

GLEARM

by Mark Harvey Levine

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Outside a grocery store. BRANDON is standing with his girlfriend, ANGELA.

BRANDON

Okay, I'll run to the pharmacy, pick up my prescription, you get the danish, we'll meet back here in fifteen or so.

ANGELA

Gotcha.

She exits. Brandon goes to move too, when suddenly DEATH appears. He's hooded, carrying a scythe – the classic Death.

BRANDON

Uh oh.

DEATH

Brandon? Brandon Schall?

BRANDON

Um...yeah...?

DEATH

Your time has ended. Follow me.

BRANDON

What? No! I can't be dead! I'm...I'm not ready...

DEATH

Oh, okay. I'll come back in forty years or so.

BRANDON

Wow, really?

DEATH

No. You're dead. Come on. Why does everyone think that'll work?

BRANDON

I can't be dead. I have to go pick up my prescription!

DEATH

You mean the one for...high blood pressure?

BRANDON

Yeah! ...oh, I see. Wow, they were right.

DEATH

Go figure. Come with me now.

Suddenly another figure enters: GLEARM. He wears a much more fun version of Death's outfit. Maybe he's got a fuzzy bathrobe on, and is carrying a tiki torch.

GLEARM

Hold it right there!

BRANDON

Who are you?

GLEARM

I am Glearm, and I've come to offer you a better way!

DEATH

I beg your pardon?

GLEARM

That's right – Glearm! We're new. You see, for millennia, Death has been the only option for the post-living. But now with Glearm – you've got a choice! We're the Awesome Afterlife Alternative. And I think you're really going to like what we have to offer. Can I give you our pamphlet?

He hands a glossy pamphlet to Brandon.

DEATH

Alternative? He doesn't get a choice! He bit the dust! He comes with me!

GLEARM

Sure, that's how it used to be. But you've had a monopoly on the whole "snuffing it" business for quite some time now. We think a little healthy competition is in order.

BRANDON

(reading the pamphlet) You've got jacuzzis?

GLEARM

That's right. And four billion three hundred million and seventy two poolside bars. And every Thursday is one dollar appetizers. The chicken wings are to die for. ...So to speak. And we've got movies, too – first run blockbusters shown on 256 inch flat screens, right there in your room. *(to Death)* And what do you have?

DEATH

I can't tell you. We're the undiscover'd country from whose bourn no traveler returns.

GLEARM

...Ooo, sounds fun. Listen, Glearm is an eternity of rest and relaxation. But it's not just sitting around, either. Just because you're a formless spirit, doesn't mean you can't get into shape. We've got snorkeling, tennis courts, volleyball -- you name it. We're all about making your eternity an adventure you'll remember for, well, all eternity. How about you guys?

DEATH

Um...well...

GLEARM

Yeah, I thought so. Listen, pal, it's up to you. Now that you've shuffled off your mortal coil, do you want to shuffle off with him, or enjoy all the amenities that Glearm has to offer?

BRANDON

(to Death) Sorry, I gotta go with Glearm.

DEATH

...but--

GLEARM

We've got free Wi-Fi. 8G. And, like you, your batteries will go on forever.

BRANDON

(to Death) I mean, come on.

DEATH

...Fine. See if I care. *(muttering as he exits)* "We've got chicken wings! We've got flatscreen TVs"

Death exits.

GLEARM

You ready?

BRANDON

Yeah! Glearm me!

Glearm touches Brandon with his Tiki Torch. Brandon falls over.

GLEARM

(speaking to the air above Brandon) Okay, I know it's a little weird at first, your soul has just left your body. But you'll find you can just float right along to Glearm. *(looking up)* There you go! Keep going! See you there! I just have a couple more calls to make. Have fun!

ANGELA rushes in.

ANGELA

Oh my God! Brandon! Are you okay?! Brandon! Oh no, oh no...Help! Can you help me?

GLEARM

I'm sorry miss, I'm afraid he's—

ANGELA

Dead?!

GLEARM

Well, not exactly. But I can tell you this. He's gone on to a better place.

ANGELA

He was everything to me. I can't live without him. I just can't.

GLEARM

Then perhaps you'd like one of these.

He hands ANGELA a pamphlet. Death comes running back in, sees her, then sees Glearm.

DEATH

Dammit!

BLACKOUT