

DUI=DOA

**Two short one-act plays
by Dan Roberts**

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DUI=DOA is composed of two short one-act plays, “The Waiting Room” and “Only Seventeen.”

THE WAITING ROOM

Karen suddenly finds herself in some kind of waiting room. She is alone at first, but other children eventually join her. No one knows where they are or why they are there, until they suddenly begin to remember their own violent deaths. In a flood of emotional monologues they discover that each of them has been the victim of a drunk driver. As they fearfully ponder their future, they are plunged into total darkness, and they overhear a conversation between a woman and her inebriated husband. The man is about to take the driver's seat, and they realize in horror that they must try to intervene, or another child will soon be joining them in their “little waiting room in the dark.” This short play strikes hard at the emotions, and it is most effective when followed by actual case histories and statistics. All of the tragic accounts in *The Waiting Room* were derived from actual news reports within a one-year period.

ONLY SEVENTEEN

*Adapted from “Dead at Seventeen,”
a letter to Ann Landers by John Berrio*

Corey Martin is dead. At the age of 17, it is the last thing he expected. He must have had too much to drink before taking off in his car, because there he is: being pulled from the wreckage and placed in a body bag, and then being laid out on a slab in the morgue while his mother tries to identify him. Later, there is the funeral, with all of his closest friends passing by the casket. Trying to understand, they each speak to him. He calls out to them time and again, “I can't be dead! I'm only 17!” But no one hears him. A fellow student delivers a eulogy full of irony as Corey's friends and family think aloud about the senselessness of his death.

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PRODUCTION NOTE FOR BOTH PLAYS

For maximum benefit, it is highly recommended that time be scheduled for audience discussion immediately following, with appearances by police officers and/or family members who have actually experienced the kind of tragedies dealt with in the play. The numbers quoted in the announcer's closing remarks are statistics gathered in 1995, and should be updated by contacting a local MADD chapter or highway patrol office.

THE WAITING ROOM

Cast of Characters

(3 M, 6 W, 4 Flexible)

KAREN - Was riding in a car with her mother.

JOSH - An aggressive pre-teen, was riding with his father who was drinking beer.

SHELLEY - Was walking on the sidewalk.

MELISSA - Shelley's best friend who was walking with her.

BOY - A pre-teen riding in a car with his mother.

SISTER - His younger sister, shy.

BUS CHILDREN (3+) - Various ages and sexes.

LINDA - Was sitting at the playground.

CYNTHIA - An offstage adult voice.

LARRY - An offstage adult voice.

ANNOUNCER - An adult or older student.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The stage is set with a slightly semi-circular line of eleven chairs, numbered in order from left to right for staging purposes. If practical, the stage should be dark outside of the chair perimeters to give a feeling of isolation in a void. The offstage voices of Cynthia and Larry may be pre-taped, but the opening and closing remarks by the announcer should be made live and in view of the audience.

ANNOUNCER: The short play that you are about to see is based upon actual tragedies that have resulted from drunk driving. It is called *The Waiting Room*, and it carries a dramatic and important message for all of us.

(AT RISE: KAREN enters SL. She decides to sit, trying two chairs before settling upon her final choice, chair #1. Smoothing out her skirt, she folds her hands in her lap and begins to hum quietly. Before long, JOSHUA enters SL unseen by her, and sits in chair #11. He listens to her humming for a few seconds, and then speaks.)

JOSH: That's a stupid song.

KAREN: Is not.

JOSH: Bet you made it up.

KAREN: Maybe I did.

JOSH: You shouldn't make up songs if you can't do better than that.

KAREN: I usually do better. Just not today.

JOSH: Why not today?

KAREN: I just don't feel like singing, that's all. I'm kind of nervous.

JOSH: About what?

KAREN: I don't know. Just am, that's all.

JOSH: You're just nervous? No reason?

KAREN: Maybe there is.

JOSH: What? What reason?

KAREN: Maybe I don't know where I am, OK?

JOSH: (*Moving to chair #6*) You're lost! I thought so. How'd you get lost?

KAREN: I don't know. I just got lost a minute ago, and I haven't had time to think about it. I didn't even know I was lost until you brought it up, thank you very much.

(SHELLEY and MELISSA enter SL.)

SHELLEY: Look, two little kids.

JOSH: Who's a little kid?

MELISSA: You are, shrimp.

JOSH: *(Standing)* I ain't no shrimpo!

SHELLEY: Easy, Mel. Maybe they can help us.

JOSH: *(Sitting again)* I ain't helpin' no one.

SHELLEY: *(Crossing to KAREN and sitting in chair #2.)*

What's your name?

KAREN: Karen. What's yours?

SHELLEY: Michelle. Shelley.

MELISSA: *(Crossing to JOSH)* You got a name?

JOSH: I got a name.

MELISSA: Wanna give it?

JOSH: I don't give nothin'.

MELISSA: How about a trade, then? Mine's Melissa. Call me Mel.

JOSH: Mine's Josh.

SHELLEY: Can you guys tell us where we are?

KAREN: Are you lost, too?

SHELLEY: Well, I'm not really sure. We weren't, but now we are.

KAREN: Hey, same here!

MELISSA: Great. *(Sits in chair #7)*

(The BUS CHILDREN enter hesitantly SR. They stop and stare at the OTHERS.)

JOSH: Some party, huh? Who brought the dip?

SHELLEY: You're the dip. Don't mind him. He's obnoxious.

Where did you come from?

CHILD 1: We don't know. I mean, we know where we came from, but we don't know where we are.

CHILD 2: Or how we got here.

CHILD 3: We're on a bus trip.

CHILD 1: We were on a bus trip.

CHILD 3: Were. Now...we're here.

MELISSA: This is really weird.

SHELLEY: You might as well sit down. It's too dark to be wandering around, even if you knew where you were going.

(The BUS CHILDREN sit in chairs #8, #9, and #10.)

End of Freeview

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