangerous game special, was it?

JAMES:

Indeed. Though there were some... complications.

VINCE:

(Agitated)

This wasn't another one of those pranks again, was it? With those kids who kept ordering decapitations despite their expirations not being years away?

That's just disrespectful to the business. It's like, I saw on the news the other day, I saw this football player. Just got signed, handsome kid, but then he just drops dead in an ice-cream factory. Turns out the kid had surgery on his skin. You know, where his date was. Did it so he'd be more likely to be picked up by his team. Kid had no respect for anyone around him, screwing over everyone else because he couldn't accept the way of things. Know what I mean, James?

JAMES:

Indeed, sir.

VINCE:

Sorry James, I didn't mean to get us off track. What is it that brings you in today?

JAMES:

The client who purchased the "Most Dangerous Game Special." He didn't pay in full.

SFX:

There is a long pause.

VINCE:

Sigh Please elaborate.

JAMES:

The client had told me he had the payment in full, so I had performed the chase. When I went to finish the contract, he was short. He gave me the information of someone who would pay his bill. His wife. so I finished... but uh... once I spoke to his wife, she didn't really... uh... she didn't pay the remainder of his bill.

VINCE:

...And you just took that?

JAMES:

Yes, sir.

SFX:

There is another long pause. Vince taps his fingers slowly on his desk. He stands up and begins to slowly pace around the room

VINCE:

James... When you work in a great company such as ours, you need to act with dignity and professionalism. And professionals have standards. Do you get what I'm saying, James?

JAMES:

Yes I do, sir.

VINCE:

I'm happy you do, James. Would you also agree that unless it is specifically requested, it is not professional for an employee of this great company to have sexual relations with a client while on the job?

JAMES:

I would agree, sir.

VINCE:

Then why did you let them fuck you,
James?

SFX:

There is a long pause. Cut outside.
James sits in his car, his phone ring-
ing.

JAMES:

Oh, come on. Pick up pick up pick up.

STELLA:

(On phone)
Hello?

JAMES:

Uh... Hi. This is James Hunt from "Happy
Endings," calling.

SFX:

Stella hangs up.

JAMES:

Hello...? Shit.

SFX:

He tries calling again. She doesn't
pick up. He tries calling a third time.
She picks up.

STELLA:

What?! What do you want, Mr. Hunt?!

JAMES:

Uh... listen. I'm really sorry about this
position I'm putting you in. It's just
as bad as it is for me as it is for
you.

Pause

Uh... you still there?

STELLA:

(Seething)

Yes. I am still here.

JAMES:

Oh, sweet. So uh- yeah. I'm really sorry. But I really need that money. I'm pretty sure my livelihood is at stake. What if I did something for you in return? I can babysit your kid or something. Or do your laundry. Please. I'm desperate here.

pause

STELLA:

Meet me at my house in an hour. I have something for you to do.

SFX:

Static. James knocks on the door. Stella opens it.

JAMES:

Hello, Ma'am. I personally must say how much I-

STELLA:

Follow me.

SFX:

They two walk up the stairs of the building.

JAMES:

Am I cleaning out the attic or something.

SFX:

Thy exit to the balcony.

JAMES:

Oh, nice view you guys have up here.

STELLA:

Indeed. My husband always liked it too. He said that the view from our balcony would be the perfect view with which to end his life.

pause

Jump over the railing, and I'll give you your money.

JAMES:

What?! Are you crazy?!

STELLA:

You said it yourself. You don't have a date. Might as well make this an interesting exchange for my husband's life.

JAMES:

Falling 48 feet gives you a 50% chance of falling, and we're more like 60!

STELLA:

I guess you really don't want the money after all. Pity.

pause

JAMES:

Let me see the money.

SFX:

Stella hands over the wad of bills.

STELLA:

I believe it should all be accounted for.

JAMES:

Six hundred, seven hundred- eight hundred?

STELLA:

A little tip as incentive.

JAMES:

Inhales.

STELLA:

Oh, before you jump, I we just need to take a safety precaution.

SFX:

She takes out a brand and brands him with it.

JAMES:

AH! What the hell was that?! Jesus it burns! Is that-

STELLA:

Today's date. In case you aren't too lucky.

Pause

JAMES:

This isn't worth seven hundred dollars.

He jumps off the balcony.

NARRATOR:

9,566.

That is the number of lives James Hunt had taken across his twenty year career. Not a single life taken out of malice. Every execution deliberately requested from the active party.

James had not planned on dying today, as all of his customers had been accustomed. But what was one more log on the fire?

And as long as he survived, this would not qualify as offering the services of "Happy Endings" for free.

SFX:

James lands, snapping his legs.

JARED

-We both know that time is something you don't have left.

-You ordered the most dangerous game special. *That's* fifteen-hundred.

-So far you've covered the hunt. Not your death.

-which *is* really quite a pity.

-What would you get without me here,
huh? Cardiac arrest? Severe hypother-
mia? Not fun ways to go.

-Jesus Christ!

-Falling 48 feet only gives you a fifty
percent chance of survival, and we're
well over 60 feet up here!

DEE

What happened to my husband?

And you want *me* to pay *you*?