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*Dramatic Publishing*

# The Quiet Place

A one-act play by  
Eddie Kennedy

# The Quiet Place

**Drama. By Eddie Kennedy. Cast: 3m., 4w.** This realistic, award-winning script deals with the issue of teenage peer pressure in a drug-oriented society. Overlooking an unseen cemetery, Sheila sits alone, remembering her boyfriend Danny. She is interrupted by the arrival of Danny's older brother, and we discover that Danny's funeral is tomorrow and that his brother is here checking on the cemetery arrangements. It seems that Danny died from a lethal combination of drugs and alcohol. A gang of threatening former "friends" of Danny's appears, and they try to intimidate Sheila into concealing from the police the truth about what happened. They know she holds them responsible for Danny's death, and in a powerful, tension-filled confrontation, the gang is faced down by Sheila and the truth. *Code: Q14.*

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# The Quiet Place

A One-Act Play

By

**EDDIE KENNEDY**



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(THE QUIET PLACE)

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## THE QUIET PLACE

*A One-Act Play  
for Three Men, Four Women*

### CHARACTERS

SHEILA . . . . . a teenage girl

PAM, JANET . . . . . Sheila's friends

DAVID . . . . . older brother of Sheila's boyfriend

PATSY, TONY, STEVE . . . . . high school gang members

*TIME: The Present*

*PLACE: A small hillside in early spring*



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## THE QUIET PLACE

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**AT RISE OF CURTAIN:** The lights come up on a small hillside which has a stone bench off to one side, and a tree stump to the other. It is early spring, but there is still a chill in the air. The sound of the wind and birds quietly sweeps the hill. SHEILA, a teenage girl, sits alone on the bench. She sits quietly, obviously distressed. After a moment, she wipes her eyes and places the handkerchief in her jacket pocket. PAM and JANET enter quickly and stop when they see SHEILA. They appear nervous. After a slight hesitation, JANET moves toward SHEILA while PAM holds back, as if keeping watch.

JANET. Sheila?

SHEILA (turning). Yes?

JANET. We thought you might be here.

SHEILA. Yeah.

PAM. Are you all right?

SHEILA. I'm fine, Pam.

PAM. Are you sure?

SHEILA (rising). I'm sure.

JANET (after a pause). It's kinda cold, isn't it?

SHEILA. Yes, it is.



JANET. Are you warm enough?

SHEILA. I'm fine, Janet, thank you.

JANET. I always think March should be warmer than this, you know?

PAM. Yeah. It seems like you wait all winter, and then it sounds like spring, but it's always so cold really.

SHEILA. I know.

JANET. And we wear these little jackets and pretend we're not cold because it's March. (ALL laugh ever so lightly.)

SHEILA (after a pause). Thank you for coming, but you don't have to be here. You really don't.

PAM. We went by your house, but you were gone.

JANET. We thought of all the places you might be, and we knew you'd come here.

SHEILA. I just needed a little time to myself. To think a little. We always liked this place.

JANET. I know.

SHEILA. It's always so quiet up here. The first time I came here I thought it was too much . . . so quiet, eerie, just so quiet. Danny grinned and said, "What do you expect in a place like this?" And then he laughed that silly little laugh. (ALL laugh lightly.) He's like that. Make you laugh at the strangest things. After a while, I never even thought about this being what it is. It was just a place. Nice, quiet, kind of pretty. Sort of our place, you know. Somewhere to come, to get away from things for a while.

PAM. Yeah.

SHEILA (crossing to the stump). So we came here a lot. When it was warm enough. And we'd sit on this little hillside and talk, or watch the clouds, and make up names for the things and faces we'd see take shape up there. Sometimes tremendous formations, always moving and blending into one another; becoming someone or something else. A quiet, ever-changing

kind of thing. We'd just sit back and watch it happen. You know?

JANET (crossing to SHEILA and touching her shoulders, with a little smile). Yes. I've done that, too. Never in a place like this. But I've watched them, too.

SHEILA (as she sits on the stump). We quit thinking of it as that. Not a cemetery at all . . . just a place. Danny used to point over there, down the hill where the markers start, and he said it was just a little town where people stayed, that's all. The markers became buildings and in the evening you could almost visualize a little town down there. You had the town, that little stream there, and that hillside over there untouched, waiting to become part of the town. Everything so neat, so practical, so obvious. (She turns to JANET and PAM with a faint smile.) I've never told anyone that. It sounds so crazy, doesn't it?

JANET (smiling softly, kindly). No.

SHEILA. I know it does. It sounds so silly, just so crazy to talk like that. (She moves to the bench.) I can't tell you the hours we spent just sitting here, leaning against this old bench. Just talking, laughing, or sometimes not talking at all. Just listening and being quiet. (JANET and PAM nervously exchange glances.)

JANET. Sheila, it's cold. We should go now.

SHEILA. We used to look for lucky clovers here. Four-leaf clovers, you know? I guess everyone's done that.

JANET. Yeah.

SHEILA. I told Danny you couldn't find luck in a place like this, and he said you could find luck about anywhere.

JANET. Sheila?

SHEILA. Danny knew this saying about luck.

PAM (still looking out). Janet's right. It's cold, Sheila. Shouldn't you go now?

SHEILA (quietly reciting). "A clover's luck doubles by simply sharing/An act of kindness, an act of caring./For we are taught from up above/That the greatest act/is an act of love." (JANET crosses to SHEILA.) We only found one. (She struggles.) I have it. It's on this chain he gave me. (She sits on the corner of the bench, lowers her head, and begins to cry quietly.)

JANET. Don't, Sheila. (She sits by SHEILA and puts her arms around her.) Please don't.

PAM (kindly). Let's go. You need to go now, Sheila.

JANET. Please, Sheila. Leave with us.

SHEILA. I'm all right. You go on. I need a few more minutes.

PAM. You should go with us now.

SHEILA (moving away). No. Really. It's all right. You go ahead. I'll leave soon.

JANET. You shouldn't be here, Sheila.

SHEILA. It's all right.

JANET. No, it isn't. You ought to leave.

SHEILA. I won't be here long, I promise.

JANET. That's not what I'm talking about, Sheila.

SHEILA. What do you mean?

JANET. I mean Patsy, Steve and Tony. They're looking for you.

SHEILA. What?

JANET. They called my house. When you weren't home, they called me.

SHEILA. They did?

JANET. Yes. And I know they'll come here.

PAM. They all know this is where you and Danny would come.

JANET. They'll be here, Sheila.

SHEILA. No, they wouldn't.

JANET. They will. They think you've been talking.

PAM. They think you talked to the police.

SHEILA. I haven't talked to anyone. I haven't seen anyone.

PAM. Patsy said you were at the chapel last night.

SHEILA. Patsy?

JANET. Yes. When Tony called, he said Patsy had seen you, and that you were talking to David.

PAM. Patsy was across the street watching. She said she saw you.

SHEILA. I didn't go in. I couldn't. (A pause.) I just couldn't go inside.

PAM. But you did go?

SHEILA. Yes.

JANET. And you talked to David?

SHEILA. He's Danny's brother, Janet. And I did talk to him. He was on the porch when he saw me standing out front. He came to the street and we talked. For only a minute, and then I left. I couldn't go in.

JANET. Well, all that bunch thinks you talked about what happened.

SHEILA. They're wrong.

JANET. Well, they're trying to find you.

SHEILA (moving away). I'll leave in a minute. They won't find me here.

JANET. I don't trust them, Sheila. You know how they are. I don't trust them.

SHEILA. You all go on now. They won't bother me.

PAM. I think you're wrong.

SHEILA. You all go on. Don't worry.

(DAVID enters upstage and quietly moves into the scene.)

JANET. At least let us wait for you.

SHEILA. What?

JANET. We'll wait in the car. Okay?

SHEILA. You don't have to do that.

JANET. We want to.

PAM. We'll wait at the entrance. Okay?

SHEILA. All right. If you want. Just give me a few more minutes. I just want . . . (She sees DAVID.) Hello, David.

DAVID. Hello.

PAM and JANET. Hello.

DAVID. Hi. (An awkward pause.)

SHEILA. We were about to leave.

DAVID. I see.

JANET (after another pause). David, we're all sorry about Danny. (PAM nods agreement. Another awkward moment.)

DAVID (breaking the silence). Yes.

SHEILA. We're leaving now, David.

PAM. Yes, we were just going.

DAVID. Could I talk to you, Sheila?

SHEILA. What?

DAVID. For just a moment?

JANET. We were just leaving, David.

SHEILA. Yes, we were about to . . .

DAVID. Just a minute or two? Sheila, I really would like to talk for a moment . . . if you could just stay a minute.

SHEILA. Well, I don't . . .

DAVID. Please. Just a minute?

SHEILA (after a pause and an exchange of glances with JANET and PAM). Okay, David. I'll stay.

JANET. Sheila?

SHEILA. I'll just be a minute, Janet.

PAM. Sheila, I think you . . .

SHEILA (crossing to PAM and JANET). I'll just be a minute. Wait for me. I'll just be a minute.

JANET (after a pause). Okay. We'll be waiting. (As she starts

out). Goodbye, David.

PAM. Goodbye.

DAVID. Goodbye. (JANET and PAM exit. SHEILA quietly sits on the bench as DAVID moves C, away from her. There is silence which is finally broken by DAVID.) Thank you for staying.

SHEILA. Sure. (DAVID stares ahead quietly.) You knew about this place?

DAVID. Oh, yes. I used to come here a lot.

SHEILA. You did?

DAVID (after a pause). When Dad first died. I'd just come up here and sit for awhile. Sit and listen. So quiet.

SHEILA. You did that?

DAVID. Yes. Sometimes. I could somehow never go down there . . . with the markers and all. I made it this far, and it was so quiet, so isolated, and this is as far as I ever wanted to go.

SHEILA. I see.

DAVID. And then one day, Danny followed me up here. I didn't hear him. I just sensed a presence. When I turned, there was Danny with a scared kind of look on his face, staring over the hill there. "It's so quiet," he said. I just took him by the shoulders and said, "What'd you expect in a place like this?" We both laughed a little and then we sat till the sun was nearly down. For some time after we would come up here whenever we needed a little time alone. We just called it the quiet place. Our special quiet place.

SHEILA. Then you first brought him here?

DAVID. In a way, I guess. He followed me that day.

SHEILA. And it became your place.

DAVID. Yes. I didn't want him to be afraid, you see. I didn't want him to be afraid to come here. He had a hard time when Dad died. I just didn't want him to be afraid.

SHEILA. And you?

DAVID. Me?

SHEILA. You said this was as far as you would ever go.

DAVID. It was as far as I needed to go. I wasn't afraid. I just didn't need to go down there. Everything I needed to feel, I could feel from here. Do you understand?

SHEILA. I think so.

DAVID. There was no reason to go. I could feel it from here.  
(A pause. DAVID stares over the hill, while SHEILA looks at him kindly.)

SHEILA. He talked of you often.

DAVID. He did?

SHEILA. Yes. Especially when you first went away to school. He missed you a lot.

DAVID. I missed him.

SHEILA. He loved it when you came home.

DAVID. So did I. (A pause.) I'm afraid I couldn't get here as often as I wanted to. Several hundred miles, you know.

SHEILA. Yes.

DAVID. It just seemed to get more difficult to find the time to get here. So I couldn't come as often as I used to, like last year.

SHEILA. Well, Danny understood that. He knew that.

DAVID. I somehow couldn't seem to find the time. (A pause.) I guess it's always like that, isn't it? People looking back saying, "I should have found the time."

SHEILA (quietly). Yes.

DAVID (after a slight pause). You didn't come in last night.

SHEILA. No.

DAVID. There were a lot of people there then.

SHEILA. I know.

DAVID. I think Mom would like to have seen you.

SHEILA. I'll see her later. I just couldn't go in.

DAVID (quietly). I know.

SHEILA. Those flowers. I can't stand the smell. I always feel so smothered. And I knew I really shouldn't go in.

DAVID (after a pause). Sheila, I don't understand what's happened. (Another pause.) I'm having real trouble understanding what's happened here.

SHEILA. Yes.

DAVID. Can you help me?

SHEILA. What?

DAVID (moving close to SHEILA). Can you help me?

SHEILA. I don't know.

DAVID. Will you help me, Sheila? Tell me what you know. Will you?

SHEILA (quietly). All right.

DAVID. Thank you.

SHEILA. I really don't know what to say, David. Danny and I didn't see much of each other lately.

DAVID. But you were at the party?

SHEILA. Well, yes. But that was the first time in a long time . . . almost eight weeks.

DAVID. Eight weeks?

SHEILA. Yes. The party was the first time I had seen him in a long time.

DAVID (after a pause). Well, what happened?

SHEILA. There was this crowd at school that Danny sort of fell in with, and we began to see less of each other.

DAVID. What about this crowd?

SHEILA. Just some kids. They used to tease Danny some, like they did a lot of people. Me. They did it to me, too. Just this bunch of loud kids that rode him a lot, about being cool and all that. You know.

DAVID. And?

SHEILA. And so, for some reason, this really started to bother



Danny and he somehow got mixed up with them, trying to prove he could do things and all.

DAVID. Things?

SHEILA. You know.

DAVID. No. Tell me.

SHEILA. You know, David.

DAVID. Tell me. Drugs? Is that what you're saying?

SHEILA. David.

DAVID. Is it? Is that what you mean?

SHEILA (quietly). Yes.

DAVID (after a pause). Who the hell's this crowd?

SHEILA. Just some kids. They run together. Always hang out together at school and everywhere.

DAVID. And they're all into this?

SHEILA. Yes.

DAVID. At school? It's like this at school?

SHEILA. Well . . . yes.

DAVID. They do this stuff at school, too?

SHEILA. Sometimes. Whenever they want, I guess.

DAVID. Damn.

SHEILA. David, I know Danny didn't realize what he was getting into. I know that. I hope you'll believe that, David.

DAVID. I want to.

SHEILA. Believe me. He just didn't know. It all just happened so fast. He didn't realize.

DAVID. I guess not.

SHEILA. He was not like them, David. He wasn't. I don't know why, but he just got pulled in like so many others have. He just got pulled into it.

DAVID. But you didn't.

SHEILA (quietly). No. But almost. (She moves away.) David, the pressure is very heavy sometimes. Even when it's not a

bunch like those who got to Danny, there are lots of other kids who are doing the same kind of thing and just doing a better job of keeping it a secret. That's just the way it is. And if you knew some of the kids I'm talking about, you just wouldn't believe it. I'm talking about people you wouldn't even believe. And it's like that a lot. And everybody expects you to try things, and it's very hard. So, Danny is just like a lot of other kids who somehow have given in to this thing. And it's just real hard, David.

DAVID. What about the party?

SHEILA. The party?

DAVID. You saw Danny that night?

SHEILA. Yes. I had decided that I wanted to see Danny, no matter what, so I went to the party. And I found Danny, and he was with those kids. He seemed glad to see me . . . really glad to see me, and he even grabbed me and swung me around a little bit. He was really glad to see me, and I was glad I had gone as soon as he acted like that. So, he asked me to drink something with him, so I got a beer and two or three times I pretended to get others so everyone would think I was really drinking.

DAVID. Danny was drinking, too?

SHEILA. Yes. He had been drinking.

DAVID. And the drugs, too?

SHEILA. He didn't mean for that to happen. I know he didn't. He said his head hurt and they told him to take some more pills.

DAVID. More pills?

SHEILA. Yes. He had some earlier, before I got there. They were teasing him about his pain, and kept telling him to take those others and there'd be no pain. And he did. (About to cry.) And later it happened. He fell asleep. And I stayed with