

The Hearing

By Brent Holland

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DEDICATION

For Connie Holland, my mom. She's pretty awesome.

STORY OF THE PLAY

A famous doctor, who is destined to make a world-changing discovery, has been killed in a car accident and two angelic members of the "Representatives of Order" have 48 hours to assemble a group of possible candidates in order to reverse time and save the doctor's life. In order to be saved, three of the candidates must be willing to serve as substitutions, trading their lives for his. What would you do for the greater good? Eight people must quickly decide during a hearing where the "Forces of Chaos" are working against them, and all are adjudicated by the ominous "Judgement." In the end we see that no decision is as simple as it seems.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 w, 12 flexible)

MICHAEL: A proponent of the light, good natured and sincere.

HANNAH: A proponent of the light... orderly and succinct.

JUDGEMENT: The judge over the proceedings. Impartial and fair.

CARRION: A proponent of the darkness. Aggressive and deceitful.

ATAXIA: A proponent of the darkness. Seductive and cunning.

ONE: Logical, intelligent. A thinker.

TWO: Compassionate but lacks confidence.

THREE: Opinionated, a mother hen type.

FOUR: Calm and peaceful, centered.

FIVE: Judgmental and quick to action.

SIX: Unsure and nervous.

SEVEN: Patient and a good listener.

EIGHT: An idealist.

** All roles can be flexible except Seven, who is female. Feel free to change names and pronouns to fit your cast.*

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SET

There are four small platforms and one large one.

COSTUMES

JUDGEMENT is an imposing figure in red.

ATAXIA and CARRION wear black or another matching color.

HANNAH, MICHAEL and CANDIDATES 1-8 are dressed in everyday clothes.

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(AT RISE: There are four small platforms and one large one. On the large platform sits JUDGEMENT. On two of the smaller platforms are ATAXIA and CARRION. The other two platforms are empty. HANNAH and CANDIDATES 1-7 are onstage. MICHAEL enters, pulling EIGHT into the room.)

HANNAH: *(As MICHAEL rushes in.)* What took you so long?

MICHAEL: I looked everywhere and couldn't find anyone. I'm sorry. How long do we have?

HANNAH: *(Looking to the big platform and calling out.)* How long until a decision must be rendered?

JUDGEMENT: *(In a booming voice.)* The Representatives of Order have thirty-two minutes to submit their substitutions.

EIGHT: *(Very confused.)* What's going on here?

MICHAEL: *(Soothing.)* I'll answer that soon... I promise.

HANNAH: Are you ready?

MICHAEL: This is going to have to be quick.

HANNAH: And we only have eight.

MICHAEL: I spent all night on the streets and there simply weren't any more.

HANNAH: I hope it's enough.

MICHAEL: *(Reassuring.)* It will be enough.

(The other CANDIDATES, numbered 1-7, have moved in close.)

SEVEN: Excuse me... I need help.

MICHAEL: We're about to get started....

FIVE: I can't remember how I got here.

HANNAH: That's perfectly normal.

JUDGEMENT: Are the Representatives of Order ready to begin the proceedings?

(EVERYONE goes silent.)

MICHAEL: Yes, Judgement, we are.

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JUDGEMENT: Are the Forces of Chaos ready to begin the proceedings?

ATAXIA: We are, Judgement.

ONE: (*Speaking out of turn.*) Uh... excuse me... we have questions...

JUDGEMENT: (*In command.*) You will remain quiet until the case has been fully presented to you.

ONE: But...

JUDGEMENT: You will remain quiet until the case has been fully presented to you. Please affirm your understanding.

ONE: What does he mean by that?

HANNAH: Do each of you understand that you are to remain quiet until the case has been fully read to your understanding?

TWO: What case?

FOUR: What's going on here?

MICHAEL: We have no time for this. Please just affirm that you understand.

FIVE: Okay. I understand.

THREE: So do I.

EIGHT: I understand.

SIX: Will we get answers if we say "yes"?

MICHAEL: Yes, you will.

SIX: Then I understand.

(The OTHERS give their affirmation as well.)

JUDGEMENT: The Representatives of Order have presented eight possible substitutes, is this correct?

EIGHT: What does that mean?

(HANNAH shoots EIGHT a look before answering.)

HANNAH: That is correct, Judgement.

CARRION: (*Mocking.*) With only eight, is there really any reason to continue?

MICHAEL: We've won with this few before.

CARRION: With Eight? (*Scoffing.*) Hardly.

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JUDGEMENT: This hearing will now begin. Potential substitutes, in order to be considered for substitution, you must be familiar with the life, and recent death, of Dr. Carter Barrett Adison. If you are not familiar with his life and work, would you please indicate so now.

EIGHT: What does Dr. Adison have to do with this?

(There is a pause as no one answers.)

MICHAEL: All eight present are familiar with the life and work of Dr. Carter Barrett Adison.

JUDGEMENT: I now turn the case over to the Representatives of Order.

MICHAEL: Thank you, Judgement. *(Looks at the CANDIDATES.)* I am going to do my best to answer all of your questions, so please let me speak until finished. I have been through this many times and I know that you are all scared, nervous, and unsure of what is going on. My name is Michael and there are a few things you are just going to have to accept if we are going to get anywhere. This is my partner, Hannah, and together we represent the concept of order on Earth.

ONE: What are you talking about? How can you represent a concept?

MICHAEL: Please hold your questions until the end. What I am about to tell you is going to seem a little... overwhelming, and perhaps unbelievable, but if you could just humor us for a few minutes, we can get to your questions. As I said, Hannah and I represent the concept of order and progress... we have, what we feel, are the best interests for society in our hearts and we fight for those beliefs every day.

HANNAH: We are the driving force behind positive change in medicine, politics, and economic stability and our hands, and the hands of those who came before us, have helped shaped the wonderful things in our lives.

ATAXIA: *(Interrupting.)* That is a very slanted point of view.

HANNAH: Ataxia and her partner Carrion represent the forces of Chaos and will tell you a very different tale.

End of Freeview

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