

# Good Riddance

By C. Jade Wyton

*Kenneth Bloom's father-in-law has died, and he could not be happier! He has waited for this day for years. And now it has finally come! And every moment of it just keeps getting better and better! It's such a good day he can even find himself getting along with his late-wife's sister, Isabel— And perhaps, with their new celebratory bond, they can finally put their old rivalry behind them.*

***Contains mentions of death, alcohol, and abuse.***

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It was a fantastic day to be going up to Warm Waters!

An absolutely wonderful day!

It didn't matter that it was pelting down with rain so heavy Ken had to drive at half the speed limit just to be safe.

It didn't matter that he had gotten up at five in the morning just to arrive on time.

And it didn't even matter that he was going to go see Isabel.

*Leon was dead.*

Leon was fucking *dead!*

And that was brilliant news!

Ken was not ashamed to admit that when he'd heard his father-in-law had suffered a heart attack, he'd literally jumped for joy.

And he was not ashamed to admit he had a bottle of wine and party supplies in the backseat of his car.

And he was certainly *not* ashamed to admit that, during the time Isabel had been organising the funeral, he had been organising a banner with "GOOD RIDDANCE YOU RACIST FUCK!" in a bold rainbow font.

The one thing he *was*, though, was ready to physically fight Leon's daughters and ex-wife if they tried to stop him hanging it over the man's headstone.

That was why he hadn't let Becky come with him.... She'd wanted to go and support her aunt, but Ken had dreaded the idea of her meeting her grandmother, and asked Isa to keep Becky safely at home until it was all over.

Isa had agreed on *one* condition; Ken not get arrested.

Ken had told her he couldn't promise that and she'd given him the most *indignant* look before heading downstairs to make dinner.

So now here he was; pulling into a parking lot in Warm Waters' graveyard and slowly navigating his way on foot to the large tarp setup that indicated that someone was being buried in this horrible weather....

There were even *less* guests than he'd thought there would be.

He could only count three heads— Isabel, Isabel's girlfriend Moon, and... ah. One of the funerary staff.

Ken couldn't help but laugh aloud at the sight, and almost dropped his umbrella.

Not even Leon's eldest daughter had come?!

Oh, that was just icing on the cake!

Sure. Perhaps it made sense for Ellen not to come (they'd been divorced for years and as far as Ken knew they hadn't talked since Barbra's funeral) but *Sharon* was Leon's *daughter*!

For her not to come just said it all!

At the sound of Ken's laugh, the trio under the tarp turned to look at him.

A moment passed as they stared at Ken; obviously taking in the armful of rainbows and bundle of balloons he was carrying.

Then Isabel snickered, covering her mouth and glancing to Moon to gauge her girlfriend's reaction to Ken's behaviour. Then, when Moon scoffed her own laugh, Isabel ran out from under the tarp to take the helium-filled balloons from him.

'Ken!' she exclaimed. 'I was *not* expecting you to *actually* show up!'

'Please, Isabel! I wouldn't miss this for the *world*!' Ken chuckled, leading her back to the tarp before lowering his umbrella. 'It's a shame Sharon isn't here though.'

'She had work,' Isabel explained. 'Apparently that's more important than Dad.'

'Isn't it, though?'

Isabel snickered, biting her lip to try and hide it but failing as she tied the balloons to the tarp's metal frame.

'Oh, Ken, I uh— You still hate me, don't you?'

'Absolutely, yes,' Ken responded, dumping his decorations on the ground in front of Moon and shaking her hand in greeting.

'Okay, so you're *really* going to hate what I'm about to ask, but—' Isabel stumbled over to Ken and took him by the arm, scrunching up her nose in an apologetic grimace. 'I need a little bit of help... *paying* the fee for this funeral. Mother said she'd pay for half but then she didn't.... So maybe you would consider.... Maybe...?'

'Only if I can hang this up,' Ken told her; holding up the banner he'd printed.

Isabel let out a laugh and clapped her hands, nodding, and so Ken headed to Leon's grave and hung it over his headstone.

The funerary employee eyed the brightly-coloured farewell with an unsurprised look, before asking Ken; 'Is there anything you'd like to put on the coffin before I lower it?'

Ken immediately spit on it; to no surprise of the employee, who simply gave a sniff and pressed the button on the machine to lower Leon into his grave.

'Yeah, right down to hell, you sorry piece of *shit*!' Ken hissed, watching as the coffin slowly descended into the ground.

'Ooh, you brought champagne!' Isabel cheered from the pile by Moon's feet. 'Can I open it?'

'Fais les honneurs salope!' Ken exclaimed. 'C'était ton père!'

Isabel gave a laugh, and uncorked the drink with a loud *POP* that sprayed foam across the grass.

'Woo!' Moon cheered, taking her hat off to swing it around playfully.

'Drink up, Dad!' Isabel cackled, pouring a cup's worth of champagne into Leon's grave. 'I'd ask you to say hi to Barbra for me, but you're heading in the

wrong direction for that!

Ken let out his own laugh and retrieved a packet of confetti from his pile; which he threw over his sister-in-law with a cheer. 'He's dead!'

'He's dead!' Isabel echoed, spinning in a happy circle that sent her dress twirling around her.

'He's gone!'

'He's carked it!'

'We're rid of him!'

'I'm free!'

'No more fights!'

'No more *fear*!'

'Good riddance!'

'Good riddance!'

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By the end of the funeral, both Ken and Isabel were *far* too drunk to drive; so Moon had driven to Isabel's house to drop the pair off before she'd gone in for her shift at the local animal hospital.

A vet! Moon was a vet! Specialising in parrots and other exotic avians!

How interesting! Oh, if Becky found out she would talk the poor woman's *ears off*! Ken was sure of that—

'Down you go, you old *bastard*!' Isabel's voice cried from the hallway, and Ken heard the (sadly, familiar) sound of a canvas and its frame being smashed into the floor.

It was followed by the sound of stomping and Isabel singing between breathless grunts.... Ken could all but *see* her jumping up and down on the portrait of her something-great grandfather that Leon kept in the entrance hall.

'*My house now! My house now!*' Isabel cried in a sing-song voice. '*My house now, smash all the old men! It's my house now—* FUCK YOU, LIVE LAUGH LOVE!'

Something wooden snapped, and Ken saw half of a wall-hanging fly past the lounge room archway. The other half soon followed it, spinning as if Isabel had thrown it like a frisbee, before Isabel danced into view and knocked over a shelf of ceramic angels.

Ken clapped for her as she did and gave a cheer; though he didn't rise from the couch to help.

Half because it was her celebration of freedom and his own spiteful victory dance didn't have a place in it— And half because his head was spinning and he thought might vomit if he stood up.

'Oooh, a photo of *Sharon*!' Isabel mocked, before slapping a hanging frame off the wall and letting it shatter on the floor. '*Whoops!* Oh well! She should have come to pick her things up *yesterday*! Like I *told her to*!'

'Oui!' Ken agreed. 'If she wanted a say in what happened with his things, she should have been more present!'

'*Yeah!*' Isabel exclaimed. 'She *NEVER* helped with Dad! She'd *promise* to help, and then she'd *never show up*! And then Dad would yell at *me* about it!'

‘Une telle pute!’ Ken scoffed, sitting up. ‘Barbra always said the same! But, oh, if *you* were even just five minutes late to something *she* wanted done—’

‘UGH!’ Isabel ran her hands over her face and made a disgusted sound. ‘Euuuughhhhhh! She would lose her *mind* at you!’

‘Oui! Oui! That’s what Barbra said!’

‘Oh, *Barbra!*’ Isabel gave a mournful cry, and stumbled over to sit besides Ken; wrapping her arm around him. ‘Ken! Ken.... Ken, I’m *sorry*.’

‘You’re sorry!’

‘I’m sorry!’ Isabel repeated, burying her face into Ken’s side. ‘I was awful to you! So, so awful! And you were always so wonderful to Barbra— I shouldn’t have been like that! I should have been a good sister, like Barbra always was!’

‘Barbra *was* a good sister...’ Ken agreed. ‘And a good wife.... She was la personne la plus parfaite! La personne la plus parfaite, in the whole world!’

‘Oui!’ Isabel agreed, and Ken heard her sniff. ‘Oui! She was! And I made her hate me!’

‘Non, *non*...’ Ken reassured, resting his chin on the top of Isabel’s head and wrapping his arms around her. ‘Non. She loved you. She did. She told me so. But she had to make a choice; she just didn’t want Becky involved with all of *this*.’

‘*It was a good choice*,’ Isabel mumbled. ‘*I wish I’d known how to get out of it, sooner*.... Oh, god— My mother! I don’t want to deal to her!’

‘So *don’t!*’ Ken exclaimed. ‘If she calls, hang up! If she comes over, lock the door!’

‘She’s going to want Dad’s things!’ Isabel groaned, flopping over to lay off the edge of the couch dramatically. ‘She always said she should have gotten more in the divorce! *Ugh!*’

‘*Ugh!*’ Ken echoed in agreement.

‘I just— I just... wish... that there was some way to stop her getting ahold of any of it,’ Isabel sighed. ‘She doesn’t deserve it! She didn’t spend the last decade looking after him! *I* did! But I don’t *want* his gross old things! I wish I could just— I wish I could just—’

Isabel cut off with a gasp, her eyes widening as she rose to her feet.

‘Ken, I have a *great idea!*’

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‘I cannot *believe* you!’ Isa scolded from the front seat of her car. ‘A *fire?! I* leave you two together for *one day* and you set a *house on fire!*’

‘It was an *accident!*’ Isabel argued. ‘It was just supposed to be the stuff in the backyard! We didn’t *mean* for it to spread to the house!’

‘Oui!’ Ken agreed. ‘An accident, Isa! We misjudged how flammable his old paintings were! But we were doing the world a favour, destroying all those bigoted things! They did not need to be passed on to the next generation of racists!’

‘Yeah!’ Isabel gave a frantic nod. ‘We did the *right thing!*’

‘You absolutely did *not* do the right thing!’ Isa retorted. ‘You burnt down a house!’

‘Just my own,’ Isabel whined. ‘I can do whatever I want to my own house!’

‘Mhm. And now just where are you planning on staying?!’ Isa growled.  
‘Because you don’t have a home anymore, you *stupid* thing!’  
‘She can stay with us!’ Ken offered.  
‘Absolutely *not!*’ Isa snapped.  
‘Why not? We have a spare room!’  
‘You’re drunk, Kenneth!’  
‘Only a *little* bit!’ Ken argued.  
‘Drunk enough to *burn down a house!*’ Isa scolded. ‘Besides, I thought you hated Isabel!’  
‘No, not anymore!’ Ken explained. ‘We are friends, now!’  
Isabel nodded again, even more frantically than before. ‘Mhm! Mhm! Mhm!’  
‘Can’t she stay with us until she finds somewhere else?’ Ken asked. ‘We have the spare room! We can put a cot in it!’  
‘I’ll do chores!’ Isabel pushed. ‘I’ll cook! And I’ll clean! And I’ll mop and sweep!’  
‘No.’  
‘Please?’ Isabel whined.  
‘*No!*’  
‘Please, mon amoureuse?’ Ken begged, leaning forward and resting his head on Isa’s shoulder as she drove. ‘I want to help Isabel. I don’t want her to suffer anymore. It’s not what Barbra would have wanted....’  
‘Ken— *Ugh!*’ Isa let out a sigh, and shook her head. ‘You’re acting *pathetic*, Ken!’  
‘Mm... but... is it working?’ Ken asked. ‘Because I can be *more* pathetic if you want me to!’  
‘Ken, *no!*’ Isa rolled her eyes. ‘I don’t want you to—’  
‘*Please*, my love?’ Ken begged, mustering up the most pitiful, woeful tone he could. ‘Please? *Please!*’  
‘Oh, my god!’ Isa snapped, before pulling over to the side of the road so she could press her face into the steering wheel. ‘*Fine!* Fine! She can fucking stay!’ she exclaimed, exasperated, and turned in her seat so she could point a furious finger at Ken. ‘But don’t you go blaming *me* when in a week, you two are at each other’s fucking *throats!*’  
‘Mm...’ Ken gave Isa a smile, and pecked a kiss on her cheek. ‘Thank you, my most beautiful Isa....’  
Isa rolled her eyes, and flopped back into her seat. ‘Oh... my... *god....*’

—END—

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