

THE SITTING-AROUND-DOING-NOTHING DEAD

By Kelly Meadows

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THE SITTING-AROUND-DOING-NOTHING DEAD

A One Act Haunted Comedy

By Kelly Meadows

SYNOPSIS: We know the dangers of the walking dead, but what about the dead that just sit around? Well, they're getting bored, verryyyyy bored. When one of them decided he can't... uh... live like this any longer, he joins up with a group of zombies who are decidedly more active. Turns out humanity isn't going to take things lying down. Now who's in danger – the living... or the dead?

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 Male, 1 Female, 3 Either, Gender Flexible)

CLAYMOR (m).....A young adventurous zombie. (50 lines)

GRIMELDA (f)A zombie who sits around and does nothing; the leader of the pack. (52 lines)

RAPPA (m/f)Another sitting zombie. (58 lines)

GRAPPA (m/f).....Rappa's twin sibling. (32 lines)

RONJIA (m/f)A walking-around zombie with a taste for human tragedy. (21 lines)

The author grants permission to portray characters as any gender, if desired. If GRIMELDA is played by a male, you may change the name to GRIMMY.

PRODUCTION NOTES

It's a short play, but you can still have fun with makeup and tattered clothing, or just a few visual effects to create a zombie "look." RONJIA could wear a running suit to signify more activity.

DURATION: 15 minutes

SOUND EFFECTS

(They will add a lot to the presentation, but they are also optional.)

- ☐ Car crashes, sirens, accidents, etc.
- ☐ Angry crowd
- ☐ Offstage scuffle

PROPERTY LIST

(Optional)

- ☐ Pitchfork
- ☐ Fake body parts
- ☐ Fake blood

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kelly Meadows enjoys sitting around doing nothing, but also likes to spin a good tale with characters alive or dead. If you can't get enough of the walking dead, check out Meadows' one-act *Kiss of Death*. In off hours, Meadows enjoys watching social interaction at coffee houses and trolling the internet for typographical errors.

AT RISE: *Four zombies, CLAYMOR, GRIMELDA, RAPPA, and GRAPPA are sitting around outdoors on tombstones, benches, chairs, haystacks, what have you. Or even at an ice cream shop—feel free to use your imagination as to where this takes place. They are bored. They look offstage, at each other, twiddling thumbs, bouncing around, etc. CLAYMOR, who is perhaps younger and definitely more adventurous than the rest, gets up and tries to go somewhere. He takes a few steps, and the others glare at him, annoyed, and he sits back down, embarrassed.*

GRIMELDA: 'Scuse me?

CLAYMOR: *(A little whiny.)* I just wanted to. *(Slowly and cautiously gets up again.)*

GRIMELDA: *(Snap!)* Claymor! Sit!

The others sigh at him with contempt, he sits again.

CLAYMOR: I just wanted to go somewhere.

RAPPA: *(Snippy.)* We know what you wanted to do, Claymor.

GRAPPA: And you can't.

CLAYMOR: This is boring.

GRIMELDA: Get used to it. We're not the walking dead, the waking dead, or any other kind of activity-driven dead. We're the sitting-around-doing-nothing dead.

CLAYMOR: *(Disappointed and sassy.)* So this is it, Grimelda? Sitting around doing nothing.

GRIMELDA: Pretty much. That's what "sitting around doing nothing" means.

CLAYMOR: What a life!

RAPPA: It's not a life. Been there done that.

CLAYMOR: *(Realizes he's not alive.)* Oh. What a death! Then what do we do? I wanted to go out. Terrorize a strip mall. Raid a football game. Feast on human flesh.

GRAPPA: Overrated.

CLAYMOR: Human flesh?

GRAPPA: Football. *(Pause.)* Hard to chew.

RAPPA: It's pigskin. It's just like a ham sandwich. Without the bread.

GRIMELDA: Well, Rappa, it can't be a sandwich if it doesn't have bread.

RAPPA: I used to wrap it in lettuce. Low carbs.

GRAPPA: Look where it got you.

CLAYMOR: *(Sigh of resignation.)* Sitting around doing nothing. With Grimelda the grouse, and Rappa and Grappa, the rhyming zombie twins. When I was alive that's all I looked forward to. Sitting around doing nothing.

GRIMELDA: And here's our reward. *(A loud auto crash is heard offstage.)*

CLAYMOR: Wow that sounds interesting. *(Hopes to get permission to get up, no one reacts.)* Ya think?

GRIMELDA: Who's to know? Probably texted while driving. *(Imitates texting.)* How R U? *(Imitates car crash.)* AAAAAHHHH! Wham. *(CLAYMOR, disappointed, stays where he is.)*

RONJIA: *(Running in.)* This is amazing! So many bodies squealing in fear and agony. You should join us! *(Giving a showy introduction, perhaps walking around shaking hands, ending with a flourish.)* Oh, I'm Ronjia, the walking talking stalking do it all apocalyptic zombie party animal rolled into one!

GRIMELDA: *(Disgusted and dismissive.)* Uh... ew.

RONJIA: Oh. You're one of *them*. They told me about you all. The sitting-around-doing-nothing dead. Look, I gotta go or I'll be just like you! *(Starts to leave.)* Sorry, duty calls!

CLAYMOR: *(Desperate.)* Ronjia, wait! *(RONJIA turns around.)* How can I be... just like you? *(Gets up, excited and tries unsuccessfully to be cool.)* Claymor, the walking talking stalking apocalyptic party animal zombie! *(Shrivels up as they others glare at him.)* All rolled into...one.

RONJIA: It's easy, Claymor! Get off your butt!

CLAYMOR: They won't let me.

RONJIA: It depends what group you want to be part of. You need to have a positive outlook on... well, I'd say life but... (*Laughs at a stale joke.*) too late for that! Zombies only have so much afterlife left in them before they fall apart and ... smooosh! You're a roll of tape on the sidewalk, then you're a ghost, (*Getting depressed.*) washing out a chamber pot from the 1890s in a dank dusty New England mansion, day after day after day... (*Perks up.*) Anyway there's a car wreck at 89th street. I'm gonna go get me some! (*Exits!!*)

CLAYMOR: (*Antsy.*) Can we go?

GRIMELDA: Have you been absent for this entire conversation?

CLAYMOR: No, I just think you're a killjoy.

GRAPPA: She wanted to be an angel, now she's a zombie.

RAPPA: (*Far too happy.*) I think she's a zamboni!

GRAPPA: What's that?

RAPPA: It's a combination of an angel and a zombie.

CLAYMOR: No it's not, it's a machine that smoothes over ice at hockey games.

RAPPA: I like my definition better.

CLAYMOR: How convenient that every word means just what you want it to. Your definitions are ruining my non-life.

RONJIA: (*Enters again, energetic, coaxing the rest.*) Hey, are you sure you're not coming? There's enough blood and guts for everyone! That texting while driving thing is the best ever! How R U? (*Imitates car crash.*) AAAAAHHHH! Wham. Dinner.

CLAYMOR: (*Ready to go.*) All right. My whole life is falling apart.

GRAPPA: Falling apart. That's what we're about.

GRIMELDA: Why don't you just bring something back? Don't they have carry out?

RONJIA: It's fresh where it lay.

GRIMELDA: Great. Car wreck, zombie attack. How do you think that's going to go over? We don't get enough bad press as it is?

RONJIA: Ask me if I care.

CLAYMOR: Do you care?

GRAPPA: I can't believe you asked.

CLAYMOR: (*Defensive.*) I was asked to ask. So I wanted to be compliant. (*Again.*) So, Ronjia, do you care? (*A little sassy.*) And if so, to what degree?

RONJIA: I don't. Care, that is. That human values system? Over. This sitting around thing? Who came up with it?

GRIMELDA: (*With disgust.*) My mother.

RAPPA: (*Shocked.*) Your mother? I thought it was like something we had to do. Sit around doing nothing. Like penance or something. Walking dead have it so much better.

GRAPPA: They told me to rest in peace. So that's what I'm doing. No one said "You're dead, now get up and run a few laps." It's "rest in peace." Since we're zombies, it's more like "rest in pieces." Either way, athletics weren't on the agenda. Which is good. If you trip, you rip.

RONJIA: Speak for yourself.

GRAPPA: I was. I'm perfectly content.

CLAYMOR: I'm not. I want to get up and go.

GRIMELDA: Then get up. Go. See if I care.

CLAYMOR: I don't care if you care. You seem to not care and yet you care at the same time. You have a total disinterest in my happiness except when it comes to stomping it out like a boot in a puddle. So no, Grimelda, I don't care if you care.

GRIMELDA: Then what's stopping you?

CLAYMOR: You are. And your mother.

GRIMELDA: You just said I wasn't.

CLAYMOR: You aren't, but you are.

GRIMELDA: You need to get a life.

CLAYMOR: Too late.

RAPPA: Never gets old, does it. (*Reciting a bunch of old jokes.*) Get a life! Can't. I don't wanna live like this. You're not. That's life! Not any more. I'm about to die of embarrassment!

RONJIA: Too late!

RAPPA: See? It's killing me.

RONJIA: Too late.

CLAYMOR: So how do you get from sitting around doing nothing to waking, walking and doing everything?

RONJIA: (*Over-excited.*) Zombie party animal, rolled into one!

GRIMELDA: I don't think you can. Unless you want to fight with my mother. She started it. Everyone's assigned a category at death, and there you rot. (*Confused.*) Not sure how my mom got involved, though.

CLAYMOR: I want out.

GRIMELDA: Not your choice.

CLAYMOR: Where's your mother?

GRIMELDA: We're not talking. And she's still living. She says she communicates with the dead, but... not even a text.

CLAYMOR: You give her too much power.

GRIMELDA: Over my life she broke up two marriages and kept me from majoring in accounting like I dreamed of.

GRAPPA: Who dreams of accounting?

GRIMELDA: (*Wistful.*) I did, Grappa! I did.

GRAPPA: Well, there are four of us and we're all accounted for. So your dream is fulfilled.

CLAYMOR: I want to get out and do and see things! I was lazy when I was a kid. Lazy when I went to college. Now I'm paying for it with forced indolence.

RONJIA: Now you see how you came across to other people. You're the "get me a glass of water" type.

CLAYMOR: I am not!

RONJIA: (*Explains.*) The person who lays on the couch and wants everyone else to get them a glass of water. "Mom will you get me a glass of water?" Sis? Bro? It's all about making someone else drop everything they're doing to get you a glass of water. You'd sooner order a bottle online than get up and the glass yourself. It's a power struggle you can't win.

CLAYMOR: I did die of dehydration, come to think. The glass was half empty. Then it evaporated. But I've learned my lesson.

RAPPA: Too late.

CLAYMOR: I thought this would be fun. Sitting around doing nothing.

GRIMELDA: It's only fun when it's your idea.

CLAYMOR: My tombstone isn't so complimentary either. It says "didn't do anything."

GRIMELDA: Mine says... "Didn't do anything right."

GRAPPA: I was a procrastinator, so mine doesn't say anything yet. I tried to put off dying, but that happened too soon.

CLAYMOR: (*Determined.*) Well, I'm going to defy your mother. Let's go.

GRIMELDA: You can't! No one defies "the momster."

CLAYMOR: I will! So goes in life, so goes in death!

RAPPA: What does that mean?

CLAYMOR: It means I'm going with Ronjia to check out that car crash on 89th. Blood, body parts, their loss is my gain! (*Imitates a text.*) How R U? I M dead. (*Smiles.*) Dinner!

RONJIA: Plus you can always swipe a cell phone out of it. Let's go!

CLAYMOR tries to get up, but has trouble.

GRIMELDA: Not so easy, is it.

CLAYMOR: (*Trying to get up.*) I can do this!

GRIMELDA: That's what we all said.

CLAYMOR: I know I can. Or die trying. And don't say it! (*To audience.*) All our platitudes become antonyms. It's very confusing. (*FINALLY he gets up.*)

RAPPA: Well we're really not dead. We're not really alive. We're "undead." There's a difference. See, if you're technically not alive nor dead-

GRAPPA: Oh, shut up Rappa. We know, we know.

CLAYMOR: Off we go!

RONJIA: You'll love it! Human misery is a zombie paradise!

RONJIA and CLAYMOR exit hurriedly while the others look on, astounded and dismayed.

GRIMELDA: (*With certainty.*) Well, this won't last long. (*They sit around again.*)

GRAPPA: Back to this. Sitting around doing nothing.

GRIMELDA: Yes. Just relax.

A whole bunch of car crashes, accidents, sirens, etc. happen offstage and they just sit through it without reacting, or at least "acting" like they're not reacting.

RAPPA: Relaxed yet?

GRAPPA: What do you think happened?

GRIMELDA: Not our business.

RAPPA: I don't care if it's my business or not. I'm going to look.

GRIMELDA: I'll tell my mother.

RAPPA: I thought you weren't speaking to her.

GRIMELDA: I'll text. She receives, she just doesn't return.

RAPPA: This is the most literal minded bunch. (*Exits, shouts from off stage.*) You should see this! (*More accidents and such.*)

GRAPPA: What *is* all that? Rush hour on the 405?

GRIMELDA: No one goes fast enough on the 405 to crash. Don't pay attention to it, Grappa. It's just there to distract us.

GRAPPA: That's kind of hard.

GRIMELDA: I used to make all kinds of noise and my mother never paid attention to me.

GRAPPA: I can't believe that.

GRIMELDA: You don't know my mother.

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