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Children of the Holocaust

by ROBERT MAURO



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Contemporary Drama Service

PO Box 7710 • Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7710

*This play is dedicated to all the children of the Holocaust.
You are remembered.*

CHARACTERS

ANNE
RACHAEL
MICHAEL
DAVID

PRODUCTION NOTES

PLAYING TIME: About 30 minutes.

SETTING: An empty stage. All shades of black and gray. Shadows of barbed wire.

COSTUMES: All are dressed in gray tattered concentration camp uniforms.

PROPERTIES: Dust or sand, family photo, string for "cat's cradle,"* tiny broken pencil, yellow Star of David patch.

LIGHTING EFFECTS: Searchlights scan the stage. Lights should be able to come up and dim out.

SOUND EFFECTS: Loud siren, sound of many voices crying fades in and out.

**"Cat's cradle" is a string game done with hands. Intricate patterns are made and are transferred from player to player. If you don't know how to make the string patterns, ask around for someone who does. This is a traditional game passed from generation to generation.*

1 **TIME:** Today.

2

3 **SETTING:** An empty stage. All shades of black and gray. Shadows
4 of barbed wire and guard tower on dark backdrop.

5

6 **AT RISE:** DAVID, RACHAEL, ANNE and MICHAEL are lying on
7 the stage as if in their graves. A siren sounds and bright
8 searchlights frantically scan the stage, looking for someone.
9 The siren stops and the bright searchlights fade. Then lights
10 come up on DAVID, RACHAEL, ANNE and MICHAEL.

11

12 **ANNE:** (*Sitting up, looking around*) Listen. (*She looks about,*
13 *listening.*) Did you hear something?

14 **RACHAEL:** (*Sitting up, listens*) A siren, I think. Yes, I think it
15 was a siren.

16 **ANNE:** You sure it wasn't a bird?

17 **MICHAEL:** (*Sitting up, annoyed at ANNE's innocence*) A bird? A
18 bird, you think Anne?

19 **ANNE:** Yes. A mourning dove.

20 **RACHAEL:** Is it morning?

21 **DAVID:** (*Sitting up*) Morning?

22 **ANNE:** Yes. Morning.

23 **MICHAEL:** Is she kidding? Are you kidding, Anne?

24 **ANNE:** No. I'm serious. It feels like morning.

25 **MICHAEL:** Feels like morning?

26 **ANNE:** Stop repeating everything I say, Michael.

27 **MICHAEL:** I have to. I can't believe you at times. You're so . . .
28 innocent, naive, at times. Like now. You say it feels like
29 morning. What does morning feel like?

30 **ANNE:** (*Shrugs*) I don't know. (*Thinks*) What does morning
31 feel like? Like we've been asleep for a long time. (*Rubs*
32 *her eyes.*) That we've just awakened.

33 **DAVID:** So you think it's morning for that reason?

34 **RACHAEL:** (*Looking around*) It looks like morning.

35 **MICHAEL:** It isn't morning. Is it, David?

1 **DAVID:** No. It isn't morning.
2 **RACHAEL:** Then what is it?
3 **ANNE:** I thought I heard a mourning dove.
4 **RACHAEL:** Did you really hear a mourning dove, Anne?
5 **ANNE:** I did hear something.
6 **DAVID:** It wasn't a mourning dove.
7 **MICHAEL:** No. It sure wasn't.
8 **ANNE:** *(To MICHAEL)* No, smarty? Then what was it?
9 **MICHAEL:** You heard the camp siren.
10 **RACHAEL:** *(Disappointed)* Oh. I was hoping it was a dove.
11 **MICHAEL:** Well, it wasn't.
12 **ANNE:** It sure sounded like one to me.
13 **RACHAEL:** *(Thinks, then)* Maybe Anne meant she heard a dove
14 besides the siren. Right, Anne?
15 **ANNE:** I'm really not sure now.
16 **RACHAEL:** I say it was a dove.
17 **DAVID:** You were wrong.
18 **MICHAEL:** There was nothing besides the siren.
19 **DAVID:** There was no dove.
20 **MICHAEL:** It was the camp siren. Someone tried to escape.
21 Didn't you see the searchlights looking for him?
22 **ANNE:** Or her.
23 **RACHAEL:** Right. Her. Maybe a woman tried to escape. They
24 do try sometimes.
25 **ANNE:** But seldom get very far before
26 **RACHAEL:** Before what?
27 **ANNE:** You know.
28 **RACHAEL:** *(Sadly)* Oh. Yes.
29 **DAVID:** There is no escape.
30 **MICHAEL:** David's right. There is no escape. You try to
31 escape from here, the guards either shoot you or you get
32 electrocuted on the barbed wire fence.
33 **ANNE:** *(Depressed)* I know. It's not very nice.
34 **MICHAEL:** No, it is not very nice.
35 **RACHAEL:** *(Trying to cheer everyone up)* Well, here we are again.

1 (*Stands and looks around.*) **But where are we?**
2 **ANNE:** (*Looking around*) **It must be the camp I was in —**
3 **Bergen-Belsen.**
4 **MICHAEL:** **Or the one I was in — Auschwitz.**
5 **DAVID:** **Or Dachau, or Buchanwald. Any one of many.**
6 **RACHAEL:** (*Stops*) **Where we died?**
7 **MICHAEL:** (*Standing and dusting himself off. He is covered with*
8 *dust.*) **Right. Where we died. Where we were killed. Am I**
9 **not correct, David? Am I not right?**
10 **DAVID:** (*Stands and looks around.*) **Yes. You are correct,**
11 **Michael.**
12 **RACHAEL:** (*Looking down at herself, feeling her arm, pinching*
13 *herself*) **So then . . . Are we alive again or what? I would**
14 **really like to know.**
15 **ANNE:** (*No one answers.*) **Come on . . . are we alive or not? We**
16 **would like to know.**
17 **MICHAEL:** **Are we alive? God, you girls. What do you think?**
18 **RACHAEL:** **I don't know what to think. I feel alive, but yet I**
19 **know I died. Still, I feel so alive. (*Finds string for a "cat's***
20 *cradle" in her pocket and plays with it.*) **Look. Cat's cradle.**
21 **Want to play?**
22 **ANNE:** **Sure. (*As they play cat's cradle*) My mother showed me**
23 **how to play cat's cradle while we were in hiding.**
24 **RACHAEL:** **It must have been so boring being in hiding.**
25 **ANNE:** **Yes, it was.**
26 **MICHAEL:** **I would go nuts cooped up like that . . . for months.**
27 **ANNE:** **Over two years for us. I began to grow out of the**
28 **clothes we had taken with us. (*Pulls up sleeves and trouser***
29 *legs.*) **Everything was too short, too tight, or too worn out.**
30 **It was sort of funny, but no one was laughing. Everyone**
31 **was, in truth, pretty depressed from being locked away**
32 **for so long.**
33 **DAVID:** **How terrible. What did you do to keep busy, to keep**
34 **up your spirits?**
35 **ANNE:** **I kept my diary, we studied, we played monopoly, did**

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