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Dramatic Publishing



go ask alice

A Full Length Play

BY FRANK SHIRAS

based on a real diary

THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

Go Ask Alice

Drama. By Frank Shiras. Based on a young girl's diary. Cast: 8m., 15w. Using almost no scenery, this easily produced yet powerful play explores the mind and experience of a high school girl who inadvertently gets into drugs. It involves your actors and your audience in some real problems, doing so in an entirely constructive way. The lesson inherent in this play is so effective because it is not the result of a lecture but, rather, a sharply visualized tragedy that happens to a member of the peer group. "A raindrop just splashed on my forehead," Alice wrote in her diary, "and it was like a tear from heaven. Am I really alone? Is it possible that even God is crying for me?" Alice is a fairly typical girl from an average family with parents who love her. What makes Alice different is that she's tricked into trying drugs and then becomes addicted. She fights against her addiction, but by the time she has learned the answers, it's already too late. *One div. int. set.*

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Based on the (actual) diary of an anonymous girl

go ask alicc

A Full Length Play

by

FRANK SHIRAS



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(GO ASK ALICE)

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GO ASK ALICE
A Full-length Play
For Eight Men and Fifteen Women

CHARACTERS

ALICE ABERDEEN	<i>sixteen</i>
HELEN ABERDEEN	<i>her mother, thirties</i>
DOUGLAS ABERDEEN	<i>her father, thirties</i>
ALEXANDRIA	<i>her sister, twelve</i>
TIM	<i>her brother, fourteen</i>
BETH	<i>teen</i>
SAMUEL	<i>teen</i>
CHRIS VETRANO	<i>her best friend</i>
JILL PETERS	<i>teen</i>
BILL THOMPSON	<i>teen</i>
JAN FUJARA	<i>teen</i>
JOE DRIGGS	<i>teen</i>
GLORIA	<i>teen</i>
FREDDIE	<i>girl teen</i>
PEG	<i>teen</i>
SHEILA	<i>thirties</i>
GEORGE	<i>teen</i>
JOEL REEMS	<i>teen</i>
MARGE	<i>teen</i>
GERTRUDE	<i>twenties</i>
BABBIE	<i>teen</i>
TOM	<i>teen</i>
DOCTOR MILLER	<i>woman psychiatrist,</i>
.	<i>thirties</i>

The action is in the present and occurs chiefly during Alice Aberdeen's sixteenth year.

ACT ONE

Scene One

LIGHTS: ALICE is amazed that beneath the pounds she recently lost there existed a very pleasing figure. Growing up eager to meet the world, she has repeatedly felt rebuffed, is now distrustful, although not despairing. ALICE, dressed in jeans, is alone, sitting on the bed in her room, taking the lock off of a strongbox from which she removes her diary. She then takes out a handful of pens and pencils, picking each up successively and speaking to it.)

ALICE. There you are, you're one of my main men. (Another.) You're my most happy fella. (Another.) You're a big brute but I love you just the same. (Another.) You may be skinny, dear friend, but you're ever faithful and I'll always, always treasure you. (Another.) And you, do you know who you are? You're my knight in shining armor, and that's why I'm going to write with *you* today. You keep the knaves from breaching the moat and capturing me. They want to carry me off to their mountain hideout but *you* won't let them, and I love you for it. (ALICE kisses pen. Knock at door.)
Who is it?

ALEXANDRIA (offstage). Me!

ALICE. Come in, "me!"

(Enter ALEXANDRIA.)

ALEXANDRIA. Alice, can I borrow your old radio?

ALICE. What for?

ALEXANDRIA. What do you care? It doesn't work good.

ALICE. Okay, Alex, borrow it. It's in my box.

ALEXANDRIA. Why do you keep that old baby box?

ALICE (archly). I have kept it because we are poor and can't afford to buy me a new one.

ALEXANDRIA. We've got enough money, Alice.

ALICE. Take the radio and go.

ALEXANDRIA. Are you gonna write in your diary now?

ALICE. I may.

ALEXANDRIA. What do you write in it? Lies?

ALICE. Alexandria, you're not a brat sister, so stop trying so hard to act like one.

ALEXANDRIA. How come you're so skinny now? You were fat a couple of months ago.

ALICE. I'm not skinny and I was never fat.

ALEXANDRIA. Are you trying to get a boy friend?

ALICE (smiling). I don't like boys.

ALEXANDRIA. I don't either. Tim says you're trying to get a boy friend. Tim says —

ALICE. You shouldn't listen so much to Timothy. He's just using you to bug his big sister.

ALEXANDRIA. Tim says boys are flies and you're trying to turn into a honey pot. (Laughing, ALICE chases ALEXANDRIA, catches her.) I'm sorry, Alice!

ALICE. You are not. Take the radio and go. (ALEXANDRIA opens box, removes radio.) And be careful of it, Alex. I don't care if it doesn't work well.

ALEXANDRIA (doing salaam). Yes, your

worshipful. I don't know why you're worried about this old radio, you just got a new stereo.
ALICE. I like old things. Now, please go so I can write my lies.

(ALEXANDRIA exits. ALICE puts on headphones and begins to write in her diary. She only gets a sentence or two down before her mother, HELEN ABERDEEN, knocks on door. She is in her early thirties, several inches taller than ALICE, slender. Headphones prevent ALICE from hearing knock. MOTHER enters.)

MOTHER. Oh, sorry, I can come back later.

ALICE (removing headphones). Hi, Mom, what did you say?

MOTHER. I'm leaving.

ALICE (laughing). So soon? You're not interrupting me. What do you want?

MOTHER (picking magazine off floor). I forgot what time you said Beth and her friend were coming to watch television with you.

ALICE. In a little while, at nine o'clock.

MOTHER. Who's her friend?

ALICE. I don't know. Some boy.

MOTHER. Oh? That's nice. I'm sure any friend of Beth's is a nice person.

ALICE. He's probably a clod.

MOTHER. Alice, you have a tendency to be cynical, to find fault in —

ALICE. "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all."

MOTHER. I know I repeat that statement, but that doesn't make it any less true.

ALICE. I try to be positive, Mom.

MOTHER. Do you? How hard?

ALICE. Real hard. I smile, I put up my hair, I go out the door and act friendly and show spirit but it doesn't work.

MOTHER. Did you hear yourself? You said you "act" friendly. You have to *be* friendly.

ALICE. I have a friendly mother, a friendly father, a friendly sister and brother — and there's me, a mean little animal who sits in a dark room and growls.

MOTHER. If you feel mean it's only because of your attitude. Your attitude —

ALICE. — "determines your altitude."

MOTHER. Do I repeat myself *that* much? But it's true, when you're optimistic, you rise above day-to-day problems and —

ALICE. Mom, please don't pick up after me.

MOTHER. If you didn't let that fall there, no one would have to pick it up.

ALICE. And please don't dust. Please, Mother, sit down with me.

MOTHER. Look, I'm picking up and dusting because it *needs* it.

ALICE. But can't you sit and talk sometimes for a minute?

MOTHER. You act like I never talk with you. Alice, that isn't true at all.

ALICE. I know it's not. You talk to me.

MOTHER. Well . . .

ALICE. I love you.

MOTHER. But . . . Alice, what's going on? What's the matter?

ALICE. Nothing's the matter. I'm sorry I said I love you. (MOTHER sits, puts arms around ALICE.)

MOTHER. Now wait a minute. (Cheerily.) Somehow I walked in here and put you in a bad mood. It means a lot to me that you love me. You know that, don't you?

ALICE (noncommittally). Yes, I know it.

MOTHER. Good. You have the whole summer ahead of you. Be positive. Think of all the new friends you're going to make.

ALICE. I'm not so sure I want to make any friends.

MOTHER. What?

ALICE. Kids are stupid. Sometimes I think all us kids are trying to be shadows of each other. We're trying to buy the same records and everything even if we don't like them.

MOTHER. There you go, concentrating on the negative.

ALICE. We're like robots. Off an assembly line.

MOTHER. Now, wait a minute. Your generation is showing signs of being very innovative, very —

ALICE. Talk about negative! Who can be more negative than *my* generation! We sneer at everything!

MOTHER. Alice! Children your age should —

ALICE. There, you see. You called me a child again.

MOTHER. Well, you're not an adult.

ALICE. I'm almost sixteen years old, Mother. Don't forget, you were only eighteen when I was born.

MOTHER. That was different.

ALICE. Different? When you're losing an argument, you just say something is different and get out of it that way.

MOTHER. It was different. Both your father and I came from working-class families. In high

school he suddenly decided on an academic career. We loved each other very much and got married and I helped put him through the university all the way to his doctorate.

ALICE. You put him through school?

MOTHER. I don't know why I didn't tell you before.
It's no secret.

ALICE. That means you had me when you were
poor.

MOTHER. Alice, are you implying we couldn't
afford you?

ALICE. It sounds like you couldn't.

MOTHER. And so didn't *want* you? Is that what
you're saying? We *wanted* you.

ALICE. My being born didn't help the situation.

MOTHER. Alice! What's the *matter* with you?

ALICE (crying). I don't know. I don't know
what's the matter with me. (MOTHER holds
ALICE in her arms, comforts her.)

MOTHER. Now, now. I think you lost weight too
fast. You've been starving yourself and getting
run down. Now, now. I love you, Alice.

ALICE. Do you really?

MOTHER. Of course I do. I love you very, very
much.

ALICE. You never say so. I have to drag it out
of you.

MOTHER. I'm sorry. I'll try to say it more. It
seems I'm always so busy.

ALICE. I make you work. I leave stuff all over.
I'll stop, I promise.

TIM (offstage). Mom! Mom!

MOTHER. I'm in Alice's room! That boy
is going to walk right on my waxed kitchen
floor!

(Enter TIM.)

TIM. I didn't walk on your waxed kitchen floor.

MOTHER. No one said you did.

TIM. You were thinking it.

MOTHER. You blame me?

TIM. Mom, guess what?

MOTHER. The Atomic Energy Commission just made you an offer.

TIM. Come on, don't make fun. At the science club meeting I got the word that my exhibit won first prize this summer. (MOTHER and TIM see ALICE put headphones back on, assume she can't hear.)

MOTHER. Really? That's wonderful! I know how hard you worked on that exhibit all year. But then, you *are* an A student. (Adjusting headphones, ALICE overhears.)

TIM. How come Alice only gets C's?

MOTHER. Why this sudden interest in your sister's academic record?

TIM. I don't like it when Alice calls me dumb.

MOTHER. If you hadn't made fun of her plumpness, I'm sure she would never have said anything unpleasant to you. (Doorbell rings.) I'll get it. Alice is expecting company.

TIM. I'm going to my room.

MOTHER. See if you can't do a little positive thinking in there.

TIM. I'll work on it. (Exit MOTHER and TIM. ALICE kicks a pillow on floor; locks up diary.)

(MOTHER reenters with guests. BETH is plump, SAMUEL flabby. Although

totally insincere, Samuel's facade takes in most adults.)

MOTHER. Beth, it's nice to see you again. And I'm pleased to meet *you*, Samuel. What program are you going to watch?

SAMUEL. Whatever program Alice wishes, I'm sure. Wouldn't you say so, Beth?

BETH. Yeah.

MOTHER. But you're the guests, you decide.

SAMUEL. In that case I'll consult the television guide, Mrs. Aberdeen.

ALICE. Hi, Beth.

BETH. Hi. This is Samuel.

ALICE. Hello, Samuel.

SAMUEL. Hello, Miss Aberdeen.

MOTHER. Alice.

SAMUEL. Of course. Alice.

MOTHER. Well, you three enjoy television. (Exit MOTHER.)

BETH. I'm gonna use your washroom, Alice.
(Exit BETH.)

SAMUEL. Just call me Sammy.

ALICE. Okay, Sammy.

SAMUEL. I like you.

ALICE. You what?

SAMUEL (advancing). I think you're pretty.

ALICE. Hey! Are you for real?

SAMUEL. Do you like me?

ALICE. I think you're marvelous. Stay back so I can marvel from a distance.

SAMUEL. I like you a lot. I wanna kiss you.

ALICE. What were you hatched from?

SAMUEL. Come on, Beth'll be out in a minute.

ALICE. Sammy, were you starved for affection

as a baby?

SAMUEL. All you girls just wanna talk. I like action.

ALICE. What was that Mr. Goodbar routine you were giving my mother?

SAMUEL. You're just stalling around.

ALICE. What program should we watch?

SAMUEL. I've got money. I can send out for a pizza.

ALICE. That's nice.

SAMUEL. If you gimme some action.

ALICE. I get a pizza if I give you a kiss?

SAMUEL. A kiss is a start. I'm dynamite. Try me, you'll want more than a kiss.

ALICE. Sammy, sit down. Thank you. Sammy, you're crazy but I can help you.

SAMUEL (chortling). Touch me. That's all the help I need.

ALICE. I'll hit you over the head.

SAMUEL. Why do you girls stall around all the time?

ALICE. We like boys who show patience and tact.

SAMUEL. I've got a lot of patience. But all it ever gets me is a good-night peck at the door.

ALICE. You're not going to solve your problem with force.

SAMUEL. Yes I am!

(SAMUEL charges ALICE, grabs her, tries to kiss her as BETH enters.)

ALICE. Stop it!

BETH. You heard her, stop it!

SAMUEL. You sure finished in a hurry.

BETH. I had a quick shower. I'm surprised at you.

Alice is my best friend.

SAMUEL. I should make out with your enemies?

ALICE. Where did you find him, Beth?

BETH. Our parents are friends. (Glances at SAMUEL.) It must be those high-pro kennel rations Sammy's getting now.

SAMUEL. You're not funny, Beth.

BETH. You're not staying here another minute if you don't apologize to Alice.

SAMUEL. I'm sorry, Alice.

ALICE. Okay.

SAMUEL. I'm sorry I didn't get any farther.

BETH. Samuel!

SAMUEL. Okay, okay. Don't yell at *me*, yell at my hormones, they make me do it.

BETH. You don't have any hormones.

SAMUEL. Shut up.

ALICE. Well, now that we're all *friends*, what program should we put on?

SAMUEL. I don't wanna watch TV, lemme put on your headphones.

ALICE. Go ahead. (SAMUEL puts on headphones, ALICE and BETH sit and talk.)

BETH. I'm sorry he's so gross. I'd heard a few stories about him, but I didn't think that —

ALICE. I understand.

BETH. He's transportation for me. He borrowed his father's car.

ALICE. Beth, you don't have to *apologize*. It's all right.

SAMUEL (taking off headphones). You got anything to eat?

ALICE. I'm waiting for the pizza.

SAMUEL. You didn't earn it.

BETH. There's a bone in my purse, Sammy.

SAMUEL. Gnaw on it yourself. (Puts headphones back on.)

BETH. This is the last time we see each other.

ALICE. Only for six weeks.

BETH. I guess so. I bet I hate summer camp.

ALICE. No, you won't. Just think of this burg.

BETH. What'll you do all summer?

ALICE. Read books. What else?

BETH. I thought / read a lot. You read so many
I think you breathe them in. How do you do
it?

ALICE. I'm used to it. I was in the hospital a long
time when I was eleven from an automobile
accident. I started reading then and never
stopped, I guess.

BETH. What's that you're reading now?

ALICE. *Madame Bovary*.

BETH. I've heard of it. Isn't it a classic? Something
they read in college?

ALICE. I guess so. But it's easy to read. Flaubert
— he's the author — was a stylist who tried to
write simply. Sometimes he sat in his window
all day trying to think of a *single* word and
screaming when he couldn't think of it.

BETH. Honest? How do you know?

ALICE. I did a term paper on him for my English
class for extra credit to raise my grade.

BETH. What's *Madame Bovary* about?

ALICE. It's this unhappy woman who doesn't have
any real friends or lovers, or something, in this
place she doesn't like. I hear it has a terrible
ending. She swallows something awful.

BETH. Don't tell me, I might read it some day.

ALICE. How can I tell you? I don't know the
ending myself.