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THE LOTTERY

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FADE IN:

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Doctor WEISS, a bearded man in his 50s, sits behind his desk. A copious file lies open in front of him.

On the opposite side of the desk, GILBERT, a seventy-year-old emaciated man and his wife CATHY, a pleasant woman in her 60s, are anxiously awaiting Dr. Weiss' words.

Dr. Weiss scans the file and finally...

DR.WEISS

Gilbert, unfortunately, I don't have good news...the PET Scan has shown the spreading of the tumor to the lymph nodes--

GILBERT

What are my chances?

Cathy looks distraught. Her eyes are wet.

CATHY

We're ready for anything...clinical trials...unapproved drugs...anything.

DR.WEISS

I've tried everything available, this is a nasty tumor--

GILBERT

Let's try harder doctor...I'm sure there is something new up there...

DR.WEISS

Okay...I have a good friend at the FDA...I'll call her to see if there is something new in the pipeline--

CATHY

When we'll find out?

DR.WEISS

I'll call you home...in the meantime, don't be upset, relax...watch TV, read a book...keep your mind occupied.

Dr. Weiss attempts a smile.

Cathy stares at him with a hopeful look.

INT. GILBERT'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Gilbert lounges on a comfortable armchair. He watches a TV quiz show.

The monotonous, soothing voice of the host hypnotizes Gilbert's brain.

INT. GILBERT'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER - DREAM

The tedious tone of the presenter's voice spreads through the room.

Gilbert's closed eyes are glued to the TV screen.

PRESENTER

These are the PowerDeath lottery numbers drawn today February 31. 0, 1, 0, 1, 0, 0, 1, 1, 0, 0, 1, 1, 0, 0, and 00. The PowerDeath meganumber is 0101. In case of a win, please come in person with your winning ticket to the PowerDeath main office. Thank you for playing with us and good luck.

INT. POWERDEATH LOTTERY'S OFFICE - DAY

The room is empty. The walls are painted in black. A large desk and a chair is the only furniture. In the front edge of the desk a nameplate says "PRIMUS GHOST, CEO.

The chair appears unoccupied.

Gilbert stands in front of the desk. He looks dazed and edgy.

A cavernous voice rises from the chair in the direction of Gilbert.

It is the voice of Primus Ghost the PowerDeath lottery's CEO.

PRIMUS GHOST

Good morning Gilbert, did you bring the ticket with you?

Gilbert stares at the chair with a frightened and inquisitive look.

PRIMUS GHOST (cont'd)
Don't be scared...you can't see me
but I'm here. I'm a ghost, after all.

Gilbert looks still confused but less anxious.

He takes the lottery ticket from the inside pocket of his jacket.

GILBERT
Here's the ticket.

He lays the ticket on the desk in front of the empty chair.

PRIMUS GHOST
Thank you.

A short silent moment, then...

PRIMUS GHOST (cont'd)
I confirm it, you're the first prize
winner.

GILBERT
Am I the winner? I can't even see the
numbers...

PRIMUS GHOST
The numbers are there...I'm the only
one who can see them.
Congratulations! How do you want to
receive the prize?

GILBERT
What you mean?

PRIMUS GHOST
Do you prefer the prize to be given
to you in a single episode or in
multiple installments?

GILBERT
I don't know...

PRIMUS GHOST
I understand your hesitation, it's a
terminal decision...let me explain...
in a single episode, you're going to
die in a few minutes--

GILBERT

Would I suffer?

PRIMUS GHOST

This I can't assure...it depends by the way you're going to die...as first prize, the lottery guarantees only your immediate death.

GILBERT

And if I choose to receive the prize in installments?

PRIMUS GHOST

In this case, your health will deteriorate every month during a twenty-month period until you die on the twenty-first month.

GILBERT

Why one wants to wait twenty months to die, anyway?

PRIMUS GHOST

I guess for different reasons...some winners told me that they wanted more time to settle their affairs, or to go to the last vacation...a young guy, told me that he needed more time to make love to different women. For you, considering your age, I suggest a prompt death.

GILBERT

Okay...I'm redeeming the prize now.

BACK TO SCENE

Cathy's loud voice resounds in the kitchen.

CATHY (O.S.)

Gil, doctor Weiss called...you're on the list for an experimental drug. He's confident this can help you.

INT. GILBERT'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Gilbert wakes up with a jolt. He looks confused.

He touches his body in several places. He breathes a sigh of relief.

GILBERT
(shouting)
I'm coming...I'm coming.

The End

