

THE ROLE OF THE DICE

By

David Lambertson

**INT. RESIDENTIAL HOME/DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

CHUCK (35), crew cut, square jaw, clad in a police uniform cuts his steak at the dining room table. He pops a piece in his mouth - chews purposefully.

Eating across from him is HANNAH (29). She wears a little too much make-up. Her large breasts cascade over a tight blouse.

The CLINKS of their silverware are the only sounds.

HANNAH

You're awful quiet. Something happen at work today?

Chuck stares at Hannah - continues to chew as he sizes up the question. He cuts off another piece of steak.

HANNAH

Well?

CHUCK

Yeah, but I don't want to talk about it right now.

HANNAH

You know your counselor said it was bad to bottle things up.

CHUCK

We'll talk later. I promise.

HANNAH

Well, the Petersons are supposed to be here at seven. We can cancel if you're not up to it?

Chuck wipes the corner of his mouth with a napkin, stands up and removes his service revolver from his holster and places it on a nearby table.

CHUCK

Naw. I'm up for a game.

Chuck stands up.

CHUCK

I'm going to change.

**INT. RESIDENTIAL HOME/DINING ROOM - NIGHT - LATER**

A MONOPOLY BOARD sits in the center of a dining table - a game obviously in progress.

Chuck, now dressed in casual clothes, sits at the end of the table. He gulps back the remainder of a beer.

DEMETRI (35), sculpted hair, expensive jewelry, crisply ironed Khakis and a dress shirt sits to the right of Chuck.

STEPHANIE (28) seven months pregnant with a simple, innocent face - a farm girl type, sits to the left of Chuck. She looks at two dice in the center of table. She's rolled a four.

Stephanie picks up a SILVER THIMBLE playing piece and moves it four spaces along the Monopoly board.

STEPHANIE

Ah, community chest.

Stephanie removes a yellow card from a deck in the middle of the board.

STEPHANIE

(reading the card)

You have won second prize in a beauty contest. Collect ten dollars.

(proudly)

Second place - not bad.

DEMETRI

Don't let it go to your head, sweetie. Caitlin Jenner was first place.

Demetri laughs too hard at his own joke. Chuck doesn't react.

DEMETRI

Oh c'mon, man. That was pretty funny.

STEPHANIE

I thought it was insensitive.

CHUCK

It was neither.

Chuck takes another swig of beer.

DEMETRI

Man, Chuck - lighten up. What is it with you tonight?

Hannah enters the room carrying a beer bottle in one hand and a wine bottle in the other.

Hannah places the beer in front of Chuck - waits for acknowledgement. None is forthcoming.

HANNAH  
Geez, you're welcome.

Hannah takes a seat opposite Chuck. She pours wine in her glass and leans over and fills Demetri's glass. Demetri ogles her breast as she pours. Chuck notices.

HANNAH  
So, whose turn?

STEPHANIE  
I just went. It's your turn.

DEMETRI  
Chuck, did I tell you that we closed the Madison deal today? Pretty nice commission, if I do say so myself.

CHUCK  
(to Hannah)  
Roll.

HANNAH  
Chuck, you're being rude.  
(to Demetri)  
That's wonderful news.  
(to Stephanie)  
You must be very proud.

Stephanie stretches her hand across the table and caresses Demetri's hand.

STEPHANIE  
I am. I think we're going to get the house on Beeker Street now.

HANNAH  
Wow! A baby on the way and a new house. That deserves a toast.

Hannah raises her wine glass and clinks it against Demetri's, then against Stephanie's water glass. Demetri motions to toast Chuck. Chuck doesn't respond.

CHUCK  
Roll.

Hannah sneers at Chuck, picks up the dice and tumbles them on the board.

HANNAH

Seven.

(moving game piece)

One, two, three, four, five, six,  
seven.

Hannah places her SILVER DOG on KENTUCKY AVENUE.

CHUCK

Cunt-tucky avenue.

HANNAH

Pardon?

CHUCK

I own it. One house - ninety  
dollars.

Hannah counts out ninety dollars in play money and slides it over to Chuck.

HANNAH

Thought I heard something else.

Demetri picks up the dice.

DEMETRI

My turn.

Demetri rattles the dice in his hand.

DEMETRI

C'mon - c'mon.

Demetri tosses the dice. Two sixes roll out.

DEMETRI

Yes.

Demetri moves his silver RACE CAR playing piece twelve spaces on the board landing on PARK PLACE.

DEMETRI

Now that's my kind of property.  
I'll buy it.

Demetri counts out \$350 in play money and tosses it in the games's bank - a cardboard cut out.

From a pile of cards, Stephanie hands Chuck the PARK PLACE PROPERTY CARD. He raises it to his lips and kisses it.

DEMETRI

And with Boardwalk, that gives me a monopoly. I'll buy one hotel.

Demetri counts out \$1,000 in play money and tosses it in the bank. He extends his hand out towards Chuck.

DEMETRI

If you would be so kind.

Chuck stares at Demetri as he removes a RED HOTEL PLAY PIECE from a small pile.

CHUCK

You do enjoy hotels, don't you, Demetri?

Chuck flips the hotel play piece towards Demetri, hitting him in the face.

DEMETRI

Hey!

HANNAH

Chuck! Say you're sorry.

Chuck leans back - takes a long sip of beer. There is an awkward silence. Stephanie starts to get up.

STEPHANIE

Maybe this is a good time for us to go. It's getting late anyway.

CHUCK

You enjoy hotels too. Don't you, Hannah?

HANNAH

How many beers have you had?

Stephanie stands up.

STEPHANIE

Okay, really, it's been fun but we should get going. Demetri has an early tee time anyway.

CHUCK

We're not done playing.

DEMETRI

(rising from his seat)  
But I think we are. Honestly, your behavior tonight --

Chuck leans over and grabs his service revolver from the table adjacent to him. He points it at Demetri.

CHUCK  
Sit the fuck down. Both of you.

HANNAH  
Chuck? What's going on?

STEPHANIE  
Oh my God. Oh my God.

Chuck cocks the trigger as he continues to point the gun at Demetri's chest.

Demetri, shaking like a leaf, motions for Stephanie to take a seat. She, as nervous as Demetri, complies.

CHUCK  
I believe it was my turn.

Chuck, holding the revolver in his right hand picks up the dice with his left hand - rattles them a bit.

CHUCK  
(to Stephanie)  
Sorry about the outburst. It was just the hotel that set me off.

STEPHANIE  
(hyperventilating)  
I - I - da - da - don't understand.

Chuck tosses the dice.

CHUCK  
Ah, eight the hard way.  
(to Stephanie)  
Relax. Hannah, you want to help her out? She doesn't understand.

Hannah stares at Chuck. Mouths "what" as she extends her hands outward.

Chuck moves his playing piece eight spaces, landing on "GO".

CHUCK  
Excellent.

Chuck removes \$200 in play money from the bank.

CHUCK  
Demetri, Hannah seems a bit  
reluctant. You want to answer  
Stephanie's question?

DEMETRI  
I don't even remember what the  
question was?

Chuck hands Stephanie the dice.

CHUCK  
(to Stephanie)  
Your turn.  
(to Demetri)  
She wanted to know why the hotel  
set me off. Please - chime in.  
(to Stephanie)  
It's okay - roll.

Tears stream down Stephanie's face as she tosses the dice on  
the game board - a seven rolls out.

HANNAH  
Chuck, stop this.

CHUCK  
Well, guess it's up to me. Anyway,  
on patrol today, I drove by a  
hotel. Ironically, on Atlantic  
Avenue. I saw Hannah's car there.  
Quite odd because she was supposed  
to be with her Mom.

HANNAH  
That wasn't me. Must have just been  
the same car.

Chuck points at Stephanie's silver thimble game piece.

CHUCK  
Finish your turn.

Stephanie shakes her head.

CHUCK  
Stephanie, please don't make me  
angrier.

DEMETRI  
Leave her alone.

Stephanie, now crying, moves her silver thimble seven spaces.  
She lands on COMMUNITY CHEST.



Chuck gives Stephanie a nod. Stephanie picks up a COMMUNITY CHEST CARD from the stack in the center of the game board.

CHUCK

Well?

STEPHANIE

(reading/weeping)

Life Insurance matures. Collect one hundred dollars. Please, I want to go home.

CHUCK

Hold on to that. It may come in handy. Now, where was I? Oh, yes - the hotel.

(to Hannah)

So, you don't think I know the plates to our own car?

Hannah's lip quiver.

HANNAH

It's not what you're thinking. I knew you were off your meds. Let them go - we can talk.

CHUCK

But then Stephanie would miss out. That wouldn't be fair. Here, I'll explain.

Chuck picks up a HOTEL PLAY PIECE and places it on the ATLANTIC AVENUE property.

CHUCK

That's the hotel.

Chuck surveys the board.

CHUCK

Only one car. Oh, I'll use this for Hannah.

Chuck picks up the SILVER DOG play piece and places it in front of the hotel.

CHUCK

It is a bitch after all.

Chuck picks up the SILVER CAR play piece and places it next to the SILVER DOG.

CHUCK  
And that's Demetri.  
(to Demetri)  
Sorry, they don't have a Mercedes.  
This will have to do.

STEPHANIE  
I don't understand.

CHUCK  
Demetri was in the hotel with her.

STEPHANIE  
(to Demetri)  
Is that true?

Demetri doesn't respond - just shakes his head.

CHUCK  
I ran the plates. It was his car. I  
also checked with the front desk.  
The room was in his name.

STEPHANIE  
Demetri, why would you be in a  
hotel?

CHUCK  
He was fucking Hannah.

DEMETRI  
I wouldn't have ever done --

HANNAH  
Or just tell him for Christ sakes.  
He knows.

DEMETRI  
(to Hannah)  
Stop.

HANNAH  
(to Chuck)  
Yeah, we were at the hotel -  
fucking! Are you happy now. And  
it's your fault. The fucking meds  
you take make you catatonic. You  
know, I'm relieved to just get this  
off my --

BANG - a shot fired through the center of Hannah's chest.  
Smoke from the barrel of Chuck's revolver wafts in the air.

A large red dot on Hannah's blouse grows ominously. Hannah moves her mouth but cannot speak. Her eyes widen and then her head falls backwards - dead.

CHUCK

Chest? Ironically, I think she was going to say chest.

Stephanie stands. Her mouth opens to scream but nothing comes out. Her eyes roll back in her head as she faints and falls to the floor.

DEMETRI

Oh my God. Fuck! Have you lost your mind?

Demetri breathes heavily - beads of sweat pepper his face.

CHUCK

Well, seems that one of us is going to have to go with Hannah. Do you believe in fate?

DEMETRI

(shaking)

No.

CHUCK

I do.

Chuck places his playing piece on the game board on a CHANCE space.

CHUCK

That's exactly seven spaces away from "Go to Jail".

Chuck picks up the dice.

CHUCK

If I roll an eight or better, I win. Seven or less, you win.

DEMETRI

Win? What the fuck are you talking about? For the love of God, stop this.

Chuck rattles the dice in his hand.

CHUCK

Well, one of us has got to die and if I'm going to jail, I'd rather it be me. If not, it's got to be you.

CHUCK (CONT'D)  
The odds are actually in your  
favor.

DEMETRI  
Stop. I beg you.

Chuck tosses the dice on the board. Each die displays a five.

CHUCK  
A hard ten. More than enough.

Chuck extends his arm and points the gun at Demetri's head.

DEMETRI  
No - no. Think of Stephanie for God  
sakes. We're having a baby.

Chuck pauses - stares at Demetri then looks at Stephanie  
still out on the floor.

CHUCK  
Maybe you're right.

Chuck places the barrel of the revolver in his mouth - wraps  
his lips around it.

DEMETRI  
(nearly sobbing)  
Thank you.

Chuck removes the revolver from his mouth.

CHUCK  
But a game is a game.

BANG! - a bullet splashes through Demetri's forehead. Blood  
spatters on the white wall behind him.

Chuck - revolver still in hand, oddly calm, scans the room.  
He spots his keys and wallet on the counter, walks over and  
picks them up. He heads towards the door and then stops.

CHUCK  
Oh shit.

He returns to the dining room table and picks up an ORANGE  
CARD from the game board.

Stephanie stirs awake. Panic hits her eyes as she sees the  
gun in Chuck's hand. She shields her face with her hands.

CHUCK

No - no. I'm not going to hurt you.  
None of this was your fault. I just  
forgot something.

Chuck flips the orange card over - in bold black letters it  
reads: "GET OUT OF JAIL FREE."

CHUCK

Don't lose that life insurance card  
you got. Demetri lost the game.

Chuck turns and walks towards the front door. Stephanie SOBS  
in the background.

CHUCK

(opening the door)  
Hmmm, maybe we should have played  
Sorry.

Chuck exits. Stephanie screams.

FADE OUT.