

THEY'RE REWRITING MY LIFE

By Jerry Rabushka

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THEY'RE REWRITING MY LIFE

A Ten Minute Dramatic Monologue

By Jerry Rabushka

SYNOPSIS: If you're a fictional character, you pretty much live the same story over and over. But what happens when the author tries to rewrite it? What if he "writes out" your girlfriend or takes away some important parts of your life on the grounds that they're no longer relevant to your story? On the plus side, maybe in the rewrite, mom won't be so distant. Maybe he can finally find out "what happens next." An unusual ride as the character Tom starts to wonder what of his life will be saved, changed or deleted.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 male)

TOM (m)..... 17 years old.

AUTHOR NOTES

Tom Douglas was the protagonist of my first novel. I took a look at it not long ago and noticed that a lot of the action needed to be rewritten. This monologue takes the point of view of the character, wondering what's going to happen to him and the people around him if his life is suddenly changed.

TOM: My name is Tom, and in the mind of the author I'm a fictional character. I live in California. Burbank...Los Angeles...somewhere there up on a mountain. I'm the main character in a book Jerry wrote when he was 17. (*Explaining.*) Jerry the writer of this monologue. I don't know if he knows, I know what he's planning. Seventeen is how old I am, in Los Angeles, in 1978. That's when the book ended, and after that, no one knows what happened to me. Jerry wants to rewrite, because if you read the book, you'll think that most of what happened to me isn't feasible—even in fiction. Most people don't write great novels when they're 17, but they don't know it for a long time after. So my life as it's been is getting ripped away from me and changed out, like taking back underwear that doesn't fit. My mother's going to have a name; the author couldn't think of a name for her last time. You'll be the first to know—it's Rosemary Douglas. You wouldn't think it would have been so hard.

"Tom, you don't want to be late for your sister's funeral!" Oh, I remember her saying that. It's amazing the things you remember your mother saying even this many years later. I *did* want to be late. I wanted to miss the whole thing. My sister lived for five sickly years and all the money in the world—and we had all the money in the world—all that money couldn't save her. My dad was a bigot, so I can't repeat most of what he said, and about who. "Those girls, they're all like that," or "you know what the problem is with the British," or...well we're British, so he never really said that.

I had a girlfriend Kathy, and by the end of the book we were on the outs. But it's kind of like that movie *Titanic*. Leonardo's character, in real life, wouldn't be allowed up in first class. He would never have met Kate Winslet, and that made the whole movie bogus. Best picture, but bogus. My family was (*As if this is a big deal.*) T.T. Douglas and Company International Publishers, and we were rich. Kathy was working class and I met her in public school.

But, Jerry says I can't go to public school, because I'm too rich. "You weren't born into all this money to run around with those people!" I can hear my father saying that. I'll have to meet Kathy some other way. Or I won't meet her at all. That's the thing about being rewritten. I've had these same experiences since 1978. Same fights, same struggles, same happiness, and now I'm not sure if everything I've grown used to will stay with me. Kathy wasn't happy with me at the end. She said I got distracted.

There are several characters speaking for the next few lines, make sure to make them distinct!

(As Kathy.) "You haven't called me in two weeks!"

"Don't start the conversation with an argument!"

(As Kathy.) "If this is how it's going to be...!"

"I don't know how it's going to be. Kathy. You better talk to me now, because next time around there might not be any Kathy."

(As Kathy, talking to the author.) "What's going to happen to me, Mr. Author? I've been Tom's girlfriend for decades! You can't write me into oblivion for the sake of a few royalties and a plot line!"

(As the author, larger than life, perhaps "looking down" on the characters from above.) "Oh yes I can, Kathy, and I will! I can't be sympathetic at the expense of the storyline. Perhaps we'll just downgrade you to occasional nuisance."

"That would make Dad happy. Wouldn't it dad?"

(As dad, disapproving.) "I never liked her."

"I know you didn't, dad."

(As dad.) “I never never ever ever liked her. I didn’t want her in the front door. Not even in the back door, and especially not in the shed. I just didn’t want her in your life.” (*Speaking to the audience, vs. Tom.*) And now, in a rewrite, I’m going to lobby to get Kathy ripped out of the story. I want Tom to date someone successful. Someone who can make Tom happy since he can’t seem to do it on his own.

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