

The Final Goodbye

by Andrea Louise Watson

A woman in her 30's sits and addresses an Urn

Right time. Time for the absolute final goodbye! I have been putting it off, because let's face it; not talking to you every day is just stupid. I can't imagine what my life will be now? How can I let you go? It's not like we are family, it's not like I even knew you that long. You've been a good confidant, even though you always insist on the last word

I got a hug off somebody today! A complete stranger, in the railway station, they just reached out - and before you ask, it wasn't a blind man, or a mad man and it wasn't out of some displaced sympathy.

...He didn't know that I was on the way to the crematorium, he was a charity worker. I donated £7 a month to Christian aid and I told him that he was doing an amazing job and...He just grabbed me and it felt so good, I just clung on as though I would fall if I let go. He smelt a damn sight better than you though, he smelt of incense and deodorant rather than piss and germoline. *(Anger of grief surfacing, although not said thought 'you selfish bastard why did you leave me, after everything I did for you')*

What can I say to you today? Do I express my guilt? Say that I didn't do enough for you, that I feel like I let you down even though I gave you more than any nurse should. Not because there was any attraction, oh God no!! That would be sick and you would love that wouldn't you, you dirty old bugger.

The first Christmas that we spent together was when we really bonded. You were very ill and had come home to die. You managed to watch the Queens speech and laughed because the Queen Mum had died. That night I seriously thought it would be your last. I can remember really connecting to you for the first time as you lay in my arms begging for Guinness. I thought, why not? Last wish. He'll be dead in the morning. I held you up right and you managed to drink two cans. Then we fell asleep as I waited for the end. It was a shock to the system to see you sitting up smiling in the morning. Three more years of your shit I had to put up with. You need laugh. Actually, the only time I saw you laugh was when I read out the obituaries .

I spent more time with you than I did with my own partner, speaks volumes doesn't it. I told him that you insisted on me being here all the time, he said I was doing too much, but in reality I preferred being here with you. We are, were, cut from the

same cloth and I know you felt the same thing. I know that underneath all the sickness we just clicked I needed you more than you needed me, and I loved you. I saw who you really were beyond that fake belligerent act. You were frightened, a frightened little boy who was scared that no-one cared, that you meant nothing.

They all turned up today as you said they would. Trevor and the kids, Susie. The whole schbang. Couldn't make it to the funeral but made it to the reading of the will, like vultures waiting to pick at the bones. I was so proud of you; I wish you could have seen their faces when the lawyer read "I, Edward David Williams being of sound body and mind have spent the bloody lot".

I have some news for you. You once said to me that you saw something special in me. That if I only knew what was inside that I wouldn't stay around to nurse an old fart, that I'd stretch my wings and leave the nest. Well, now you're gone, I've done it. I've quit! I'm taking my savings and I'm going to live, I'm going to travel. I leave tomorrow on my own, yes that's right, I'm leaving him. I know that economically it's not the best, but that's the thing it is the BEST time, had thought of taking you with me, finding some remote exotic outpost and setting you free, but you're a British boy and the empire doesn't extend as far as it once did you would hate foreigners so I have to leave you behind...I have to let you go.

I am going to place you under the most beautiful tree in the place where we were always going to go and when I come home, that's where I'll find you. And if by some miracle I have a family someday I'll bring them to meet you and we will all have a picnic under the branches, read the obituaries, laugh and remember the cantankerous old bugger that showed a young thing like me how to live

Edward...Teddy, I'll never forget you!..!

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