

The Ghost of Zygote Never to Come

By Jack Hall

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CHARACTERS

Herbert- A stem cell researcher

Glen- The ghost of an embryo

AUTHOR'S NOTE: When I wrote this, I imagined it as a Monty Python sketch, with Glen having the voice of Eric Idle. Use it, or do your own thing. Just get the message out what a farce embryonic stem cell research is!

Herbert is working on a petri dish. Glen enters.

GLEN: Hello, there. Having a good day?

HERBERT: Do you mind? This is a very delicate procedure.

GLEN: Sorry, doc, didn't mean to mess you up.

HERBERT: That's quite all right.

GLEN: Wouldn't want you to have a slip of the scalpel there. After all, those are my cells.

HERBERT: Beg your pardon?

GLEN: In the dish. That's me.

HERBERT: It's a zygote.

GLEN: It was a zygote before you cut it open. Now it's just an empty lot of cells, and here I am, drifting aimlessly in the spirit realm.

HERBERT: You're a ghost?

GLEN: Ghost of Zygote never to come. Ha ha. Not that you believe in all that life begins at conception nonsense, right?

HERBERT: Is that sarcasm?

GLEN: Is it? I dunno, doc. I'm only a zygote. You tell me.

HERBERT: Look, I don't know why you're haunting me, but we're doing nothing illegal here.

GLEN: Never said you weren't.

HERBERT: What we do in here helps people to live better, more fulfilling lives.

GLEN: Nothing wrong in that, right?

HERBERT: Nothing.

GLEN: So you're using my cells to cure a disease?

HERBERT: Well, no.

GLEN: Reproducing organs for transplant then?

HERBERT: If you must know, I am making sperm.

GLEN: Sperm?

HERBERT: Human sperm.

GLEN: I should hope so. I was human. Oops, I mean, I woulda been human had I made it through the zygote phase.

HERBERT: You know there are a lot of sad, infertile men out there who can't become fathers on their own. This procedure will enable them to produce their own offspring.

GLEN: So let me get this straight. You cut up my cells, which were formed by a sperm and egg, so that some chap firing blanks can come along and have kids of his own?

HERBERT: It's not like you were viable!

GLEN: Oh hardly, sir! I was just a blobule! Take me out of the womb, and I'm a nothing.

HERBERT: Exactly.

GLEN: Then again, let me bake around nine months, and Mr. Empty Cannon and his darling wife woulda had a bouncing baby all their own, with no needless cutting or gutting.

HERBERT: You are being sarcastic!

GLEN: Am I? How can I tell? I'm only a zygote.

HERBERT: Shut up!

GLEN: Who am I to tell Mr. Empty Cannon he has no right to reproduce himself?

HERBERT: Will you please shut up??

GLEN: Can you at least tell me if I was a boy or girl?

HERBERT: No!

GLEN: Come on, am I a Glen or Glenda?

HERBERT: That does it! I quit!

Herbert exits.

GLEN: Hey! Any chance you can patch me up or something?

Glen takes the petri dish, sadly, and exits.