

SEPARATING THE DUST

WRITTEN BY DARREN BREALEY

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SEPARATING THE DUST

After the funeral service for Mrs Virginia Cromwell, their sons Michael and Chad discuss their mother's Final Will and Testament. The mourners have left, their kind thoughts exchanged. The sandwiches and tea have been served. It's no secret to the boys their late mother's Final Will and Testament has been divided equally. Chad makes his announcement to contest the Will for his lions share; Michael defends his ground. Chad's wife, Raelene makes her true feelings known about Michael to both of them, which only aggravates the underflow of smouldering years of unspoken hatred between the three of them. The little church on the hill where the funeral service for Mrs Virginia Cromwell was held prepares for another funeral service to be held at five.

<i>Michael</i>	...	<i>Brother to Chad</i>
<i>Chad</i>	...	<i>Brother to Michael</i>
<i>Raelene</i>	...	<i>Married to Chad</i>

Chad and Michael say their final thank you to the attentive mourners at their Mother's funeral at the Church hall. A couple of tables hold an array of paper plates with half eaten sandwiches and biscuit, dirty tea cups, saucers and spoons. A small pile of Records of Service sit to one side of one of the tables. A couple of used records litter the floor underneath. Raelene is in the kitchen washing cups and saucers.

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MICHAEL moves some plates of food around one of the tables as CHAD organises cups, saucers and spoons into rows on another table.

MICHAEL: I guess mum would've enjoyed the service.

Pause.

MICHAEL: Chad, do you think Mum would've enjoyed the service?

CHAD: I suppose, if she was here to see it.

MICHAEL: She was here. In spirit.

Pause.

MICHAEL: I'd like to think she is watching over us.

CHAD: She's dead, Michael. Get used to it.

MICHAEL: It's no one's fault she's dead.

CHAD: My fault is it?

Pause.

MICHAEL: Forget it.

CHAD: If you had bothered to make sure I got your call...

MICHAEL: Don't start that again.

CHAD: My fault is it?

MICHAEL: All I said was I think Mum would've enjoyed the Service.

CHAD: Do you think we can enjoy the Service again next week?

MICHAEL: Very funny.

CHAD: It's not my fault.

MICHAEL: Jesus Christ, what is up your arse?

CHAD: If there's anyone here with anything up their arse, it's you. Where's ya boyfriend?

MICHAEL: We didn't feel it would've been appropriate.

CHAD: If Mum is watching over us, she'll know now won't she? Didn't the Priest say they know-all when they walk into the bright light.

MICHAEL: If she does know, she'll forgive me.

CHAD: How convenient.

MICHAEL: Why are you so angry?

CHAD: You lied to Mum about everything. You made me lie for you.

MICHAEL: I haven't lied to Mum about everything.

CHAD: What do you call hiding your gayness from her?

MICHAEL: My gayness, as you put it was something she didn't need to know.

CHAD: You came out a bit late didn't you?

MICHAEL: It's my life, Chad. I'll do with it as I want.

Pause.

CHAD: I never understood how you could pretend to get along with people; smile at them, act as though they were your best friend, but you never really gave a flying fig about them. People come and go so quickly in your life Chad; I'm amazed you even know their name. I have no idea what you find so appealing about those sorts of people.

MICHAEL: I'm not even going to justify that comment with a response.

CHAD: Because you know I'm right.

MICHAEL: You have no idea.

CHAD: You have no sense of family.

MICHAEL: Oh very good – thou of the great judgement. Hypocrite. You're so quick to judge me about my life and yet you have no time to analyse your own mistake of a life.

CHAD: I married Raelene because I love her.

MICHAEL: You married Raelene because she was the only slapper who'd sleep with you.

CHAD: At least I can get a woman to sleep with me.

MICHAEL: Have you told her about Sally, your last wife? The one you made have an abortion against her will? The one you left in hospital to recover with no support? The same one you tapped on the shoulder the next

night because you had the urge? You didn't mind the blood and split stitches from the surgery, was it to prove a point?

CHAD throws a cup at MICHAEL, missing him.

CHAD: You're lucky I don't split your lip right here and now. If we weren't at Mother's funeral, this would be your day and I'd be shedding tears of joy.

MICHAEL: I've felt your warm loving hatred since puberty.

CHAD: Wonder why?

MICHAEL: I constantly do.

CHAD: Try this on for size; remember when we were play-fighting in the front room and we got covered in that plague of fleas? You came into the bathroom and stuck your head in the shower; you stared at me.

Pause.

MICHAEL: You mean the time I was twelve? You told me to look at the pile of dead fleas washing down the drain. I wasn't staring at you, you pervert; I was looking at the dead fleas.

CHAD: You were staring at me.

MICHAEL: You mean you've been hanging onto that all these years. Oh, get over yourself.

CHAD: And I don't appreciate you sucking on my best-mate, either.

MICHAEL: I didn't think anyone knew about that.

CHAD: Yeah. Well you thought wrong.

MICHAEL: If the truth be known, it was him who came to me in the street one summer's afternoon and asked me to come over to his house. I don't quite remember what he said or how he made the first move, but I do remember we had a torrid affair for about three years.

CHAD: I don't want to know.

MICHAEL: I think you need to know.

CHAD: No. Not really.

MICHAEL: You're the one carrying the extra baggage.

CHAD: You have an answer for everything, don't you? It wasn't my fault. Oh, it wasn't my fault I sucked...

MICHAEL: Are you two still friends?

CHAD: Haven't seen him since he left home to live with his girlfriend and two kids.

MICHAEL: So what, I never stopped experimenting.

Pause.

CHAD: The only thing that stopped me from telling Mum the truth were the tears in her eyes and the hurt it would've caused.

MICHAEL: You mean you didn't want to take responsibility for your little brother's life. No one said you had to, but for some bizarre reason you feel it's your God-given right to take charge of everyone.

CHAD: At least I can say I live my life honestly.

MICHAEL: Bully for you.

CHAD: Who was there to fix things? Who was the one she called on to maintain her house?

MICHAEL: Sir Chad, saviour of the white goods.

CHAD: I didn't see you installing her ceiling fan, fixing the television or replacing the spindle in her dishwasher.

MICHAEL: I didn't see you out shopping with her or going out to lunch and a movie, sharing a laugh.

CHAD: That's because she treated me like a son and not like a daughter.

MICHAEL: I spent time with her.

CHAD: Did you tell her?

MICHAEL: Maybe I did.

CHAD: You're full of shit.

Pause.

MICHAEL: This is great.

CHAD: What?

MICHAEL: You keep on arguing with me, even at Mum's funeral.

CHAD: If you had bothered to make sure I got your call, she wouldn't have choked to death on her lunch.

MICHAEL: Where was the Nurse?

CHAD: Don't you worry about them; I've yet to deal with them. They'll be spitting teeth before I finish, but you, neglecting your responsibilities and your mother.

MICHAEL: What do you want from me?

CHAD: Well, let's see. Dad died two years ago. Mum today. I'm happily married to Raelene. Have two beautiful kids. A house. A job. Friends. You know what, I want nothing from you. I don't need nothing from you. I don't want you in my life. That's what I want. Nothing.

***** Truncated *****

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