



# THE BARGAIN

A Tale of Planned Endings.

We tend to personify spiritual things as if they were people. We assume, therefore, these beings of the supernatural can be manipulated as easily as we manipulate people. But fate cannot be controlled at a mere whim.

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**T**ired of the pains and torments of existence, a man decided to end his life. He made an appointment with Death. At the appointed time Death arrived, a tall, hooded skeletal figure, robes covering his bleached white bones. He was accompanied by the smell of mold, rot, and dirt. There was the sound of distant, ghostly drums. But he appeared mystified. He checked and rechecked his datapad. "Why," Death muttered, "must the IT department be constantly updating things. I can never figure out where anything is. What was wrong with a simple old stone tablet?" He turned irritably to the man, pointing at him with one emaciated finger. "Do you know what I am doing here? I don't recall your name on my lists."

"I wish to end my life," the man replied.

Death replied in a massive basso-profundo voice that reverberated across the room. "Do you know what happens when people have tried to bargain with Death?"

"Yes," the man replied meekly, "I was hoping those things would happen to me. As I said, I wish to end my life."

"Have you not read the stories?" Death demanded. "Have you ever tried to bargain with death?"

"No," the man replied timidly. "No, I haven't"

Death's voice resounded like the call of an ancient bell. "It doesn't turn out well."

"I see," answered the man. "But that about my request? Will you take me away now?"

"You wish to bargain with Death?" the skeletal figure asked.

"Yes"

"You lose," answered Death and vanished like the night at dawn.