

The Eulogy

I didn't know the amount of pressure that would come with being the first and only speaker at a funeral. Being a former comedian, I am not afraid of a crowd, but this crowd looks intimidating and dull. As I look around this dark and dusty church in Jacksonville, Florida. A city I've grown up in with my best bud Dennis, I hear my name being called. "Alexander, would you please step up and share a few words?" The Pastor says, with an eerie look on his face. I rise from my seat and walk to the podium, hoping he doesn't smell the boozy protein shake I had this morning, as I make my way past. I immediately begin to survey this melancholy crowd. Being a performer, knowing your crowd is important, and this crowd seems to be a mystery. "Well, here goes nothing," I take a deep breath and muster up what little positive energy I had left. Wow, a lot of people out there. Seeing all of these faces, some of them familiar, others not so much. This just makes me realize how much Dennis liked to party. Dennis was the opposite of me, in every sense of the word. He was the level headed nerd, where I was the daredevil and risk-taker. When combined, became the main ingredients for a crazy time. That being said, I am sure we all know why we are gathered here today. For some of us, it's not just for the free coffee and donuts. But for some of us that are hungover, coffee and donuts sound like a wonderful treat. Speaking of desserts, this gathering is two strippers, and one support dog shy, of being the world's lamest renaissance fair. At least Dennis's sister is here, so tally one for the strippers. Hi Stacy, great to see you. Man, Dennis wouldn't want it any other way. Hence the reason I am here, I will be the train conductor, in charge of dragging this gathering from a dull episode of The Golden Girls, and deliver us to Jack Daniel's land. What can I say about Dennis that he hasn't already

corrected any of us on? The guy was everything I wanted to be, except for the unfortunate death part. He was smart, gifted, and a bigtime know it all.

I remember one time, this genius made me believe that The Ninja Turtles were real, and they had moved out of New York City to Texas because the crime was becoming unbearable for them to manage. I figured the Ninja turtles moving to Texas seemed plausible because there they could hang out at a Walmart without disguises, ultimately blending right in with the locals. The best part of this story is that we were both in our late twenties. My lime green Crocs and I fell for all of his outrageous stories. One time I decided to get him back for all of the crazy things he would make me believe. I had a wild idea to ditch our summer semester of college to move to Las Vegas for a month. We ended up going through with it. Dennis and I lived in a homeless camp under a bridge. We would instigate bum fights to pass the time. He had the homeless community convinced that we were agents looking for new boxing talent. When we finally had our fill of the homeless festivities, we decided to head back to Jack-hole, Florida. On that Grey Hound bus route home. Dennis got into a heated debate with a flat earther. It was a thirteen-year-old boy who truly believed the earth was indeed flat. Dennis participated in a thirty-two-hour long debate with this kid, despite the kid bringing up some pretty solid points, Dennis was unwavering in his defense that the earth is round. Trust me, it got awkward and testy on a few occasions. But entertaining, to say the least. It was like watching the presidential debates, while sitting in the official transportation vehicle of poverty. These stories are just scratching the surface.

We took a trip to New Orleans once, and went to a popular rave night club we heard about on Facebook. Now, neither of us was much for raving, but the photos of all of the pretty women on the page lured us to the club. When we got there, we realized it was the one weekend

out of the year that they do a gay night. “We didn’t come all this way to not party,” so we decided to partake and dance our faces off anyways. I met a guy at the club who asked me if we wanted any drugs. I figured why not? Everyone is doing them, plus it can’t possibly get much worse than getting to a club expecting women, and only finding a bunch of dudes. So I said the only drug that came to my mind. “We will have two Mollys kind sir.” I said to the fine, yet mysterious dealer in the club. Unsure if he could hear me from the drone of the robot music, or unsure if I even pronounced the name of the drug correctly. He nodded his head, and handed us a baggy with some white powder-like substance. We paid him his asking price of sixty bucks, despite Dennis’s desire to haggle with him. Now the fun part, how to take this weird, alien-like powder. We rushed to the bathroom, decided to wrap it in toilet paper, and swallow it. So that is exactly what we did. Afterwards, we excitedly hit the dance floor to rip our sweet moves. An hour went by, and I asked Dennis if he felt anything. He mentioned that he doesn’t really feel anything. Other than a crazy stomach ache brewing, possibly getting ready to make some mud butt. We needed to find that stranger, because that’s exactly how my stomach was feeling too. After finally locating the drug dealer, Dennis decided to confront him. Long story short, the dealer laughed in our faces when we told him his drugs were broken. “You ate it?” He said pointing at us, as if we were frat boys who had phallic objects drawn on our faces. “What did you give us, you evil man?” I said to the guy. “I gave you what you asked for buddy, I gave you crack.” He said with a smirk. “Crack?” I said with a dumbfounded look. “Yes crack, and you dumbasses ate it!” he said laughingly. “But I wanted Molly dude,” I said. “Nope, you asked for crack.” By this time, we could have gone back and forth arguing about what drug name I said, and what he thought he heard. However, my bowels were melting inside of me. We hightailed it out of that dreadful place, leaking at the bits. “We ate Crack bro?! We are such idiots.” I said,

squeezing my buttocks, and shuffling down Bourbon Street with my best bud. Fortunately, Dennis and I found a dark spot in a back alley, behind an IHOP to toot. I thought I had internal bleeding, but luckily I am a fast healer. Oh, the many life lessons we learned from that trip.

As time went on, Dennis and I grew apart. He got a kick-ass job as an architect in Atlanta, and I started touring the country as a stand-up comic. We stayed in touch as best as possible, but something was always missing. Telling these stories here has opened my eyes to a few things. We made many mistakes growing up, but we learned from all of them. We had each other to laugh at, or with. I recall him always telling me to never give up, and to tell my jokes as if he was there in the crowd. I'll be honest guys, I've struggled allot. Currently, my life is in shambles. Dennis would be extremely disappointed in me. He would want me to do better. I am ashamed to admit, that it has taken Dennis falling off of a building, to make me realize how precious life is. I almost wish it was me in that casket instead. He was destined for greatness, whereas I am destined for the bottom of a bottle. This day on, I challenge myself, and everyone here, to never take your life for granted. Become a stripper like Stacy, believe in the Ninja Turtles, move to Texas if you have too. Have long arguments with punk-ass kids, host bum fights under a bridge, and even eat crack. If that's what it takes to finally start living your lives, then I challenge us all to do it. I promise that I will turn my life around. Starting today, I will learn to live again. In loving memory of my best friend. Dennis Eugene Brown.