

Baked With Love

by

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Characters

Huey: (30s, M) A warm, goofy, care-free, do gooder just trying his best. Married to Conrad (Connie), son-in-law of Mama May.

Conrad: (30s, M, Connie) A little neurotic and anxious, intellectual planner, son of Mama May, married to Huey.

Mama May: (60s, F) Mother to Conrad, Jennie and Tom. Caretaker.

Jennie: (Late 20s, F) Sister to Conrad & Tom.

Alan: (Late 20s, M) Married to Jennie, brother-in-law to Conrad & Tom.

Betty: (5ish, F) Child of Jennie & Alan.

Tom: (Late 30s, M) Brother to Conrad & Jennie. The one nobody likes.

Delivery Person: No relation.

ACT IScene 1

LIGHTS UP on the kitchen of a lower-middle income home. HUEY is preparing cookies to bake. He is gently singing along to "My Heart Will Go On" by Celine Dion. He discovers they are out of flour and puts the empty bag on the end of the counter then worriedly checks the time. The drums hit in the song and HUEY begins to belt. Getting really into it as CONRAD enters.

CONRAD:

What, what, what is happening?

HUEY:

YOU'RE HERE, THERE'S NOTHING I FEAR --

HUEY serenades CONRAD, continuing to sing and ignoring CONRAD'S interjections.

CONRAD:

Huey. Babe, my kitchen...I just cleaned. Okay, yes I love you. My family will be here so soon and I, the mess...I'm gonna have to let you play this out aren't I?

HUEY finishes with commitment.

CONRAD:

Okay, you want to tell me what this is all about?

HUEY:

I'm so here for you. I love you through your grief, and if you want to stay in bed all day and eat your feelings I'm here for that too. Trained for it. I'm making cookies and I got the playlist cued up --

CONRAD:

Oh no no. No more sad ballads for you. Huey, honey, sweet Boogie Bear, I know you have the heart of a baby beluga--

HUEY:

It is big.

CONRAD:

So big, but sweetheart, my Papaw was a senile 97 years old. His days consisted of tubes and shitting.

HUEY:

(Blubbering) Such a warrior. You clearly get your strength from him.

CONRAD:

Okay. My Papaw passing is a blessing for him, and us frankly. He gets to be with Nana.

HUEY:

(Sobbing) Oh Connie, that's beautiful. I'm here to support you through this grief stricken time.

CONRAD holds up a melodramatically sobbing HUEY.

CONRAD:

I feel very supported. Okay, come on, you know what would make me feel even *MORE* supported?

HUEY:

(perking up) What, babe? Anything. I want to support you.

CONRAD:

If you cleaned up the kitchen.

HUEY:

I'm making your Meemaw's cookies for your family. Since your Papaw loved them so much.

CONRAD:

Okay, but we have to leave within the hour to pick up my mom from the airport. Jenny and Alan may even beat her here. And who knows with Tom--

HUEY:

Ugh, Tom. I promise I'll finish up right after I run to the corner store. We're out of flour.

CONRAD:

Ah, hence the empty bag on the counter--

HUEY:

I'm gonna clean! Go take your shower. You are always a little persnickety before you hose off.

CONRAD:

Perhaps it's the grief.

HUEY:

(Tearing up again) My poor baby. Come here.

CONRAD:

I'm joking! I'm getting in the shower! Clean this Kitchen Huey! And no more sad ballads! I hear a Sam Smith song I'm lowering your plant budget.

HUEY:

(Aghast) You wouldn't.

CONRAD:

I would.

HUEY:

How could you say such a --

CONRAD:

Dead Papaw.

HUEY:

(Emotional) You're resilience is inspiring!

CONRAD exits. HUEY goes back to the kitchen and begins tidying. There is a knock at the door.

HUEY:

(Surprised) Ah! Sweet Madonna! They're here? So soon?

DELIVERY PERSON:

(Offstage or Behind Door) Delivery!

HUEY:

Thank Cher!

HUEY opens the door.

DELIVERY PERSON:

Delivery of Chester Conrad Hughes.

HUEY:

Umm, so sorry, did you say Chester Hughes?

DELIVERY PERSON:

Chester Conrad Hughes.

HUEY:

Um, uh, well, um Che--, Chester is, um deceased.

DELIVERY PERSON:

Well I would hope so. Sign here.

HUEY signs and takes the package.

DELIVERY PERSON:

Careful. Benny's Bereavement Bargains has been known to use basically a sandwich bag when you opt for the basic package. Later!

DELIVERY PERSON exits.

HUEY:

Benny's what? What a strange interaction. (*Looking to package*) Love a mystery! Let's see what you're packin'.

HUEY grabs a kitchen knife and cuts open the box. Pulls out a piece of paper he has accidentally cut in half.

HUEY:

Oops! Here we go. (*reading*) "No better bargain than Benny's Bereavement Bundle. Scan the QR code and get your next cremation half off."

HUEY reaches in the box and pulls out a plastic bag of PaPaw's ashes. He has cut it with the knife and PaPaw's ashes are spilling out rapidly all over the floor. A Lazzi ensues of HUEY failing to keep the ashes in the bag.

HUEY:

Papaw! Oh no no no no no no no. Stop runnin' PaPaw! I'm trying to help you. Oh, oh, oh, you're everywhere. No no no. What do I do? What do I do?

HUEY grabs the empty flour bag and starts putting PaPaw's ashes in it.

CONRAD:

(*Offstage*) Babe? Did I hear the door?

HUEY:

Just a minute love of my life! Shit, shit, shit.

CONRAD:

(*Offstage*) You better be cleaning up!

HUEY:

I'M DEFINITELY CLEANING UP!! SO MUCH CLEANING. ALL THE CLEANING! A GRAVE AMOUNT OF CLEANING!

CONRAD:

You sound stressed. Do you need help?

CONRAD pokes his toweled head out of the bedroom.

HUEY:

(Panic) No! (overcompensating chill) I mean no, I, I got it. You just stay in that bedroom getting ready. I've totally got this.

CONRAD:

Well that remains to be seen.

HUEY:

What remains!?? (BEAT) No remains. No remains to be seen! All remains to be in hand, under control. (BEAT) Now finish getting dressed. We have to get to the airport!

CONRAD:

Alright my adorable weirdo. I'll go put some pants on. Unless...You wanted to join me real quick?

HUEY:

Oh, oh, um (looks at apron covered in Papaw's ashes) I couldn't possibly, out of...um...respect for your Papaw. He just feels so...present right now. So, so present, on me.

CONRAD:

Okay Sweetheart.

CONRAD exits. HUEY rapidly finishes cleaning up most of the ashes into the flour bag. He has a crisis of conscience when he has to wash his hands in the sink.

HUEY:

(Considers washing hands) Ahhhhh, you deserve better than a garbage disposal Papaw...Oh! The plants! I heard you had a bit of a green thumb too!

HUEY exits out the front door. CONRAD enters and sees the flour bag.

CONRAD:

Huh. Guess he did make it to the store.

CONRAD puts away the flour bag. HUEY renters quite wet.

CONRAD:

Huey! What, what, what is happening? You know what,

hold that thought, you can tell me in the car.

HUEY:

In the car?

CONRAD:

Yea, we gotta go. If we don't get to the airport early enough you know my mom will just Uber. She has no patience for waiting.

HUEY:

(Looking for flour bag) But umm...Where?

CONRAD:

Huey, honey, baby, I'm sorry I stressed you out about cleaning up the kitchen. I know death can be hard for you, but try not to immerse yourself in it. I know he's here.

HUEY:

You know?

CONRAD:

Of course. Just because I am comforted by him finally getting peace, doesn't mean I don't know that I stand on the shoulders of his greatness.

HUEY:

I don't know about shoulders.

CONRAD:

Huh?

HUEY:

More likely his tooth.

CONRAD:

What?

HUEY:

Let's go get your mom and stop standing on Papaw.

CONRAD:

Okay weirdo, I love you. Let's go.

HUEY:

Let me just turn off the oven, I'll be right there!

CONRAD exits. HUEY looks around desperate for a second, then turns off the oven and exits. We hear a car pull out of the drive. A moment later

a car pulls into the drive. MAMA MAY enters with her bags.

MAMA MAY:

Oh no no, making me wait at the airport. That is some Tom behavior. God says to love all your children the same, but Jennie would have been on time. Hogwash is what it is. And what is happening here? Oven still warm? Mom's cookie recipe? Wet ingredients in the bowl? Oh no no. Waste not want not. Let's get that Baking soda in there. Salt. Brown sugar. Now where is your flour boys? Flour, flour, flour...Ah! Here it is. Excellent.

MAMA MAY measures Papaw's ashes out of the flour bag and into the bowl. She mixes the ingredients.

Huh, bit clumpy. We'll just work it a bit.

MAMA MAY squeezes the mixture and then starts rolling little dough balls onto a tray. A Lazzi of nearly licking her fingers or eating some dough, but doesn't.

Pop these in the oven. Oh, Papaw. I do wish you were here. You always did love to lick the spoon.

MAMA MAY licks the spoon clean. There is a knock at the door and in enters JENNIE, ALAN, BETTY and TOM. Hugs all around. ALAN and BETTY quickly run to the bathroom.

ALAN/BETTY:

Potty Potty Potty Potty Potty!

JENNIE:

Alan! (*points a different direction*) Potty Potty Potty Potty Potty!

ALAN/BETTY:

Potty Potty Potty Potty Potty!

ALAN and BETTY exit.

JENNIE:

Mom! Hi! I'm so sorry about Papaw.

MAMA MAY:

My father lived a big beautiful life. Now where did your husband rush off with my grandbaby?

JENNIE:

Did you not hear? Potty, potty, potty, potty, potty!
It was quite the van ride.

TOM:

Hi mom!

MAMA MAY:

(A little less friendly) Thomas. Did you ride with
your sister?

TOM:

It's a funny story actually--

MAMA MAY:

Actually, I don't care.

JENNIE:

What smells so good mom?

MAMA MAY:

Memaw's cookies!

JENNIE:

Oh, they're the best. Where are Conrad and Huey?

*CONRAD and HUEY enter. ALAN and BETTY return
from the bathroom.*

CONRAD:

Huey! Slow down. Mom! I missed you! Your flight was
early. We were not late.

ALAN and BETTY reenter.

ALAN:

(Relieved) Ahhh, Potty.

BETTY:

I peepeed in the potty!

EVERYONE:

(random exclamations of joy) Yay!

HUEY:

(Rapidly, with less enthusiasm for TOM) Jennie! Alan!
Betty! Tom. Mama May! So very wonderful to have you.
(BEAT) Wait.

*HUEY sees the flour bag on the counter and
freezes staring.*

MAMA MAY:

Oh! I finished the cookies.

HUEY:

You what?

MAMA MAY:

I finished the cookies.

HUEY:

You finished the cookies.

MAMA MAY:

I finished the cookies.

HUEY:

You finished the cookies.

MAMA MAY:

Yes Huey, I finished the cookies.

HUEY:

You finished the cookies with, with, with--

HUEY, speechless, gestures to the flour bag.

MAMA MAY:

(*confused*) With this flour?

HUEY:

You finished the cookies with that flour? It's in the cookies.

MAMA MAY:

Well it's in the oven now.

HUEY:

Again!? (*BEAT*) Oh Papaw!

CONRAD:

I'm so sorry mom. Huey doesn't handle death very...gracefully.

The timer dings! MAMA MAY pulls out the cookies.

MAMA MAY:

Oh! Perfect timing. Who wants a cookie?

HUEY:

No!!

CONRAD:

Huey. What is wrong with you?

HUEY:

The flour...it's umm...it's expired!

MAMA MAY:

Oh, nonsense Huey. That's a government lie to get you to spend more money.

MAMA MAY starts transferring some cookies to a plate. BETTY attempts to grab a cookie.

BETTY:

Can I have one grandma?

MAMA MAY:

Of course baby. Might be a little hot.

JENNIE:

There aren't any nuts in them right mom?

MAMA MAY:

Of course not.

HUEY:

(Anguishing) Well there's at least two...

CONRAD:

Thanks mom.

MAMA MAY:

You're welcome baby.

TOM:

Yea, thanks mom.

MAMA MAY:

Don't suck up Tom. Alan? Cookie?

ALAN takes cookie and cross to JENNIE and BETTY.

ALAN:

You know what they say about cookies--

All of the family begins grabbing a cookie and blowing on them to cool them.

ALAN:

Better than an anti-depressant!

JENNIE:

Oh honey, no.

EVERYONE:

(Except HUEY) To PAPAW!

HUEY loses it. Smacking cookies, crying, pitching a major fit. When he slows, BETTY comes out from hiding. She is actively eating the cookie.

HUEY:

Oh Betty.

BETTY:

(Mouth full) Uncle Huey? Don't you want one?

HUEY reluctantly takes a cookie. MAMA MAY's phone pings.

MAMA MAY:

Conrad. You're Papaw's ashes arrived here. You didn't mention it.

CONRAD:

I didn't know they had.

BETTY:

What's the matter Uncle Huey?

All the members of the family are eating cookies.

MAMA MAY:

Says here Huey signed for them.

CONRAD:

(while eating a cookie) Huey? Where's Papaw's ashes?

*HUEY eats the cookie while humming
"Near...Far...Wherever you are."*

LIGHTS OUT