

Dark Comedy

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**DISAPPOINTING HELL**

**By Tara Meddaugh**

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*VAN, a man in his 20s-30s, stands in a line of people in a kind of waiting room of Hell. He is uncomfortable, almost annoyed to be where he is. He speaks to the other people in his line.*

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VAN

You know, I wouldn't be here if I hadn't seen my soul tonight. I didn't know it was my soul at first, but when it started talking to me, when it started telling me how I was scared of being hit by invisible cars, how I was only happy listening to Simon and Garfunkle... well, it sounded so much like me. So I go to it. I go to it and ask it, if it could tell me one thing, just one thing about itself, about me, what would it tell me. So it hesitates at first, you know, like it can't decide what delicious secret to tell me. Then it sighs, as much as a soul can. It sighs and sort of hiccups a little. Like maybe it's overexcited. Or drunk or something. So when it's done making these sounds, it stares at me with its transparent eyes, and it says, in this tiny voice—the voice a fawn might have, or a baby lamb. And it says, "If you live through today, you'll get fired tomorrow. And when you get another job, you'll get fired from that. And when you find someone you love, that person will leave you. And when you die, no one will care."

(pause)

So what do you say? What do you say when your own soul tells you you're a failure? And it looks pretty happy about that too. Almost giddy. Like it's having fun telling you you'll end up alone. So I start to wonder if it's really my soul at all. If it's someone else's—like maybe my arch nemesis or something, and it's telling me all this so I give up hope. Stop fighting for the good side and my enemy wins. By forfeit.

(pause)

So I say the only thing I can think to say. And I do the only thing I can think to do.

(pause)

"I don't need you," I tell it.

(pause)

And then I squash it. And I kill it.

(pause)

And that's why I'm down here, I guess.

(pause)

I really thought it'd be a lot hotter.

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