



Association of E.C.
**Drama
Educators**

Youthwrite 95



**Julius Davies, Carleigh Baker, Craig Taylor
Oren Bick, Linda Hui, Don Moen**

Kana O'Brien

Forward

The following plays are the winners of the 1995 Youthwrite competition, held under the sponsorship of the Association British Columbia Drama Educators. Twenty-eight play were submitted from schools around B.C. and these six were chosen as the best representatives of the work of young writers in B.C. The prize for these writers was to attend the B.C. Festival of the Arts and see their work performed; and now, to see their work in print.

These six plays were first produced at the B.C. Festival of the Arts by the school that the author was attending. All the authors were in attendance; and the performances and the playwrights received adjudication and encouragement from internationally acclaimed actress and playwright, Nicola Cavendish. It was a memorable and moving moment at the festival when the audience rose in a spontaneous, prolonged, standing ovation for the work of these students.

The Association of B.C. Drama Educators feels that these plays are of interest to teachers and students around the province, and that these works could provide challenging and interesting scripts for further productions. We would like to remind you that these scripts are covered by copy write and the payment of royalties to the authors of these scripts may encourage them to write more plays. Royalty information will appear with each script.

"Most of the greatest and lasting living literature from the past is dramatic literature. It is essential to one's comprehension of any period. The work of the playwright useful for it helps us to understand the students we teach. Theatre teaches values to live by. If students are allowed to only present famous and successful work they will lose respect for their own judgment. If they participate in irrelevant work they will come to regard their lives as irrelevant. If they are forbidden free expression, they will not respect others rights to it. If they are not asked to question, they will obey unquestioningly. If arbitrary limits are placed on their learning, they will be satisfied to be ignorant."

The Big One

by

Oren Bick

Point Grey Secondary

Original production

Directed by

Oren Bick

Cast

Melissa.....Rebecca Scott

Simon.....Josh Remick

Caution. Professional and amateurs are hereby warned that The Big One by Oren Bick is protected under copyright law. Inquiries regarding performance rights should be directed to:

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The Royalty for each performance will be \$10.00.

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The Big One

by Oren Bick

Characters: Simon (15), Melissa (15)

Setting: Simon's house in middle-class Kerrisdale. Late evening on a warm Saturday night in September.

Scene: Simon is just outside his front door, watering plants, when Melissa walks by. She glances at him, unaware that for a month, she has been the secret object of his desires. Simon, seeing her, stops his work and watches her as she passes his house, but she walks straight ahead, ignoring him. Suddenly however, she turns and meets his stare, whereupon he looks away, bashfully.

Melissa: Hi.

Simon: Hi.

Melissa: (Pause) I know you, don't I?

Simon: Yeah. (Pause) I go to your school.

Melissa: Really! Wow, there are so many people in school who I don't know. Just so many people. This is great though, I mean knowing you now. It's so cool!

Simon: Yeah.

Melissa: Hey, you're in one of my classes, aren't you?

Simon: Yeah, Earth Science. I sit behind you.

Melissa: That's right, I know you now! Ben, isn't it?

Simon: Close, It's Simon. (Melissa looks puzzled) Ben is the fat kid who sits next to me. I'm Simon.

Melissa: I'm Melissa.

Simon: I know.

Melissa: Oh. (Pause) Well, bye then, Simon, guess I'll see you in class Monday. (Starts to walk away) No, wait! Have you done that homework yet?

Simon: The sheet on earthquakes?

Melissa: Yeah, I completely don't understand it. You do, I guess.

Simon: Well, sort of. I mean, I did it and all, but--

Melissa: You're so smart! I don't understand a thing in that class! It's so completely pointless! I mean, I'm only taking it 'cause my friends told me it's an easy science credit. That's why everyone takes it, I guess.

Simon: Well, not everyone.

Melissa: But you do, right? I mean, why the hell would you want to take earth science?

Simon: (uneasy laugh) Right. It's pointless.

Melissa: You are so right. (Pause) So can I see your homework now?

Simon: My homework?

Melissa: Yeah, the earthquake stuff. You said you'd let me see it.

Simon: Sure. Umm, you wanna wait out here, or come in?

Melissa: Am I allowed in?

Simon: Yeah, sure.

Melissa: (as they enter house) We should do this quick though, cause I don't want to be late for tonight.

Simon: What's tonight?

Melissa: You mean you don't know about it?

Simon: About what?

Melissa: Amy's party, idiot! It's only the biggest party so far this year!

Simon: It's only September.

Melissa: Why aren't you going?

Simon: Umm... well, I wasn't planning on going, but I guess I might.

Melissa: That's good. Hey, nice house.

Simon: Thanks. Okay, I guess I'll get the homework...

Melissa: (absent-mindedly) Yeah. Hey, are your parents home?

Simon: No, they went to a movie.

Melissa: And they're leaving you alone on a Saturday night? Wow. I mean, think what you can get into.

Simon: (turning red) They... trust me.

Melissa: Shows how stupid they are. I mean, for all they know, we could be getting it on right now.

Simon: (choky) Uh-huh.

Melissa: Of course we know that I would never do anything with you, but what do they know, eh?

Simon: Yeah, you're right. I'll, um, go get the homework. (he exits, Melissa looks around the living room. It is furnished nicely, with a large couch, a few big chairs, and wall-to-wall carpeting. There are two small coffee tables, with various carvings lying on them, and there are quite a few pictures hung on the walls. At one side is a dining area, with a large oak table and three chairs. At the other side, by the door, is a small bureau, with a telephone on

- top of it. Soon Simon returns with a binder, and flips it open to the correct page) OK, take a look at the first question. An earthquake of magnitude--
- Melissa: Hold on, give me a sheet of paper so I can copy it myself.
- Simon: (obliges) OK, earthquake of magnitude 8.3, what distance away will the tremors--
- Melissa: Just the answer, OK? I'm late here.
- Simon: Oh, I just thought you might--
- Melissa: No. (Pause) This is all just so stupid, OK? I mean, this is the stupidest course I have! What's the point in learning about earthquakes? You're not going to be some kind of earthquakologist, are you?
- Simon: No...
- Melissa: Then why get into this?
- Simon: It helps to know about this kind of thing!
- Melissa: Not at all, it doesn't!
- Simon: You don't think so?
- Melissa: No.
- Simon: Don't you think that when an earthquake in this city is such a huge reality, we've got to know about it, when it happens?
- Melissa: That's bull. When an earthquake happens, it doesn't matter one bit how much you know about that stuff. I'll panic, you'll panic. We'll all die. Even the damn scientists, they'll panic and die too. It doesn't matter if you know how to use a seismograph or some shit like that. We're all just gone! Dead bodies on the 6 o'clock news, that's what we'll be, broadcast all over the world! And in a few days, they'll forget about us, and move onto the next tragedy. It'll just happen, there's nothing we can do about it! Nothing anybody can do about it! You can't go against nature!
- Simon: But you can prepare, right? Have fresh water ready, a flashlight, matches...
- Melissa: Nobody really does that! I know we don't.
- Simon: Yeah, neither do we. (Pause) You know, I don't think I'll go to the party after all.
- Melissa: Fine. I'm still going. C'mon, just give me the answers.
- Simon: OK, 120 km, 7.0, 6.0, P-wave, S-wave, 8 o'clock, and Los Angeles.
- Melissa: (writing) Hold on, hold on. 8 o'clock, then what?
- Simon: Los Angeles.
- Melissa: OK. (gets up) Well, I've gotta go, but hey, I guess it's good to know that now I've got someone smart in my class who I can use. Thanks.

Simon: Anytime.
Melissa: (looking around) Where'd my backpack go?
Simon: Over there. (Melissa walks over to get it, Simon is watching her.)

---EARTHQUAKE---

(The lights flash on and off, and there is a loud rumbling sound. The furniture rattles around, and smaller things fall over. In general, there is a lot of noise, including screams, car alarms, animals, etc. Simon, realizing what is happening, alertly dives under the dining room table, but Melissa stands petrified, unable to move)

Simon: Melissa, over here. Get under! (Melissa crawls under the table. Just then, a lamp falls, just where she was standing. Meanwhile, something falls on her foot, and she screams)
Melissa: (ad-lib panic and screaming)
Simon: Just stay here, don't move! (More ad-lib reaction to the earthquake from Melissa and Simon, amid even more noise, and even less light. Soon all is quiet, but dark) I'll be right back. (He walks offstage, stumbling over a fallen piece of furniture on the way)
Melissa: Are you OK?
Simon: Yeah, fine, I think. (He comes back with a big, lit flashlight. He then finds matches, and lights candles) I think it's over now. You can come out.
Melissa: Are you sure?
Simon: I guess.
Melissa: Oh, I can't!
Simon: Why not?
Melissa: I'm too scared.
Simon: Well, I guess you can stay there if you want.
Melissa: Alone?
Simon: No, um, I'll come under too. (crawls under)
Melissa: (Puts her arms around him) Thank you Simon. (Long Pause) Nothing's happening. (Pause) Is it over?
Simon: Yeah, well, there might be a few aftershocks, but it's over for now.
Melissa: Aftershocks?
Simon: You know.

Melissa: No.

Simon: You don't know what aftershocks are?

Melissa: I'm stupid, OK?

Simon: OK, OK.

Melissa: (Pause) So is it over?

Simon: Yeah, it's over.

Melissa: It's safe now?

Simon: Uh-huh.

Melissa: (Gets up, looks around. Simon does too.) I guess we're still alive, eh?

Simon: Looks like it.

Melissa: And that was more exciting than any party ever was.

Simon: Are you going to the party now?

Melissa: I was so scared!

Simon: But you're OK now. Except look at the house, what's happened to it?

Melissa: It'll be fine. I'll bet it's in better shape than Amy's.

Simon: I'm going to have to clean this up... (starts to move, but Melissa stops him)

Melissa: Simon, did you save my life?

Simon: Did I?

Melissa: Didn't you?

Simon: I don't think so.

Melissa: You did!

Simon: How could I have saved your life?

Melissa: If you hadn't dragged me under the table--

Simon: I--

Melissa: --I would've been toast! Look at the lamp, right here. Or this chair. They would've fallen right on me. I would've been dead!

Simon: That wouldn't have killed you!

Melissa: It could have! Don't you know anything? People die in earthquakes! And it's not like in the cartoons where they die 'cause a big crack opens up--

Simon: I know--

Melissa: --They die 'cause things fall on them!

Simon: Buildings, not chairs!

Melissa: You don't think a chair could kill someone?

Simon: Not from falling on him.

Melissa: What if it fell off the Empire State Building?

Simon: Sure, that would kill someone, but--

Melissa: It wouldn't even have to be that high, would it, right? Even off of a normal house, I'll bet it could kill someone!

Simon: Maybe, but this chair fell from exactly zero metres off of the ground. And in case you haven't been paying attention in math, either, zero metres isn't very high.

Melissa: So what you're saying is, that people can only die in earthquakes when buildings fall on them?

Simon: I guess so.

Melissa: Then how are they expecting anyone to die in this earthquake? I don't exactly see this building crumbling!

Simon: I guess our house is sort of earthquake proof.

Melissa: I guess so. So you guys are fine, with your earthquake proof house, and your candles, and your flashlights-- Wait, I thought you said you weren't prepared, you didn't have all this!

Simon: I just... found some stuff.

Melissa: So this is all you have, right? You don't have the bottled water, and the extra food, and whatever the hell else you need.

Simon: No. Well, we might have a bit of water out back, but that's it.

Melissa: Oh. Well, I guess it's actually kind of good that you have all this stuff. It helps, sort of.

Simon: Yeah, it does.

Melissa: It just makes you think, that other people, who aren't ready, they're not-- OMIGOD! (runs to phone, starts dialing) It's not working! It's not working! It's n-- It's dead! Your phone's fucking dead!

Simon: Why do you need the phone?

Melissa: My mom! My dad! My sister! What's wrong with your phone?

Simon: (sudden realization) My parents... what's happened to them?

Melissa: Simon, get your phone working!

Simon: I've gotta find them... (runs to door, but Melissa intercepts him, grabbing him by his shirt)

Melissa: Where are you going?

Simon: To find my parents!

Melissa: What about MY parents?

Simon: Find 'em yourself! (tries to go)

Melissa: Don't leave me here!

Simon: I gotta go!

Melissa: Don't leave me here, alone!

Simon: Why not?

Melissa: I'm scared.

Simon: You're scared?

Melissa: (nods)

Simon: Melissa-- What's done is done. There's nothing else that can happen.

Melissa: Stay here with me, Simon.

Simon: I--

Melissa: (sitting on sofa) All this we've just gone through together, and you're leaving?

Simon: (giving in) My parents--

Melissa: What's done is done. Nothing else can happen.

Simon: (sits down) They're adults. They can handle themselves.

Melissa: I'm only a kid. I need you.

Simon: They're fine, probably. What could have happened?

Melissa: I need you, Simon.

Simon: And if they're not fine--

Melissa: They are.

Simon: --what can I do about it? Nothing.

Melissa: (pause) You know what, Simon?

Simon: What?

Melissa: You're a really great guy.

Simon: Oh. Thanks.

Melissa: And to think I didn't know you until tonight. It's amazing how many people in school I don't talk to, 'cause I think they're geeks or something. And then if it turns out that they're like you, well, what other awesome people am I missing out on meeting?

Simon: What do you mean?

Melissa: Well, like, what about that fat kid?

Simon: Ben?

Melissa: Yeah. Maybe underneath all that blubber there's a cool guy.

Simon: Well, I don't know if you'd like Ben.

Melissa: Why? I like you, don't I? (Pause)

Simon: Ben is just... a bit weird.

Melissa: Oh. Well, there must be other people that are OK. Maybe I could go to one of your parties. That would be cool.

Simon: What parties?

Melissa: Your parties. Party parties.

Simon: There are no parties.

Melissa: No parties? You and your friends don't have parties?

Simon: No.

Melissa: How can you have a life with no parties?

Simon: I've done OK so far.

Melissa: So you mean to tell me you've never gotten drunk, smoked a joint?

Simon: (pause) No.

Melissa: Wow! That is so queer-- a grade 10 who's never gotten drunk.

Simon: What's the point of it?

Melissa: The point? The point is just doing it! (takes a beer can out of her backpack) Here, have some.

Simon: Are you sure?

Melissa: Yeah, why not?

Simon: I don't know! Is it OK?

Melissa: Of course it's OK! Why wouldn't it be?

Simon: I don't know, I don't really want to take your beer.

Melissa: Why not?

Simon: Do you have enough? For you, I mean?

Melissa: Sure, I've got a six-pack in here. Go for it, it's the best. (Pause) Wow, this is so weird. And you've never smoked pot either?

Simon: No.

Melissa: You really don't know what you're missing! C'mon, drink some already!

Simon: (opens the bottle, puts it to his nose. It stinks. Cautiously, he puts it to his lips, and has a small sip. It tastes awful) Good.

Melissa: I told you so. Have some more!

Simon: Nah, I really don't want to. Here. (offers it back)

Melissa: No, it's OK, you finish that, and I'll open another. (she does so) Cheers!

Simon: Cheers. (He takes another sip as Melissa chugs the whole thing down)

Melissa: Oh, that was so good.

Simon: (rises) Maybe I should clean up.

Melissa: (rises) Good idea. I'll help you.

Simon: (putting his drink on a coffee table) We should just pick up some of this stuff. (they both walk around, righting lamps, etc. Melissa comes across a piece of smashed crystal)

Melissa: Oh god, what's happened to this?
Simon: (coming over to look) That's one of my mom's favorites, too.
Melissa: Is she gonna be mad?
Simon: I guess so.
Melissa: Oh Simon, I'm sorry.
Simon: It's not your fault. And it's not mine, either. What was I supposed to do, dive over and catch it when it fell?
Melissa: (laughs) Oh, you are so funny!
Simon: (pause) Are you drunk?
Melissa: Hell no! It takes me at least two or three! Speaking of which, you'd better finish that!
Simon: I will. (He picks it up, and sits back on the couch. Melissa joins him)

---AFTERSHOCK---

(Same deal as initial earthquake, but half as loud, and half as long)

Melissa: (scared) Not again! (She leaps at Simon, clutching him, and in the process knocks his beer onto the couch) Haven't we been through this already?
Simon: It's just an aftershock.
Melissa: (Pause) Under the table?
Simon: Yeah.
Melissa: (jumps up, pulling Simon along) Hurry! (They duck under the table, just as the rumbling stops)
Simon: (Peeks out) Well, that was disappointing, wasn't it?
Melissa: (laughs) It's over forever now, isn't it?
Simon: Haven't you been paying attention in class?
Melissa: No.
Simon: There's more than one aftershock.
Melissa: That was an aftershock?
Simon: That's it.
Melissa: Well, that wasn't so bad. I can handle that. Forget the earthquakes, just bring on the aftershocks, I can take 'em! (laughs)
Simon: Are you sure you're not drunk?
Melissa: You just don't get it, do you? I'm not drunk.
Simon: I don't think you should have anything else to drink. I'll just put it all away. I'll spill this one out-- (sees bottle spilled on couch) Oh no!

Melissa: What is it?

Simon: Look at this stain on the couch!

Melissa: So? If your mom can live with the broken-- whatever that is, she can live with the stain on the couch!

Simon: You don't understand! It's a beer stain!

Melissa: Yeah.

Simon: So she'll be able to tell! She's not stupid. What's she gonna think?

Melissa: Oh. You're right.

Simon: (panicking) How do I get rid of this?

Melissa: Umm... use... water, or something. Some cleaner, do you have a good cleaner?

Simon: I don't know! (He runs offstage, comes back with a towel, and starts wiping the stain) It's no use! (He gets up, not realizing that Melissa is hovering above him, and he finds himself standing face to face with her, about an inch away. Embarrassed, he moves away, backwards, tripping over a fallen lamp, and falling over)

Melissa: (laughing) Simon, you are too much!

Simon: (practically in tears) What am I going to do?

Melissa: What are you going to do?

Simon: My parents are going to kill me! (Pause) When they get home. (Pause) If they get home.

Melissa: (Picks up phone. It is dead. She puts it back down) What if--- (She collapses into the couch, crying)

Simon: (Slowly gets up, and looks at her. Not knowing what to do, he sits down next to her, and cautiously reaches out a hand to her shoulder. This just makes her cry harder, but when he pulls back, she cries even harder. Finally, slowly, he puts both his arms around her) It's OK, it's OK.

Melissa: (still sobbing) Simon?

Simon: What?

Melissa: You have no way of finding your parents.

Simon: Not right now.

Melissa: Neither do I.

Simon: No.

Melissa: What if they're dead? (Her crying gets louder)

Simon: They're not. Don't say that.

Melissa: What if everybody's dead?

Simon: Couldn't be--

Melissa: (a bit quieter) What if we're the only two people left in the world?

Simon: (thinks) For now, we are.

Melissa: (pause, pulls away from Simon) Would you have cried if I had died?

Simon: What?

Melissa: If that chair had fallen on me and I had died--

Simon: You wouldn't--

Melissa: --Would you have cried?

Simon: I-- don't know.

Melissa: I know if you had died, I would've cried.

Simon: Really?

Melissa: Yeah, you're practically my best friend now.

Simon: But you never even knew me until today.

Melissa: That doesn't matter. Because right now it's you and me, Simon. That's it, that's all there is.

Simon: (Pause) You're missing your party.

Melissa: That's OK.

Simon: Biggest party of the year.

Melissa: It's only September.

Simon: I guess they're not having too much fun though.

Melissa: Forget the party! We're having our own party!

Simon: What do you mean?

Melissa: Oh, nothing. (Pause) There's nothing we can do now but sit and wait, eh?

Simon: Our own party?

Melissa: Just you and me, kid. (Simon sighs) And don't ditch me or something, because I wouldn't ditch you now, Simon. Not after this. This is probably the biggest thing that's ever happened to me, this earthquake. People will say, 'where were you when the earthquake happened', and I'll say, 'with Simon'. They might laugh, but they don't know.

Simon: Kind of like JFK?

Melissa: Right. Simon, you are my JFK.

Simon: Which makes you my Jacqueline Onassis?

Melissa: (shrugs) I wonder if there'll be school on Monday?

Simon: Probably not.

Melissa: What a waste! We did that homework for nothing!

Simon: You copied that homework for nothing.

Melissa: Same difference. (Pause) Lighten up, JFK. I'm here to stay.

Simon: For how long?

Melissa: You can't kick me out into the street! I'll just sleep over tonight, OK? It'll be our own private little slumber party.

Simon: Yeah, uh, that would be... fun.

Melissa: Do you have an extra sleeping bag by any chance?

Simon: (Relieved) I think I could find one.

Melissa: Good. (Looks at Simon) Simon, you really are a great guy.

Simon: You think so?

Melissa: Yeah. And I'm not just saying that. You are the greatest.

---Blackout, leaving only candles in the darkness---

I Love the Way You Kiss Me

By
Don Moen

Abbotsford Senior Secondary
Original Production
Directed by Terry McLellan

Cast

Michelle.....Dawn Joy
Jeff.....James Conner

Caution. Professional and amateurs are hereby warned that I Love The Way You Kiss Me by Don Moen is protected under copyright law. Inquiries regarding performance rights should be directed to:

Don Moen
2916 Mountview Street
Abbotsford B.C.
V2S 6R2

The Royalty for each performance will be \$10.00. Don Moen must be informed of the location of the play and performance date within thirty days of performance. The thirty day restriction can be changed upon request.

The printing of this play is made possible by
the generous support of

Jeff

Jeff is an egomaniac with an inferiority complex. He has learned that a man needs to be controlling and manipulating in a relationship. He finds his security in being in love. He believes that if he is in love everything will be alright. He is a very sick person. Society has taught him this. Being in love is his drug. Without it he feels he is nothing. With it he feels like a god.

Michelle

Michelle is co-dependent. She gets her security in being dependent. In having people take care of her, or taking care of people herself. She does not love herself, so she loves others. She lets people walk over her because she is scared if she stands up and fights she will lose. She concerns herself with the agony of defeat rather than the joy of victory.

Scene 1

Jeff: Michelle?

Michelle: Jeff? Jeff! Long time no see. How long has it been?

Jeff: 3 years. 3 years since.

Michelle: Ya....

Scene 2

Jeff: Oh, hi Michelle.

Michelle: What were you doing?

Jeff: Nothing.

Michelle: Really?

Jeff: Really. I, uh, oh well, that's not to say, I'm -

Michelle: - a fool?

Jeff: Yep. But a fool with soul.

Scene 3

Michelle: Look, Jeff, I mean, it's just, I mean. I'm sorry.

Jeff: How do I know it's even mine?

Scene 4

Michelle: Jeff, please. Please don't do this.
To me. To you. To us. Let me in Jeff.
Why won't you let me in?

Scene 5

Jeff is sitting. He then he gets up and starts pacing. He eventually walks over to the phone and puts his hand on it, hold it their for a few moments, then shakes his head and walks away.

Scene 6

Jeff: Hi.

Michelle: What?

Jeff: Hello!

Michelle: What?!!

Jeff: Hello!!!

Michelle: Oh, hi.

Jeff: What? Oh. Ya wanna dance?!

Michelle: Sure.

Jeff: My name's Jeff.

Michelle: Michelle. Are you hurt?

Jeff: What?

Michelle: Are you hurt?

Jeff: No. Why?

Michelle: Then what are you doing?

Jeff: Ha. Ha. Very funny. It's called dancing.

Michelle: On which planet?

Scene 7

Michelle: Jeff. Jeff. Jeff. C'mon. Wake up. You're gonna make us late.

Jeff: Get off my back.

Scene 8

Michelle: Jeff. Jeff. Jeff! I know you're there Jeff. C'mon Jeff. Damn you!

Scene 9

Jeff: Happy Birthday!

Michelle: Thanks. I love you.

Jeff: You'd better.

Michelle: What's that's supposed to mean?

Jeff: Nothing. I love you.

Michelle: Oh.

Scene 10

Michelle: It's not a good time to come in Jeff.

Jeff: Oh, c'mon. Why not?

Michelle: I'm not feeling well.

Jeff: I can make you feel better.

Michelle: No Jeff, please. Not tonight.

Jeff: Fine, if your gonna be like that.

Michelle: Jeff, don't get like that. Jeff.

Scene 11

Jeff is pacing. He sits down, then almost immediately stands up and walks over to the phone. He picks up the receiver and dials. After 2 rings he hangs up.

Scene 12

Michelle: Why can you do it and I can't?

Jeff: 'Cause I'm a guy.

Scene 13

Michelle: I love the way you kiss me.

Scene 14

Michelle: Jeff. Jeff please. Why are you doing this?
I don't understand you. Why Jeff? Answer me,
damnit. Why won't you answer me.

Scene 15

Michelle: Jeff, do you love me?

Jeff: What kind of question is that?

Michelle: Do you love me Jeff?

Jeff: Don't be silly.

Michelle: Do you love me?

Jeff: Of course I love you.

Michelle: Do you love me?

Jeff: Yes!

Michelle: Do you love me? Do you love me? Do you love me?
Do you love me? Do you love me? Do you love me?

Scene 16

Jeff: Well, do ya wanna?

Michelle: I'm not sure.

Jeff: You know how much this would mean to me don't you?

Michelle: Ya.

Jeff: I want you to do what's right for you.

Scene 17

Jeff: Who was that?

Michelle: Nobody.

Jeff: Who was that?!

Michelle: Just a friend.

Jeff: Just a friend?

Michelle: Just a friend.

Jeff: Just a male friend?

Michelle: Well, ya.

Jeff: Why do you do this to me?

Michelle: Do what?

Jeff: Oh come on. How would you like it if I did that to you.

Michelle: I wouldn't care.

Jeff: Exactly. You don't care.

Scene 18

Jeff has his hand on the phone.. He walks away from it and goes to leave. He walks back to the phone and dials.
After 2 rings:

Michelle: Hello? Hello? Hello! Who is this? Who's there?
Hello?

Scene 19

Jeff: I'm sorry. It's just when I get that like that.
I love you.

Scene 20

Jeff: Michelle. Michelle. Michelle. C'mon. Wake up. You're gonna make us late.

Michelle: Get off my back.

Jeff: Fine. Then you can walk.

Scene 21

Michelle: Jeff. Jeff. I know you're there. C'mon Jeff. I just wanna talk.

Scene 22

Jeff: Yes. I know. I know. Look I-. I know we haven't had much time together. I'm busy. I gotta go. I'll talk with you tomorrow.

Scene 23

Jeff: Michelle? Michelle? Are you here? Where are you? Are you asleep? You're in for it now. I'm getting some ice water.

Michelle: Hi.

Jeff: Morning sleepy head.

Michelle: Listen Jeff, I...

Jeff: Oh my god. I gotta go.

Michelle: Jeff, it's, I mean, call me?

Jeff: I don't know.

Scene 24

Jeff: Listen, Michelle, I, I mean. I'm sorry. I really am. If you ever-

Michelle: - It's over Jeff.

Jeff: Ya. O.K. Well. I, uh, gotta go. Ya. See ya.

On The Balcony

By

Julius Davies

Kitsilano Secondary School

Original production

Directed by Ken Scott

Ensemble

Corinne.....Andrea Lane

Emmanuel.....Jess Debeck

Carina Dielessen

Claudia Cervenka

Sean Curley

Theo Blake

David Collette

Sahara Tamarin

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Inquiries regarding performance rights should be directed to:

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The Royalty for each performance will be \$5.00. However if you send me a videotape of the performance there is no fee.

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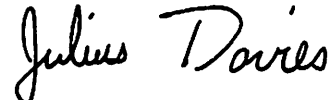
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Author's One Suggestion

This play was done in Kamloops for the B.C. Festival of The Arts in late May of 1995. I was quite thrilled and happy and all that, getting to see it performed in front of real people who really liked it! I have to thank Mr. John Gellard, my English teacher, for forcing me to write the blasted thing. I also have to thank Andrea, Jess, Sean, Sahara, Claudia, Theo, Dave, Carina and Mr. Scott for doing such an excellent job in Kamloops.

Now here's my one suggestion: Use Ravel's "La Valse" for the music.

Sincerely,



Julius Davies

On The Balcony

Dramatis Personae: Corinne
Emmanuel

Scene: The balcony, at a music hall. Corinne is already seated when Emmanuel enters.

Scene 1

Emmanuel - Excuse me, but is this seat taken?

Corinne - No.

[Pause]

Emmanuel - May I take it?

Corinne - Sure.

[Pause]

Emmanuel - I could sit somewhere else if you like.

Corinne - Okay.

Emmanuel - Would you like me to sit somewhere else?

Corinne - Uhh, sure.

Emmanuel - I could.

Corinne - Okay.

Emmanuel - But I'd rather sit here.

Corinne - Okay.

Emmanuel - Thank-you.

Corinne - You're welcome.

[Pause]

Emmanuel - What are they playing tonight?

Corinne - I don't know.

Emmanuel - Doesn't it say on the tickets?

Corinne - I don't have any tickets.

Emmanuel - Then how'd you get in?

Corinne - I don't know. Don't you have a ticket?

Emmanuel - Of course I don't. Would I have asked you what was playing if I had a ticket?

Corinne - I'm sorry.

[Pause]

Emmanuel - I'm sorry.

[Pause]

Corinne - Would you like a mint?

Emmanuel - Do you have one?

Corinne - Yeah.

Emmanuel - Yes please. Thank-you.

Corinne - You're welcome.

Emmanuel - Do you always give people mints?

Corinne - I guess.

Emmanuel - Well, thank-you.

Corinne - You're welcome.

Emmanuel - Do you know how mints are made?

Corinne - Yes.

Emmanuel - My Grandpa, he was a confectioner. I think that's what he was called: A confectioner. He made mints.

Corinne - Really?

Emmanuel - Yeah. He'd get peppermint oils and sugar and boil them in water for a little while --

Scene 2

Corinne - Hush. They're starting.

Emmanuel - Huh? Oh.

[Pause - Music starts]

Emmanuel - [Coughing]

Corinne - Hush!

Emmanuel - [Coughing] It's that blasted mint you gave me.

Corinne - Hush!

Emmanuel - [Coughing] I'm sorry.

Corinne - Hush! People are looking at us!

[Pause]

Emmanuel - I think it's Tchaikovsky. Sounds like him.
Lot's of instruments.

Corinne - Shutup, dammit!

Emmanuel - Sorry.

Corinne - Hush!

[Pause]

Emmanuel - Yeah, I'm pretty sure it's Tchaikovsky.

Corinne - Shutup, I'm trying to listen.

Emmanuel - You know, he killed himself. Rather he "forgot"
to boil his water. Same thing in those days.

Corinne - It's Ravel dammit, now shutup!

Emmanuel - I'm sorry.

[Pause]

Emmanuel - How do you know it's Ravel?

Corinne - I've heard it before. Now be quiet.

Emmanuel - Well that's not fair, you hearing it before. Me,
I had to guess.

Corinne - Shutup.

Emmanuel - You don't like me.

Corinne - What?

Emmanuel - You don't like me.

Corinne - I don't like you?

Emmanuel - Yeah. You don't like me. You keep telling me to shutup.

Corinne - I don't even know you!

Emmanuel - You keep telling me to shutup.

Corinne - You refuse to stop talking! People are looking at us.

Emmanuel - I'm sorry.

Corinne - Stop saying that.

Emmanuel - I'm sorry.

Corinne - Stop!

Emmanuel - I'm sorry.

Corinne - Well, don't be.

Emmanuel - I'm, uh...

Corinne - Now hush.

[Pause]

Scene 3

[Pause - Corinne starts to breathe heavily, she likes this music...]

Emmanuel - Uhh... Uhh... Are you okay?

Corinne - [Breathing] Shutup...

Emmanuel - Uh...

[Pause]

Corinne - What's your name?

Emmanuel - Pardon me?

Corinne - Emmanuel.

Corinne - Emmanuel... Emmanuel...

Emmanuel - Yes?

Corinne - I like your name, Emmanuel.

Emmanuel - Uhh... Thank you.

Corinne - I've never met an Emmanuel before.

Emmanuel - Thank you.

Corinne - Would you like to know my name?

Emmanuel - Yeah.

Corinne - My name's Corinne.

Emmanuel - Yeah.

[Pause]

Emmanuel - Do you like this music?

Corinne - I love this music. Give me your hand.

Emmanuel - What? Why?

Corinne - Just give me your hand.

Emmanuel - Uhh...

Corinne - [Holds his hand to her breast.]

Emmanuel - What are you doing?

Corinne - I'm listening to the music.

Emmanuel - You're holding my hand.

Corinne - I'm listening to the music.

Emmanuel - [Draws his hand back] People are looking, I don't even know... we're... people are looking...
I mean, what are you doing?

Corinne - [Takes his hand again]

Emmanuel - [Draws his hand back] You shouldn't be here. Let me see your ticket. How'd... you shouldn't be here. Did you sneak in?

Corinne - You don't like Ravel?

Emmanuel - People are looking!

Corinne - I love Ravel. Especially this.

[Pause]

Emmanuel - I... I... shouldn't be here. I don't have a ticket. I don't.

Corinne - Emmanuel.

Emmanuel - Yes, I must get going. I'll just put on my jacket and be off.

Corinne - You can't leave. It's already started.

Emmanuel - I'll just put on my jacket.

Corinne - Don't you like this music?

[Pause]

Emmanuel - Yes.

Corinne - Listen to it! One two three, one two three. Do you know how to waltz?

Emmanuel - Yes.

Corinne - Waltz with me.

Emmanuel - But, this isn't a ballroom!

Corinne - Waltz with me.

Emmanuel - But... but, I don't even know you!

Corinne - So?

Emmanuel - And people are watching!

Corinne - No they're not.

[Pause]

Emmanuel - You said they were.

Corinne - Could I have this dance?

Emmanuel - [Sigh] [Dances with her] What are we doing?

Corinne - Dancing?

[Pause - They dance for awhile]

Emmanuel - Did you see that?

Corinne - What?

Emmanuel - The conductor just looked at us!

Corinne - At us?

Emmanuel - You see? We're disrupting, this isn't a ballroom.

Corinne - You want to sit?

Emmanuel - Yes.

[Pause]

Corinne - [Touches his shoulder]

Emmanuel - Ehhh! Don't do that! You startled me.

Corinne - Sorry.

Emmanuel - Do you come here often?

Corinne - All the time.

Emmanuel - This is my first.

Corinne - What do you think?

[Pause]

Emmanuel - Are you always like this?

Corinne - Like what?

Emmanuel - This!

Corinne - Which is?

Emmanuel - Are you always so friendly?

Corinne - Do you listen to a lot of music?

Emmanuel - Me? Oh no, not really. My mother wanted me out of the house so she dropped me off here.

Corinne - Your what?

Emmanuel - My mother.

Corinne - Your mother!

Emmanuel - Yeah?

Corinne - You live with your mother?

Emmanuel - Yeah.

Corinne - Oh.

[Pause]

Emmanuel - You don't live with your mother?

[Lights fade, music fades, and everyone goes home.]

Purgery

by

Carleigh Baker

Lillooet Secondary School

Dedicated to the memory of Jens Zokol

Original production directed by

Carleigh Baker and Howard Baker

Cast

Carla.....Carleigh Baker

Derek.....Derek Bernier

Kelly.....Kelly Waite

Michaela.....Michaela Johnson

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The Royalty for each performance will be \$10.00. The authors name must be included on all publicity material.

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Purgery

By Carleigh Baker.

Characters

Kelly: Teen. Trying her hardest to appear confident in front of her peers, Kelly is suffering from being neglected by her parents. Her confident style often appears egotistical to others, especially since she comes from a well-to-do family. She is trying desperately to attract attention from anyone, although sometimes it is not the kind of attention she wants.

Michaela: Teen. A dry humored, sarcastic girl on the outside, although she is sensitive inside. She feels that there is no need to share her problems with others, but she has big problems. She is also concerned about what others think of her, always wanting to appear strong. However, she is quick to judge others. Michaela and Kelly get along so poorly because they are so similar. They are both trying to cover up their insecurities.

Carla: Teen. Struggling to establish her sexuality, Carla is dealing with many mixed emotions. She feels unable to tell anyone about her feelings, not wanting to upset her single mother and not wanting to be criticized by her peers. She is trying her best to fit into the stereotypical mold of a teenage girl but it is difficult for her because she has to deny her emotions.

Derek: Teen. Although usually appearing to be a free spirit, Derek has some problems. He is vaguely aware of his problem with alcoholism, but unsure of what to do about it. Also suffering from that common teen age "disease" of self-consciousness, Derek projects an ultra-confident, ultra-slick persona, although sometimes he slips up and the not-so-confident Derek shows through.

Scene One: Lying is Painless

Lights up on a living room scene. There is a couch on centre stage and a small table left of it. On the small table is a telephone and a plastic plant. There is a larger table downstage right. On this table is a CD player.

Kelly enters carrying a few CDs and two cans of pop. She goes to the table puts the pop down, and turns on the music. Music up. (lightly) She wanders around the room for a few seconds in a restless way. Finally, she sits down on the couch .

Kelly: (to the audience) Hmmm. Eight o'clock. It would be nice if some people showed up, this being a party and all. No one's phoned to cancel; I told almost half the school! (Getting anxious) It's New Year's Eve for god sakes, who doesn't want to party on New Year's Eve! Come on people! (Stands up, begins pacing around the room) No one's going to show up and I'll feel like a total loser. (Really anxious) Or worse yet, only two people will show up and they'll tell everyone what a loser I am! AAAAAH! (She stops, takes a deep breath, and sits down.) Calm down Kelly. (Takes a few more deep breaths, fans her face with her hands, and tries to calm down.) It's only eight-o-two. You've had plenty of parties, and they always turn out great. (to audience) I just get so nervous. Everyone thinks I'm so sure of myself, so confident. It's hard to look confident when you feel so self conscious. (Pause, as if she has just made an important discovery) That's, like, the secret of teenagehood, looking confident even when you feel self conscious, which is most of the time. (pause) Maybe it's the secret of adulthood too.

Doorbell

Kelly: YES! (Runs to the door)

Guests file in, (extras first if they are used) Kelly greets them all, appearing confident, saying things like "Hi, you're early" and "Hey! Good to see ya!". Each guest greets Kelly happily. When the last guest has entered, all the guests freeze.

Kelly: (Relieved, wipes her forehead, says to audience) Whew!

(approaching Michaela) Michaela! I'm so happy to see you! *(to audience)* I hate her.

Michaela: *(to audience)* Who is she kidding, she hates me! *(to Kelly)* I'm glad I could make it! Your parties are always the best!

Kelly: Are you having fun? *(to audience)* I hope not, considering you weren't invited! Why would I invite her. She thinks she's so hot. Always flirting with all the guys.

Michaela: Oh yeah! I'm having a great time! *(to audience)* Who could have fun at a loser party like this? Why did I even bother to come? No one important is here. I guess I don't have anything better to do.

Kelly: Where's Trevor? Didn't he come with you tonight? *(to audience)* Now I did invite Trevor. He's fun to have at parties. Not bad looking either. Why he bothers with HER...

Michaela: No, Trevor and I aren't seeing each other any more. *(to audience)* Well that's not exactly the truth. *(sarcastic)* After he'd finished beating me up for the third time this month I had decided that it was over, But I figured that it was a good time to keep my mouth shut. God knows I've gotten good at that. Keep your mouth shut and he'll have nothing to use against you. Of course, you have to use a different tactic with the folks, lying. *(imitating parent)* Where did you get that awful bruise, dear? Volleyball, skiing, breaking and entering, you get good at covering up after awhile. You even get good at covering up your feelings, no one in this room could ever guess that there's anything wrong with me! *(angrily)* Not that they'd care to know the truth- oh no! The truth hurts and we avoid pain whenever possible.

Kelly: *(faking sadness)* Oh, you two broke up? That's too bad!

Michaela: *(with a hint of sarcasm)* Yeah, too bad.

Both: *(as they turn away from each other)* Yeah, right!

Kelly: See ya.

Michaela: See ya.

They part, Michaela moves towards Carla who is busy looking at CDs.
Carla notices Michaela.

Carla: Hey Michaela

Michaela: *(with a hint of sarcasm)* Hi! Isn't this fun! Kelly always has the greatest parties!

Carla: *(not picking up on the sarcasm)* No kidding! So... What's new? Are you still seeing Trevor Matthews?

Michaela: No, he wasn't exactly my type...

Carla nods, Derek bursts in holding a case of beer.

Derek: PARTY!

The crowd cheers as Derek throws a beer at Kelly, passes a few out to the other party people, and hands two to Michaela.

Michaela:*(handing a Beer to Carla)* Here, have a beer.

Carla: All right! Thanks! *(To audience)* Yuck, I hate beer but I'm afraid to say no! They make it sound so easy on T.V. *(mimicking ad)* no thanks, I'll just have some healthy orange juice. Everyone will respect me and no one will make fun of me! *(Sighs, looks at the beer)* If I don't drink it, I'll look like a loser. *(To Michaela)* I love beer!

Michaela: Yeah, me too. *(to audience)* Ewww, she actually likes beer! I think its disgusting! I only drink it so I don't look like a total loser!

Carla: *(opening beer)* Cheers!

They clink cans, drink, turn away from each other and make a face, trying to swallow.

Michaela and Carla: Gross!

Carla moves to couch, sits and tries to drink the beer. Derek notices Carla and makes his way over to the couch. He brushes past her provocatively.

Derek: Hey there. *(He sits, says to audience)* My my my, looking hot as usual. *(Pause)* I can't believe she's never had a boyfriend. Well there's always a first time!

Carla: *(forcing a smile)* Hi! *(To audience)* Oh god it's him! How is it that he always manages to find me at every party. Mister Stud. If I tell him to leave me alone he'll call me a bitch. *(to Derek)* So! what'cha doing?

Derek: *(Puts an arm around her)* Oh nothing, just mingling *(Eyes her up)* I've been watching you all night.

Carla: *(removing arm from her shoulders politely)* That's nice. Are you having a good time? *(To audience)* I wish he wouldn't look at me like that

Derek: *(a little bit shaken at Carla's response but recovering quickly)* You bet! Hey, do you want another beer? *(to audience)* Way to go, big guy slick as ever. Get 'em drunk, it'll work every time. What a babe!

Carla: A beer, oh, no thanks! I'm not drinking much tonight. *(To audience)* How do I get rid of him?

Carla turns away, Derek is about to say something to her when Kelly approaches.

Kelly: *(Gushing)* Oh HI Derek! *(less friendly)* Hi Carla.

Carla and Derek: Hi.

Kelly: *(still gushing with happiness)* I'm so glad you're here DEREK! You always make the party so much fun!

Derek: Thanks. *(to audience)* Go away! Can't you see you're cramping my style?

Kelly: Can you believe my parents went away on New Year's Eve? I mean, as if I'm not going to have a party! They are so stupid! *(to audience)* He's so cute!

Derek: *(obviously unimpressed)* Uh...Yeah.

Carla: You're pretty lucky Kel. I'm amazed if my Mom is out until nine o'clock.

Kelly: *(Annoyed at being interrupted, just barely answers Carla and continues talking to Derek)* Oh. Wow. And they phoned yesterday to make sure I knew that I wasn't allowed to have any parties.

Carla: What did you tell them?

Kelly:*(distainfully, as if Carla was asking an amazingly stupid question.)* I lied, of course. Anyways Derek, my...

Carla gets the hint, happily rises to leave.

Carla: Excuse me guys.

Kelly: Oh. Bye. *(jumping in)* My Parents are always gone; you should come over some time! *(to audience)* Without Carla. He always seems to be talking to Carla. I don't even think she likes guys.

Derek: Um, maybe. *(to audience)* She's nice but...

Actors should be in Tableau 1 position around the thrust: Kelly points to Derek, Derek points to Carla, Carla points to Michaela.

All in unison except Michaela: I like her *(Kelly says "him")*

Kelly: *(grabs Derek)* Come on Derek, let's dance! *(Kelly starts to really move, doing a mild version of the Lambada. Derek is a little embarrassed as they are the only two dancing, but he realizes he is trapped and submits to Kelly)*

Carla moves to Michaela

Michaela (*indicating Kelly*) Look at her dance! Has she no shame!?

Carla: It is kind of embarrassing to watch, but you know Kelly, she's not afraid of what people think of her.

Michaela: Well I know what I think of her.

Carla: (*smiling*) Hmmm. You don't like her much, do you?

Michaela: Well she doesn't know it, although I don't think she thinks very highly of me.

Carla: Uh, don't take this the wrong way or anything, but why are you here if you hate Kelly so much?

Michaela: Well there were no other big New Year's Eve parties. (*shrugs*) I just felt like coming I guess.

Carla: Makes sense.

Michaela:(*indicating Kelly and Derek*) Just look at them!

They both turn towards Kelly and Derek

Derek realizes that he is being watched by Carla. Suddenly, He begins to dance like a mad man, first imitating a John Travolta style, then moving to the twist and finally breakdancing. (Music slowly increases in volume) At first, Kelly plays along but as Derek's intensity increases, his dancing ability decreases and she gets embarrassed, finally she backs away. Derek becomes oblivious of everyone and dances by himself for a few seconds, finally ending up on the floor, arms and legs flailing. All the party people are staring at him, Carla is laughing. Suddenly he realizes what is happening and stops. (Music resumes it's former volume) Derek walks over to the table and grabs a beer, looking very embarrassed. Gradually, the party resumes its former state. Kelly mingles nervously.

Carla:(*still laughing*) Whew! That was great! That was hilarious!

Michaela: I can't believe he did that! I'm inviting him to my parties!

Carla and Michaela laugh. Kelly approaches them from behind. Immediately Michaela stops laughing but Carla keeps laughing, occasionally imitating Derek's dance.

Kelly: Oh my god, that was so embarrassing! I'm going to die!

Michaela:*(a feeble attempt to console her)* Oh, it wasn't that bad.

Carla: *(not realizing that Michaela is trying to console Kelly)* YES IT WAS! Ha Ha Ha! *(Michaela elbows her)* OH! *(She calms herself, and also makes a feeble attempt at consolation.)* No, it wasn't that bad.

Kelly: You don't think it will get around school, do you?

Michaela: No no no! *(to audience)* I certainly hope so!

Kelly: No I guess not. *(indicating guests)* They have a whole weekend to forget about it. *(She walks away)*

Carla: That was so funny. *(noticing that Michaela is still holding a beer)* Hey, are you still drinking, or is that your first? *(To audience)* She's so cool.

Michaela: Nah, its my first beer. No heavy drinking tonight. *(To audience)* Or tomorrow night, or next weekend...

Carla: Yeah, me neither. *(To audience)* I wish I could just tell her. I wish I could just tell anyone. My Mom is always asking me why I don't have a boyfriend. What can I tell her, its because I'd rather have a girlfriend? Besides, I'm not even sure if that's how I really feel. Maybe I'm just confused. Maybe I'll change. My mom asked me once if I was gay. I knew what she wanted to hear, so of course I told her no. I knew It would just upset her to say anything else. It was just a little white lie.

Michaela: Well, see ya!

Carla: Yeah. *(to audience as Michaela walks away)* Look at her. This is so confusing! Why am I like this? Why do I feel like this? She has no idea how I feel. No one has any idea how I feel.

Tableau 2 positions at new locations on the thrust and with new poses

All in unison: Why can't I ever say what I feel!

Music gets a little louder; people mill around for thirty seconds doing schmoozing business. Derek tries to approach Carla again but Kelly grabs him just in time and they chat for a bit, Carla grabs a beer and offers one to Michaela. Derek finally corners Carla but she manages to escape, Michaela and Kelly chat for a bit...etc... If extras are used, they can mingle freely.

After thirty seconds or so, the music volume goes down, characters begin a series of QUICK dialogues. All "Both" lines are to audience.

Michaela: *(To Kelly)* I love your dress.

Kelly: Thanks!

Both: Get real!

Kelly: *(To Derek)* Derek, you are so much fun! We should party together more!

Derek: Yeah.

Both: *(Kelly happily and Derek unhappily)* Oh my God!

Derek: *(To Carla, putting his hand on her shoulder)* Oh, sorry, does that bother you?

Carla: *(moving away)* Oh no...no. Not really.

Both: *(Derek happily and Carla unhappily)* Yes!

Michaela:*(To Carla)* So Carla, are you seeing anyone?

Carla: Well no, I'm uh... Well you see, I think, uh... Umm no, I'm not seeing anyone.

Michaela looks confused and walks away, Carla shakes her head.

Tableau 3 positions

All in unison: Why don't I ever say what I mean?

Music down, Kelly rushes to the front of the stage.

Kelly: Okay everybody, time for the countdown, ten seconds until its 1995

Kelly and Carla: Seven...six...

All: Five... Four... Three... Two... One... HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The song "Auld Lang Syne" begins to play. There is a chorus of people talking, singing, wishing each other a happy new year etc... People hug, Derek gives Carla a kiss on the cheek and she reacts when he turns away. Kelly has witnessed this and grabs Derek and kisses him on the cheek. Derek is startled at first but actually smiles and hugs Kelly. Carla, looking uncomfortable, gives Michaela a hug, but Michaela is oblivious to her feelings of discomfort. Michaela and Kelly give each other fake smiles and hug, making a face when the other can't see. If extras are used, they should be participating in this. Gradually, the sound dies down, characters continue talking, but quietly, making sort of a hum . Michaela pulls away from the group.

Michaela: In the coming year, I resolve,

Carla:(pulling away from the group) -to always speak my mind, to always say what I'm feeling.

Kelly: (pulling away from the group) -To give everyone a fair chance.

Derek:(doing the same) -To be honest with people.

Tableau 4 Positions

All: To stop being such a liar!

Michaela: (to Kelly) Kelly, I don't really like yo... Oh never mind.

Kelly shrugs, Moving to Derek

Kelly: Derek.. I really like yo... Oh never mind.

Derek shrugs, moves to Carla who has her back to him. Looks at Carla's bum

Derek: *(starting to show signs of drunkenness)* Carla, I REALLY like your...
(Carla whirls around, a shocked expression on her face) Never mind.

Carla turns, shaking her head, moves to Michaela

Carla: Michaela, I think I like... Oh, never mind.

Carla: *(dejected)* Maybe next year.

Michaela: *(dejected)* Maybe next year.

Kelly: *(dejected)* Maybe next year.

Derek: *(dejected)* Maybe next year.

(Music is gone). Kelly moves towards the door, Derek looks at his watch.

Derek: Well I'm going to go check out some other parties, man. *(Moves toward the door, overcorrecting a bit)*

Michaela: *(concerned)* Who did you come with Derek?

Derek:*(misinterprets the question, arcs over to Michaela, puts an arm around her)* I came by myself, why, you looking for a ride home?

Michaela: No, and I don't think you should be driving home*(Removes the arm.)* why don't you leave your car here and I'll take you home.

Derek: No way! I told my parents I was going to Kevin's house to study!

Carla: On New Year's Eve? Do you really think they believed you?

Derek: *(proudly, slurring a bit.)* My parents believe everything I say. Besides, what they don't know wont hurt them.

Kelly: You still shouldn't be driving.

Derek: I'm in fine shape to drive, I can handle my alcohol.

Michaela: *(sighs)* Okay studly. Just drive slow and go straight home, okay?

Derek: Your concern is touching, I'll be fine!

Carla: It's getting kind of late, I should go too.

Michaela: Yeah, this party is over.

Extras exit first, then each character exits after a brief good bye to Kelly.

Each character should freeze once they have "exited" but they should still be seen by the audience. Kelly continues speaking as if she can't see them.

Kelly: *(Ad lib goodbys)* Thanks guys! It was fun! Thanks for coming! Oh, don't fall Derek! See You! Hey, we'll do it again some time!

After this line Kelly freezes herself for three beats and then:

All in unison: *(Kelly and Derek wiping their foreheads)* Whew! What a night!

Lights dim but stay high enough to signal further action

Scene Two (The truth hurts)

Begin with sound effect (see notes). One isolated spot up on each actor who is frozen holding a telephone. Lights fade when sound effect ends.

Actors are in tableau position. Each has a telephone. When he/she begins her monologue, the actor is discovered by a single spot. When the monologue ends, the spot fades out.

Kelly: Hi Dad. How's Hawaii? *(listens)* That's what I thought. *(listens)* No, nothing's wrong I...*(trails off as if interrupted)* Yeah, Christmas was fun, thanks for the stereo. Thank Mom too. *(listens)* That's okay, you have to take your holidays where you can get them, right? Look Dad, I wanted to tell you....*(interrupted again)*...Okay, but I have something to tell you, I...*(listens)* Okay Dad, I'll talk to you later. I love you. Bye.

Michaela: *(obviously very emotional, the audience can see that she now has a black eye.)* Hello, I'd like to speak to someone who can help me. I...*(listens, swallows hard)* Yes I have been in an abusive relationship. My boyfriend Trevor...*(listens)* I've been with him for about six months. *(listens)* Have I confronted him? *(touches her black eye)* I've tried. *(listens)* I'm eighteen. *(listens)* My parents? No, I haven't told them.*(pause, answers angrily)* I don't know why the hell I haven't told them, That's why I'm phoning you! I can't tell them! *(listens, answers sounding angry and confused)* Maybe I can?*(pauses, thinks, and slowly puts the phone down as if she has just realized something very important)* Maybe I can.

Carla: Hi Mom, you wanted me to phone you? *(Listens)* Well what's so important that I have to phone you at work? No wait, let me guess: you've met a man! *(listens)* A man for me? What do you mean? *(Listens, looks uncomfortable tries to make a joke)* Now Mom, I think that anyone working at your office is a little too old for me! *(Listens, disappointed)* He's twenty. Look Mom, I'm really not interested...*(Listens, answers quickly)* I know I've never had a boyfriend, I'm perfectly happy. *(Listens, starting to get angry)* Mom, I am not interested I don't care *(Listens, answers quickly)* I don't care how much trouble you went through, you can't force me

(Listens, answers quickly, finally exploding) Do you want to know why? You don't want to know why, Its because I'm gay mom! I AM GAY! Do you hear me?*(listens)* Yes we can talk about it when you get home, Its about time we talked about it. *(slams down phone to a half inch from the cradle, then forces herself to put it down gently)*

Derek: *(shaken)* Hello, my name is Derek. I think I have a problem. *(Listens)* No, its not drugs, its alcohol. *(Listens)* Well, I've been drinking since I was... I can't remember when exactly, but its gotten out of hand. I drink every weekend.*(Listens)* No, I drink on weekdays a lot too. I drink when I'm bored, I drink when I'm depressed, I drink when I'm nervous about something, *(frightened)* It wasn't supposed to be like this! *(sounding shaken)* Tonight, I was driving home, and I was drunk and I... I almost hit someone. I ALMOST HIT SOMEONE! *(Listens, answers quietly)* I need help. *(pause)* I have to tell my dad. *(Listens)* Yes, I'll tell my dad.*(Listens)* Alcoholics Anonymous? *(disgustedly)* I can't go there, that's for...*(Realizes what he is saying)* Drunks. Well, I'll think about it, first I'm gonna talk to my dad. *(Hangs up)* Hey Dad!

Kelly: Hi Mom.*(Listens, checks watch)* Dad said to call in a half an hour. Mom I just had to tell you something...*(Listens, replies angrily)* What, you're too busy for your own daughter?*(pause)* I have something on my mind, I had a party mom, I broke the rules, I ALWAYS break the rules. *(listens)* Well what the hell else was I supposed to do with you two gone all Christmas break, celebrate with the butler? *(sadly)* Most parents take their kids with them on holidays. *(Listens)* I know. I know I'm in big trouble. *(Listens)* Why did I tell you? I just had to tell the truth.

Spot up on Michaela

Michaela: I just had to tell the truth

Spot up on Carla

Carla: I just had to tell the truth

Spot up on Derek

Derek: I just had to tell the truth.

Crossfade to interior room

Scene 3 Purgery

Interior of Carla's house. Furniture is reversed from Part One positions. Door frame is on stage left .

Carla is discovered looking at a framed 5x7 photo of herself. Derek comes to the door opening and rings doorbell. Carla is startled, goes to the doorway. She is repelled at first, and then recognizes that he is in trouble. She opens the door (in mime) and lets him in

Derek: (*emotionless*) Thanks

Wordlessly, Derek follows Carla into the room. He sits on the left side of the love seat; she stands behind it right of him.

Derek:(*answering the unasked question*) I couldn't go home just yet. (*Carla still doesn't step in*) I got into some trouble the other night because of my drinking.

Carla: That's too bad. (*to audience*) What did he expect? (*Pause*) What did you expect? (*She is surprised by her own honesty*)

Derek: (*floored*) Do you hate me?

Carla: How can I? I don't know you. (*to audience*) The poor guy.

Derek: Yeah that's good. To know me is to hate me. (*to audience*) I am sinking myself with this girl.

Carla: I didn't say to know you is to hate you.

Derek: You didn't have to. I already know. I'm pretty useless. In fact, I'm worse than useless, I'm dangerous. I nearly ran over somebody yesterday. People are right; I'm a drunk.

Carla: Derek, you're seventeen. Isn't it a little early to make a permanent judgement about what you are?

Derek: What do you mean?

Carla: I don't know. Maybe who you are is more complicated than that.
(*Thinks about herself. To audience*) Maybe who you...

Derek: I just feel so alone. Nobody in my family is like me. They all have the control, the self-discipline. I should have things great but I have to be the screw up. (*Looks toward Carla*) I guess you wouldn't understand.

Carla: (*with irony that Derek doesn't catch*) No.

Derek: It might not be so bad if I just had someone who would listen.

Carla: Someone's listening.

Derek: Who? God?

Carla: Derek, me.

Derek: Well, yeah, but (*thinks*) Well, yeah.

Carla: (*Now talking about herself*) You said you feel... like the only one of your kind in the Ark. And I heard you.

Derek: (*emotional*) Yeah. I did try to get help. I even told my Dad. He said (*mocking his dad's voice*) a little experimentation is normal at my age. I think I'm far beyond the experimental stage. (*Long pause. to audience, confused*) I wonder if this stuff turns her on.

Carla sits beside Derek. He moves to embrace her, looks at her.

Derek: Not now.

Carla puts her hand on Derek's shoulder briefly.

Carla: (*with no bad will*) Not ever, Derek.

Derek: (*sincere*) Thanks a lot for listening, Carla.

Carla: Thank you , Derek, and you're welcome.

Derek: (*rising to go. To audience*) She's great. (*To Carla*) You're great.

Carla: (*Accepting her due*) Thanks.

Derek: (*Crosses to doorway, mentally rerunning their conversation*) " Not now. Not ever, Derek." Why "Not ever"?

Derek moves into an isolated spot. Recognition dawns as the light fades.

Derek: (*with mature understanding*)OOOOOh.

FADEOUT

Life (Not the Magazine)

by

Linda Hui

Crofton House School

Original production

Directed by Eve Harrison

Cast

Ann Evans.....Michelle Thong

Sabrina.....Elaine Lam

Dr. Myrna Powell.....Afsane Jetha

Gladys.....Rishima Bahadoorsingh

Joan Russel.....Melissa Nicolls

Darlene.....Jennifer Claydon

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The Royalty for each performance will be \$6.00.

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Life (not the magazine)

Written by Linda Hui

It is the 1950's. It is the era of the Cold War, spy scandals, and Elvis. It is also the time of Marilyn Monroe, James Dean, and the Twist, but in a little office space on the twenty second floor of a run-down old office building, all was quiet.

The office is dim and seedy, like the private eye offices you think of in old movies. The green leather sofa is worn; it already had many years of use before ending up at the used furniture shop where it was bought. The chair to one side of the sofa looked stiff but, oddly enough, fitted well with the rest of the room. There were no windows in this little room causing one to feel apart from the bustling world of New York outside. On the side wall where one would have expected the window is a shelf containing thick heavy volumes on Alfred Adler, Carl Gustav Jung, Sigmund Freud, and John B. Watson among others. To the far end of the room was a desk that had once been modern and new a few decades ago in the Depression but had gone through too much for the owner to even bother having it polished. A tin of pencils and pens along with several thick textbooks sat on one side of the desk.

On the other side of the desk is a silver picture frame, one of the few objects free of dust; it was of a young woman who in her prime could have been labelled as pretty from that angle. At the corner of the photograph is a snapshot of a young gentleman in a navy blue brand-name suit bought at the peak of its fashion from the most fashionable store around town. He was no doubt well off, but he had a charming, self-deprecating smile on his face asking to be loved for himself. The young man looked intelligent and benignly charming in comparison to the vain young woman who seemed to have nothing in her mind but air. One cannot be cruel, however, to the young woman, for she has received her share of life's misery like everyone else. She is the psychologist who presides in this little office worn out by time.

On the other side of the door to the waiting room is a secretary's desk in slightly better condition but still rather worn out. Strewn on the desk are files, papers, and a typewriter. The metal from the few doctor's chairs in the waiting room is the only thing that shines.

The setting gives the impression of having lived but lacking something vital. The lighting is dim because this is set apart from the real world. The characters are typical of their era and their city, smooth and stylish. Every character is a world unto herself lending a nonrealistic feeling. The secretary, who is in her mid-fifties, at the desk is self-absorbed although she is at work typing a form. The psychologist, whose youthful looks are fading, is in a separate world than her patient lying on the sofa. With the exception of the coming patient and Sabrina, none of these characters connect with one another although they interact. Old wartime music can be heard in the background.

The door opens and the secretary looks up with futile hope of a dark handsome stranger who can sweep her away from her dull boring world. Ann enters with Sabrina and Gladys's hopeful expression disappears. Sabrina takes a seat.

Ann: [walking to Gladys's desk] I have an appointment at two-thirty.
Gladys: [bored and not too fond of anything] Ann Hutton?
Sabrina: [commenting to herself] Here we are at the shrink's office, with our depression problem, again. . .
Ann: Yes.
Gladys: Have a seat.
Ann: [sits down beside Sabrina]
Sabrina: Well, it seems pretty normal. No lunatics yet, though that secretary could probably use a bit of help. Oh! That shade of lipstick! [Gladys doesn't hear Sabrina]

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Ann: *[trying to think of something nice to say about her]* At least it matches. *[Sabrina laughs]*

Gladys: *[looks up wondering who Ann is talking to, she can't see Sabrina]*

Sabrina: What a prune-face! She looks like she's about to shrivel up and die! *[laughs]*

Ann: *[laughs discreetly, like a "lady"]*

Sabrina: I doubt she's ever had any fun in her life.

Ann: *[kindly]* I feel sorry for her. It doesn't seem like she'd mind if she died tomorrow.

Gladys: *[looks up again and looks at them as though she was crazy]*

Sabrina: I suppose. *[dropping the subject, looks around the room curiously]* This place seems better than the last one.

Ann: They're all alike to me.

Gladys: *[mutters]* She's crazy! She's talkin' to herself! *[sighs then returns to what she was doing]* I'm getting too old for this job.

Sabrina: Its a big improvement that they don't take your fingerprints and mug shots here.

Ann: I suppose.

Sabrina: You know what, Ann?

Ann: What, Sabrina?

Sabrina: I always thought that I'd marry some rich fella and go shoppin' all day, *[interrupting herself like a narrator with a fact]* at Tiffany's, of course, *[resuming her former mood]* and have a dozen servants.

Ann: You did, remember? Dear old George.

Sabrina: Then he had to go out and ruin it by getting a heart seizure at the eighteenth hole, leaving hardly enough money for me to live on. So he was better off dead— oh well, here we are, seeing shrink after shrink who can't even help.

Ann: *[ignoring the little quips]* If I had known, . . .

Sabrina: . . . I'd have jumped off the Empire States Building when I had the chance. . . we woulda gotten into the newspapers too.

Ann: Oh, come on, it wasn't that bad. They just didn't. . .

Sabrina: Understand?

Ann: Yes.

Sabrina: *[Feeling bad for depressing Ann, she tries to cheer her up.]* If we'd died then, we wouldn't have received that scholarship, and if we hadn't received that, we'd never have gone to Florida for that trip. You ought to be happy about that.

Ann: Yes, the trip was nice. Do you remember . . .

Myrna: *[comes out of the office with the previous patient]* I'll see you next week. Goodbye, Darlene. Gladys, send the next one in five minutes. Thanks.

[The lights in the waiting room dim.]

Myrna retreats into her office and sits down at her desks. She begins to write down a report of her patient then slowly drops her pen as she looks at the photograph of the young man. Sad longing appears on her face as she remembers him. Her eyes mist over and a tear rolls down her cheek as she reaches over to touch his face in the photograph.

Myrna: *[mournfully]* Oh, Henry! Why?

She closes her eyes in anguish, her hand goes to her forehead as she tries to force the painful memories out of her mind. After recollecting herself, she sits back up and goes back to writing her report again.

[The office dims.]

Ann and Sabrina are still talking in the waiting room. Darlene walks to the desk to make another

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appointment with Gladys.

Darlene: An appointment for next week please.
Gladys: Usual time.
Darlene: Yes. Thank you very much, Gladys. I'll see you next week!
Gladys: Goodbye! *[bravely attempts a smile]*
[Darlene exits.]

Gladys picks up a romance novel on her desk and begins to read.

Sabrina: You know, in life, we're all guaranteed one thing.
Ann: *[somewhat amused and familiar with her friend's philosophical pondering]* And what's that?
Gladys: *[doesn't even bother looking up now that she's used to it and keeps on reading her romance novel]*
Sabrina: That we're all goin' to die sometime or another.
Ann: Rather pessimistic.
Sabrina: It is. Ann, do you think we could take a trip? We haven't gone anywhere for years!
Ann: That's a good idea, somewhere warm, where we can get away from this city.
Sabrina: *[She thinks for a moment then her face lights up.]* Ann, could we go to California? We've never been there before!
Ann: *[doubtful]* Oh, I don't know—it's so far away, though.
Gladys: *[looks at her watch; five minutes has past]*
Sabrina: *[simultaneously as Gladys looks at her watch]* But think, the sun, the beaches, the—
Gladys: Go right in. *[She leans back in her chair and opens her book.]*

[The scene in the waiting room dims.]

Ann enters the room and Sabrina follows behind.

Myrna: Good afternoon, Mrs. Hutton. Please have a seat. *[she closes the door then sits down in the stiff-looking chair and picks up her pen and notepad]*
Ann: Good afternoon, Dr. Powell, and, please, call me Ann. *[She sits down in the middle of the couch.]*
Sabrina: Could you move over, please?
Ann: Of course. *[Sabrina sits down beside her.]*
Myrna: *[noticing that Ann is sitting to one side of the couch]* Feel free to use the entire couch and make yourself . . . comfortable.
Ann: *[brightly]* Oh, it's alright.
Myrna: Oh, um, well, anyway, how are you feeling today?
Sabrina: *[sarcastically]* Just great, I love seeing shrinks!
Ann: Not bad, I guess.
Myrna: Alright, what seems to be your problem?
Sabrina: Nothing you can help us with!
Ann: *[gives a reproving look and pokes Sabrina while Myrna looks on with astonishment]*
Sabrina: Alright, alright! Well, you explain it her, I don't know what you mean.
Ann: Well if you don't know, how am I supposed to?
Sabrina: *[stubbornly]* That's your problem. You're the one who made me remember all those boring things in school, I guess I'm just burnt out.
Ann: Don't be ridiculous!
Sabrina: She won't be able to help so why bother?

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Myrna: [clears her throat] Um, . . . would you. . . is there. . . are you, uh, talking to someone there?

Ann: [blushes] Um, oh, no. I'm just. . . [groping for a word]

Sabrina: [smirks] Talkin'?

Ann: . . . talking! You—! [realizing she'd been tricked, she pokes Sabrina off the couch]

Myrna: To yourself? To a friend? A ghost? What? [exclaiming to herself] I've never had a case like this before!

Ann: [teasing Sabrina] I'm not sure what she is.

Sabrina: Hmph! For your sake, you better hope I'm very intelligent!

Myrna: [writing furiously in her notepad] Now we're getting somewhere! Now, does she look like a person? Or a thing? Can you see her clearly? How influential is she in your life? How long have you been seeing her? A year? Two? Have you had any serious illnesses in your past? An extraordinarily high fever? What can you tell me about her?

Sabrina: [exchanging looks with Ann while Myrna is babbling on] Is this her idea of psycho analysis? How is this supposed to help?

Ann: [shrugs] She's the expert.

Myrna: Are you talking to her now? What is she saying? Are your parents separated or divorced? Were they supportive of you? Did you have many brothers and sisters? Were you the oldest? Or the youngest? Did you lack attention? Are you—

Ann: Is this supposed to help me? [Sabrina helps herself back to a seat on the worn couch]

Myrna: Of course! I'll repeat the questions more slowly. Does she look like a person? [short pause] Can you see her? [short pause] Is she—

Ann: I don't know how to describe her.

Myrna: Do you see her? What's her name?

Ann: Sabrina. Yes, I see her, she's just [Sabrina gets up and wanders over to the desk and pokes through its contents. Ann's eyes follow her while Myrna continues to jot down notes.] . . . there.

Myrna: What is she wearing?

Ann: Today? [continuing to watch Sabrina] A red dress and a mink.

Myrna: Is she wealthy?

Ann: Spends like it.

Myrna: Is she. . . pleasant?

Ann: Most of the time. [to Sabrina] What are you doing over there?

Sabrina: Nothing. I'm just lookin'.

Myrna: What did she say? What did she say?

Ann: That she's just looking around your desk. [politely] I hope you don't mind.

Myrna: Not at all, what does she think?

Sabrina: That it's just a buncha junk. [quoting from the report Myrna was working on] "It seems that a psycholinguistic neuroses complex is developing. . .". Excuse me?!

Ann: She doesn't find it very interesting.

Myrna: [disappointed, but still hopeful] Oh, what else?

Sabrina: Hmm, what's this? [about to pick up the photographs]

Ann: [scolding her gently, but firmly] Please, don't touch that, Sabrina.

Myrna: No, no, what is it that she's looking at?

Ann: [She gets up from the couch and walks over to Sabrina who hands the silver frame to her.] This photograph. . .

Myrna: [She stiffens. She hasn't talked about Henry with anyone for years. Kept as a dream of long ago, she remembers him with all the idealized details of a picture improved over time. Trifling human faults were forgotten and that charming smile seems even more sweet.] Th-that's me.

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Sabrina: She was pretty, too bad it was wasted in all that psycholinguistic mumbo-jumbo.
Ann: You were pretty.
Myrna: Thank you.
Sabrina: Who's this fella? [*She picks it up to have a closer look then suddenly draws her breath.*] Oh, Ann, look. . .
Ann: [*softly, like a breath*] Henry.
Sabrina: [*looking back at a tragic past that seemed to been her life a hundred years ago*] He was the only one who ever understood. . . but he left.
Ann: To fight in that damn war. . .
Myrna: [*seeing what Ann is looking at*] That was my fiancé. . .
Sabrina: Fiancé?! She must be the girl he told us about, um. . . [*trying to remember her name*] Myrna! That's it, the one he was dating before!
Ann: Whatever happened to him?
Myrna: [*nervously, as though back in grade school being interrogated for passing notes*] H-he went off to college.
Ann: [*doubtful*] Oh?
Myrna: [*bending her head in shame*] Actually, he left me.
Sabrina: Dumped is more like it!
Ann: [*elbows Sabrina gently*]
Myrna: [*uncomfortable*] Now, this person you talk to, ah--
Ann: Why?
Myrna: [*with a kindly smile pretending she didn't know what Ann was talking about*] Why what?
Ann: Why did he leave you?
Myrna: I'm not sure.
Ann: [*skeptically*] He didn't tell you? [*Sabrina sinks down into the chair and gazes memorably at the aging photograph*]
Myrna: [*rushing to his defense*] Oh no! He wasn't rude or anything! [*a pause*] He tried to tell me, but. . .
Sabrina: You didn't understand.
Ann: But what?
Myrna: It didn't. . . make sense to me. He said he wanted something more than making money and socializing, that he wanted more from life than that.
Ann: Than what?
Myrna: He said I wouldn't know what he was talking about, and he was right, I guess. Oh, but I loved him, though. I would have given him my life.
Sabrina: You did, and he didn't want it. Henry wanted more than just that. [*remembering him fondly*] He was special, so different from anyone I had ever known. Henry was so unpredictable, in a rage one minute then ecstatic the next! [*to Ann*] Remember? [*nods*] And when he spoke, he was so eloquent! And he wanted to be understood. . . "Just a bit of understanding," he would always say.
Ann: What did you do after Henry left?
Myrna: Oh, I was devastated. I don't think I had ever felt so lost in my entire life, and my family was horrified! They were so sure we were going to get married. Then my aunt signed me up for a course on psychology: [*bitterly*] "A respectable job for a fallen woman." [*She sighs, then suddenly becomes alert.*] How did you know his name was Henry?
Ann: Oh, ah, because. . . I knew him.
Myrna: [*narrowing her eyes*] How?
Ann: [*She is reluctant to say anything, but she doesn't see any other choice.*] I was a waitress at one of those fancy restaurants and Henry came in for lunch one day. He was all depressed so I tried to crack a joke to make him smile. It worked for about half a second then the boss caught me at it, and I got fired. I was depressed too and Henry felt bad so he hired me to be his secretary.

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Myrna: So, it was. . . just professional then?
Sabrina: She'll be furious when she finds out it was us Henry dumped her for. But it was her fault. It was.
Ann: *[she mentally prepares herself as though she were getting ready to leap into a deep hole]* We became engaged.
Myrna: You what?! *[flying into a rage, she drops her notepad and pen on the ground]*
Ann: We became engaged--
Myrna: *[her voices gets louder each second]* I heard what you said the first time! So you're the one who has him! You're wasting my time! Leave my office now!
Sabrina: She's telling me to leave?! The nerve of her!
Ann: *[inching backwards]* Dr. Powell, would you calm down a little, please.
Myrna: *[threateningly]* Don't you tell me to calm down! *[She picks up the picture frame and threatens to throw it at her.]* I want you to leave! *[throws the photograph to the ground]*

[Lights in the office dim.]

Meanwhile, outside in the waiting room, Joan, a little old lady who can only be described as wise and jolly, if there can be such a combination, comes in and reports to Gladys.

Joan: Hello! I have an appointment in fifteen minutes!
Gladys: Joan Russell?
Joan: The one and only, I may not be well off but I'm alive and happy!
Gladys: *[suspiciously]* Are you sure you didn't just overdose on caffeine?
Joan: *[laughing]* I don't think I need psychotherapy either, my children do though. They think I'm in denial or something just because my husband never made it back for us to be together from here to eternity! What book are you reading? *[Gladys holds up the book]* "*[title of romance novel]*"! We never read that stuff in my days! My friends and I just went out and lived! *[sighing fondly]* The 20's seem so long ago! *[remembering that Gladys is there]* If I had to die tomorrow, I'd be dying happy. I've lived. Now you on the other hand, look like you've been sitting here all your days! Get out and do something, put a smile on your face! Like they say, you only get to live once!
Gladys: *[stating her fact of life]* I need money you know.
Joan: Money! Always money that gets in the way of living, either too much or too little! Isn't life more important? What have you done all these years, sitting at your desk reading about things you'd like to do, just get out and do everything you want!
Gladys: Look, you don't understand, it's not that simple-
Joan: I'll tell you what I understand, it is if you make it simple: you either live, or you don't.
Gladys: *[She opens her mouth to argue but realizes the truth of the words. Joan sits down and the conversation is over.]* Just live, huh?

[Lights in the waiting room dim.]

Inside the office, they're still yelling deafly, not hearing. Ann is hiding behind a chair while Myrna still threatens to throw the frame at her.

Myrna: How could you do anything so low! So rotten!
Sabrina: Tell her! Don't just hide there!
Ann: *[trying to be brave]* It doesn't matter who did what to whom now!
Myrna: You're the one who has him!
Ann: No, but I don't!

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Myrna: [sarcastically] Why? Did he leave you too?
Ann: No! He's dead!
Myrna: [She stops as though she had been slapped. There is a crash as the frame hits the ground.] Dead? [she manages her way to the sofa then collapses]
Sabrina: Oh my Lord! She fainted!
Ann: Don't just stand there! What do I do?
Sabrina: I don't know! Here, uh, get that secretary, maybe she'll know!
Ann: [She runs to get help.] Help! She fainted!
Gladys: Fainted!
Joan: Here. [rummaging around in her handbag] I have some smelling salts, my mother always told me to bring them along just in case, I guess they finally came in handy!
Ann: Oh, thank you! [She rushes back in to revive Myrna.]
Sabrina: Wake up! Why won't she wake-
Myrna: [choking] What is that horrid smell?! [Sabrina drops into a chair in relief.]
Ann: You're awake!
Myrna: [sitting up] Who wouldn't be? [mournfully] Henry. . . did he die in the war?
Ann: [nods] On the beaches of Normandy.
Myrna: Oh, why, though? He wasn't drafted, was he?
Ann: No.
Myrna: Why, then?
Ann: He wanted to save the world like all those other boys who signed up.
Myrna: Ohh, that Henry! He would go off and do something stupid like that! Never thinking about anyone else, I can't understand him!
Ann: He knew that.
Myrna: What?!
Ann: He knew you could never understand him. What he did wasn't stupid and, for your information, he was thinking of everyone else when he signed up!
Myrna: If he had, he wouldn't have left.
Sabrina: No wonder Henry left her! What a horror to have around!
Ann: Shut your mouth, Sabrina! [turning back to Myrna] You-you selfish, self-centred-! It's no wonder he left you!
Myrna: I'm the psychologist around here and you're the one talking to goodness knows what! I'm not the one who needs therapy here!
Ann: [turning towards the door] Oh forget it, I'm leaving! This just isn't going to work! You don't have a shred of compassion to show to anyone! [Sabrina is fuming at both of them.]
Myrna: [She pretends not to care although it will mean one less patient.] Fine, go ahead and leave! Oh, and forget seeing anymore shrinks, just go straight to the asylum!
Ann: [calm again, and in control] I'll go, but before I do I'm going to say one thing: Henry loved me.
Myrna: No, he was a cad for leaving me, and you too. He didn't love anyone.
Ann: This is precisely why he left! You could never. . .
Sabrina: Understand him. Listen to him. Care for him.
Myrna: I couldn't what?
Ann: [quietly sitting down on the sofa] Be a friend to him.
Myrna: [still not understanding why Henry wasn't content] I was always there for him, going with him to parties, the country club, I was there for him.
Ann: And that's all. You never really talked to him, or even try to understand him. That's all he was looking for.
Myrna: I loved him.
Ann: So did I.
Sabrina: And he went off and got himself blown to bits. [they all sigh at the same time]

Linda Hui

Myrna: Tell me about Henry. Like-like you said, I never really knew him.
Ann: [*she smiles dreamily*] Different, from anyone you'd ever know.
Myrna: I may not know much but that I did. He was a special one. What does Sabrina think?
Sabrina: [*exchanges looks with Ann*]
Ann: That you're right.
Myrna: Did he know Sabrina?
Ann: Um-hmn.
Myrna: What did he think?
Ann: [*finding the thought amusing*] That she ought to be locked up in a cage, he thought she was too nosy! They got along well though, she was intelligent, witty, and lively. [*smiles, and, for a moment, she looks as she did eleven years ago with Henry*] He adored her.
Myrna: He saw her then?
Ann: [*the smile fades and her and Sabrina's expressions are the same: sorrow, and regret*] Yes.
Sabrina: The only one who did.
Myrna: When did Sabrina come along in your life?
Ann: About the same time Henry did, I think.
Myrna: [*picking up her pen and notepad from the floor*]
Sabrina: He was the one who found me when nobody else, including you, thought I was around. And now, I'm just trapped here.
Ann: I'm sorry. You know George didn't like you.
Myrna: Who's George?
Ann: My late husband, I married him after I-I found out Henry had died.
Sabrina: [*her voice rises with anger at Ann, and George*] How would Henry feel if he knew this is what's happened to me?!
Ann: He's dead.
Sabrina: [*murmuring softly*] Why do you have to keep it all inside?
Ann: [*ignores her, but not without regret*]
Myrna: How did he feel about Sabrina? Did George. . .like her?
Ann: [*shakes her head*] No, he hated her.
Myrna: What happened then?
Ann: [*she doesn't dare look at Sabrina*] He-he made her disappear.
Myrna: How?
Ann: Stifling her, I think, I'm not sure.
Myrna: Oh. What does he look like?
Ann: I'll show you a photograph. [*after rummaging through her handbag, she hands a snapshot over to Myrna*] Here.
Myrna: He's very distinguished looking. Wealthy?
Ann: [*nods*]
Myrna: What was he like?
Sabrina: A stiff old bore.
Ann: [*feels as though she has to defend him*] He was rather. . . conservative, he was a lawyer. It was very stressful on him dealing with his clients. I should have been a better wife to him-- [*her eyes fill with tears*]
Myrna: [*moved, she offers Ann a tissue*] Tissue?
Ann: [*accepts one*] But I-I was still young, and. . . and then there was the news that I couldn't have any children. . . [*dabs her eyes with the tissue*] Our lives weren't wonderful, but we did the best we could. We married because Henry's father—he was like a father to me—well, he was a client of George's, and he didn't want to see me go back to waitressing.
Myrna: Did you love him?
Sabrina: [*bitter over all the years she had to spend with him instead of Henry*] I couldn't

Life (not the magazine)

stand him.

Ann: *[She thinks it over before answering.]* I think I was fond of him, but. . . we didn't know each other the way Henry and I did.

Myrna: *[Gently, she strokes the snapshot, reflecting a bit for the first time in her life.]* Just like I didn't know Henry the way you did with him, I suppose.

Ann: Yes, I suppose. *[she has a reminiscent smile on her face remembering her love]*

Myrna: What was Henry like?

Ann: *[She talks as though in a trance.]* He was so intelligent, forever coming up with witty jokes about all the things he knew. And he was so kind too, he'd give money to any poor fella who came up to him. I always worried that they may be conning him out of his money.

Sabrina: *[remembering fondly]* And he always scolded me for being too suspicious! It was so exasperating seeing him give his money away!

Myrna: *[laughing, sharing in her memories]* It must have exasperated you seeing him give away his money!

Sabrina: *[She turns her head sharply to face the psychologist then slowly breaks into a smile.]*

Ann: It was horrible! He was so generous, and there wasn't a thing anyone could do about it either! You know, he loved reading! Read anything he could get his hands on!

Myrna: I'd spent countless hours trying to drag him away from his books! *[She reflects on her time with him and memories flooded her. She shakes her head in slight disbelief.]* When he was around, I don't think I really loved him. But then after he had left, memories of all the things I disliked in him seemed to vanish and all that was left was. . . an image of what I wanted him to be. It wasn't until today that I was able to remember him clearly again. I just wish. . . that I hadn't wasted all that time.

Ann: *[encouraging]* You're still pretty and you have many years ahead of you yet.

Myrna: You think so?

Ann: Absolutely!

Myrna: *[looking at the time]* Oh no! I'm behind schedule now!

Ann: I'd better go then. Sabrina? *[they get up and head towards the door]*

Sabrina: Coming. *[walks out in front of them]*

Myrna: *[She comes out of her office with Ann. Sabrina is quietly serene in leading Ann and Myrna out of the office, and all the while Joan is watching them. Myrna studies her for a moment then smiles slightly and holds out her hand in a gesture of friendship, or understanding maybe. They shake hands and a silent pact takes place as they look at each other. Then Myrna turns to Gladys]* Send the next one in five minutes please. *[As she is about to enter her office again, she smiles at once more.]* I'll see you again next week?

Ann: *[nods]* Same time next week.

Myrna: *[to Gladys]* Write that down, would you please?

Gladys: Certainly.

Ann: I'll see you then.

Sabrina: *[smiles]*

Myrna: *[smiles straight at Sabrina as though she could see her]*

Ann: *[The corners of her mouth turn up ever so slightly.]* Goodbye.

[Ann and Sabrina exit. Myrna goes back to her desk.]

Myrna smiles ruefully to herself after hearing what Joan said then goes back into her office. Like before, she sits back down at her desk to write a report. Dropping her pen, she picks up the photograph of the young man and studies it. She is regretful but no tears come to her eyes. She then takes the photograph and slips it behind her own in the silver frame, places it back on her desk and continues writing her report. It is all the same as before. The office is still seedy and

Linda Hui

worn, and the report is just as boring but her heart has changed and her outlook towards life, changed by a single incident.

Back in the waiting room.

Joan: *[as though talking to someone beside her]* Now she seems to done some good
for this dead old place!

Gladys: Not another one!

[Waiting room fades into darkness.]

The Organ Pedal

by

Craig Taylor

Dover Bay Secondary

Original production

Directed by Hugh Anderson

Cast

The Rector (Michael).....Joey Kenward
Elsie Homepole.....Laura Foran
Louise.....Stephanie Hale
God.....Todd Forth

Caution. Professional and amateurs are hereby warned that The Organ Pedal by Craig Taylor is protected under copyright law. Inquiries regarding performance rights should be directed to

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The Royalty for each performance will be \$9.47.

The printing of this play is made possible by the generous support of

the organ pedal

Originally performed May 27, 1995, Kamloops B.C. in Youthwrite 95
with the following cast:

Louise:	Stephanie Hale
Michael, the Rector:	Joey Kenward
Mrs. Homepole, the organist:	Laura Foran
God:	Todd Forth
Voice:	Craig Taylor

Directed by Mr. Hugh Anderson

Written by Craig Taylor

(A very plain office with a large wooden desk in the middle. On the desk sits a telephone. Behind it sits a plush, comfortable chair. To the left of the desk is one straight-backed chair. To the right of the desk are two straight-backed chairs. There is a door stage left leading to the hallway and a door stage right leading to the confessionals.)

(Musty, out-dated organ music plays loudly in darkness)
(the lights come up)

Mrs. Homepole: ...and it seems to me that the young people in the congregation just aren't listening any more. I don't even remember the last time I saw any of the young men singing with the organ. I don't know if I should even be bothered with playing it any more.

Michael: (gently urging her towards the door) Well Mrs. Homepole I think there is no doubt how much you are appreciated and I think...

Mrs. Homepole: And for another thing...the pedals stick. They stick like moths to a light bulb and I'm telling you...back when Father Poleteller was here the pedals never stuck...and the boys sang. I remember when all the boys sang, just like little angels but I'm telling you...

Michael: Well, I'll tell you what. (hands Mrs. Homepole a stack of paper) I want you to go back to the organ, just for a couple of hours and look through this music. Now, it's a little more modern but I think you'll find that maybe the young men will sing a bit if you play music that they are more in touch with.

Mrs. Homepole: I don't know...I'm telling you these new fangled songs are too frisky. (Michael gently urges Mrs. Homepole out of the room) I remember when hymns were hymns and church was a place of respect and...(Michael finally succeeds in getting Mrs. Homepole out of stage left door)(he sighs and rests against it)

(a young woman opens the door startling Michael. He regains his composure as she peeks her head through)

Louise: Hello...hello? Is anyone here?

Michael: Well, hello Louise. What a blessing it is to see you here today.

Louise: I hope I'm not late.

Michael: Oh no, no. Our guest hasn't quite arrived yet.

Louise: Our guest? You didn't mention to me that there would be a guest.

Michael: Louise, he's not really a...guest. He's here to give me something very special...and...well, I thought it would be important for you to witness this.

Louise: Is it something I can sign right now?

Michael: No, no, no. You don't understand the...magnitude of what is happening here. This guest is...and, well, he will always be the most important man in the world.

Louise: I wasn't expecting to see anyone like that today.

Michael: Don't worry Louise, you look very pretty in your Sunday dress.

Louise: (uncomfortably) Father, these are my work clothes. I have to be at the store after this appointment.

Michael: Oh, you have a job. That is just terrific. It's good to see that you girls are getting out there and working nowadays.

Louise: Father I've been working since I turned eighteen...

(knocking is heard from stage left door)

Michael: Oh, that must be him now. (hands Louise a brush) Straighten your hair my dear, you'll want to make a good first impression.

(Michael gets up and walks to door. Before he reaches it, the door swings itself open. Another man, slightly younger, walks in. The door swings itself closed)

Michael: Louise, this is God. God this is one of the top young ladies in our congregation at St. Phillips, Louise Markell. Louise is very involved in the activities that we offer such as the Young Women's Sewing Auxiliary, the Young Women's Baking Squad and our Bible Study Unit.

God: Nice to meet you.

Louise: Nice to meet you...(pause)...uh, I'm sorry but...haven't I seen you somewhere before...no, I'm sure of it, I've seen you somewhere...I just can't place it. What was your last name?

God: My last name?

Louise: Yes, your last name. (looks him over) (God looks at her, puzzled)

Michael: (pleadingly) Louise I think you should...

Louise: No, no, if you'll pardon me, I know I'll get it. Just wait. God, God, God...(pause)...Oh, oh you mean THE God? Oh my God. (drops to her knees) I mean Oh my Lord, I'm so sorry...I didn't realize.

God: That's quite alright. I'm finding this whole grovelling thing is becoming quite tiresome.

Michael: (whispering) Yes Louise, please don't embarrass me.

Louise: (awestruck, she staggers to her feet) You're not as tall as I thought you would be.

God: Well, I get that a lot.

Louise: But I'm not saying you're short...

God: No, that's quite alright. I'm very happy with my height.

Michael: (clears his throat) I hate to interrupt but I'm sure that you can't be away from the Kingdom for too long.

Louise: Oh my... Well if you're not up there what will happen? Won't the world collapse into chaos or pillaging or...

God: No, no, myself no. We sure learned our lesson after those dinosaurs. (laughs) Leave nobody at the controls and look what happens. Now we always have an interim man up there when I'm away. His name's Stanley Gibberson. He's a great guy.

Michael: Stanley! Oh... Stanley! I met him at a retreat two years ago.

God: That was before the chicken bone accident in November.

Michael: Ah, yes. What a tragedy...

God: Yes.

Louise: Well, pardon me for asking, my Lord, but...

God: Please, please, stop it with this Lord business. It feels so formal.

Louise: (hesitantly) What should I call you then?

God: That's the first thing I wanted to talk about, I mean, My Self, I've got this personality crisis where it's always God this and My Lord that. I wouldn't mind a name for a change. Something with a bit of character.

Michael: But Lord you have so many variations on your name...

God: I'm quite aware of that Michael. I just wanted something more personal.

Louise: Couldn't you go by Charlton?

Michael: Louise! I don't think that is appropriate. You were not being addressed.

God: No, no I appreciate the suggestion but I'm looking for something different. That bare-chested-on-top-of-a-mountain image is alright but I've always considered myself more of an intellectual. Oh, but Charlton, that would have been perfect for the last God.

Louise: The last God?

Michael: Oh, I don't think she needs to know that information.

God: It's fine now, Michael. I have no reason to keep it a secret.

Michael: But she's a wo...(catches himself)...mortal.

God: So are you. (to Louise) You should have seen the last guy. He had the long, flowing beard and (chuckles) he would always strut around the office with his shirt off. The blinds up and everything. Oh, he made a lot of people angry. I remember some days we must have got about fifty calls when he had his shirt off and his beard on. Mostly from the Greeks.

Louise: The Greeks?

God: What a hot headed bunch they are. Always whining about Zeus and his copyright and how we Christians should get our own look. Now that's why I want a name that doesn't sound like anyone else.

(at this point, the stage lights slowly start to brighten) (temperature in the office is growing)

Michael: (fans himself) May I suggest something Christian...maybe one of the disciples?

God: Michael, I don't think you've been listening. I need something new...and besides, do you know how confusing the next poker game would be with two Peters or two Andrews.

Michael: Yes, of course. I'm sorry.

God: (musing) Something thoughtful yet not all-knowing. Something...

(long silence as each character tries to think despite growing heat in the room)(lights continue to brighten)(each character continues to look around and think of a name)(Louise looks at her watch)

Louise: (blurts out) Timex!

Michael: What! Louise that's preposterous, I can't believe...

God: Wait a minute...that's not bad actually...Timex...TImex... tiMEX...yes, I really like that.

Michael: I think it's totally inappropriate.

God: Well, you're forgetting who's God here Michael, aren't you.

Michael: Yes, of course. I'm sorry.

God: Well then, now that I have a name...(sits down and begins to realize how hot it is) Michael have you turned the heat up?

Michael: (wiping his brow) No, I haven't.

Louise: My Lord...I mean Timex...Look at that, out the window.

(she points out the window)(all three peer into the space above the audience)(stage lights are very bright)

Michael: It looks like the sun is getting...

God: Bigger...oh damn it. Pass me that phone.

(Michael snaps his fingers at Louise who passes him the phone. Michael then passes the phone to God)(room is continuously getting hotter)(God dials)

God: Uh huh...yes, this is him...get me Stanley right away...Stanley Gibberson!...right, the guy in the control room...thank you. (angrily) Stanley!...well I'm sorry I woke you up but look at your sun orbit...I know it's getting closer to Earth...(exasperated) What do you do?...listen up Stanley, now look at your control board, look at the knob beside sunset...right, the red one...no, no don't push it! Gently pull it back...(lights fade to normal)...good, good...no Stanley you're not fired...no, I don't hate you...okay...alright...goodbye. (hangs up phone) Alright now where was I?

Michael: I think we were just getting down to business, my...Timex.

God: Of course. (puts hand on Louise's shoulder) Do you know why I am here?

Louise: I don't really want to guess.

(God begins to speak but is cut off by Michael)

Michael: Well, let me answer this question if I may. (taking on a more strident stance) I've seen this happen a number of times to young women in various congregations I have been involved with and...I think I know what kind of honour is being bestowed upon you today. (clears his throat and puts his arm proudly around Louise) Louise, I would like to welcome you to the ranks of cherubim and seraphim. You are going to be, what we like to call, an angel-ette.

God: (puts his arm around Louise's other shoulder) Actually Louise, you haven't been chosen to be an angel...or an angel-ette for that matter. My job here today is to formally ask if you will become the new God. (Michael's hand and jaw quickly drop) My people have had their eyes on you for some time Louise and we want you to take the reins as soon as my retirement papers are finalized.

Louise: You're retiring?

God: Yes.

Louise: And you want me to take over?

God: Yes.

Louise: But you can't retire...well...I mean you can do anything you want but...you can't retire.

God: Louise, I'm God.

Louise: Exactly.

Michael: And she's a woman!

God: Exactly.

Louise: This can't be right.

Michael: Exactly! God needs to be strong and forceful. A decision maker. In fact, if anyone was to be chosen as the new God it should have been...

(as Michael says the word "me", Mrs. Homepole enters stage left and says at the same time...)

Mrs. Homepole: Excuse me! Excuse me! (ignoring God and Louise) I hope I'm not interrupting anything but I'll be darned if I didn't tell you those pedals were sticky and let me tell you something else. When I went to play, they stuck worse than a Junebug caught in fly paper. I'm telling you that...

Michael: Mrs. Homepole I guess you did not notice you were interrupting our conversation?

Mrs. Homepole: Well, if it wasn't important I wouldn't have done it, but I'm telling you that I'll never be able to learn those crazy songs of yours if the darn pedal keeps sticking.

Michael: (again trying to edge her out of the room) How about I come down in, say, ten minutes to help you...

Mrs. Homepole: You'll come with me now if you want those songs rehearsed.

Michael: Mrs. Homepole, I'm very busy with my guest right now.

Mrs. Homepole: That's just fine. Treat you guest like the Lord Almighty Himself but leave poor Mrs. Homepole to unstick the pedals. I'm telling you I would rip those pedals right out myself if my back wasn't weaker than a...

Michael: Alright, alright, alright. (staring angrily at Louise) I'll be right back.

(Michael produces a crowbar out of his desk then exits with Mrs. Homepole through the stage left door)

God: I know what you're thinking.

Louise: Of course you do.

God: No, I'm not reading your mind. I can just tell you're thinking...why me?

Louise: Well, why me?

God: Louise, look at the big picture. You're young, you're intelligent and you're devout. You are perfect for our new image.

Louise: New image?

God: Let's face it Louise, the Church is not what it used to be. I mean, back in the Middle Ages we had some pretty hardline guys running the show up there and it worked. We had fear, architecture and some great hymns going for us but now we have evangelism, fanaticism and...personally, I think we need a change.

Louise: But I'm not qualified to run the universe.

God: There's a manual. It's a great read.

Louise: But I've sinned.

God: Nothing the boys in the front office can't take care of.

Louise: What about you? Where does a God go when He...retires?

God: (produces pamphlets from his coat) Well Louise I could...(looks at one)...move on to a Higher State of Being or...(looks at another)...release myself into The Energy Flow of the Universe or...(looks at another)...I could get a condo in Florida. It's my choice.

Louise: Well, My Lord...Timex...I...don't know. I mean, what would I tell my parents? I'm not finishing university because I'm becoming a supreme being? I don't know if they would be proud or angry.

God: I know that this is a big decision and I would like to give you time to think about it but the more we wait, the longer Stan remains as God and he's on Union wages so...

Louise: So I would have to make up my mind...?

God: Today.

Louise: Today?

God: You have to understand that we usually don't work like this in Heaven. We pride ourselves in having the best customer service in all the afterworlds. It's just...well...my resignation papers are finalized at...noon today.

Louise: You quit? Just like that?

God: No, no, I didn't quit. I gave my notice decades ago but the personnel department took such a long time agreeing on the perfect candidate that I've ended up working past the standard retirement age...230 years.

Louise: You don't look it at all.

God: Thank you. I have a personal trainer. But (looks at watch) enough about myself. Do you have any questions?

Louise: Questions? Well, what would I responsible for as God?

God: Everything and nothing really. We have staff for just about everything...weather, solar arrangements, human assembly and disassembly, support staff at Heaven. The main thing would be listening to prayers and the occasional miracle.

Louise: How would I do miracles?

God: You would have powers.

Louise: You mean ultimate powers?

God: Ultimate powers to do ultimate good...Louise, do you remember that Super Nova last year?

Louise: Yes.

God: That was me...and same with the Northern Lights.

Louise: But they take those away when you retire, don't they?

God: The major ones but...I still have some minor ones, you know...party tricks.
(Michael re-enters with a crowbar and something resembling an organ pedal in his hand) This one is great at functions. (points finger at Michael)

Michael: I can't believe that woman. Sometimes I look at her and I just want to...

God: Bark like a dog.

Michael: No...not that. I was thinking more along the lines of...

(God snaps his fingers, Michael drops to his knees and begins to make barking noises)

Louise: This is what's left of your powers?

(Michael continues to scratch himself and bark)

God: This happens to every God who retires...and some of them have turned a pretty profit on the hypnotization bit.

Louise: You don't mean...

God: Yes, Reveen was God at one point in time, before the Vegas offers, but let's just keep that between you and me and...(looks at Michael who is still whimpering on the floor)...Oh for my sake Michael (snaps fingers, Michael gets up)

Michael: (as if nothing has happened) I'll just put this (holds up crowbar) back in the confessional.

God: Alright Michael.

(Michael exits stage right)(fixed phone on desk rings)(and rings)

God: (motions to phone) Go ahead, no one on Earth knows I'm here.

Louise: (picks up phone) Hello...this is her...Hi Mom...no, no I won't be home for dinner...what time will I be home tonight?...uh...I'm not sure. How about I call you from wherever (looks upwards) I end up...okay?...bye. (puts down phone) What about my friends and my family? While I'm up there for 230 years, they'll be getting old and dying down here.

God: Louise, Louise, that comes with the territory. You need to understand that death is not the end.

(Michael has returned and is leaning up behind Louise and God)(silence falls upon Louise as well as Michael as they realize what they are being let in on.)

Louise: What happens...when you die?

God: (looks to Michael) I really can't disclose that kind of information in this company.

Michael: Oh, I can keep a secret...

God: Michael, I know how well you keep secrets.

Michael: But I could turn over a new leaf, I could...

(God draws a remote control out of his pocket and presses a button)(Michael freezes and begins to retrace his steps backwards off stage in a rewind fashion. He appears again, crowbar in hand and proceeds to walk backwards to the last entrance spot)(actions should resemble a tape in rewind)

Michael: ...dluoc I, fael wen a revo nrut dluoc I but. Lanoisefnoc in kcab siht tup tsuj ll'I. Fra fra fra...etc.

God: It's temporary, don't worry, but I was talking about...

Louise: Death.

God: Oh Louise, don't say it like it's some kind of life ending experience.

Louise: What happens when you die?

God: (bluntly) Nothing much really...a lot of paperwork. The Buddhists have to be set up in the Reincarnation placement program and everybody else is sent to Heaven...which is overpacked already. We're bordering Valhalla on one side and those Vikings are steaming mad.

Louise: What about hell?

God: Oh, our Hell program was a budget cut centuries ago.

Louise: Where did Satan go?

God: There is so much fear in your voice when you say that name.

Louise: Isn't he the supreme ruler of evil?

God: Old man Satan? (laughs) Not anymore. He just sits on his porch, drinks lemonade and hollers at kids who run across the lawn.

Louise: There are lawns in Heaven?

God: Well, Louise...

(God is about to answer when Michael re-enters, crowbar in hand)(Louise stares as God snaps his fingers)

Michael: (regains himself and realizes what he is carrying) I'll just put this back in the confessional...again.

God: We understand completely Michael. Louise and I were just talking about Heaven.

Michael: (regains administrative stance) Ahhh yes, Heaven. I visited once after that knife-in-the-toaster incident in october. I was only there for a few minutes...nice place though, I thought the service was great.

Louise: The service?

Michael: ...nice place though, I thought the service was great.

Louise: The service?

Michael: ...nice place though, I thought the service was great.

Louise: The service?

Michael: ...nice place though, I thought the service was great.

(during this sequence all actions as well as speech are repeated exactly the same)(movement should resemble a record skipping)(God, however, is not affected)(motions go on indefinitely as God searches his pockets and angrily pulls out the remote control. He points it out above the audience, towards Heaven and hits the side repeatedly as if it will stop the skipping. Finally he presses a button and both Michael and Louise pause, then slowly slump over, slurring their speech not unlike a tape running out of batteries)(lights slowly fade to black except for a single spotlight which God steps into with the telephone)

God: Hello...get me Stanley...no this is God, get me Stanley...I don't care what he's asking you to call him. Thank you...Stanley? Now I understand that you're having some problems up there...You're what?...Getting a feel for the controls?...*(laughs uneasily)*...Stanley?...Don't you dare hang up...Stanley? *(angrily reaches for remote control)* I'll do it myself. *(presses button)*

Voice: *(friendly in an automated computer style)* Good afternoon and welcome to Life. For a complete introduction please press one...To start a new life form please press two...To open an existing file please press three *(God presses three)*...Thank you. *(Voice changes to loud authoritative tone)*
Let There Be Light!
(lights flash on)
Let There Be Life!
(Louise and Michael spring up from their slumped position)
Let There Be Air!
(both characters suck in a large gasp of air)
(Voice reverts back to friendly computer style)
Please continue.

Michael: ...nice place though, I thought the service was great.

Louise: The service?

God: *(jumping in)* Yes, Louise the service is terrific, the people are terrific. Everything is terrific but the fact is, I need an answer now.

Louise: Right now?

Michael: I think you should reconsider. This girl is obviously not ready for that kind of responsibility.

Louise: He may be right...I'm very flattered but...I don't know. You have to understand that I was the girl who couldn't keep a goldfish alive. How could I take care of everyone on Earth...and everything? If I can't put together Lego how am I supposed to maintain a universe?

God: I know you have faith in yourself. (Louise opens her mouth to protest but is cut short by God) I want you to see something. This is what I carry with me on Earth in case I get homesick for Heaven.

(God walks to the edge of the stage and spreads his arms as if painting a picture)(Louise and Michael slowly get up and peer into the picture God has conjured)

Louise: That's the most beautiful thing I have ever seen.

God: (pointing) I planted all those trees myself.

(seconds of silence as characters stand transfixed by the view)(as this is happening, Mrs. Homepole enters from stage left door, unnotices and muttering something under her breath)

Louise: (staring straight ahead) I'll do it.

God: (turns to Louise and holds out his hand)(she grasps it) Thank you.

(Michael, who is about to protest, as well as Louise and Mrs. Homepole suddenly pause, frozen in their position)(God realizes what has happened, looks up to Heaven then picks up the phone)

God: Stanley! Now!...He's what?...He's not taking any calls?...Well then listen to me, listen to me very closely (voice becomes trancelike and hypnotic) You are getting sleepy, you are letting your mind slip into a slow state of relaxation...deeper and deeper...good...now you are calmly pressing line one to the control room...good...(louder) good...(louder) good...(almost a yell) Stanley!...Stanley what do you think you're doing...Your name's not Stanley anymore?...(becoming genuinely scared) Well listen, whoever you are, I think this power trip has gone a little too far. This is a religion, not some brainwaching dictatorship.

(Stanley ceases to be heard silently over the phone but is instead heard audibly over the microphone)

Stanley: Sometimes I can't tell the difference.

God: (putting down phone) Where are you?

Stanley: Here and there.

God: Stanley...you are not God.

Stanley: Well, I sure as hell am not a union worker anymore.

God: I trusted you with this power Stanley.

Stanley: And you don't think I'm appreciating it?

God: I don't think you're appreciating the consequences here. I want you out of Heaven. Now.

(silence)

Stanley: I will be happy to oblige you.

(Voice ends as Mrs. Homepole raises her head and drops her cane to the floor. Her expression and body movement has changed as well as her voice)(actress playing Mrs. Homepole has now assumed the personality of

Stanley)

Stanley: (testing out new body) I've always wanted to try this. She's a little constricting but she'll work.

God: Leave that woman alo...

(Stanley snaps his fingers leaving God frozen in position)(He walks to Louise)

Stanley: So...this is the one. Our next supreme ruler. Young. Naive. Inexperienced. Female. I would have hated to have seen the other candidates.

(Louise breaks herself out of the freeze)

Louise: Mrs. Homepole? (Stanley snaps fingers once expecting Louise to revert back to frozen position)(she does not) Mrs. Homepole? (Stanley snaps) What are you doing?

Stanley: (trying to act as Mrs. Homepole would) I'm just paying my respects to this...man.

Louise: (grpsing Stanley's arm) Well, Mrs. Homepole, maybe you should just go back to the organ and...(pulls on her arm. Stanley yanks it back and slowly turns toward her)... You're not Mrs. Homepole are you?

Stanley: Well, technically yes but I'd rather you called me Stanley.

Louise: You're Stanley? You're...the interim God, aren't you? What are you doing here?...In Mrs. Homepole?

Stanley: In order to take over I have to get a feel for the opposite sex.

Louise: You're taking over? I thought it was me who was taking over.

Stanley: You didn't really think he was telling the truth now, did you? Being a God is more than welcoming people at the Pearly Gates, my dear. Who do you think orders the plane crashes, the tornadoes, the fires? Who do you think pulls the plug on your Grandparents' heart or slicks the road for a thousand car accidents. It all comes with the package. It's as ugly as it is beautiful. It's...no place for a lady.

Louise: Listen to yourself. This isn't how a God talks. You sound like a...

Stanley: Like a what Louise? Like someone in power is supposed to sound. That is what I sound like.

Louise: You're not a God of love.

Stanley: I can be as loving as the next God but...when dealing with the competition one has to use other, less endearing qualities. Get away from me.

(Stanley snaps fingers as Michael and God slowly walk backwards and stop in front of the desk)(as God is walking back, Louise plucks the remote from his hand)(Stanley does not notice)

Louise: Stop it.

Stanley: Who's left to stop me? There's no power left in him...or you...or anyone. You're finished here.

Louise: I'm not leaving.

Stanley: Louise, I hate to take you out of this...life now but it can only be one of us. I can't really kill you though. I'm not that kind of God. I'll turn you into a rock. Something silent. Something that will sit on the Earth forever and never say a word. It's a shame though. I hate to lose an intelligent and pretty girl such as yourself. You could have been my secretary. (Stanley raises his arm)(Louise raises the remote) What are you doing?

Louise: I don't know.

Stanley: Put it down Louise. You weren't meant to know. You shouldn't have to know...I...I don't think you understand what you're holding.

Louise: I know what this is.

Stanley: But you don't know why this is, do you? You woke up this morning with an average day. You woke up with dreams that aren't up there. They're down here. And the best part is that your dreams are things I can get, Louise.

Louise: So what?

Stanley: No, no. So why? Why should you take the chance? What if it goes wrong Louise? You've got your own life to worry about. That's what is real, isn't it? The cars, the houses, the babies, the husband. So why? Why bother? people aren't just born with happiness. They're granted it. Give me that and walk away. Be happy Louise and walk away.

Louise: You don't know what I want.

Stanley: You're forgetting who I am girl.

Louise: And you've forgotten who I am. (points remote at Stanley)

Stanley: Alright just stop it. Stop. This isn't some kind of...showdown. We can handle this like civilized beings. (pause) (Stanley lunges for the remote)

(Louise and Stanley struggle for the remote and finally press a button at the same time)(lights flash and a tremendous noise reverberates around the building as both characters are flung to opposite ends of the stage)(the remote is dropped in the middle)(gradually Louise and Stanley realize they have become chickens)(they drop to their knees and begins to peck)(and peck)

Stanley: Buc buc what have you done?

Louise: Buc buc buc I don't know.

(both characters begin pecking their way towards center stage where the remote sits)(they reach it at the same time and peck simultaneously)(lights flash and an extremely loud sound is heard)(characters are flung to their feet on opposite sides of the stage and realize they are frogs)

Stanley: (in a deep frog voice) Louise stop these games. I won't tolerate this any longer.

Louise: (in a deep frog voice) I have to stop you.

(again the two characters move forward, this time in a hopping motion)(once they have reached the remote they attempt to hit it with a frog licking action)(Lights flash and there is a tremendous boom)(the two characters are flung onto their feet)

Stanley: (tries to speak but finds he has no voice)(he begins to use sign language frantically)

Louise: (signs back in a desperate response as she slowly begins to edge toward the remote)

Stanley: (keeps signing threatening words as he does the same)

(both characters grab the remote and press the button)(lights flash and the same huge noise is heard)(the remote is dropped to the floor as both characters realize they are blind)(they drop to their knees and quietly start to feel around for the remote)(numerous times they come painfully close to touching each other)

Stanley: Louise?...Louise?...Where are you? (Louise has found the remote and begins to stand) Louise, just let it be. Just let it be, Louise. The Church wasn't meant to be changed. You don't go changing something like the Church after all this time. You're just a girl Louise. You're just a...

(Louise, now standing at the front of the stage, presses the remote control)(the stage blacks out)

Louise: (in darkness) What have I done?

Mrs. Homepole: (in darkness and original character) I'll tell you what you've done...you've turned the crazy lights off. It's darker than the hair of a skunk in here. I'm telling you that I hate the dark, I hate it more than...

Michael: (in darkness) Shut up Mrs. Homepole. Please just shut up.

God: I think we can only stay in darkness for so long Louise.

Louise: Oh yes, of course. Let there be light!

(lights come up on the stage revealing a large rock down stage center)

Mrs. Homepole: What is it?

Michael: It's a stone.

God: What do you call it?

Louise: Stanley.

(end of play)

Author's Note:

Oh, I forgot what I was going to say.



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