

**PLEASE BE AWARE THAT  
THIS PLAY IS FULLY PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT**

All plays, books, music and other materials published by Heartland Plays, Inc. are fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries which the United States has reciprocal relations including, but not limited to all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, The Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention. All rights to the plays and materials on our website are strictly reserved including, and without limitation, professional and amateur performance rights; motion pictures; public reading; radio and television broadcasting; audio and video recording and reproduction of any type known or yet to be invented; information storage and retrieval systems of any type known or yet to be invented; and the rights of translation into any and all languages. No individual or organization whether amateur or stock may perform this or any play published by Heartland Plays, Inc. without first obtaining advance permission from Heartland Plays, Inc. and paying the appropriate fees including Royalties and Single-Use Copyright fees. Heartland Plays, Inc. collects royalties on behalf of the Playwrights whose plays it publishes. Unauthorized copying, transcribing or reproduction of this or any play or excerpt, or storage or transmittal in any form and by any means whether known or yet to be invented, is strictly forbidden except as provided by Agreement with Heartland Plays, Inc. Any unauthorized use is a violation of copyright laws and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

**FIVE SIMPLE RULES TO REMEMBER**

1. DO take advantage of the free online perusal of our plays to help you make the best choice for your particular needs or production.
2. DO enjoy the convenience of our online purchase application for performance rights and single-use copyright.
3. DO understand that this play and all plays and materials on our website are controlled by Heartland Plays, Inc. and fully protected by copyright.
4. DO NOT attempt in any way to copy, transcribe or reproduce this play by any means or perform this play or use any play or material from our website without first receiving permission from Heartland Plays, Inc. Any attempt to use this or any other work without first obtaining permission is a violation of copyright and punishable by law.
5. DO NOT rob this Author or any of the Authors we represent of their right to be paid for the use of their property. It is a crime and it is wrong!

**Product Code A0860.7**

# **So Much for Seatbelts**

**by Craig Kenworthy**

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED  
REPRODUCTION WITHOUT SPECIFIC WRITTEN PERMISSION PROHIBITED**

**Performance Rights Available Exclusively through  
Heartland Plays, Inc. at [heartlandplays.com](http://heartlandplays.com)  
[playsnow@heartlandplays.com](mailto:playsnow@heartlandplays.com)  
customer service: 406-431-7680**

**Copyright © 2011 by Craig Kenworthy**

# **So Much for Seatbelts**

by Craig Kenworthy

## **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

**KARA;** *a med student in her late 20's*

**JOSH;** *mid 20's, engaged to Kara's sister. He sells shoe accessories at the mall*

**BRIAN;** *an independent contractor "grim reaper"*

## **SETTING**

*A car buried in a mudslide*

## So Much for Seatbelts

by Craig Kenworthy

*(AT RISE: KARA in the driver's seat of a car buried in a mudslide; JOSH seated in the passenger seat beside her. BRIAN, who THEY picked up hitch-hiking, is partially hidden, spread out in the back seat. The dome light is on. A cup of soda and Kara's purse can be seen. As the lights come up, JOSH is busy pushing buttons on his cell phone.)*

Josh

How long do you think our air will hold out?

Kara

We'd have more of 'our' air if we hadn't picked up your friend back there.

Josh

I thought he was your friend. *(Still pushing buttons)* And I'm not the one who drove us into a mudslide, Kara.

Kara

You act like I saw a sign saying, "Mudslide just ahead," and kept going. There is no cell service here. So why are you still messing with that?

Brian

*(Leaning up and forward to look over JOSH's shoulder)* Hey, Josh, who's Cindy?

Kara

It's not my younger sister, April, his fiancée, is who it's not.

Josh

It's nobody.

Brian

Nobody sends you a lot of messages.

Josh

What if we're already toast... dead and just don't know it?

Brian

Like Schrödinger's cat.

Kara

Are you saying we are already dead?

Brian

If you haven't been observed to be dead yet, you could exist in many states— Dead/Alive. Boring.

Josh

I'd know if I was dead, Dude.

Kara

How?

Josh

I'd have felt my aura dissipate. My essence going. So, tell me more about this cat, Brian. It's Brian, right?

Kara

Maybe less talk by the hitchhiker, more air for us to survive.

Brian

Don't worry. I'm not taking up any air. Here, watch.

*(BRIAN leans forward to blow onto the rearview mirror.)*

Josh

Nothing. His breath did nothing. Didn't fog the mirror.

Kara

Who are you?

Josh

Are you the guy with the... what is that thing? Death?

Brian

The scythe? No. I do some work for him. Kind of an on-call thing. A dispatcher calls me. Get it? Dispatcher? Sorry.

Josh

So, we are dead already. Except that cat just hasn't looked at us yet.

Brian

No, you are both still alive. For now.

*(JOSH starts pushing buttons on his phone again.)*

Kara

Let me see the phone.

Josh

No.

*(KARA grabs for it. SHE and JOSH struggle.)*

Brian

You're both breathing awfully hard.

*(KARA gains control of the BRIAN's phone and drops it down her shirt.)*

Josh

*(Looks at her like he might reach for phone)* Brian, are we gonna die?

Brian

The good news is that help is coming. They are banging around with probes, searching for the trapped cars. The bad news is that you run out of air before they find the car.

Kara

Great. I should have let you take the bus home from the airport.

Brian

You didn't let me finish. There is enough air for one of you to last just long enough.

Kara

One of us?

Josh

So, how are you going to decide which one?

Brian

Oh, I'm not going to decide. You can either both die from a lack of oxygen or one of you can save the other.

Josh

Kara?

Kara

Yes?

Josh

I promise to tell April how brave you were.

Kara

What? Wait a minute. Why are you assuming you get to survive?

Josh

Because you're the med student.

Kara

The Hippocratic Oath says, 'Do no harm,' not, 'Kill yourself to save your batty, underemployed potential brother-in-law.'

Brian  
Hmmm, doctor, doctor assisted suicide.

Josh  
Did you just call me batty?

Kara  
You sell shoe accessories at the airport. The world doesn't exactly cry out for that, does it?

Josh  
You want to be a dermatologist.

Kara  
Hey, skin is one of the most important organs.

Josh  
Yes, much more important than a heart.

Brian  
I think the lungs are the important ones here.

Josh  
There has to be some fair way to decide.

Kara  
Yes, let's see. *(Sarcastically)* Brian, pick a number between one and a hundred.

Brian  
Okay. Two. No. One.

Kara  
Brian, how long do we have to decide?

Brian  
About five minutes.

Kara  
I just renewed a prescription.

*(KARA removes a bottle of pills from her purse and hands it to JOSH.)*

Brian  
There is a plastic bag back here you could use. *(Holds it up)* Smells like... talcum. *(Waves it around)*

Josh  
It's good for blisters. We use it at the shop for people who have a bit of a rubbing problem.

Kara

These could work. They can induce a light coma. If you... if one of us swallows most of them and then we... one of us uses the bag to cut off their air supply after they pass out. Of course, we'd need to make sure they don't vomit up the pills.

Brian

That would leave enough air for one of you.

Kara

*(Beat)* I'm sorry about the 'batty' remark, by the way.

Josh

I'm sorry this is how you're finding out about it, Kara, but April is pregnant.

Kara

I was wondering when or if she was going to get around to telling you.

Josh

You knew? You knew that and you still wanted me to die? What kind of sister-in-law are you?

Brian

I think what kind of aunt might be the better question. *(Waves plastic bag around)*

Kara

I've never been in love. April loves you. A lot. I just don't know why.

Josh

She talks about you all the damn time.

Brian

Ah, love. It's like a firefly on a summer night. It's beautiful for awhile, but when you catch it, it just dies in the jar.

*(KARA and JOSH stare at BRIAN.)*

Brian, *Continued*

Four minutes by the way.

Josh

They are your anti-anxiety pills.

Kara

So that means I should have to take them?

Josh

You'd really leave him or her without a father?

Kara

How do you know you're the father?

Josh

What? *(Starts hyperventilating)* Are you saying April is cheating on me?

*(KARA grabs the bag from BRIAN and gives it to JOSH.)*

Kara

Calm down. You're using up a lot of air. She'd never cheat on you, but what about you? You didn't want April to see all those text messages, did you?

Josh

*(Breathes into bag)* Yeah, I didn't want her to see the messages. But you have to believe me. It was a one-time mistake. I've been trying to get Cindy to realize that.

Kara

April didn't tell you about the baby right away because I thought you might be cheating on her. Turns out I was right.

Josh

The thing with Cindy happened when April came to stay with you. Right after you wrote her that letter where...

Kara

I told her not to marry you.

Josh

I was going to say where you told her not to sell my organic foot care products door to door. You told her not to marry me?

Kara

Yes, I crushed your latest brilliant business scheme. *(Takes bag away from him)* Who buys anti-fungal spray from someone who comes to the door?

Josh

People care about their feet.

Brian

Maybe you should agree to become a podiatrist, Kara.

Kara

Do you know how hard it is to work full time and still get into med school?

Josh

I made one mistake. They don't execute other parents who cheat.

Brian

He's right. Most adulterers just get weekends at Chuck E. Cheese.

*(KARA sets down the pill bottle.)*

Josh

Brian, isn't there some cosmic reason it needs to be one or the other of us? Karma or something?

Brian

Sorry, just a quota I need to meet. *(Looks out the window)* But if it makes you feel any better, a Honda full of Hari Krishnas just went. Man, are they in for a surprise.

Josh

*(Looks around)* You had to buy this old Hyundai instead of taking that used Explorer I offered you. Bet it had twice the interior space. Twice as much air.

Kara

Used twice as much gas. *(Reaches into her purse, pulls out a little photo holder)* You'd think I'd have a more recent photo of the two of us.

Josh

*(Looks over)* That's the same one April has in the kitchen.

Kara

Aren't you going to get out your photos of her? Just to see her?

Josh

I left my wallet at work.

Kara

Right.

Josh

You'd leave her all alone, with a baby and heavily in debt? Or I guess she wouldn't be alone. There'd be you to tell her who to marry or not.

Kara

Debt? She doesn't have any debt. I paid for five-and-a-half years of college, so I should know. She won't have to pay off your debts from that stupid foot massage salon, since you aren't married yet.

Josh

Maybe it wouldn't have been five-and-a-half years if you hadn't told her to change her major after she started out in Bakery Science.

Kara

She was drifting. Cupcakes is just not a viable career path.

She cosigned for the business loans.

Josh

She never told me that.

Kara

Need a decision soon.

Brian

What if I refuse to do it? If I just decide that April is better off without both of us. You, the cheater, and me, the one who tells her who and what...

Kara

Oh, that makes sense. Kill her (*Air quotes*) 'potential' husband and her only sister.

Josh

April'd leave you if she knew.

Kara

Women are funny like that. You sleep with another one and they get antsy.

Brian

I meant if she knew you let me die for you. She'd take the baby and go.

Kara

Maybe we should destroy my phone now, just in case we both die. No reason for her to know about Cindy.

Josh

You cheated on her once. How can I be sure you won't do it again?

Kara

I won't. You... can't.

Josh

I love last moment honesty. Gets me right in the heart, if I still had one.

Brian

I only saw the ocean once. And it was raining. Josh, do you mind if we turn off the light for a moment?

Kara

Sure.

Josh

*(JOSH turns off the dome light. LIGHTS TO HALF.)*

Josh, *Continued*

I think I have a hanky if you...

*(SOUND: Car horn.)*

Brian

*(Loudly as if deafened)* I could have told you the rescuers aren't close enough for that to matter.

Kara

I just thought screaming would use too much air. I was going to help people. I know it's just on the surface, but help them with the way they feel about themselves. When you think about it, it's like cosmetic psychiatry. How people see others seeing them matters a lot.

Brian

Whatever you two decide, it's no skin off my nose. *(Looks at KARA)* Sorry.

Josh

You'll have to hold the bag down if I start to struggle. Do you understand?

Kara

Stop.

Josh

She needs one of us, Kara. We both know that. Even if it has to be the wrong one.

Kara

Stop.

Josh

Do you want to tie my hands down with the seat belt, so I don't try to take the bag off?

Brian

You don't have to tell anyone you killed him. He'll look much nobler that way.

Kara

Stop. Both of you. I know who it has to be, okay. I want you to tell her about Cindy.

Brian

One minute.

Josh

Alright. I'll tell her. I promise.

Kara

*(Takes pill bottle from JOSH)* She needs to decide if you are gonna be a Chuck E. Cheese regular or a regular dad.

*(KARA shakes some pills out into her hand.)*

Josh

*(Takes the bottle)* I don't think you need all of the pills.

Kara

*(Kara looks at him, puzzled)* Worried that too many might make me vomit?

Josh

Right.

Kara

*(Picks up cup of pop)* I am going to die with the taste of watery Diet Coke in my mouth. God.

*(KARA takes the pills and a swig of pop. SHE swallows then leans back in her seat.)*

Josh

How do I tell my wife I killed her sister?

Brian

She could leave a note explaining. Say it was her choice, I suppose.

Kara

He wouldn't like the note I'd leave. *(Starts to pass out)* And she's not your wife yet. I see a light above me. No, that's just that little map thing.

Josh

Brian, what is going to happen to her?

Brian

Not my department. Besides, why do you care?

Josh

*(Looks at pill bottle)* Two light comas might work. Give us both just enough air.

Brian

You can't be sure about that.

Josh

Like they say, nothing in death is guaranteed.

Kara

Maybe I should leave a note. About little Ms. Cindy.

**This is Not the End of the Play**  
**Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes**