THEREFORE
A Play in Three Acts*

JOHN ADDISON DALLY**

I. Dying

This play is ideally performed by a teenage cast. The nine players are identified only by gender and number (Man 1, Woman 1, etc.). Woman 3 should be the smallest and youngest of the cast. The lights come up on a circle of eight identical high-backed chairs placed in the middle of the playing area, their seats facing out toward the audience. The audience surrounds the circle of chairs, their rows broken by aisles at the four cardinal points for the entrance and exit of the players.

W3 enters the lighted area and contemplates the chairs. After a moment she chooses one and sits down. She looks around, sighs, and puts her chin on her hand, her elbow on her knee. Then she sits back again, waiting. M6 enters the lighted area and takes stock of the situation more quickly. He speaks abrasively to W3.

M6: You’re sitting where I want to sit. Get up.

W3 looks startled, but rises and moves hesitantly several seats away, occasionally glancing nervously at M6. M6 sits down deliberately in W3’s vacated chair but immediately becomes restless, huffing and changing postures frequently. Finally, he yells at W3.

M6: You’re sitting where I want to sit. Get up.

W3 looks startled, but rises and moves hesitantly several seats away, occasionally glancing nervously at M6. M6 sits down deliberately in W3’s vacated chair but immediately becomes restless, huffing and changing postures frequently. Finally, he yells at W3.

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M6: And don’t sit there, either. I never know when I might need any of these chairs! Go on, move!

W3 moves sheepishly around the circle, out of sight of M6, who begins counting all the chairs he can see.

M6: One, two, three, four . . . (turning to look the other way) . . . five, six. Six! That’s a lot. That’s more than anybody else has. (Looking around) And there isn’t anybody else, so things couldn’t be better.

In spite of his statement, M6 continues to seem ill at ease. He resumes his earlier mannerisms. M1 enters and sits down on a chair one seat removed from W3. He appears agitated.

M1: That was really stupid! I never thought he’d come back so soon. Now I’m in trouble. Big trouble. Why didn’t I think about this before I started?

W3 moves closer to M1 in an attempt to be sympathetic.

M1: It’s always been this way, all my life. No matter how carefully I plan, some jerk always manages to foul it up! The near misses I’ve had! The near misses! I could write a book . . .

W3: (Tentatively) What’s wrong? Did something happen?

M1 gives no indication of being aware of W3’s existence. He sinks into a frozen posture and stony silence. W2 and W7 enter simultaneously from different directions and sit on opposite sides of the circle. Whenever W2 speaks, W7 repeats her words exactly but with different inflections and personality. When W7 initiates, W2 repeats. Sometimes one speaker begins just a few words after the other, providing a kind of echo. A player number in the middle of a sentence indicates where that player begins speaking the same sentence from the beginning. Occasionally the two women speak simultaneously, but they never imitate each other.

W2: Well, you know, I never really did think it was such a good idea. So unoriginal. (W7 repeats.) If you want to get people’s
attention, you can’t just give them the same tired old thing. (W7)

W7: You have to understand how people work. (W2) Every person wants to think (W2) that he or she is

W2, 7: (not quite together) Original. Unique. A cut above average.

W2: So to appeal to the majority you have to speak to them as individuals. (W7) Get them into your confidence. (W7) Always remember, though, (W7) that they really aren’t individuals. They all think alike. They have the exact same needs and secret longings. It’s you, the thinker, the knower, who stands apart.

W2 and W7 sit back with looks of satisfaction on their faces. W9 enters quietly. She looks at the players assembled thus far and a vacuous smile spreads across her face.

W9: Oh, boy! A party! (She advances to the chairs and walks around them, looking at those seated and smiling vacantly. No one pays any attention to her except W3, who looks at her expectantly.) Are you invited to this party? (W3 looks crest-fallen. She shakes her head sadly.) Well, then, move! You can’t sit here if you’re not invited to this party.

W3 moves again, on the verge of tears and increasingly bewildered about where to sit. She takes a seat on one of the remaining chairs. W9 sits down next to W2 and looks around, obviously enjoying herself in spite of the fact that no one pays any attention to her.

W9: I live for parties! I love to see what people are wearing, and who they’re with, and talk to all my friends. (She looks around again, smiling, in the extremely un-party-like silence. To W2) This is so much fun! Maybe in a little while we’ll put a Blu-ray on, or maybe just some music. (Pause) Everybody is always so happy at parties . . . that’s what I like best. I can’t stand people who come to parties and talk about their problems. I mean,
who needs it? As if anybody cared. . . . (Pause) This is so much fun. . . .

W5 enters dramatically with a triumphant and humorless laugh. No one pays any attention to her but W3, who is awestruck.

W5: Ha! They put on their little costumes and do up their ugly little faces but it doesn’t do them any good. As soon as I came in they all knew they were lost. (W5 parades self-confidently around the circle of chairs.) I was the most beautiful person in the room; the most beautifully dressed, the most graceful and well-spoken. The others didn’t have a chance. (Increasingly extravagant) I thank God for all that I am, and all that I have! I thank God for making me infinitely better than those around me: more intelligent, more creative, more beautiful, more wise. I have nothing to fear, nothing to lose! I have it all!

W5 sits next to W3.

W3: (Still awestruck) You are very beautiful. . . .

W5: (With deep conviction) Yes.

M6: (Releasing a rage that has been mounting) All these people! They’re taking up all the space! Space that belongs to me, my space! I’ve got to get rid of them! They have no right to be sitting on my chairs unless I’ve asked them to, and I haven’t asked any of them! (Shouting) Not one of them!

W7: A certain kind of cooperation (W2) can be achieved when the goal is sufficiently attractive.

W2: People who would normally not be caught dead together (W7) can be seen working side by side. The cooperation thereby achieved (W7) is superficial, merely contractual, and should not be mistaken for true solidarity.

W2, 7: (Almost together) True solidarity is an illusion.
M1: Maybe I should go back. Maybe I could undo the damage. Maybe we could talk. . . . (Pause) I’ll be damned if I’ll do that! Okay, I take my fair share of responsibility, but if he hadn’t come back so soon there wouldn’t have been a problem. This is his fault, not mine. It’s up to him to come to me with a solution, if there is one. I can’t always go the extra mile. I’ve done that too many times, and I’ve never been thanked for it yet. I could write a book.

W4 enters, talking vehemently to the air.

W4: Get away from me! Get . . . a . . . way . . . from . . . me! (Shouting at those seated) What is wrong with you, anyway? What is wrong with you? And you! And you! And you! You want to know what’s wrong with you? You’re crazy! You’re all crazy! (W4 begins to run around the circle, making the “classic” sounds of madness.) Crazy, crazy, crazy, crazy! (W4 becomes still abruptly; mood swing) My mother always taught me to cross my legs at the ankles and put my feet underneath my chair. A lady never finishes everything on her plate. The water glass should always be two inches up from the knife and one inch to the left. (Another mood swing; pointing accusingly at one of those seated) I saw that! Don’t ever try to get away with that again! (W4 moves to one of the two remaining chairs and sits down. Suddenly bewildered) What is this, anyway? Who are all of you? What is the point of this?

W3: (Rising and crossing to W4; with relief) That’s exactly what I’ve been wondering, too! Exactly! I’m so happy to hear you say that! Maybe we can figure it out together! Maybe we can be friends.

There is no reaction or even eye contact from W4. M8 enters seething with anger.

M8: (Pacing aggressively and pounding his fist with his palm) I have had it! I have had it with councils and meetings, debating and talking, working out careful little solutions on white 20 lb letter stock! It’s time to act! It’s time to show who’s in
charge! It's time to separate the men from the boys. (W3 flees from this onslaught but M8 follows her around the circle. Panned, she takes the last available chair.) What do you think you're doing? Who gave you the right to take that chair? Did I? I did not! Get out of it. (W3 jumps up and M8 begins chasing her around the circle.) Get out! Get out! Get out! There's no room for you here! Get out! Get out!

In desperation, W3 manages to squeeze between the chairs into the center of them. Appeased, M8 sits in the remaining chair.

W9: (Smiling) I love the little snacks people come up with to serve at parties. (Pause) My favorite is pieces of water chestnut and pineapple wrapped up in bacon.

W4 begins to laugh incongruously, beginning softly but growing louder; she continues under W5's lines. As W5 enters the laughter is interspersed with babble and non sequitur remarks: “All the toads came. They were very happy to do so.” “Typewriter, write-typer, tire-wipers, ripe-tighters.” “Mares eat oats and does eat oats, but little lambs have scurvy; the kid might have scurvy, too, wouldn’t you?” W5's voice should dominate, however. From within the circle of chairs W3 turns and tries to follow each voice as it enters.

W5: (Her face growing dark) This is not enough! I came expecting more than this, and I won’t leave until I get it. (She stands and stamps one foot.) Do you understand? I simply will not be treated like this! (She begins to pace around the circle.) You may treat the others this way but you have another thought coming if you think you can treat me like this. I am not like the others, as anyone can plainly see. (She stops, arms akimbo.) I want more praise! Do you hear? More praise! (Babble from W4. W5 begins to lose confidence.) Why won’t anyone listen to me? Who won’t anyone give me what I need? It’s so simple. All I want is . . . is. . . . (She collapses in her chair, overcome by rage and frustration.) I hate you! I hate you all!

W4: Always wear clean underwear. You never know when you might get run over.
Therefore

M6: (In counterpoint with M1) Maybe I can buy them out. But that'll deplete my cash reserves, and I can’t afford to do that.

M1: (Overlapping M6 slightly) Why doesn’t anyone else have these problems? Other people seem to be able to make plans and carry them out and no one interferes.

M6: (Overlapping M1 slightly) What if they unionize? Then what'll I do? I've got to think of a way to keep them from unionizing.

M1: There's no way I can pick up the pieces from this one. No way. This is going to follow me wherever I go. I'm a marked man.

M6: I know! Everybody has a price. I'll start making loans for all those things they want but don’t really need, and then I'll kill them with the interest! I'll make it so high they'll never even get to the capital. (M1 begins speaking here.) Then I'll be able to tell them where to sit and when and for how long. If I can’t get rid of them, at least I can control them. And that's almost as good. In fact, that could be even better.

M1: (After “the capital . . .”) It isn’t even my fault! But I have to pay the consequences. Why can’t I just start over? My whole life is a disaster now!

W7: As a society increases in size and sophistication there is a natural widening in gaps between the classes.

W2: Power, education, and money become consolidated at one end of the social spectrum, resulting in a pervasive feeling of injustice and despair among the masses.

W7: The haves perceive the have-nots as a threat to the status quo and so further restrict their freedoms by whatever means lie at their disposal.
W2: The have-nots perceive their own situation as so hopeless that the only conceivable response becomes violence to overthrow the status quo.

W2, 7: Social analysts agree that the escalation of these conditions will inevitably lead to a society’s downfall, but no solution for the cycle has ever been discovered.

W2: Well, you know, I never really did think it was such a good idea. (W 7 repeats; then, together) So unoriginal.

M8: (Explosively) Nothing has ever been accomplished by talking! It’s the side that wields the biggest stick that gets the work done! We’ve gotten to the top by our own sweat, so why shouldn’t we be able to enjoy it?

W9: Parties are like a special world where there are no problems, nothing to worry about. When I’m at a party I can forget the rest of the world exists. There’s nobody to think about except me, and I can pretend the party will just go on forever.

M8: If these other people were as smart as we are and worked as hard as we do they’d have the same advantages! It’s not my fault they’re stupid and lazy. There’s hardly enough land and natural resources to go around these days, so they might as well go to the people who know how to use them best.

W9: I went to a party once where someone had left a newspaper lying out by accident. Sure enough, somebody picked it up and started talking about someplace halfway around the world where people are dying of starvation and disease because of a civil war going on in their country. Can you imagine? I mean, talking about people dying at a party? Some people are just thoughtless.

From here to the conclusion of the act the various voices come in one on top of another, building to a cacophony.
W5: I’m feeling much better now. I just went and looked in a mirror and came away so refreshed. I had forgotten that I have it all. For a while I had this silly idea that I needed something from outside myself, but now I’ve realized how wrong that was. I’ll never be so silly again. *(W 2 and W 7 begin here.)* After all, what could I possibly need? I have beauty—incredible beauty—and poise—incredible poise—and I know how to carry myself in a way that no one can ever surpass. Not only that, but I’m kind to others who don’t have all the advantages I have. I try to help them whenever I can—at least twice a year. Of course, sometimes it’s hard to help people who are completely intimidated by me, but I try. After all, I can’t blame them. *(Repeat as necessary.)*

W2, 7: *(In unison)* The main thing wrong with our society is its complete lack of authority. The main thing wrong with our society is that it’s too authoritarian. *(Repeat as necessary.)*

M6: Controlling other people is better than I thought it would be. It’s got all kinds of advantages that I never imagined. *(M 1 begins here.)* All I had to do was make a few shrewd investments and a few fast deals and I was set! Now people go when I say go and sit when I say sit. They hang on every word I say, because they know their lives depend on it. *(Repeat as necessary.)*

M1: There’s just no future for me! I can’t go backward and I can’t go forward. *(W 4 begins here.)* I’m stuck with this guilt for the rest of my life. If only things had been different! If only he hadn’t come back so soon. If only other people wouldn’t get in my way. *(Repeat as necessary.)*

W4: *(Insane laughter and babble, ad lib.)*

W9: *(Shortly after W 4 begins laughing)* I live for parties. I love to see what people are wearing, and who they’re with, and talk to all my friends. When I’m at a party I can forget the rest of the world exists. There’s nobody to think about except me,
and I can pretend the party will just go on forever. (Repeat as necessary.)

M8: The world belongs to the powerful. The world belongs to the strong. The weak must be systematically eliminated. The only solution to disagreement is violence. (Repeat as necessary.)

As the cacophony grows, W3 becomes increasingly tormented by it, calling out “Stop! Listen to what you’re saying! Stop it, please!” As the din increases, W3 sinks to the floor, her hands over her ears. There is a deafening bang. Blackout.

II. Waiting

During the blackout the chairs are rearranged into three rows facing in the same direction. Unless otherwise indicated, a feeling of lassitude and numbness prevails throughout this act.

W5: What happened?
M8: What have we—
M1: What?
M6: Nothing happened.
W9: What time is it?
M8: We haven’t. . . .
W4: Oh, why won’t they stop? Why won’t they stop?
W9: It’s very quiet.
W5: Something must have happened.
M6: No, I tell you! Nothing happened. (Pause) Oh, I feel sick!
A society that has reached a sufficient degree of alienation will, like any individual, become ill and seek to discharge the perceived source of its malaise.

I listen and listen, but I can’t hear anything.

There’s nothing to hear.

Are you there?

Who?

You. Are you there?

I don’t understand what you mean.

All the mirrors are broken. I can’t tell who I am.

Who said that?

(Thoughtfully) After you kill people, they’re dead. They can’t hurt you anymore, or get in your way. They’re just dead. They can’t. . . .

I knew this would happen.

(Crying softly) Why won’t they stop? Oh, why won’t they stop?

I don’t understand.

It’s so quiet.

If you ask me, one social reformer is just like another. (W 7 repeats.)

There’s no changing people.
All the programs, all the political platforms, all the earnest speeches and inspired marches amount to the same thing:

You can’t make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear.

I can see now that it just didn’t matter. It wouldn’t have made any difference if I had gone back. Nothing would have—

You can’t get blood out of a turnip.

If only people didn’t have memories.

Killing people is a kind of death, isn’t it? Everyone dies, but people who kill die sooner. I wonder why I never saw that before?

Or is this real, and everything else—

1 Adapted from Horace.
W9: (Quickly; a sudden realization) Everything else was an ill—
(She gasps and covers her mouth.)

W3 enters quietly and stands looking at the group; they do not acknowledge her.

W5: (Feeling her face; slowly) I . . . am . . . ugly! Oh, God, I’m ugly, and I never knew it. (She looks at her hands.) Even my hands are ugly.

W2, 7: The human personality structure is an odd combination of resiliency and weakness. In the grip of an illusion, it can resist almost any challenge to its self-sufficiency and power. If the illusion is shattered, however, the entire structure may collapse under the slightest strain.

M6: I want you all to leave me alone! Do you understand? Just leave me alone!

M8: But no one is—

M1: (Fiercely) Shut . . . up!

W9: Is the party over?

W4: Yes! Yes! The party is over! Finished! There is no more; that’s all there is!

M6: Someone get her to shut up!

M1: Why don’t you?

M8: I don’t understand.

W9: (Outburst) Well, why are we all just sitting here?

M6: What else is there to do?

W5: (Crying softly) I’m ugly! I’m ugly! Oh, God, I’m so ugly!
W9: Why can’t we fix it, make it like it was before?
M1: I don’t want to.
M8: Fix what?
M6: This is your fault.
W9: My fault? Why?
M1: Shut up.
M6: It has to be your fault, because if it isn’t your fault, it’s mine.
M8: What are we talking about?
W4: Everything! We’re talking about everything! It’s all everybody’s fault!
M1: Maybe it’s her fault.
W5: (Softly) I hate you . . . I hate you all.
W9: This is never going to change, is it?
M8: What?
M1: It will just go on and on like this.
M6: What?

W2, 7: Research has shown that a society will persist in patterns that lead to its own destruction in spite of widespread evidence that a change of course is necessary for survival.

W9: I can’t bear the thought of that.
M8: There’s nothing you can do about it.
Therefore

W2, 7: You can’t teach an old dog new tricks.

W9: I’d rather be dead.

M6: You already are.

W9: What?

M1: What’s that supposed to mean?

W2, 7: In normal usage, “death” denotes the termination of all biological processes. In certain metaphorical instances, however, “death” may be used to describe the absence of such qualities as love, hope, and imagination.

W5: I want out of here.

M6: There is no “here.”

W5: I don’t care. I want out.

M8: You’re on your own.

W4: (Insanely) Boy, is she ever! (She laughs maniacally.)

W3 now approaches the group and, during the remaining lines, attempts to join hands or turn heads to establish some connection within the group. Her efforts are met with resistance, sometimes stubborn, sometimes listless.

W9: (Beginning to cry) I don’t understand.

M6: Stop that!

W5: (Crying) I want out of here.

M6: Do you hear, stop that crying!

W4: (Interspersed with laughter) “Where is this sight? What is it ye would see? If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.
O proud death, what feast is toward in thine eternal cell? The ears are senseless that should give us hearing. Let me speak to the yet unknowing world how these things came about.”

M1: (Over W4) It wouldn’t have made any difference if I had gone back.

W5: (Over W4) Why can’t someone do something?

W9: (Over W4) I’m scared! I’m scared!

W2, 7: The perpetual cycle of a society’s birth, rise, and decline is intrinsic to nature. There is no alternative to it.

W3 takes W2’s hand in her own. W2 looks blankly at their joined hands, then into W3’s face, and speaks.

W2: Well, not necessarily.

W7: What?

W2 and W7 look at each other for the first time. The others turn as one to look at W2 and W7. Blackout.

III. Celebrating

During the blackout a dining table is brought into the center of the playing area. The chairs are placed around it as for a meal. As the lights come up, the playing area is empty. W4 enters with a great show of mystery and caution, suspicious of this new arrangement. She runs up and slaps the table and then runs away again, waiting to see if there is a consequence. When there is none, she approaches again and begins to dance around the table gleefully, occasionally drumming happily on it. This mime should be given an amount of time adequate to match the audience’s own curiosity about the addition to the set. W4 finally sits down at the table and begins entertaining herself.

2 Hamlet, Act V, Scene 2.
W2 and W7 enter the playing area side by side. Seeing the table, they exclaim as one and jump backward. As they approach a second time, M1 enters from another direction. He seems weighed down by thought, but as the table penetrates his consciousness he gradually becomes more aware and animated. W4 continues to entertain herself, oblivious of the others.

M1: What’s this?

W2: Who put this here?

W7: What is it?

M1, W2, and W7 circle the table cautiously.

W4: (Laughing to herself) They said it couldn’t be done!

M1: What are we supposed to do?

W2 and W7 look nervously at one another.

W4: (Laughing) What do you want to do?

M1: (Looking blank for a moment, then smiling for the first time) Well, I’d like to sit down, but I feel like there’s some reason I shouldn’t. I can’t remember what the reason is, though.

He knits his eyebrows, then relaxes them. He approaches a chair tentatively, pulls it out, and sits down. Immediately he feels profound relief and comfort, a positive reaction quite different from W4’s. W2 and W7 continue to keep their distance. M8 enters and stands, looking confused.

M8: What’s this?

W4 makes an elaborate show of standing up, sliding her chair back in to the table, and dancing over to M8. She takes his hands and swings him around joyfully, then continues to dance solo around the table.

M8: (Laughing as W4 takes his hands) Hey, what are you doing? What is this?
W4: (As she dances away) When I was young I was very, very young, but when I was old I was younger!

W5 enters grimly and watches the scene between W4 and M8. As she watches her face breaks into a genuinely happy smile. W4 dances around the table to her.

W4: Come on!

W5: (Laughing) Where?

W4: Anywhere! Everywhere! Come on! (She takes W5 by the hand and leads her toward the table.)

W5: (Laughing) But I don’t have anything to wear! And what will I say? How should I act?

W4: Who knows? Who cares? Today’s the day! Today’s the day!

W4 has been pulling W5 gently along. Now, for an instant, they stop and hold each other’s gaze.

W5: (Solemnly) Yes. It is, isn’t it?

W4: (Dancing away as W5 seats herself and looks around happily) Round and round it goes, where it stops, nobody knows. (Pushing M8 to take a seat, as well) Come on! You, too!

M8: (Laughing) Okay, okay! I don’t understand, but I guess it can’t hurt. (M8 sits next to W5.)

W5: (Placing her hand on M8’s arm) Oh, but you do understand.

M8: (Looking at W5) I do?

W4: (Confronting W2 and W7) Well?

W2, 7: Well, what?
W4: Come on! Come on! (She pulls on their hands, but they dig in their heels.)

W2, 7: NO!

W4: But it’s all for the best!

W2: There’s no evidence of that.

W7: You can’t prove it.

W2: There’s no research.

W7: No one knows what to expect.

W4: Yes! Isn’t it wonderful? Come on!

W2 and W7 look at one another, confused. In their confusion, W4 is finally able to lead them to the table. W2 and W7 sit down on opposite sides and begin to look about cautiously. Catching one another’s eye, they begin to giggle. M1 casts a sidelong glance at W2 and begins to laugh as well. All join in. The laughter is happy and innocent, neither raucous nor unkind.

M8: (Still laughing) Why are we laughing?

W4: Exactly!

W5: I think you’re right!

The laughter subsides.

M1: When I was a child, I had. . . .

W2: What?

M8: What was it?

M1: (Suddenly embarrassed) Oh, it’s silly. . . .
All: No! C’mon! Tell us! (etc.)

M1: Well, it was a big metal egg with a music box inside it. There was a handle on the outside of the egg, and when you turned the handle the music played until you stopped turning it. It was painted green, and there was a scene of a leafy forest with a little white rabbit looking out.

All: (Appreciatively) Oooo.

W2: My favorite color is magenta.

M8: I love the way rocks get smooth when they’ve been underwater for a long time.

W7: I’m terribly shy about meeting new people.

W5: I’ve always wanted to be very tall.

W2: (To W5) You’re very nice.

M8: (To W2) You have pretty eyes.

W7: (To M1) I like your voice.

M1: (To W7) That’s a nice dress you’re wearing.

W9 enters quickly and stops abruptly, brought up short by the sight. All turn at once and shout as though on a prearranged cue:

All: SURPRISE!

W9: (Taken aback) What’s this?

W2: What does it look like?

W9: (Unsure) A party?

W4: Give that little lady a box of cigars!
W9: But I don’t have an invitation.

M1: Sure you do!

W7: You don’t need one!

W5: None of us does!

W2: Sit down, sit down!

All voice agreement. W9 sits. All begin to talk animatedly and happily with those next to and across from them, creating a party atmosphere. M6 enters the playing area, unnoticed (apparently) by anyone at the table.

M6: (Scowling) What’s this? (He takes a few steps around the table and cranes his neck as conversation continues.) Where am I supposed to sit?

All: (Flinging their arms toward the remaining chair, gleefully) RIGHT HERE!

M6: Oh!

M6 smiles and takes his seat amid good-natured laughter. The group becomes quiet for a moment and looks deeply at one another, becoming aware of each other’s reality in the present instant. After all have made eye contact, M8 speaks.

M8: (Standing and clearing his throat) I just want to say that . . . well. . . .

W7: Yes?

W2: Go on!

M8: Well . . . I just want to say that this is the best time I’ve ever had, and I wish it could go on and on.

Everyone applauds as M8 sits down.
W5: (Sheepishly) He’s right. It’s the best time I’ve ever had, too, and I don’t see how I could have been so hateful before.

Everyone makes noises of sympathy.

M1: We’ve all been like that.

W4: My end is my beginning, and my beginning my end.

M6: Hey, isn’t there someone missing?

All: No, I don’t think so. Who? Who would it be? All the chairs are full. (etc.)

W9: Who did you have in mind?

M6: I don’t even know her name.

W4: “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”

M8: I don’t think we were very nice to her.

W2: She wouldn’t want to be here if she were here.

M1: Huh?

W5: Look! There she is!

W 3 is seen outside the playing area, hanging back shyly.

W9: Hey! Hey, you! Little person!

W 3 looks startled and suspicious.

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3 Romans 8:31, KJV.
M1: Come and join us!

W3 shakes her head.

W7: It's all different, now! You don’t have to be afraid!

W3 shakes her head again.

W2: Don’t you see? We’re really sorry about before.

W5: It will never be right till you’re here.

M8: We need you to join us.

W3 takes a few cautious steps toward the group and cranes her neck to see the table better.

W3: There’s no place for me to sit.

All exclaim in protest.

M1: We can fix that. Just come.

M1 goes to W3 and offers her his arm. As he escorts her to the table, all sing Pomp and Circumstance March #1 raucously. M1 leads W3 to the head chair and seats her. The occupant of that chair takes M1’s chair.

M1: Now where will I sit?

M6: (Rising) Here, take mine!

W2: (To M6) Now you need a place. (Rising) Here!

M8: (To W2) Well, you shouldn’t have to stand. (He rises.)

All begin to talk and laugh as the game increases its pace. When a festive atmosphere has been achieved, M6 suddenly stops the action by these words:

M6: Hey, don’t we have to think about going home?
W5: I think we already are.

M1: I think you’re right.

All talk and laugh as the lights fade. As the applause begins, baskets of fresh bread are brought out and thrown with abandon on the table. The cast picks up loaves and begins breaking them in half and tossing them into the audience, inviting the audience to break them again and toss them to others.