

THE END IS NEAR

By Kelly Meadows

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THE END IS NEAR

A Comedic Play

by Kelly Meadows

SYNOPSIS: What better a family outing than the kids onstage and the parents in the audience? A better play, for one. Better behaved parents, for two. But while the characters bemoan that “*The End Is Near*,” the poor audience begins to feel there’s no end in sight. Along with that, the family’s bickering takes over, both on stage and off. A play we can all identify with, and the end will be here before you know it! Or... will it?

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 females, 2 males, 0-10 extras)

ASHER (m)..... Father. *(28 lines)*

JEANNIE (f) Mother. *(22 lines)*

ELTON (m)..... Brother, in high school.
(35 lines)

CRISTELLA (f) Sister, in high school. *(37 lines)*

EXTRAS (m/f)..... Optional, can be in the
“audience” watching the play.
(Non-Speaking)

TIME: Present day.

SETTING: A school play.

SET: There are some chairs set up for an audience and a stage or playing area for the actors. [Make sure to stage this so both “audience” and actors face front.]

PROPS

☐ Two Play Programs

COSTUMES

ASHER and JEANNIE – “Mom, Dad, I hate when you wear that and we go somewhere,” is exactly what the parents should have on.

ELTON and CRISTELLA – Very esoteric attire, they can be more dance oriented, or something really “out there” or experimental.

AUTHOR’S NOTE

If there are no extras, the cast should play as if there is an audience surrounding them or speak to the “real audience”. The actual “play within a play” needs to be performed with lots of dramatic poses and dramatic pauses, so that the parents’ interjected lines flow naturally as the players are “giving pause” before the next line. The point to get across is that the actors think they’re doing a much more interesting play than anyone else does. If there are no

AT RISE: ASHER and JEANNIE are seated onstage each holding a play program. If there are EXTRAS, they can be seated and watch and react to the action. They can also eat, drink, text, get overly involved, cry, or simply not pay attention throughout the play.

ASHER: (*Looking over a play program.*) I can't believe our kids wrote a play. (*To audience, waving play program around and pointing to the stage.*) Our kids wrote a play.

JEANNIE: And the school is letting them put it on. (*To audience, waving play program around.*) Our kids!

ASHER: (*To JEANNIE.*) Can I tell you something?

JEANNIE: (*Loud so everyone hears her.*) You're so proud?

ASHER: (*Lowering his voice.*) I'm afraid it's going to be awful.

JEANNIE: Asher! People will hear you!

ASHER: (*Chastened, covering for his mistake.*) Oh yes... proud as the dickens! Proud as Charles Dickens in debtor's prison. Because our kids owe us big.

JEANNIE: Shhhh here they come!

JEANNIE stands up, speaking to the rest of the audience as ELTON and CRISTELLA enter and step up front to the audience, swaying back and forth like every director tells every actor not to do.

JEANNIE: Hey everyone, these are our kids!

ASHER quiets JEANNIE down and pulls her to her seat.

ASHER: Not yet. We probably should see how they do before we admit to them.

ELTON: My name is Elton, and this is a play I wrote with my sister Cristella.

CRISTELLA: It's called *The End is Near*.

ELTON: We'd like to thank our parents who have supported us through this journey.

CRISTELLA: (*Waves.*) Thanks Mom, thanks Dad!

ASHER and JEANNIE call attention to themselves.

ELTON: But we've kept the script a secret, so they haven't heard it or seen it. And we have to warn you...

CRISTELLA: Some of you might find this material verrrry disturbing...

ELTON and CRISTELLA get back into place.

ELTON: OK, I'm beginning.

CRISTELLA: (*Shocked, feels blindsided.*) I begin, Elton.

ELTON: No, I do, remember?

CRISTELLA: Oh my gosh I can't believe you're doing this to me in front of all these people! I start!

ELTON: No, we agreed, I have the first line. Otherwise it doesn't make sense.

CRISTELLA: Oh, you think because you're the boy you get to go first.

ELTON: No, Cristella, I have the opening line in the play!

CRISTELLA: Mom... Elton's doing it again!

JEANNIE: Asher, he's doing it again. Elton, is this part of the play or are you doing it again? (*To audience.*) You never know with theater these days.

CRISTELLA: It's not the play. He's doing it again.

JEANNIE: Stop doing it and let your sister start the play!

ELTON: Fine. Start.

CRISTELLA: Oh, never mind, You start. Let the baby have his bottle.

ELTON: (*Pouting.*) No, you start. You want to go first, so go first.

ASHER: (*Jumps up.*) I know one thing, if no one starts it, I'm going to finish it.

JEANNIE: (*Stands up.*) Everyone calm down. Now, start the play. (*To audience, sits down, trying to play this off as "nothing".*) Just pretend none of this happened.

ASHER: (*Sits down. To audience.*) You've got kids, you know what it's like.

CRISTELLA: Okay, we're starting now. (*Gives ELTON a look of annoyance, then gets into character, as a distant lost young lady.*) The end is near. (*Pauses to look in the distance.*)

ASHER: How can the end be near if they just started?

JEANNIE: Maybe it's a short play, now Asher, shhh!

ELTON: (*Coming up behind CRISTELLA.*) It's near!

CRISTELLA: The end is coming, and there's nothing that can be done.

ASHER: Good, then we can get out early.

JEANNIE: Stop it!

ASHER: I'm just reacting to what's on stage. You know I hate a sad ending.

ELTON: *(Steps to the side, with exaggerated hand movements.)*

There is no beginning.

CRISTELLA: There is no middle.

ELTON: There is only...

CRISTELLA and ELTON: *(Join hands in the middle of the stage.)* The end...

ELTON: Which is near.

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