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WALT'S IN THE CAR

Dialogues / Comedy / 3 min
Cast 2 Male x2

Gene and Howie drove forty-five minutes to scatter their friend Walt in the lake. Neither of them thinks he brought the ashes. Walt, it turns out, has been in the back seat for three weeks.

CHARACTERS

GENE - 60s, retired mail carrier, keeps score on everything and has for fifty years

HOWIE - 60s, retired shop teacher, treats every sentence as a setup and has never once cleaned out his car

SETTING

A park bench facing a small lake on a cool October morning, a parking lot visible behind them.

A park bench facing a small lake. Fall. A parking lot behind them. GENE, in a windbreaker, sits with a thermos. HOWIE arrives slowly with a paper bag of donuts and sits.

HOWIE

Where is he?

GENE

Where's who?

HOWIE

Walt.

GENE

What do you mean where's Walt. You got Walt.

HOWIE

I don't got Walt. You got Walt.

GENE

Howie. Why would I have Walt?

HOWIE

Because Linda gave him to you. At the church. I watched her hand you the box.

GENE

She handed me a box of programs. Leftover programs. I got forty programs with Walt's face on 'em in my hall closet.

HOWIE

So who's got Walt?

GENE

You said you'd take him. You said, "I'll take him home with me, he's used to my house." Because of the poker.

HOWIE

That was a joke.

GENE

It didn't sound like a joke.

HOWIE

Everything I say sounds like a joke. That's my whole personality. You've known me fifty years.

GENE

Well, I took it serious.

Pause. HOWIE opens the donuts. Offers one. GENE takes it.

HOWIE

So we drove out here.

GENE

We drove out here.

HOWIE

Forty minutes.

GENE

Forty-five. There was a thing on the bridge.

HOWIE

To put Walt in the lake.

GENE

Where he asked.

HOWIE

And nobody brought Walt.

GENE

Appears that way.

HOWIE

This is, honest to God, this is the most Walt thing that's ever happened. He'd love this. He would be laughing so hard right now.

GENE

He'd be laughing at you.

HOWIE

At me?

GENE

You're the one who said you'd take him.

HOWIE

Gene. I'm gonna be very calm. I'm gonna eat this donut. And I'm gonna say one more time that I did not take the man home.

GENE

Then where's he been for three weeks?

HOWIE

I assumed your closet. With the programs.

GENE

He's not in my closet!

HOWIE

Well, he's not in mine!

A jogger passes. They both nod politely and wait.

GENE

(low)

Did Linda keep him?

HOWIE

Linda's in Arizona. She moved the day after. You drove her to the airport.

GENE

I drove her to the airport.

HOWIE

Gene.

GENE

Don't say it.

HOWIE

He's in Arizona.

GENE

He's not in Arizona. She would've said.
"Gene, I'm taking Walt." She would've said
that.

HOWIE

Would she? Because she didn't say anything
when she took the good lawn chairs.

GENE

Those were her lawn chairs.

HOWIE

They were Walt's lawn chairs, and he told me
I could have 'em.

GENE

We're not doing the lawn chairs.

*HOWIE finishes his donut. Wipes his hands. Then
he goes very still.*

HOWIE

Oh no.

GENE

What.

HOWIE

Oh, no no no.

GENE

What, Howie.

HOWIE

I did take him home.

GENE

I told you!

HOWIE

No, listen. I took him home. I put him in the back seat, because I didn't want him in the trunk, that felt wrong. And then Marianne said the back seat was full of junk and to clean it out, and I said I would, and I didn't.

GENE

So he's...

HOWIE

He's in the car.

GENE

Right now.

HOWIE

Right now. He's been in the car. Three weeks. He's been to the pharmacy. He's been to my grandson's soccer game. He went through the car wash.

GENE

You took Walt through the car wash?

HOWIE

It's a nice car wash!

GENE starts laughing. Can't stop.

GENE

Three weeks. You drove him around for three weeks and you sat here and let me think I lost him.

HOWIE

I didn't let you think anything, I forgot!

GENE

That's worse!

HOWIE

It's not worse, it's just different!

GENE stands, still laughing, and picks up the thermos.

GENE

Go get him.

HOWIE

You go get him. You lost the lawn chairs.

GENE

Howie. Go get our friend out of your car.

HOWIE gets up, grumbling, and heads for the lot.

GENE sits back down and looks at the lake.

GENE

(to the lake)

You'd have loved this, Walt. You'd have loved this.

END OF SCRIPT