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Dramatic Publishing



Stairway to Heaven

by
Gregory Fletcher

From...

35 in 10

Thirty-Five Ten-Minute Plays

Compiled and Edited

KENT R. BROWN

This excerpt contains sexual references.



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STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

By
Gregory Fletcher

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Stairway to Heaven premiered at Manhattan Theatre Source in 2004. It was produced by Gary Garrison and Brian Otano, directed by Janice Goldberg, and featured Ari Butler and Allison Goldberg. Previously, the play was workshopped with director Kathy Plourde and actors Ryan Bethke and Julie Miller. At the 2004 national Kennedy Center/American College Theater Festival, it was directed by Jon Royal, featured Kaitlin Yikel and Brian Watkins, and was chosen the winner of the 2004 National Ten-Minute Play Award.

CHARACTERS

ELISA: 17 years old.

GIL: 16 years old, Elisa's brother.

SETTING: The carpeted stairway of a family home.

TIME: The new century, 2000.

STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

AT THE CURTAIN: *GIL, wearing a dark suit, is lying down on his back. His sister, ELISA, also dressed in dark colors and wearing a skirt, starts down the stairs. Her hair is pinned up in the messed-up look.*

ELISA. Get up. *(No response.)* I said, get up. Now!

GIL. So go.

ELISA. Like—I'm in a skirt.

GIL. Like—I'm gonna look? Gross.

ELISA. You're sixteen, of course you'll look.

GIL. In your dreams.

ELISA. Shut up. Why don't you go up to Mom so she can see how wrinkled your suit's getting. You should iron it.

GIL. And you should brush your hair.

ELISA. It's supposed to look like this, you jerk. Move!

GIL. Just go if you're going.

ELISA. If you look, that's sexual harassment, and sexual harassment leads to sexual abuse, and statistics show that one out of five women are sexually abused by a family member—

GIL. I can't believe you're quoting your term paper to me. That is so lame.

ELISA. I got an A+ on that paper. Gil, enough! If you don't move, you are so dead meat!

GIL. Two deaths in one week? Doubt it.

ELISA. Please. Go see Mom.

GIL. I'll see her when she comes down.

ELISA. I don't want her to be alone.

GIL. She's probably dressing, let her be.

ELISA. She's dressed, you're dressed, we're all dressed!

Dressed and waiting. (*Sighs.*) And waiting. Go on, at least while I'm making Mom and me a cup of tea.

GIL. Oh, la-de-da, so adult. When did you grow up all of a sudden?

ELISA. When do you think?! (*GIL looks away.*) She needs you.

GIL. No, his...when I had to go up for his dress shoes, for the funeral home...his closet...I could...you can still...

ELISA. Smell him?

GIL. Yeah.

ELISA. Okay, so come down with me, I'll make you your first cup of la-de-da tea. You'll like it.

GIL. No.

ELISA. What?

GIL. Too many...the photo magnets on the refrigerator.

ELISA. Oh. Well, you can wait at the dining-room table.

GIL. His chair. Waiting to be pulled out.

ELISA. The living room?

GIL. The recliner. His impression...

ELISA. Still on the cushion, yeah. The back yard? Never mind. The hammock. Even in the garage. His car.

GIL. I could feel him on the steering wheel.

ELISA. Then go in your room, at least you're safe there. I'll call you when it's ready. (*GIL doesn't move.*) In your own room?

GIL. Every trophy. Every ribbon. He's there, cheering me on.

ELISA. For someone who's dead, he sure is all around. (*She finally gets it.*) Except here.