

Dying to Leave You

by

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Based on a true story

Jane announces she's leaving, but an unexpected letter reveals she has Cancer. Hearts are broken and loyalties torn apart. Who's going to look after her now?



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It's Jane's dying day. We accompany Jane as she delves back through her life and loves, flowing to and from conscious thought in her hospital room as visitors arrive. The story follows her life as Ben's wife and mum to their two teenage daughters, Dawn and Lynda.

Dancer Jane recalls how circumstances dictated, and she was untimely forced to confess she's leaving with Ben's older brother. Her bags were packed, but before she leaves, a letter from the hospital reveals she has Cancer.

Jane's world was thrown into turmoil, and her family struggled, but accepted her back while she underwent savage treatment. Her lover slipped the scene - damaged goods just not his bag. Relationships twisted and turned when Jane's diagnosis was declared terminal.

In 'Dying To Leave You', we also follow the complicated emotional lives of teenagers managing double devastation of their mother - a woman eventually freed from a life of constraint in a male dominated world.

This short has potential to be developed into 5 part series. Each episode will follow this unusual and heart breaking family story. The strained parent-child relationships and the path of love vs lust into an emotive and turbulent drama.

FADE IN:

INT/EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - PRESENT DAY

Gliding through the house, made beds, family photographs, pet portraits. Downstairs, untidy kitchen, two packed holdalls wait in the hallway. Front door flies open and up to the sky, through the clouds and stopping abruptly. Hurling down vertically, through a roof, stopping sharply.

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Viewing from two metres above a hospital bed just as JANE (39) closes her eyes for the last time.

JANE (V.O.)

I know you'll think the worst of me
- I mean, what kind of mother walks
out and leaves her kids? Even
worse, what kind of mother runs off
with her husband's brother.

INT. HOTEL RESTAURANT CARVERY - 4 YEARS AGO [FLASHBACK]

A family meal, adults laughing, JANE (35) a tall brunette with a generous cleavage passes her husband BEN (34), he's cracking another joke at someone's expense. Jane slides in, sits opposite his brother, GLEN (45) suited and slick, Rolex at the end of his cuff. Glancing upwards, she meets his wandering eyes, looks away.

JANE (V.O.)

You don't have to tell me it's not
right. I know full well. But I've
lived a lot of 'not right' because
of others so I guess you could say
not right is kind of my thing.

Jane pouts, flicks her hair, pours more wine. Looks down the table and joins in a conversation.

[FLASHBACK ENDS]

RETURN TO SCENE:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - PRESENT TIME - DAY

Jane is hooked to a morphine drip, cannula from the back of her hand, down from her wedding ring. Fresh flowers and cards on a cabinet absent of any food or drink.

JANE (V.O.)

Don't think I'm expecting you to understand either. I can't even tell you I'm in an abusive marriage, and that I fell helplessly into the arms of a sensitive soul sweeping me off my feet. No. The truth about my husband is he's bloody overbearing. I literally can't do anything wrong in his eyes, and my God I've done plenty.

Ben has arrived, he's fussing over the flowers, kisses Jane, smooths her hair and flicks through her chart.

JANE (V.O.)

He's the king of turning a blind eye, head in the sand, nothing-to-see-here. Expensive gifts, flowers every week. Where do you want to go? What do you want to do? The best of everything. The kind of bullshit that's driven me fecking mad for years. I don't mind telling you I hate it.

CUT TO:

INT. SQUASH COURT, WEEKDAY MORNING - 6 YEARS AGO [FLASHBACK]

Jane and Glen playing at a good level, relaxed but competitive. No viewing gallery on court 3, it's selected for it's privacy. They flirt.

JANE

Hey! Take that serve again, stay in your box.

Glen pins Jane up against the wall, she laughs.

GLEN

It's your box that I'm interested in getting into.

Jane pushes back.

JANE

I haven't finished with your balls here yet!

They laugh. They play on.

Jane stops, looks out at the viewer breaks 4th wall.

JANE (CONT'D)

Full disclosure since we're here,
and I have your attention - this
affair wasn't the first.

CUT TO:

INT. DANCE STUDIO - 7 YEARS AGO [FLASHBACK]

Jane is leading a passionate Latin American Passo Doble in
her dance class. Other dancers look on.

Jane looks out at the viewer, breaks 4th wall.

JANE (CONT'D)

There's Stephan - and Andy

Stephan swings Jane around, Andy glances at his own partner.

JANE (CONT'D)

Andy could really put his back into
it.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - 7 YEARS AGO - NIGHT [FLASHBACK]

Jane and Andy are having gymnastic level sex. Jane's on all
fours, Andy pumping from behind. Jane breaks 4th wall.

JANE

But his dick is a lot like a walnut
whip, he'll be there for ages and
to be honest I can't feel a thing
apart from his balls.

Jane is lying on her back in the bed after sex, closes her
eyes. The alarm clock beside the bed bleeps. Her eyes remain
closed. The alarm clock sound changes to a blood pressure
monitor.

[FLASHBACK ENDS]

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - PRESENT TIME

Darkness. Jane is unconscious in her hospital bed.

JANE (V.O.)

Oh here's the bleeps, wait... shhh. I
can hear my girls...They must be
back from school.

(MORE)

JANE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Lynda's just finished her Junior Cert and Dawn's done her Leaving - off to college in September. I'm proud of them both, but Dawn hates me right now so I need to listen in.

Focus...pull everything together...listen.

The girls have arrived from school, DAWN (18) and LYNDA (16), sorting out their snacks.

DAWN

What time's Dad coming?

LYNDA

Dunno, I think he's in Drogheda today, getting the van fixed.

DAWN

It's a right piece of shit.

LYNDA

I know, it'll fall apart one day and you'll just see a tyre bouncing down the road.

DAWN

I'm not getting the bus back, takes ages. I'll see if Mark can come pick us up?

JANE V/O

Bloody Hell girls, hello? I'm here you know. Say something to make me feel better about all this.

DAWN

What time are they coming round again?

LYNDA

Five I think. We'll stay an hour and go home.

DAWN

Okay. What's for dinner?

LYNDA

There's some chips in the freezer, we can get pizzas in DayBreak.

DAWN

I'll get Dad to give us shopping money tomorrow, there's not much in.

JANE (V.O.)

Remember I'm here girls. I can't stay long. Say something important, something about how you feel about me.

Dawn looks at Jane, nudges Lynda.

LYNDA

Do you think she's asleep?

DAWN

She's probably listening in on us, knowing her.

LYNDA

Probably. They're not telling us anything, are they?

DAWN

Do you think that's it then?

LYNDA

Suppose so.

DAWN

Or are they waiting to tell Da first?

JANE (V.O.)

Tell Da...He knows girls, it'll break his heart but he'll get over it. I am sorry to leave you like this, but after everything that's happened, it's for the best.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - 17 YEARS AGO [FLASHBACK]

Ben and Jane bringing their new born baby home to a small country cottage, surrounded by fields. Ben is leading Jane in by the elbow.

[FLASHBACK ENDS]

CUT TO:

EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - 14 YEARS AGO [FLASHBACK]

The two girls are toddlers, Ben is playing with them in the garden, Jane is upstairs on the phone. Looking out, Jane breaks the 4th wall.

JANE

So there's me, stranded, two kids,
house, his family, and I couldn't
drive back then. Trapped, and so
young, but I stayed and did the
right thing.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - KITCHEN, DAY - 1 YEAR AGO [FLASHBACK]

A birthday party, family are around, in the living room. Jane and Glen meet in the kitchen. They brush past each other, it's erotic and Jane inhales deeply. Glen leaves with a drink and Jane is alone at the sink.

Jane breaks the 4th wall.

JANE

Oh God, just to feel the blood in
my veins or something to excite me.
I needed that. Arousal. Fireworks.
A sparkler would have done.

Jane puts apple tart in the microwave.

JANE (CONT'D)

So between the jigs and the reels,
I got away with affairs for years,
this last one in particular was the
biggie. Talk about shite on your
own doorstep. Brace yourself for
the gossip though, I wouldn't have
told them if I knew I'd be dying in
a year's time.

The microwave bleeps. The sound turns into the bleeps of a blood pressure monitor again.

[FLASHBACK ENDS]

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - PRESENT DAY

Dawn and Lynda return to the bedside. They are in everyday clothes, Dawn's athletic, dressed from Penneys, Lynda's grungy, black converse and a 21 Pilots T-shirt. Dawn picks up the TV remote.

LYNDA

Hiya mum.

JANE (V.O.)

(faraway)

Oh, hello girls.

LYNDA

Do you think she's really there and can hear us?

DAWN

Dunno. What do you think? Do you think *he'll* visit?

LYNDA

No. Does it really matter now anyway?

DAWN

Do you think she'll wake up?

LYNDA

Nah, I doubt it. How could she come back to us anyway, they've told us what's happening. Either way she's gone.

DAWN

Yeah I suppose you're right. Shit though. Nothing else to say is there? I know it sounds horrible, but I think it's better that she just goes now, and doesn't linger on.

LYNDA

She left us already.

DAWN

What do you think's going to happen at home?

LYNDA

Dunno. One thing's for sure though, Da's going to be in bits.

DAWN

God yeah.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOMS - AFTERNOON - 1 YEAR
AGO [FLASHBACK]

Jane is putting her make up on, she's in her good clothes.
Dawn leans on the doorframe.

DAWN

You going out Mam?

JANE

Yeah, Supervalu. Just need a few
messages.

DAWN

And so you need all that make-up to
go Supervalu?

JANE

If I want, Dawn, yeah.

DAWN

I might come with you then.

JANE

You stay here with Lynda, Dad's not
home for a bit yet. I won't be
long.

Dawn folds her arms, looks disapprovingly at Jane.

DAWN

If it's just a few bits, why go all
the way to Supervalu when Dunnes is
much closer?

JANE

Jaysus Dawn, give me a break, mind
your own.

Jane kicks her door closed. Dawn goes to her own room.

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. PUB CAR PARK - GLEN'S CAR - 1 YEAR AGO - DAY
[FLASHBACK]

Jane and Glen are reverse-parked at the back of the car park.

GLEN

Have you thought more about telling them?

JANE

Look, Lynda's revising for her Junior Cert, when she's done her exams done I'll tell them.

GLEN

Bring your things to mine a bit at a time. You don't want to wait around. Best make it a clean break, yeah? A quick exit, yeah?

Jane stops his hand travelling up her skirt, Glen has no intention of stopping.

GLEN (CONT'D)

God I just can't wait to get my hands on you.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - STAIRS - 11 MONTHS AGO - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Jane and Glen are half-way up the stairs, semi-naked, Jane's head in Glen's hands as he leans back, guiding her head down towards his groin. At the last second, Jane turns her head to the viewer, breaks 4th wall.

JANE

Any minute now, Dawn's going to come home early to catch us at it. She'll walk through that door and -

Dawn walks in and screams. Glen jumps up and leaves. Dawn is pacing, she's arguing with Jane who has gone upstairs. Jane turns, breaks the 4th wall.

JANE (CONT'D)

So that was it, no waiting, I had to tell them, there and then. He left me to break the news, of course, no need for extras in this scene. To be honest I would have preferred a scene. Now I have to tell Ben.

Door slams as Dawn leaves.

[FLASHBACK ENDS]

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - PRESENT DAY - NIGHT

Lynda returns from the shop with flowers, Dawn is watching East Enders.

LYNDA

The nurse said she'll change the water later, but I thought these looked nice.

DAWN

She won't see them.

LYNDA

But she might open her eyes, we don't know for sure.

DAWN

Whatever you think. Did you get crisps?

LYNDA

Yeah, and a magazine in the bag. I got Coke as well, keep us awake.

Lynda rummages through the paper bag.

JANE (V.O.)

Paper... I have to go back down. So soon this time. It must be near girls. Paper, reminds me. The letter. It came out of the blue...

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - UPSTAIRS BEDROOMS - 9 MONTHS AGO - AFTERNOON [FLASHBACK]

Jane leans on Lynda's bedroom door frame holding a letter. Lynda's surrounded by school books, keeps her back turned.

JANE

I just opened this from the hospital.

LYNDA

Yeah?

JANE

The lump I had removed by the doctor was Cancerous and I've got to go back to see a consultant.

LYNDA

Ok. When?

JANE

Wednesday next week.

LYNDA

That's quick.

It's awkward, Lynda tries to summon empathy, but she can't fake it and Jane leaves.

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. RURAL BEAUTY SPOT - CAR PARK - GLEN'S CAR - 6 MONTHS AGO [FLASHBACK]

Jane has a surgical dressing on the left side of her head, above her ear. She stares ahead. Glen's hands remain on the wheel.

GLEN

I think the best thing for me to do is lie low and let you have your treatment. I wouldn't be able to get the time off to go with you, you know that.

JANE

But I've told them Glen. I fucking told them. And him! I just told them I was leaving, with you - his brother - their uncle of all people. Now, hey girls, I have Cancer, come help mammy. What the hell kind of messed up crap is this? Dawn hates me and Lynda's not talking to me either.

GLEN

It's for the best we take a break. Ben'll sweep it under the carpet now you're, erm, sick. We'll make plans again when you are alright, yeah?

Jane looks out of the window.

GLEN (CONT'D)

I'll drop you back to your car. Text me later.

CUT TO:

INT. FAMILY HOUSE - UPSTAIRS MASTER BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Jane's in bed, crying hard. Ben gently puts his arm around her. It helps. The crying softens.

[FLASHBACK ENDS]

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - PRESENT DAY - LATER AT NIGHT

Lynda is crying. A nurse checks Jane's observations and makes notes, she smiles sympathetically at Ben, who is absent-mindedly comforting his daughter.

JANE (V.O.)

(faraway)

My girls are here and so is Ben.
Listen. God, let me come up and
hear them.

Dawn is trying to find another chair. They stand beside Jane.

BEN

Dawn, it's alright, leave it, the
nurse said she'd bring another
recliner and we can stay in here.

DAWN

How long's it going to be?

BEN

She didn't say.

LYNDA

Her breathing's really bad.

DAWN

Dad, I'll get the nurse to tell us
what's happening.

LYNDA

I'll come with you. Shall I go shop
Da? Did you eat anything?

BEN

No. Get me a coffee from the
machine, here, take my card.

The girls leave, Ben takes Jane's hand.

JANE (V.O.)
 (faraway)
 Ben is here. All at once I feel
 your love Ben. It was always here.

Ben straightens her rings. Jane's breathing is raspy.

JANE (V.O.)
 Ben. I can't hear you properly.

BEN
 I don't know what I'm going to do
 without you.

JANE (V.O.)
 Ben. I can't hear you, I can't
 think. It's time for me to go.
 I have to go back down.
 Deeper this time.

The machine bleeps.

BEN
 Jane I always loved you no matter
 what, I thought I might have been
 enough, but I hope you know I'm
 here and he's not.

JANE (V.O.)
 (weak)
 I know Ben. I have to go now.
 The girls. Are they here?

The nurse draws the curtain around the hospital bed, she nods
 to Ben as the girls return.

NURSE
 Do you girls want a minute on your
 own to say goodbye?

Ben and Dawn leave, Lynda stays beside Jane.

JANE (V.O.)
 Lynda I'm tired now, don't cry
 sweetheart. You are my beautiful
 daughter, stay strong.

LYNDA
 (softly)
 Bye mum.

Dawn goes into the bedside when Lynda emerges.

JANE (V.O.)

Dawn. I have to go now Dawn, I'm so tired. I love you all so much.

DAWN

Mum it's Dawn, it's ok to go. I Love you.

The curtain moves back, Ben and Lynda return to Jane's side. The nurse checks Jane's pulse.

LYNDA

Was that the last one?

The nurse nods, and places Jane's hands together, adds one of the flowers from the vase. Ben and the girls cuddle in to comfort each other.

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. FAMILY HOUSE - PRESENT DAY

Gliding through the house, made beds, family photographs, pet portraits. Downstairs, untidy kitchen, two packed holdalls wait in the hallway. Front door flies open and now up to the sky, through the clouds, clean air and into the bright light of sun rays.

LYNDA (V.O.)

I was a dancer, and always will be. Remember girls, the life I came from was harsh. Be wild and high spirited, dance and let all your choices be your own. I love you.

FADE OUT.

THE END