
REVOLT AT THE PORTALS

by: Roswell Rogers

Directed by: W. Mark Wattenford

Copyright and use of this play applies. Permission for its use must be granted from the author or the director.

CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

MISS JONES	Assistant to the Chief Registration Officer
MR. PETERS	Chief Registration Officer
R. A. TYCOON	A business executive
MISS SADIE SUNSHINE	A hypochondriac
JENNY SMITH	A young college student
MRS. BULAH BESSEMER	A charitable woman of position; Jenny's aunt
RIP DARREN	A disillusioned young man
MISS ALQUIST	An atheist; hippie type

Note: Besides choosing a main cast there should be "under-studies" that can fill in, in the event one or more of the primary cast members are unable to make a performance.

ACT I	
Scene 1	Registration and Admittance Office – early morning
Scene 2	Same – A half – hour later
ACT II	
Same – A few minutes later.	

PROPS

MISS JONES	Folder for Mr. Peters. Tray and six glasses for orange juice (iced tea). Four clip boards and pens. Pile of forms for Mr. Peter’s desk. “Eternity” magazine, also on the desk.
MR. PETERS	White robe when he enters through Heaven door. A scroll to read from, same place
TYCOON:	A briefcase with the initials (RAT) on it
SUNSHINE	A large purse full of pills, and a blanket
JENNY	A large, “spill able” purse containing, among others things, sheet music
RIP	A flight suit and a parachute and a helmet.
Miscellaneous	A large trash can. A red light (for Hell door). Tray and glasses for orange juice (iced tea)

COSTUMES

MISS JONES	Secretarial, nice looking
MR. PETERS	Business suit, and white robe for the end
TYCOON	Business man, sharp suit, perhaps a mustache
SUNSHINE	Middle aged woman’s house dress
MRS. B	Very sharp, excellent taste, flattering style – somewhat older, expensive looking (A suit, perhaps).
JENNY	Young college student, good looking
RIP	Skydiver/s flight suit
ALQUIST	Dark, non-descript, sloppy or way-out. She doesn’t care much about appearances - Gothic maybe.

Other people who wish to participate can serve as “under-studies”, set construction, prop acquisitions, costume acquisitions, prompter, program lay-out and ad promoters (several could be used for this). An ad promoter is one who can sell a space in the program to a business who may wish to promote the play with financial support and who will receive acknowledgment and a space in the program for an ad from small ads to full program page ads (which are half standard sheet size). Programs are made with standard 8 ½ x 11 sheets folded in half – therefore a full program page ad is half the size of a standard 8 ½ x 11 sheet. Cost of ads will be determined according to each production and area businesses. If you see other needs that may be filled inquire to do so.

REVOLT AT THE PORTALS

Act I – Scene 1

The scene is a rather large registration office such as one might find in a municipal or county building. Down stage to the left is the registration officer's desk and chair, with a side chair to the right of the desk. Down stage to the right is a row of four chairs, plus a chair slightly separated from the others still further to the right and directly facing left stage. The main entrance door is on the right side and a door to an inner office is on the left.

The one incongruous element in this setting is a pair of magnificent, sparkling, arched doorways in the center of the rear wall.

At rise a pretty young lady, Miss Jones, enters through the stage left office door. She is clad in a trim, white or beige suit. She heads for the desk, but then stops and glances around rather surreptitiously, then moves to a top drawer and takes a folder from it, and examines its contents with avid curiosity.

As she is engrossed in this activity, Mr. Peters, the registration officer, enters from stage left office door. He is a pleasant looking man of forty five or so, wearing a dark business suit. He watches Miss Jones a moment, amused. Then he clears his throat and says...

PETERS	Good morning, Miss Jones.
JONES	Oh! Uh . . . good morning, Mr. Peters. I was – uh – just getting out the folder for you. I mean, the list of people who are scheduled to come in today.
PETERS	Well! Only five coming in today.
JONES	Six.
PETERS	What? Oh, you're right. It's six. Well, that's still a light day . . . for which we should be thankful. How many of these six do you think will go through the fold door?
JONES	I wish all of them could. Some days it's almost more than I can stand watching the ones who don't go through.
PETERS	It's not easy, I'll admit. But you'll have to learn to look at them more objectively, Miss Jones.
JONES	Yes sir. How many do you think will go through?
PETERS	I can't tell. These names don't give any clues. Bessemer, Sunshine, Smith, Tycoon . . . Tycoon! How do you like that one? Rip Darren. There's a funny one. And Alquist. You know, I have a strange feeling that we're in for some kind of trouble today. I have nothing to go on, but somehow I . . . <i>(Enter Mr. Tycoon)</i>
TYCOON	Well, here I am! Way ahead of schedule. This is the right place? I'm R. A. Tycoon. You're the man in charge, eh?
PETERS	Yes, sir. I'm Mr. Peters, the registration officer. Have a seat, Mr. Tycoon.
TYCOON	Thank you.
PETERS	Miss Jones will take your briefcase.
TYCOON	Thank you, my dear. But be careful with that. There are some important contracts in there.
PETERS	She'll put it in a good place <i>(Miss Jones drops it in the wastebasket, then exits)</i>

TYCOON	Okay, so what do we do now? What's your routine?
PETERS	Well, first there is a form to fill out . . .
TYCOON	Oh, now look, Peters, can't we skip some of this red tape? I've got connection, you know.
PETERS	Oh, have you?
TYCOON	Of course! You just let some of the boys know who I am, and they'll shoot me right on through. And a word from me in the right place won't hurt you either, Peters.
PETERS	Thank you, sir, but I'm afraid you'll still have to fill this out . . . (Enter Miss Sunshine)
SUNSHINE	Oh, dear, dear. I knew this was going to happen to me. I just knew it! I felt it in my bones.
PETERS	Uh - - Madam . . .
SUNSHINE	What do I do now?
PETERS	If you'll just have a seat over . . .
SUNSHINE	I'm Miss Sunshine.
PETERS	That's fine, Miss Sunshine. Now if you'll just . . . (Miss Jones Enters)
SUNSHINE	Sadie Sunshine.
JONES	You come with me, Miss Sunshine. You can sit over there, by the door.
SUNSHINE	Oh, not by the door, please! You people ought to know what drafts do to me.
JONES	Oh, well, the door is closed.
SUNSHINE	Closed? But I need fresh air!
TYCOON	Lady Sunbeam, will you go over and sit down and keep quiet? You're taking up my valuable time.
SUNSHINE	That's right, pick on a poor, defenseless woman.
PETERS	Please! Let's not have any bickering. We have much more important matters to take care of.
JONES	You just come with me, Miss Sunshine, and everything will be fine.
TYCOON	Boy, you get all kinds here, eh, Peters?
PETERS	All kinds, Mr. Tycoon. Now if you'll just take this form over there and answer all the questions as fully as you can . . .
TYCOON	Oh, now look, Peters, I told you . . .
PETERS	Do it for me, Mr. Tycoon?
TYCOON	For you? Oh, I get it. Make it look good in front of the others. Okay, Peters . . . for you. Glad to help you out. (Enter Jenny and Mrs. B.)
JENNY	Oh, now, aunt B., you have no cause to blame yourself for what happened to either of us. These things just happen and nobody can tell why. Fact is, I don't think we're supposed to know why such things do happen. One time I read somewhere that people . .
TYCOON	Could we have a little quiet in here?
JENNY	Oh, excuse me. Well, we're here. This is Mrs. Bulah Bessemer and I'm Jenny Smith . . .
TYCOON	That's your man over there . . .
JENNY	Thank you. Oh, my! Look at those doors! Aunt B., just look at those doors! I've never seen anything like that in my life! (To Tycoon) Aren't they just grand?
TYCOON	Lady, I'm trying to concentrate. Do you mind?
JENNY	No, I don't mind, but it wouldn't hurt you to be a bit more friendly. Isn't that right, Aunt B.?

MRS. B.	Jenny, leave the gentleman alone.
JENNY	Yes, you're right. This whole thing is a pretty big shock to him, and he more than likely doesn't even know what he's saying.
MRS. B.	Well, that's not for us to discuss. What he does is his business. We have our own to take care of.
JENNY	(To Peters) Are you the man in charge here?
PETERS	I'm the registration officer, yes. I'm Mr. Peters.
JENNY	It's so nice to meet you, Mr. Peters. This is my Aunt, Mrs. Bulah Bessemer. She is . . . here, you sit right here, Aunt B.
MRS. B	I can manage all right, Jenny, thank you.
JENNY	I want to tell you what a fine woman Aunt B. is. Do you know that she gave all . .
MRS. B	Jenny, please . . .
JENNY	. . . she gave all the new hymn books to the church, and that isn't the half of what she's done, so you can treat her very well, can't you, Mr. Peters?
PETERS	Of course. Now if you ladies will take these forms and . . .
JENNY	When do we go through that lovely door?
PETERS	Well, not just yet. You ladies take these forms over there and fill them out, and we'll get to you as quickly as possible.
JENNY	Oh, thank you, Mr. Peters.
PETERS	All right, Miss Sunshine.
JENNY	(To Mrs. B) Certainly is nice, isn't he? (To Sadie) Helloooooooo! (To Mrs. B.) Poor soul. Probably been sick
JONES	There you are, Miss Sunshine, comfortable?
SUNSHINE	No, not very, but what can you expect in this world, or out of it for that matter. Things never work out for the best, seems like. (Miss Jones exits)
PETERS	Have you no faith in anything, Miss Sunshine? Why are you so pessimistic?
SUNSHINE	Who, me?
PETERS	Haven't you had any cheerful days?
SUNSHINE	Oh, my yes. Well, not so many for myself, but I spent many days going to hospitals to sheer up my friends.
TYCOON	Undoubtedly!
PETERS	All right, now, Miss Sunshine . . . (Enter Rip Darren)
RIP	"Oh, the daring young man on the flying trapeze . . ." Anybody want a good second-hand parachute? Bargain price, one slight defect . . . won't open. Money back guarantee. Here. Hold this for me, grandma. (shoves helmet in stomach of Sunshine.) (To Peters) Howdy, Captain. The brave young Rip Darren at your service. But I can't say I'm too crazy about it. But I asked for it, and, brother, I got it. So this is our little group, eh? Pretty funny. I can see this is going to be a real bummer party.
JENNY	Please. This is a place of quiet.
RIP	Why, sure, kid, I'll be quiet. For a long time. (To Peters) Okay, Captain, let's get this show on the road. What have you got for me? What's the . . . (Enter Miss Jones) Wellllllllllll! Well, well, what's this? Yes, this is more like it! Never expected to see someone like you here.

	Oh, you're too much, honey. This has got to be a joke. If I'd known about you, I would have tried to get here even sooner than I did. What's your name, beautiful, and why am I so in love with you?
JONES	My name is Miss Jones, and I'm the assistant to Mr. . .
RIP	Miss Jones? Oh, You're kidding. I wouldn't settle for anything less for you than - - Melody Angel face. Look Melody, I don't know how long it takes for them to process me out of here, or whatever they do, but however long it takes, promise me that you'll spend every second of it with me.
JONES	Oh, well, I'm sorry, sir, but . . .
RIP	Promise me. Under these circumstances, that's not too much to ask, is it?
TYCOON	All right, Flash! Will you sit down and stop interrupting everything. Time might not mean anything to you, but it's mighty valuable to me.
RIP	Time? What are you talking about? What's time got to do with anything now?
JENNY	Now, now, let's try to be fiends. I really don't think you realize where you are, and why. Wouldn't you say so, Aunt B.? <i>(Enter Miss Alquist)</i>
MRS. B	Well, I certainly think we could do with a bit more dignity and reverence.
JENNY	Oh, yes, by all means.
MRS. B	I think we should all realize that this is the most important moment in our lives, that we are on the threshold of the most wonderful beginning we have ever know! <i>(laugh)</i>
ALQUIST	<i>(Picks up laugh)</i> Ha, ha, ha – Forget it! Why don't you people give up this sweet little drama of self-delusion? Why don't you face up to the one incontestable, irrefutable, unalterable reason why we are here. And let's use the word. We are all . . . dead.

(BLACKOUT)

Act 1, Scene 2

On stage are miss Alquist, Jenny, Mrs. B., Mr. Tycoon, Miss Sunshine, Rip Daren, and Miss Jones.

RIP	<i>(To Miss Jones)</i> Hey, beautiful, do we have to fill out all this stuff? Don't you already know everything there is to know about us?
JONES	Perhaps we want your version (explanation) of it, Mr. Darren.
RIP	My version (explanation) ... oh, boy!
TYCOON	From the sound of these questions I think it's more than our version (explanation) you want. I get the impression that we're judging ourselves.
JONES	Well, who knows better than you what kind of a person you really are?
RIP	Makes it a little tough, eh, dad?
JONES	Didn't we give you a questionnaire, Miss Alquist?
ALQUIST	Yeah.
JONES	Good. Finish it as quickly as possible. <i>(Exist Miss Jones)</i>
ALQUIST	Yes, I'll finish it alright. <i>(Tears it up and throws it in the wastebasket.)</i> All right, children, let's get our work done quickly. And neatly . . . remember now, you get three points for neatness. Oh, don't waste time looking around. First one through gets an extra half our in the sandbox. (10 points)

JENNY	Oh, my, you really shouldn't make fun of this!
ALQUIST	I shouldn't?
JENNY	Oh, no!
RIP	Boy, they sure want to know everything about you. Makes a guy feel kinda creepy (uneasy) going back over his life.
TYCOON	I don't doubt it, the kind of life you probably lived.
RIP	You're not kidding, Dad.
SUNSHINE	How do you spell "rheumatism"?
TYCOON	R - O - O - M
RIP	Giving them the full medical report, eh grandma?
TYCOON	Great Scott, woman, what are you writing, a novel? You shouldn't waste that stuff here. You ought to send it to True Confessions. They'd eat it up.
JENNY	They said we were supposed to tell the truth, didn't they?
TYCOON	The truth, yes, but that's ridiculous. You've got to be kidding. (You can't be for real, lady!) I mean, how can you answer an either/or question true or false?
JENNY	Well, you shouldn't be reading it. It isn't polite to read over a person's shoulder.
TYCOON	I'm sorry. Question: Did you enjoy life on earth or did you feel mistreated? Answer: False!
JENNY	Oh, Aunt B., you ought to put down about the money you donated to the church for the new pews in the sanctuary.
MRS. B	Oh, I hardly think that's important.
JENNY	Oh, yes. Everything is important. Put it down. We ought to put down all we can, and you certainly did your share, always giving to this and giving to that.
MRS. B	Jenny, shhhhhhh.
JENNY	But it's true.
RIP	Hey, how did you two happen to kick the old bucket on the same day: Stab each other with your knitting needles? (Crochet hooks)?
JENNY	No, it was a car accident. You see, my aunt was driving me to where I catch the bus for my music lessons, and we had swung around by the post office so she could mail the check she sends regularly to that institution for people who are - - uh - - well, you know a little - - uh . . .
ALQUIST	Nuts?
JENNY	Yes Oh, Noooooo!
MRS. B.	Jennifer, I would rather we didn't discuss that, if you don't mind.
JENNY	I'm sorry . . . Anyway, we had swung around by the post office, when this car came charging right at us and smashed right into us. CRASH, BANG, CRUNCH! Noise? I thought I'd die! . . . er... Well I did . . . And you know what I thought of at that moment? Oh, this is silly, but the only thing I worried about was my shoes. I had on these new shoes, see? And I thought, "Oh, I'm scuffing up my new shoes!" Sure is funny what a person thinks of at such a time.
TYCOON	That's odd, you thinking about shoes. That's what I thought about too . . .

ALQUIST	Why not? Ain't all God's children got shoes? . . . "When I get to Heaven goina put on my shoes, goina walk around and shout the good news. All right!" What's the matter? Don't you all like a little church music? (Rip claps)
TYCOON	Church music, oh, brother! Well, as I was saying, I thought of the time when I was a little kid and I wanted some new shoes. My old man (father) said the old ones were good enough, but I was ashamed . . . actually ashamed to go outdoors in those old things. So you know what I did? Oh, I was a clever one. I chewed those old shoes to bits with some of my father's tools, and blamed it on the dog! Oh, I got my new shoes then all right. And boy, was I proud of them! Now what in the world would make a man think of a fool thing like that right while he's - -
ALQUIST	Dying. Why are you people all so squeamish about (afraid of) that word? A fact is a fact, my friend and you can't change it by avoiding it.
RIP	Okay, so let's don't avoid it. Tycoon, let's start with you. How did you - - die?
TYCOON	Me? The old ticker conked out (heart stopped beating). But it was really that stupid doctor's fault.
JENNY	That really isn't a nice thing to say. Doctors do the best they can.
TYCOON	Not this one. He told me to slow down, take it easy. But how can you take it easy when you're the head of a big company? That's ridiculous. Then he said I better not eat fat, no butter. The old Cholesterol (fat) is stacking up in there like soot in a stovepipe, he said. But a busy executive can't fool around with a lot of idiotic (stupid) diets. So in a few weeks it happened. And here I am. It was all his fault.
MRS. B.	How can you say that? He warned you didn't he?
TYCOON	He mentioned it, yes. But he should have forced me to diet. That's what he should have done, forced me. But, oh no. All he did was say, "Okay, I've given you the facts, R. A. From here on it's up to you. You're an intelligent man." Now what kind of a doctor would say a fool thing like that? I'll never trust him again.
JENNY	I don't believe you'll get any more chances.
RIP	Okay, how did you "d-i-e," Happy Face?
SUNSHINE	Oh, it was miserable.
RIP	Naturally.
SUNSHINE	My doctor kept insisting there was nothing wrong with me. But I knew better. I had asthma, bronchitis, neuritis, phlebitis, gastritis . . . (pneumonia, small pox, malaria, typhoid, yellow fever, tuberculosis, cholera)
RIP	Sorry I asked.
SUNSHINE pleurisy, lumbago . . .
RIP	Okay, Mom.
SUNSHINE	I also had housemaid's knee . . . But the really terrible thing is that I couldn't even die from one of those horrible diseases to prove to my doctor he was so wrong! I got this new electric blanket for my housemaid's knee and I turned it on, it shorted, and I was electrocuted!!! (slipped on a banana peel and broke my neck).
RIP	Shocking! . . . Okay, exclusive. You're the only one left.
ALQUIST	Oh, no, What about you? In what glorious way did you shuffle off the mortal coil? (die) (Miss Sunshine is just recovering from a crying spell, and takes a bottle of pills out of her bag.)

RIP	Well, now it was glorious. Like a bird. A mighty bird in flight. You see I was shy-diving. Free fall. For kicks. Anything dangerous - - that was for me. So there I was, floating though space. Great sensation. Fall as far as you can without pulling the cord. Well I went as far as I could and POW! (Loud – at which Miss Sunshine jumps, scattering pills from her open pill bottle all over herself and Mr. Tycoon.)
SUNSHINE	Oh, my expensive pills!
RIP	Right into the ground . . . chute didn't open. That's the way I lived, and that's the way I got it. And you?
ALQUIST	I existed. Now I cease to exist. That happens to animals, to trees, flowers, weeds, bugs, everything.
RIP	Okay, you ceased – but how?
ALQUIST	What difference does that make now? It's done, finished, that's the end, there is no more.
JENNY	How can you say that?
ALQUIST	Very easily. I deal in facts. I don't delude myself with all your nice little myths (stories) about eternity.
JENNY	I hope you never regret those words!
MRS. B.	Jenny, please don't get involved. It's none of our business.
JENNY	You're right, Aunt B. I always have to go around sticking my two cents worth in. I don't know why the Lord didn't make me more life you. But that woman over there . . . she's so wrong!
TYCOON	Don't pay any attention to her. She's a nut. I'll bet she's never been inside a church before.
SUNSHINE	Are you a church man, Mr. Tycoon?
TYCOON	Certainly I am.
SUNSHINE	A devout church man?
TYCOON	Devout? I even used to play golf, tennis, bowl – all kinds of stuff with the pastor.
RIP	You still haven't told us anything about yourself. What's your name? Were you married?
ALQUIST	I was named Alquist, just as the tree in my front yard was named elm and the one in my backyard was named sycamore. As for marriage, that's just another one of your little conventions to make everything seem legal and right . .
JENNY	Then we're to understand you've never been married?
MRS. B.	Now, Jenny ... Please try to remember our policy of non-involvement. (Enter Peters and Jones)
PETERS	Well, how are we getting along?
RIP	Oh, just great. Having a ball! Hi, beautiful, I missed you.
PETERS	Are you about finished with your questionnaires?
SUNSHINE	As finished as I'll ever be.
PETERS	Fine. Miss Jones, will you collect them please?
TYCOON	Be sure mine gets to the right people, eh, Peters?
PETERS	Indeed it will, Mr. Tycoon.
ALQUIST	What's this for?
PETERS	You tore up the first one.

ALQUIST	How did you know that?
PETERS	Your kind usually do tear up the first one.
ALQUIST	I see. Well, my kind tears up the second one, too.
PETERS	There are more on the desk. Help yourself when you're ready. It's usually the third one they fill out. Thank you, Miss Jones. While these are being processed to determine your final destinations, you may wait in the inner office if you care to. It's a bit more comfortable in there. <i>(Peters exists.)</i>
JONES	Would you care to go inside, Miss Alquist?
ALQUIST	No, I don't have nay reason to.
JENNY	Miss Alquist, I want to talk to you about some of those terrible ideas you –
ALQUIST	On second thought I do have a reason! <i>(Miss Alquist exists hurriedly, with Jenny right behind her. Mr. Tycoon rises and helps Mrs. Bessemer with her chair.)</i>
TYCOON	Mrs. Bessemer?
MRS. B.	Oh, thank you. You're very kind. <i>(She exits)</i>
TYCOON	You noticed how nice I am! And how about you, Miss Sunshine?
SUNSHINE	Might as well. Can't be any worse in there than it is out here.
TYCOON	Miss Sunshine, I don't know what we'd do without you to sheer us up.
SUNSHINE	Well, someone has to do it. <i>(Both exit. Miss Jones is about to go with them when Rip moves to stop her.)</i>
RIP	Wait a minute honey, don't go with them. Stay and talk to me. One last moment. What do you say?
JONES	Now you wait a minute, Mr. Darren. First I'm not your honey and second, you don't have to act like this anymore. You're really not like that, you know.
RIP	You think you're pretty smart, don't you?
JONES	It's not that I'm smart. It's just that you're rather transparent. (I can see right through you.) Look at your hand. It's wet with fear.
RIP	Okay . . . so I'm afraid. If it makes you happy, I'll confess that I'm so scared I'm sick.
JONES	That doesn't make me happy.
RIP	I think I was scared all my life. Take that skydiving; every time I jumped I died a thousand deaths. I don't know why I thought I had to do things like that.
JONES	Did you ever investigate Jesus Christ and His claims?
RIP	I never could quite buy that. I think there were times I wanted to believe, but I just couldn't . . .
JONES	But the most important thing in life is to believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior. That's the real test.
RIP	Well, boy, looks as though I flunked that test, but good. What will happen to me? <i>(Enter Alquist and Jenny)</i>
ALQUIST	Will somebody call off that female preacher freak! Tie her up or something!
JENNY	Well, just let me ask you this one question. <i>(Exit Miss Jones)</i>
ALQUIST	Oh, please. Just go back in there . . .in that . . . "eternity ward".
JENNY	If you don't believe in the hereafter, if you believe death ends everything, why are you here? <i>(Enter Mr. Tycoon)</i>

ALQUIST	I'm not here!
JENNY	Well, if you're not here . . . where are you?
ALQUIST	This is just illusion, imagination . . . the after-glow of a fire that's been put out. A purely mechanical phenomenon that is taking place during the moment of death. Anything you think you see is a figment of your imagination. All of this will dissolve into nothingness. <i>(Enter Mrs. Bessemer and Sadie Sunshine.)</i>
JENNY	You're way over my head with all those big ideas, but the Bible tells us very plainly . . .
ALQUIST	You really believe the Bible stuff, don't you?
JENNY	Of course I do – why don't you?
TYCOON	And I tell you, for your soul, Miss Hippie, you better get down on your knees right here and now and ask forgiveness.
ALQUIST	Don't you think it's a little late to convert me?
TYCOON	It's never too late!
ALQUIST	Oh, surely not you too, Mr. Wall Street!
TYCOON	Go ahead, make your jokes, but anything you can do, any strings you can pull to process your soul through the right channels, I advise you to do it.
ALQUIST	I told you to stop it! I don't want to hear any more of this nonsense!
SUNSHINE	Oh, me! I think I'm going to have an asthma attack! <i>(Jenny and Mr. Tycoon help her to a seat.)</i>
ALQUIST	Alright, alright, if you're so sure there is something behind those doors, take a look. Open the doors and look.
JENNY	Don't you know what you're tampering with? It isn't for us to say who can go in there. We can't open those doors. Aunt B., you explain it to this poor woman.
MRS. B.	Jenny, please... I keep telling you over and over I don't want to become involved in this.
ALQUIST	Don't you people have the nerve to find out if your myths are actually illusions or not (stories are true)? What about you, Mr. Lay-it-on-the-line Business Man?
TYCOON	There are certain things that man doesn't meddle with. Certain things that are not for us to know until the time comes.
ALQUIST	The time is here, Brother . . . Well, it looks as though it's up to you.
RIP	Me?
ALQUIST	Yeah! You're the brave one here, aren't you?
RIP	Yeah. I'm the brave one.
ALQUIST	You said you craved (loved) danger, lived by it, that is was your code. All right, this is your one last chance to prove it. . . Open the door Rip
RIP	Yeah
ALQUIST	Well.....?
RIP	Why not? What have I got to lose? <i>(Rip starts for the Hell door – Jenny moves to stop him and in so doing spills purse and falls.)</i>
JENNY	No!
RIP	<i>(Rip is on the floor where he has fallen from Jenny's push.)</i> Hey! What happened? Hey, boy, you should have gone out for football, kiddo. <i>(Mrs. Bessemer and Tycoon rush to Jenny's side to help her.)</i>

MRS. B.	You shouldn't do such things. You're going to kill yourself.
JENNY	That's one worry I do not have anymore. (Tycoon and Rip are now busy picking up the articles which spilled out of Jenny's purse. Bessemer and Jenny return to seats.)
ALQUIST	But this doesn't end all your worries, kid. You may think you've won this round, but all you've done is just delay your big disillusionment (disappointment).
MRS. B.	Would you mind keep your big... ideas to yourself? It seems to me that you've caused enough trouble around here.
TYCOON	(Tycoon holds up article from Jenny's purse.) I must say, Jenny, you certainly came well prepared.
RIP	What's all this music for? Hey, look at that title.
TYCOON	"Harp Playing Made Simple."
JENNY	Well, I do play the harp . . . Isn't that right Aunt B.?
MRS. B.	Yes, that's right, Jenny. You do indeed. Don't you think you had better go in that other office and lie down for a bit? (Enter Peters carrying IBM cards. Miss Jones follows him in.)
JENNY	No, no I'm fine. I don't need to go in there. . . Oh, Mr. Peters . . .When do we go through that lovely door?
PETERS	Well, that's what I want to talk to you about right now. Your questionnaires have been thoroughly examined and carefully considered. And I have your final assignments . . . determining which of the doors each of you will enter.
JENNY	You mean we don't all go through there (the gold door?)
PETERS	Uh . . . we're coming to that. I think perhaps you'd all rather sit down first. Just anywhere you like. (Jenny steps forward to get here purse.)
JONES	Why not right here, Jenny. (Exit)
PETERS	Now . . . uh . . . I want you all to understand that while the Board of Entrance Examiners gives the applicant every benefit of the doubt, the requirements for entrance are . . . unique. Your group is exceptionally small, so naturally the number of you who have been accepted is also relatively small . . . However, percentage-wise, your group is a bit above average . . . of or six . . . out of six, one of you has made it.
JENNY	Only one ? ?

(BLACKOUT)

Act II

On stage are Alquist, Mrs. B., Jenny, Sunshine, Tycoon, Rip and Miss Jones. Miss Jones has just served Mrs. B. and Alquist a glass of orange juice (ice tea) and is offering some to Jenny

JONES	Would you care for some orange juice (iced tea), Jenny?
JENNY	No, no thank you.
JONES	How about you, Mr. Tycoon?
TYCOON	Yes, thank you, my dear. Ah, you don't have the large size?
JONES	No, sorry. And you, Miss Sunshine?

SUNSHINE	Oh, no, no orange juice for me! Shall I tell you what that does to my gastritis?
TYCOON	No! (Miss Jones moves to Rip, smiles at him as she offers the tray.)
JONES	And how about you, Rip. (Rip looks at her a moment, then takes a glass and raises it in a toast.)
RIP	Well, here's to what might have been.
SUNSHINE	Why couldn't Mr. Peters tell us who it is?
JONES	Oh, now, Miss Sunshine, you must be patient.
SUNSHINE	But I can't stand this suspense! Which one of us is it? Why didn't he tell us?
JONES	You'll know very soon now.
TYCOON	I don't see the point in making us wait. A waste of time.
ALQUIST	It gives you a little more time to mull over (thin about) the miserable, deluded lives you've lived.
SUNSHINE	I tell you, my heart can't stand much more of this. I think I might have an attack. Ohhh! Miss Jones, tell us. Who's the one?
MRS. B.	I think we would do ourselves a favor by talking about something else . . . something pleasant. (Exit Miss Jones)
TYCOON	Agreed.
ALQUIST	All right. Anyone know any good jokes?
RIP	Jokes? Sure, I know a good one. A real funny one.
SUNSHINE	I don't want to hear it!
RIP	I don't either, because it's about me. Me and the screamingly funny notion I had when I came in here. I thought . . . I really thought that when my record would come up, they'd sorta look the other way, give a sly wink, and let me slide on through. Pretty funny, huh? You can laugh now. That's the joke. (Rip looks from one to another of them for some kind of reaction. They all turn away from him in embarrassed silence. Tycoon clears his throat and makes an attempt to break the silence with a bit of pleasant talk.)
TYCOON	I remember a rather humorous little item. When I was a child, I dreamed that there was this long rope ladder leading up to Heaven. It was so long and such a hard climb that I figured most of the people would get tired and fall off before they ever made it. So what I did . . . always the schemer (clever one). . . I hid a little box of cookies in my room, so when the time came for me to make that long climb up that ladder, well, I'd have something to give me strength. I guess I figured that if God helps those who help themselves, the then . . . (He is interrupted by the SOUND OF CELESTIAL MUSIC issuing forth as the Heaven door opens, and Mr. Peters appears, now wearing a white robe over his suit. The group is startled by the music.)
PETERS	My friends, we are ready now. Will you please rise? Those names I do not call will enter through that door (the black door) where each one will receive further, individual instructions . . . The one name I have here is . . . (He unrolls the scroll and looks at it.) . . . Miss Jenny Smith. (They are all pretty stunned by this, especially Tycoon and Miss Sunshine. Rip is surprised, but evidently thinks it's a good choice. Jenny doesn't react very much.)
SUNSHINE	What?!
TYCOON	Just a minute here!

RIP	Good going, Jenny!
TYCOON	Peters! What happened? What went wrong?
PETERS	Nothing went wrong, Mr. Tycoon.
TYCOON	Didn't you talk to the right people about me?
PETERS	Mr. Tycoon, may I explain?
TYCOON	Yeah. This better be rechecked. Doesn't God help those who help themselves?
PETERS	Indeed He does, and you were well rewarded with a prosperous life, were you not?
TYCOON	Well, yes, I was, but . . . look, if it's money you want . . . here . . . (Pulling out wallet)
PETERS	Unfortunately, that was your primary and only concern in life. Material gains, material possession . . . leaving no room for God. The strength you were looking for to climb that rope ladder comes not from cookies - - but from faith.
TYCOON	Oh, well, that cookie thing was just a kid idea.
PETERS	True. . . but it carried over into adulthood . . . and when you become a man, you are to put aside childish ideas. (Miss Sunshine pushes her way up to Mr. Peters, as Tycoon, shaking his head in disbelief and defeat, moves back and slumps down in his seat.)
SUNSHINE	Please sir, couldn't you reconsider me? I'm not a well person.
PETERS	You're not?
SUNSHINE	No, and what's more I've been a good woman. I never harmed anyone.
PETERS	I'm afraid you did, Miss Sunshine. You established the dubious record of spreading enough gloom and pessimism in any one week to last the average person a lifetime. The harm that such an attitude can do to people's spirits is incalculable (cannot be counted). That world of yours down there, Miss Sunshine, takes a lot of cheerfulness to keep it going. Why, if you had had one tenth the real illnesses that Jenny had . . .
SUNSHINE	Her?
PETERS	Indeed.
JENNY	Oh, I didn't mind.
SUNSHINE	See there! She wasn't so bad off, while I was miserable! And furthermore, I never did anything wrong. I never led or stole or cheated anyone.
PETERS	You even did that, and the tragedy is that the person you cheated was yourself. You took the gift of life and worried it into a thing of misery. I'm afraid you had no faith in anything, Miss Sunshine . . . much less Christ. (She stares at him, realizing this is the truth. Tycoon suddenly stands up with a new thought.)
TYCOON	Is there any appeal? Like to a higher court?
PETERS	None. Sorry, Mr. Tycoon.
RIP	You've had it, Dad. We all have.
JENNY	But really Mr. Peters, I'm sure Aunt B., is a Christian. Of course, I never talked to her about it, but I was so sure. You should see all she gave to the church, and all the checks she sent to that institution for the people who are . . . you know. . .not quite right.
PETERS	We know at that, Jenny, and it was very generous of her, but . . .
MRS. B.	But it was a false thing, Jenny.

JENNY	False? What do you mean?
MRS. B.	That kind of giving was no problem for me. I could afford it very well. But I was only giving that money to keep from giving any of myself.
JENNY	Oh, but you were always giving to this and . . .
MRS. B.	Let me finish, Jenny . . . It's not easy for me to make a confession.
JENNY	Confession?
MRS. B.	You never knew it, but my mother was in that institution.
JENNY	Your mother?
MRS. B.	I could have taken care of her in my home, but I didn't want the burden, the bother. It was much simpler and pleasanter to give money to people and to God, rather than giving myself.
JENNY	I don't understand.
MRS. B.	Of course you don't dear, because you were everything I wasn't. You gave every shred of yourself to everyone and to everything.
JENNY	I did that?
ALQUIST	Oh, cut it out, Jenny. Take your medals and sit down.
MRS. B.	You stay out of this!
PETERS	All right, if there are no more questions now . . .
TYCOON	Wait! I don't think this whole set-up is fair! Why weren't we told this is the way it actually is? Why weren't we told the rules so we'd know what to expect?
PETERS	You were told, Mr. Tycoon.
TYCOON	Well, in a way, yes, but how were we to know it was true? All the things you hear and read about the hereafter (live after death), it's hard for a man to know what to believe.
PETERS	What you believe is entirely up to you.
TYCOON	Okay, but in my company, I let my employees know exactly where they stood. The rules were posted right on the bulletin board. And I saw to it that each employee stayed in line.
PETERS	Our rules are posted too, Mr. Tycoon. The Bible . . .
TYCOON	The Bible! Don't give me any of that Bible stuff!
PETERS	The Bible, Mr. Tycoon, is quite explicit on our entrance requirements. Christ died for your sins and by faith one must receive Him as Lord and Savior. The difference is that we don't make you do anything. That is strictly up to you. Your free choice. Everlasting life is a decision you have to make for yourself. No one can do it for you. Only you ... only you. (Tycoon stares at Peters as the words sink in.)
ALQUIST	End of speech. Now may we have an end to this whole deplorable matter (ridiculous situation).
PETERS	Immediately, Miss Alquist. You people will all kindly step over . . . and enter that door. An attendant will guide you from there. And Jenny, you come with me.
MRS. B.	Go on, Jenny.
JENNY	Oh, Aunt B., please forgive me for not telling you about Jesus . . . but I always thought that you had received Him as your savior just as I had . . .

PETERS	Jenny, may I speak to you a moment? (Jenny walks to Peters and they stand talking quietly in front of the Heaven door.)
TYCOON	It can't be too late. Let's try praying.
RIP	I don't think I know how.
TYCOON	I never was much good at it, but I think I can remember the 23 rd Psalm.
SUNSHINE	Yes, I remember that; I used to repeat it to people that I visited in the hospital. I especially like the part about walking through the valley of the shadow . . .
TYCOON	Well, let's try it. (As the group begins praying, Jenny and Peters go through Heaven door. Then lights dim.)
RIP	Hey, who turned out the lights?
MRS. B.	Jenny? . . . Jenny's gone!!!!!! (As he tries Heaven door.)
TYCOON	We can't get in!!!
RIP	(Rushes to Earth door) It's locked!
<i>Tycoon opens Hell door, Alquist screams as red light comes on, then - BLACKOUT</i>	
<hr/> <p><u>John 3:36</u></p> <p><u>He who believes in the Son has everlasting life;</u></p> <p><u>and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.</u></p> <hr/>	
<p>For any considering in producing this play through your church, group or organization contact W. Mark Wattenford - 2119 W. Broadway - Spokane, WA. 99201 - Email: wattenford@att.net - 509-847-3020</p>	