

# From Death's Door To Heaven's Gate

*By Mark W. Anderson*

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## **DEDICATION**

*I would like to dedicate this play to Matt Cross, for his vision and his enthusiasm in wanting to be part of it. A new friend, and a great team player, I am grateful that God allowed our paths to cross. I would also like to thank Sandy, Marsha, Rachel, Jenny, Wayne, Melanie, Jason, and Elizabeth for their long hours, blood, sweat, and tears that went into the first performance of this play!! God Bless!!*

*Mark, the playwright*

## **STORY OF THE PLAY**

Five college students from various religious backgrounds are meeting just before Easter break to discuss special projects for graduation. All are very talented, but quite different from each other. There's Kirk, the athlete who's comfortable in his Christianity; Logan, the cynical "get-by" Christian; Caitlin, the sorority girl who wears her Christianity like jewelry; Julie, the silent Christian; and finally Shelley, an agnostic who wonders if all Christians are like the ones she knows. It seems like nothing will make these students understand one another better until Kirk is fatally injured in a car accident. Together they find the true religion, that based on the likeness of Jesus Christ.

## **SYNOPSIS OF SCENES**

**Scene 1** - A school day, just before Easter break.

**Scene 2** - A few minutes later.

**Scene 3** - About a half an hour later.

**Scene 4** - Later in emergency room and several days later at funeral home.

**Scene 5** - An hour after the funeral.

### **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(2 m, 3 w, 2 flexible, 8 to 10 non-speaking, doubling possible.)*

**KIRK ROGERS:** An athletic, easy-going Christian who spends his summers doing missionary work. Speaks out for Christ. Concerned for friends.

**LOGAN MCKENZIE:** A Christian whose cynical outlook on life is alarming. Very confrontational and to the point. He's a "get-by" Christian, won't commit himself totally to Christ.

**CAITLIN SAMMONS:** A sorority member and a convenience Christian. She serves Christ when it is to her advantage to do so.

**SHELLEY AUSTIN:** A student on financial aid, feels like an outcast. She isn't saved and wonders if all Christians are like the ones she knows.

**JULIE LAMBERT:** A silent Christian who's afraid of losing her friends if she acknowledges Christ in her life.

**\*PROFESSOR BARKLEY:** A teacher at the university and a published author but ready to quit writing.

**\*STUDENT:** Reports the accident to the others.

#### **NON-SPEAKING ROLES**

**\*DOCTORS/NURSES:** On duty in emergency room.

**JESUS CHRIST:** Shows Kirk around heaven.

**MAN:** The truck driver who was in the accident.

**\*STUDENTS:** (3-5) Offer condolences to others.

*\*Can be either male or female, doubling possible.*

**TIME:** The day before Easter break and eight weeks before graduation.

**PLACE:** Student lounge of a small college. Also, the emergency room of a local hospital.

**PLAYING TIME:** 35 - 40 minutes. With suggested music - 70 minutes.

### **PROPS**

Book bags, textbooks, etc. for students.  
Pen for Professor.  
Magazine and headphones for Logan.  
Purse, mirror, lipstick for Caitlin.  
Bible for Kirk.  
Bandages for Logan.  
Sheet/hospital gurney for Kirk.  
Picture of Kirk.  
Box of Kirk's belongings.

### **SUGGESTED MUSIC**

The author suggests the following songs be used in the performance of this play:

"Tell 'em" by Karen Wheaton  
"He Believes in Lost Causes" by Phillips, Craig, & Dean  
"I Believe" by Wes King  
"Whatever It Takes" by Karen Wheaton  
"Don't Tell Them Jesus Loves Them" by Steve Camp  
"The Third Heaven" by Carman  
"When I Get Home" by 4-Him  
"Thank You/ Feel The Nails/ or The Altar" by Ray Boltz

Use original sound track by original artist for a greater dramatic effect. Have actors pantomime actions during songs. Have singers sing the first five songs with soundtracks if you choose to do so. However, playing songs will also suffice. If you choose not to use all of the songs, be sure to use "Whatever It Takes," "The Third Heaven," and "When I Get Home." They are crucial to the outcome of the play!

**Scene 1**

**SONG** - "Tell 'Em."

*(BEFORE CURTAIN: BARKLEY and KIRK are DS talking.)*

KIRK: Professor, I really enjoyed reading your book, "Christians in Daily Battles." Will you sign this for me?

BARKLEY: Uh ... yes ... sure, Kirk. *(Autographs book.)*  
Great game last night!

KIRK: Thanks. I find your work really interesting. How do you come up with all those ideas?

BARKLEY: *(Uncomfortable.)* I ... well ... they just come to me.

KIRK: Are you working on another book?

BARKLEY: No. I'm taking some time off.

KIRK: Really? Why?

BARKLEY: Rest. Relaxation. To come up with some fresh ideas.

KIRK: How long are you going to take off?

BARKLEY: I don't know. *(Changes subject.)* Have you and your group put your ideas together about the graduation ceremonies yet?

KIRK: We're working on them. I'm getting ready to meet with them in a few minutes.

BARKLEY: Good. I need the ideas as soon as possible to present to the college board.

KIRK: You'll have them. *(THEY exit.)*

*(AT RISE: CURTAIN opens. LIGHTS come up. LOGAN, with headphones on, is on the couch, reading a magazine. JULIE is in a chair reading a textbook.)*

CAITLIN: *(Enters.)* Well, well, well. What have we here? I'm glad to see everyone is busy. As usual, I'm on time and that other girl and Kirk are late.

JULIE: She has a name, it's Shelley.

CAITLIN: *(Insincerely, with hand against face.)* Why, of course it is. How forgetful of me.

JULIE: Did anyone ever tell you that you're impossible?

CAITLIN: Yes. Hello, Logan. Are you through with your classes? *(LOGAN doesn't respond.)* Logan. *(Goes over to couch.)* Logan. *(Lifts headphones and shouts.)* Can you hear me?

LOGAN: *(Jumps.)* What? Caitlin! Can't you see I'm busy?

CAITLIN: I sure can. Reading another issue of "The Rich and Blameless." Honestly, I don't know how you can read that trash! Where did you get it?

LOGAN: Out of your locker.

CAITLIN: *(Jerks away from HIM.)* It's my issue with *(Current actor.)* on it. It will soon be a collector's item.

LOGAN: Oh. That's why you bought it?

CAITLIN: Of course it is.

LOGAN: Oh, I see. I thought it might be because of the two-headed cow that gave birth to a U.S. Senator. *(LOGAN and JULIE laugh.)*

CAITLIN: You're so funny!

JULIE: Now that sounds like mighty interesting reading.

CAITLIN: *(Ignoring JULIE.)* And turn down that music. You're going to go deaf!

LOGAN: What?

CAITLIN: You're going to go deaf!

LOGAN: Huh? What?

CAITLIN: *(Yells.)* You're going to go ... *(Realizes.)* Oh! You heard me!

LOGAN: I know. I was just seeing how long it took you to figure it out. It was an idiot test and guess what. Caitlin, you passed!! *(Laughs.)*

CAITLIN: You're just so hysterical! *(Digs out mirror and lipstick and fixes HER face.)*

JULIE: Have you all finished your projects for graduation?

LOGAN: Sort of.

JULIE: Sort of? Logan, we have a little more than two months to get it done. And we're supposed to have our ideas today for Kirk.

CAITLIN: *(Puts away mirror and lipstick.)* That's why we're having this meeting.

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LOGAN: No Duh!! I've got the music lined up and that was all I was supposed to do!

CAITLIN: And my speech is ready.

LOGAN: Your speech? What speech?

CAITLIN: My valedictorian speech, of course.

JULIE: Good. And Kirk's lined up Shelley to be the student marshal.

CAITLIN: You've got to be kidding!

JULIE: No. Why?

CAITLIN: Shelley? She's ...

LOGAN: She's what?

CAITLIN: Heaven help me, I don't mean to be judgmental ...

LOGAN: *(Sarcastically.)* No, of course not. Not you!!

CAITLIN: She's not like us. *(Sighs heavily.)* I mean for goodness sake, she's on financial aid!

JULIE: Caitlin!

LOGAN: For crying out loud! What does that have to do with anything?

CAITLIN: It has everything to do with it.

JULIE: You're a SNOB.

CAITLIN: And proud of it!

LOGAN: Just because she wasn't born with a silver spoon in her mouth doesn't mean she's any different than we are!

CAITLIN: *(Shocked.)* I beg your pardon!

JULIE: Being poor is not a crime, Caitlin!

CAITLIN: I wasn't insinuating it was! Now -

KIRK: *(Enters.)* Hey, guys! Sorry I'm late for our meeting. What's up?

JULIE: The usual.

LOGAN: We're helping Caitlin with her spelling. Caitlin, now spell prejudice.

CAITLIN: *(Exasperated.)* Well!

KIRK: What?

CAITLIN: Oh, he's just trying to be cute. He better keep on trying!

JULIE: Kirk, have you seen Shelley?

KIRK: Yes. She'll be here a little later. She's finishing up a test. *(To LOGAN.)* What music do you have lined up?

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