

DOWN FROM ABOVE

A Drama in Two Acts

by Jeff Richards

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Several people come back from Heaven to tell others about their lives on Earth, and the changes they experienced through God's love and grace. The stories tell of the spirit of forgiveness and salvation that the Lord offers all of us. As Penny says, "Remember, there's a celebration at the end of the road. And it goes on forever." About 70 minutes.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

"Down From Above" was originally presented in November of 1992 by the Performing Artists of Chapel Hill with the following cast:

PASTOR: Paul Twedt
EMILY: Allison Tigard
JOHNNY: Herb Davenport
TOMMY: Nadine Thompson
FIGURE: Bill McMonnies
MARTHA: Marlene Fullerton
SARAH: Kimberly Schertzer
PENNY: Lois McMonnies
THELMA: Susan Nordman
CRYSTAL: Heidi Calhoun
SOLDIER: Jack Newton
BOBBY: Ty Newton

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 m, 6 w, 1 flexible)

PASTOR JACK: A man in his later years.

EMILY PATTERSON: A girl in her early teens.

JOHNNY HOLIDAY: A middle-aged man.

TOMMY DONLEY: A nightclub comic.

THE FIGURE: A man or woman of any age.

MARTHA: A middle-aged woman.

SARAH GLEESON: A handicapped girl in her teens.

PENNY THURSTON: A refined, middle-aged woman.

THELMA: A woman of any age.

CRYSTAL WATERS: A woman in her mid-twenties.

SOLDIER: A man in his forties.

BOBBY: A young man. He is unseen.

SETTING

A single interior. The setting should represent a secret meeting place such as a warehouse, factory, or abandoned building. The set should be simple, stark, and realistic. Furniture should be limited to a simple table and five chairs, stools, or boxes.

NOTES ON PRODUCTION

It is important that the actors and director approach the characters with as much realism as possible. They should be "real" people and nothing less. Any attempt at stylization will lessen the impact of the play. These people should not be ghosts, spirits, or any sort of other-worldly beings. We should be able to see as much of ourselves in them as the actors are capable of portraying.

The setting, while not specific in location, should be realistic as well. Flames, smoke, or any sort of special effect would only lessen the impact of the here and now.

ACT I

(The stage is in darkness. A PASTOR can be seen standing in the darkness. A LIGHT comes up center, but he is not in it.)

PASTOR: Over here. I'm over here. *(The LIGHT stays center. HE starts to move into it. Just as he reaches it, the LIGHT goes out and comes back up where he just had been.)* Very Funny. Very funny. *(Peering into the darkness.)* Who's running this show?

VOICE: You are, sir.

PASTOR: No. No. I mean yes, you're right. I said I was running this show, but who is runnin' these fancy gizmos up here? *(Pointing to the lights.)*

VOICE: You mean the instruments, sir?

PASTOR: Instruments? What in the blue moon is an instrument?

VOICE: The lights, sir. The stage lights.

PASTOR: Yes, son. The stage lights.

VOICE: I am, sir. I'm running them.

PASTOR: *(Out to audience.)* What's that saying? "A mind is a terrible thing to waste"? *(To Voice.)* I know that you are running them, son. I just thought that I might find out what you name is?

VOICE: Oh sure. Sorry, sir! I didn't understand ... I thought ... Bobby, sir. It's Bobby. *(Pause.)* I'm not in trouble, am I, sir?

PASTOR: No trouble, Bobby. I just like to know a person's name. That's the beginning of a relationship. Know what I mean, Bobby?

BOBBY: Yes, sir.

(Long pause.)

PASTOR: *(To audience.)* He's thinking about it. I can smell the brain cells churning away.

BOBBY: Uh ... what ... what's your name, sir?

PASTOR: *(To audience.)* Ahh! The predictability of youth!
(To Bobby.) In a minute, son! I've got a whole fancy introduction worked out here, OK?

BOBBY: Yes, sir!

PASTOR: You just keep those "instruments" planted right on this old kisser, OK, Bobby?

BOBBY: Yes, sir!

PASTOR: *(To audience.)* Good kid. *(Pause.)* Well, at last we meet. Good evening. My name's Jack. As you can see, I used to be a pastor. Pastor Jack. I know. Has kind of a funny ring to it, doesn't it? "Pastor Jack!" Sounds like I should've been hosting a kiddy show or maybe sailing a pirate ship. *(In his best pirate voice.)* "Arghh maties! It's I, Captain Jack! Keelhaul that scurvy sea dog and bring the young damsel to me!" I always appreciated a pretty damsel! *(Pause.)* But, I'm getting sidetracked. That happens a lot down here, I forgot. *(Pause.)* I need to set the stage, so to speak. Now, some of what I'm about to tell you may sound strange ... even unbelievable to some ... but no matter. I'm here, you are all out there, and I hope and pray that we have a meeting of the minds.

In fact, why don't we do just that. Pray, I mean. Best way to start off anything. Now those of you who may not know of the Lord just yet, don't get all squirmy and sweaty in your seats. You came for a show and we'll give you one. There's nothin' mystical or mysterious about prayer. In fact, it's the most natural thing I know. All right, here we go ... oh, don't worry ... I was a Presbyterian pastor, so I'll keep it short. Dear Lord: I pray that what I and the others say here tonight will be what You want, when You want, and how You want. Work through us so that these folks listenin' will be touched by Your Spirit and Your love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. All right! Now you've probably been wonderin' why I've used all these past tense words when referrin' to myself. The answer is simple: I'm dead. *(Pause.)* Yep. You heard me right. In fact, every person you will see up here tonight is dead. I kind of hate to use that word, 'cause it's not really accurate. But you can understand best if I put it this way.

End of Freeview

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