

FINIS

By Gay Scheuer Janis

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SYNOPSIS

Here's an award-winning play about a relevant problem, teen suicide.

One day Dave was in school, the next day he is gone. Without even any skid marks to show he tried to brake his speeding car, the invincible Dave is dead. Although the school play has been canceled, the other kids in the drama club try out a few dramatic scenes to see if they can't pull something together.

They run through a couple of scenes, first playing an evangelist, then English nobility, yet everything reminds them of Dave's death. Dave is "with" his friends, making his usual wisecracks and trying to add humor with his performance of a hard-sell used car salesman.

But as the kids start to work through their grief and shock, they unite, realizing how precious and fragile life is. They realize that life does go on, even if you've lost someone very close. And Dave is left alone, wishing for another chance at life.

One set, easy to stage with exceptional acting opportunities.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

DAVE: High school senior who seemed happy and confident but who let his problems get to him; trying to reach his friends though now dead.

CRAIG: Best friend of Dave; a senior.

LISA: A friend hit hard by Dave's death.

PEGGY: Another close friend of Dave's.

LAUREN: A student only superficially grieving.

TIME: The present.

SETTING: The "pit" beneath a high school stage.

FINIS

(AT RISE: The three major characters are walking on from SR. LISA goes USR, PEGGY crosses DR and starts putting the makeup away. CRAIG crosses SL to the stairs.)

CRAIG: That was abrupt. *(Kicking over stool.)* I can't believe her.

LISA: Cut it out. We don't need a bigger mess to clean than we have already.

CRAIG: Yeah but I can't believe that she would just drop it like that. *(Imitating the teacher's voice. Stands on a stair riser.)* "I'm very sorry, folks, but it looks like we just won't be able to do the show. It just wouldn't be the same without David, you know."

LISA: It wouldn't.

CRAIG: *(Gets down, stands next to stairs.)* I know that but -

PEGGY: Somehow the whole thing doesn't seem real ... It was just two days ago, Friday, we were all down here putting on our makeup and our costumes for the pictures for the showcase and now ... *(Starts putting away the makeup on small table DR.)*

LISA: And now we have this mess to clean up and no show. Look at all this junk. Everyone just tossed their costumes down, left their props anywhere. *(Picks up costumes CS and crosses USC to hang it.)*

PEGGY: *(Wistfully.)* The makeup is still open and -

LISA: We have to clean up the whole thing.

CRAIG: No show, no David, no nothing. *(Drops one of the tools that HE was putting away.)*

PEGGY: I don't know. I still can't believe it. It doesn't seem real.

LISA: You already said that. Everyone has been saying it all day.

PEGGY: *(Holding on to a cold cream jar slowly screwing the lid on.)* Yeah, you're right, but it still seems like a nightmare, a bad dream or something. When you called to tell me and to turn on the news, I didn't believe you. It seemed like some horrible joke or something that was just

PEGGY: *(Continued.)* a trick to show how gullible I am, and that you would all be laughing at me. Even when I heard the guy on the TV describe what happened, I still didn't believe it. I kept thinking they got the wrong name, or maybe it is David, but he is in the hospital. If the doctors just try harder, they'll be able to save him. O.K., sure he won't be well right away but he'll get better. I mean, it's David. People like David don't die. Not till their successful men with a wife and children and -

LISA: You know you aren't making it easier on any of us.

CRAIG: He's gone.

LISA: And since we are the remaining officers of the drama club, it's up to us to clean up the mess and put everything away till next year. *(Picks up costume that has fallen by the coat rack and hangs it.)*

CRAIG: Next year, Peggy and I won't even be here. This was it, our senior play - our last chance to prove ourselves - to show what we could do.

LAUREN: Hi guys. *(Walks through the doorway in a cheerful mood.)*

(At the same time:)

PEGGY: Hi.

CRAIG: How ya doing, Lauren.

LISA: Did you come down to give us a hand?

LAUREN: No, I'd like to, but I got to get home. With all the late rehearsals and all, I'm really behind in my homework. I've got a term paper due next week for McPhillips and I haven't really started it yet. *(Getting makeup on HER hand.)* Oh, yuck. I just came back to find my makeup bag. I think I left it here after the rehearsal when we were having the pictures taken. I'm sure it is around here some place. *(SHE starts looking all around the set going DR, crossing SL and forcing CRAIG to move.)* I don't know why I always lose everything. I never seem to remember where I put anything.

LAUREN: *(Continued.)* It's blue with little flowers on it. Have you seen it? *(THEY all just look at HER.) (Finding it on the floor, CS.)* Oh great, here it is. *(Changing HER mood and becoming more reflective and sad.)* Besides, I don't want to stay around here with all this stuff from the show. It's too morbid. You know, it still doesn't seem real yet about Dave. He was one of the cutest, most popular guys in the school. He was so full of life. You know, we were really starting to get close. I just can't seem to get it into my head that he's gone and the show isn't next Friday. We rehearsed the show for eight weeks now. I think that it's the longest I've stuck with anything. It seems a shame that we couldn't do it. He was so full of life. *(CRAIG drops another tool noisily to the ground and breaks the mood that LAUREN has created.)* Well, bye. *(SHE exits SR.)*

LISA: *(Aside to HERSELF.)* I just don't understand her. I don't -- I don't understand her. Why is she -- why is everyone being such a phony about this ... that bit about her getting to be so close to Dave. You know all day long at least half the girls in the school have been carrying on as if they just lost their boyfriend or something. You know Christina, the girl in my French class, started to cry so much that Madame told her she could go to the rest room. I don't even think she knew him. Then there is us ... I mean we really ... I really cared.

CRAIG: But, she's right about one thing. It is too bad that we can't put it on. You know Dave wouldn't give it up that easily.

PEGGY: *(Crossing CS toward CRAIG.)* I don't know. At first I thought the show was really going to be great, one of the best the school has ever put on. But lately, I don't know. It seems that half the people didn't know their lines or their cues.

(LISA crosses between PEGGY and CRAIG to get a can of hair spray on the table.)

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