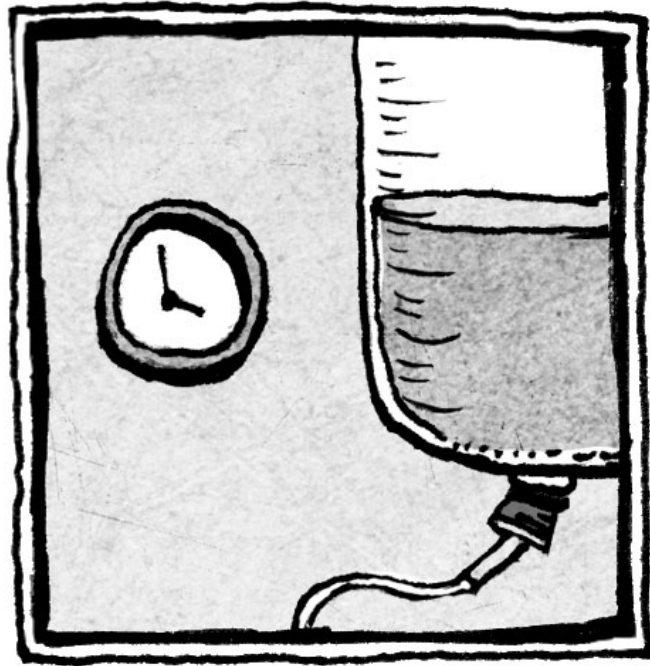


PERUSAL SCRIPT



TO BE CONTINUED

by Davey Morrison



Newport, Maine

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To Be Continued

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Artwork by Steve Morrison for the New Play Project as published in “Out Of The Mount.” Used by permission.

Order # 2117

“To Be Continued,” by Davey Morrison, was originally performed in April 2009.

Director: Enoch Allred

Assistant Director: Davey Morrison

Eric: Micah Fry

Randy: David St. Julien

Nancy: Melissa McCarty

TO BE CONTINUED a Ten-Minute Play by Davey Morrison. 2m 1f. Hospital room setting. A friend comes to visit, a simple thing, that turns complicated as the one being visited presents a complication. Premiered at the New Play Project, 2009. **ORDER #2117**

Davey Morrison — Davey is New Play Project’s Workshop Director, and has had over half a dozen short plays produced and performed through NPP over the past two years. His full-length play *Cycle* was workshopped and received a staged reading through BYU’s Writer Director Actor workshop, and won second place in the Vera Hinckley Mayhew Playwriting competition. In addition to playwriting, Davey is a published poet and journalist— with works published in *Sunstone*, *Mormon Artist*, and *The Provo-Orem Word*—and an award-winning filmmaker, actor, screenwriter, and visual artist. Davey is also the author of an ongoing film column for Examiner.com. He has roughly a million projects in the works.

TO BE CONTINUED

(A hospital room. A long, white metal bed with long white sheets and long metal machinery around it. RANDY, in his early thirties, with several days' growth of facial hair, lies in the bed, shrouded in hospital garments, his face pale.)

*(As the **lights** come up, he wakes up from a nap, presses the palms of his hands against his eyelids, and sighs loudly. He opens his eyes, then shuts them.)*

(A knock on the door.)

RANDY. Come in!

(ERIC enters, in his early twenties, in a white shirt and tie. He shuts the door quietly behind him. RANDY sighs again and closes his eyes.)

ERIC. Hi.

RANDY. Hi.

ERIC. Brother Jeppeson couldn't make it today. His wife is sick.

RANDY. No worries.

ERIC. And I was going to bring you some of Nancy's cookies, the pumpkin chocolate chip kind. But she didn't get them in the oven in time. She'll drop them by when she picks me up.

RANDY. It's fine, don't worry about it.

(Silence.)

You're my Ministering Brother, aren't you supposed to ask how I'm doing?

ERIC. How are you doing?

RANDY. Ha!

(Beat.)

I've got maybe three weeks.

(Silence.)

Not to make things awkward or anything.

ERIC. Is there anything I can do?

RANDY. Cure cancer.

ERIC. I'll work on that.

RANDY. Thanks.

ERIC. You look tired.

RANDY. I feel tired. So how are things with you? How's Nancy?

ERIC. Things are good. Nancy's good. The baby's good. Yeah, things are pretty good.

RANDY. Glad to hear it. And the office, how's that?

ERIC. We're trying to get along without you. They just hired Dr. Stevens full-time. He's moving into your old place.

RANDY. Right.

(Pause.)

And the quorum?

ERIC. They're all good, too. They finally released you in church today.

RANDY. No kidding? Eight months horizontal, I thought they'd never get around to it.

ERIC. Yeah. Jim Halliwell is the new elder's quorum president.

RANDY. Yeah? Good for him.

(With some effort, RANDY turns over on his side in bed.)

I hate being a medical doctor and dying. I wish Death would come a little closer when he's laughing at me so I could punch him in the face. At least you can use me as an object lesson for your seminary class. Don't drink when you're a teenager or you'll get liver cancer and die.

ERIC. Right.

(Neither of them talks. ERIC is clearly feeling a little uncomfortable.)

Sorry I'm not more talkative.

RANDY. No, I understand, that makes two of us. I've not got a lot to talk about. They haven't fixed the remote yet, so mostly I just lay here, I sleep, most of my meals are pumped into me. Not really that exciting. It's sort of like being a three-toed sloth who gets the Home and Garden Network.

ERIC. How is that?

RANDY. The Home and Garden Network? It's not bad. You'd be surprised how exciting *This Old House* is when your only alternative is staring at white plaster and obsessing over your impending death.

(Silence.)

Does that make you uncomfortable?

ERIC. No. No, not at all.

(Beat.)

I mean, yeah, it does a little, but—

RANDY. It makes you uncomfortable. That's okay. It makes me uncomfortable too.

(Beat.)

So did you bring your *Ensign* or some scriptures or anything?

ERIC. Yeah. You want me to read you something?

RANDY. That's what you do, right?

ERIC. Right, sure.

(He opens his Ensign and flips aimlessly through the pages.)

Look, do you want to talk about anything, or—

RANDY. No.

ERIC. Okay.

(Beat. He looks at the article.)

Well, the month's main article is about the evils of pornography.

RANDY. Great. Just what I need in my situation! Thank you, God!

ERIC. So do you want me to read it?

RANDY. Don't do it.

(Silence.)

Do you believe in an afterlife?

ERIC. Yeah. Yeah, I do.

RANDY. Sure you do. Well, I'll tell you. Eternity looks a lot different from up close.

ERIC. Yeah.

(Beat.)

This one time, when I was young, I almost drowned, my brother and I were at the ocean, my parents weren't watching us, the tide came in and I was about three or so, and so I ran out, it was so exciting, my first time on the beach, and then suddenly it just grabbed me and my knees buckled and suddenly, I mean, I was only like five, but I suddenly knew I was going to die and I saw what that would be like, it was weird, it was more terror and more peace than I've ever felt before, both at the same time, and I was really disappointed it was happening, that I was dying before I'd really even had a life, but I knew everything would be all right. I knew—

RANDY. You didn't die.

ERIC. No.

RANDY. That's the difference, man. I'm going to die. You said you knew you were going to die, but you didn't know that, because it didn't happen, you can't know something that's not true. I know I'm going to die. It's just a question of whether it's in two weeks or three. Tuesday or Wednesday. It's going to happen.

I won't be here to vote in the next election. Or give kids candy this Halloween. Or wake up early for work, ever again. It's different.

ERIC. I'm sorry.

RANDY. You don't need to be sorry, I'm just saying it's different.

ERIC. Right.

RANDY. Sorry, man, I'm a little pissed, maybe it's the radiation.

ERIC. No, it's okay, don't be sorry.

RANDY. Too late.

(Silence.)

Faith is easy. You can believe in what you want. There's hope. You can make stuff up, it's all hypothetical, it's not here-and-now. Knowing is hard.

ERIC. But you believe in God, right?

RANDY. No.

(Silence. RANDY casually leans up on his elbows, reaches for a glass of water from the end table, exerting all of his energy and avoiding eye contact.)

Will you hand me that?

ERIC. Sure.

(He stands up, goes to the table, and hands RANDY the glass.)

RANDY. Thanks.

(He drinks.)

Man, this stuff is good.

ERIC. Do you . . . do you want to talk about that?

RANDY. About what?

ERIC. You know . . . not believing in God.

RANDY. Oh, that. Well, I think it's been going on for awhile now. I didn't know it or anything, but it was there. Once it occurs to you how ridiculous the whole thing is, God, how much it makes absolutely no logical sense— well, a lot of people choose to keep on believing to avoid worrying about death. That's what I did. And it worked, mostly. I was productive, I was happy. Really, actually happy. I felt like I was making other people happy and I felt good. The Spirit, serotonin, it's easy to get them mixed up. But once it's here, death, you can't ignore it anymore. The big black elephant in the room just gets bigger. And blacker. And you just have to face it, you can't pretend anymore. You can't play games, you can't play Pretend There's No Elephant!

(Beat.)

You don't believe in God, do you?

ERIC. Yeah, I do.

RANDY. Yeah, I know, but not really, right?

ERIC. Yeah, I really do.

RANDY. Okay, whatever you say.

(Neither of them speaks. Neither of them moves. RANDY breathes loudly, his eyes still closed. Finally, Eric clears his throat.)

ERIC. "As we encounter that evil carrier, the pornography beetle, let our battle standard and that of our communities—"

(RANDY groans loudly. ERIC looks at him.)

What?

RANDY. I don't have a computer, the only channel I get is the Home and Garden Network, I'm not looking at porn.

ERIC. I'm sorry.

RANDY. Don't be sorry, just stop reading that.

ERIC. I'm sorry.

RANDY. I've got three weeks left to exist, you want to waste them?

ERIC. I'm sorry.

(Silence.)

So, you want to watch *This Old House*?

(RANDY looks at him.)

RANDY. You want to know what I'm going to do with my last three weeks of life? I'm going to call everyone I know. Everyone. Family, friends. Enemies. Apathetic acquaintances. Tell them they don't need to have a funeral for me, they don't need to do anything, they don't need to make me cookies or bring me anything while I'm still here. Just take all that money, take all of my money too, and go to the store or get on eBay and buy some telescopes. They don't need to be expensive, but as many as they can afford, the nicest. Call up everyone they know, ask them if they have any telescopes, if they know anyone who does. Send out chain e-mails. Tell everyone. And they'll amass this huge collection of telescopes in my honor, hundreds, thousands, and then they'll take them all to NASA or wherever, some super-telescope, the biggest one in the world, the one that sees the farthest, and they'll line them all up, eyepiece to eyepiece, and look through. And hopefully it'll be enough, hopefully they'll have enough and they'll be able to see far enough, that they'll be able to see the end of everything. The blackness. The

PERUSAL SCRIPT — **To Be Continued** by Davey Morrison

non- blackness, the anti-blackness, whatever it is. The end of the universe, of creation. And then they'll know. They'll know what I know. They'll see the elephant and they won't be able to pretend they didn't.

(Silence.)

ERIC. Let's watch *This Old House*.

THREE MORE PAGES TO THE END