

THE BRIDGE WATCHER

By Mike Willis

Copyright © MCMXCV by Mike Willis

All Rights Reserved

Heuer Publishing LLC, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this work is subject to a royalty. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. All rights to this work of any kind including but not limited to professional and amateur stage performing rights are controlled exclusively by Heuer Publishing LLC. Inquiries concerning rights should be addressed to Heuer Publishing LLC.

This work is fully protected by copyright. No part of this work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without permission of the publisher. Copying (by any means) or performing a copyrighted work without permission constitutes an infringement of copyright.

All organizations receiving permission to produce this work agree to give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production. The author(s) billing must appear below the title and be at least 50% as large as the title of the Work. All programs, advertisements, and other printed material distributed or published in connection with production of the work must include the following notice: **“Produced by special arrangement with Heuer Publishing LLC of Cedar Rapids, Iowa.”**

There shall be no deletions, alterations, or changes of any kind made to the work, including the changing of character gender, the cutting of dialogue, or the alteration of objectionable language unless directly authorized by the publisher or otherwise allowed in the work’s “Production Notes.” The title of the play shall not be altered.

The right of performance is not transferable and is strictly forbidden in cases where scripts are borrowed or purchased second-hand from a third party. All rights, including but not limited to professional and amateur stage performing, recitation, lecturing, public reading, television, radio, motion picture, video or sound taping, internet streaming or other forms of broadcast as technology progresses, and the rights of translation into foreign languages, are strictly reserved.

COPYING OR REPRODUCING ALL OR ANY PART OF THIS BOOK IN ANY MANNER IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN BY LAW. One copy for each speaking role must be purchased for production purposes. Single copies of scripts are sold for personal reading or production consideration only.

PUBLISHED BY

HEUER PUBLISHING LLC

P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406

TOLL FREE (800) 950-7529 • FAX (319) 368-8011

THE BRIDGE WATCHER
BY MIKE WILLIS

SYNOPSIS: Being a young person in today's world is no easy task. Tragically, many young people feel they are not able to cope and become desperate to take their own lives. Suicide is not something that happens to other people. It can be a reality in any family. This award-winning drama creates an awareness in the minds of the audience regarding the ever-increasing problem of teen suicide and the suffering felt by those who survive a loved one's suicide.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(Flexible cast of 10; 1-9 Men, 1-9 Women)

JUMPER	<i>(112 lines)</i>
A GIRL OF SEVENTEEN	<i>(0 lines)</i>
WATCHER	<i>(116 lines)</i>
A STREET PERSON	<i>(0 lines)</i>
POLICE OFFICER	<i>(0 lines)</i>
UNIFORMED POLICE OFFICER	<i>(0 lines)</i>
MOTHER	<i>(0 lines)</i>
FATHER	<i>(0 lines)</i>
BOYFRIEND	<i>(0 lines)</i>
THE BOY	<i>(4 lines)</i>
A YOUNG TEEN	<i>(0 lines)</i>
FRIENDS	<i>(0 lines)</i>
THREE TEENAGE GIRLS	<i>(0 lines)</i>

CASTING

The casting of "The Bridge Watcher" is extremely flexible and can be adjusted to meet any director's needs. The following roles could be played as either male or female: JUMPER, WATCHER, POLICE OFFICER, BOYFRIEND, THE BOY, and FRIENDS. THE BOY could become THE GIRL. Also, at the director's discretion, the play could be performed with only three characters: the JUMPER, WATCHER, and THE BOY.

NOTE: The Watcher should appear rather unruffled, in sharp contrast to the

Jumper. The family and friends should be played as illusionary characters. These characters are silent throughout the entire play.

SET

A raised platform resembling a bridge with railings spans the upstage center area. This area should be dim. The use of fog is not required, but would be very effective. If you decide to use all of the characters, the downstage area should be lighted separately.

THE PLACE

The entire play takes place on a bridge somewhere tonight.

Perusal Only
Do Not Copy

ACT ONE, SCENE 1

Setting:

The lights come up revealing a raised platform stretching across the stage. The platform is slightly upstage and resembles a bridge with a railing. There is a narrow ledge on the downstage side of the railing.

At Rise:

If possible, fog shrouds the bridge and a ship's horn sounds in the distance as the JUMPER enters on the bridge from stage left. The JUMPER is an attractive girl of seventeen, dressed in jeans and a sweater. The JUMPER is visibly upset and has been crying. She crosses to the railing and looks down. Slowly, she climbs over the railing and stands on the ledge. It is quite obvious that she is considering jumping. The WATCHER enters on the bridge from stage right unnoticed by the JUMPER. The WATCHER is bearded, dirty, and dressed in tattered clothes. HE moves quietly toward the JUMPER; then, stops and watches. The minute the JUMPER looks about ready to jump, the WATCHER speaks.

WATCHER: Going to jump, huh?

JUMPER: *(Startled.)* What?! Oh . . .

WATCHER: Are you going to jump?

JUMPER: Jump? Oh . . . no . . . I wasn't going to jump . . . I -

WATCHER: Funny . . . looked like you wanted to jump.

JUMPER: Why would I want to do that?

WATCHER: Don't know.

JUMPER: I was just looking.

WATCHER: Looking?

JUMPER: Yes . . . to see what's down there.

WATCHER: Air.

JUMPER: What?

WATCHER: Air and water . . . not much else.

JUMPER: Yes, that's what I saw. Just water.

WATCHER: And air.

JUMPER: (*Irritated.*) You can't see air.

WATCHER: No, but it's there. Well, are you going to jump?

JUMPER: No! I told you I wasn't going to jump.

WATCHER: Looked like you were going to jump.

JUMPER: I don't care what it looked like. Why don't you go away and leave me alone.

WATCHER: So you can jump?

JUMPER: (*Starts to protest, then says softly.*) Maybe.

WATCHER: (*Crosses to the railing.*) It's a long way down.

JUMPER: So?

WATCHER: What if you change your mind?

JUMPER: Change my mind?

WATCHER: On the way down, I mean. The fall is going to take a while, you might change your mind on the way down. Then what?

JUMPER: I won't! I won't change my mind!

WATCHER: Are you sure?

JUMPER: I'm sure.

WATCHER: Well, then . . . I guess you're going to jump.

JUMPER: I didn't say that!

WATCHER: That's right, you didn't. You said you wouldn't change your mind. The mind is a funny thing, you can change it without anyone knowing about it.

JUMPER: What do you mean?

WATCHER: When you change your clothes, people see the change. When you change your hair style, people notice. But . . . when you change your mind, no one sees it. You're the only one who knows about the change. You could change your mind a hundred times a day and no one would be the wiser.

JUMPER: Go away and leave me alone. (*The WATCHER does not move.*) Please . . .

WATCHER: Where would I go?

JUMPER: Go home.

WATCHER: I am home.

THE BRIDGE WATCHER

JUMPER: Where? Here? The bridge?

WATCHER: Yes.

JUMPER: You live here? What do you do?

WATCHER: Watch.

JUMPER: Watch? Watch what?

WATCHER: The bridge.

JUMPER: The bridge? You watch the bridge? What for? Why do you . . . *(Suddenly realizing.)* For jumpers! You watch for people jumping. *(Climbing back over the railing to the bridge.)* Go away! Leave me alone! I am certainly not going to jump to give you any kind of satisfaction.

WATCHER: Why would your jumping satisfy me?

JUMPER: Why else would you be here?

WATCHER: Maybe, I'm not.

JUMPER: Not what?

WATCHER: Here. Maybe I'm only an illusion, something in your mind. It may be possible for you to change me, even as you change your mind. If that's the case, only you and I would know about it.

JUMPER: *(Very upset.)* Real or illusion, will you leave me alone? *(Pleading.)* Please leave me alone.

WATCHER: So you can jump?

JUMPER: *(Quietly.)* I don't know.

WATCHER: So you can go home?

JUMPER: I don't know that either.

Optional: She leans on the railing. A light comes up on the mainstage area. The MOTHER enters carrying a chair, she places the chair in the pool of light and sits. The FATHER enters and starts to pace. They look worried, the MOTHER has been crying. The JUMPER sees them and says quietly.

JUMPER: Mom . . . Dad.

WATCHER: What?

JUMPER: *(Pointing.)* They're right there . . . down there in the mist.

WATCHER: *(Looking.)* I don't see anything.

JUMPER: Right there! Don't you see them?

WATCHER: No. What are they doing?

MOTHER and FATHER do not speak, they slowly pantomime the movements described by the JUMPER.

JUMPER: My mother is sitting . . . she's crying. My father is pacing back and forth.

WATCHER: Sounds like they might be worried . . . upset.

JUMPER: Worried? Worried about what?

WATCHER: Don't know. Maybe they lost something.

JUMPER: Lost something?

WATCHER: Something very important in their lives. Someone they love.

A POLICE OFFICER enters the on stage pool of light and crosses to an imaginary door. He also does not speak.

JUMPER: There is someone going up to the front door. It's a policeman.

WATCHER: Wonder what he wants.

JUMPER: He's talking to my father. *(Pause.)* Now he's leaving.

WATCHER: And your father?

JUMPER: He's hugging my mother . . . they're both crying. *(Calling to her parents.)* Mom! Dad! What's the matter? Don't cry, please don't cry. *(Turning to the WATCHER.)* What's wrong with them? Why won't they answer me? *(She turns back, but the on stage pool of light has vanished and the MOTHER and FATHER have left the stage.)* Mom . . . they're going. Where did they go? *(Yelling.)* Mom . . . Dad . . . I'm here, I'm here!

WATCHER: Are you?

JUMPER: Yes, yes I am. I'm here.

THE BRIDGE WATCHER

WATCHER: Yes, well . . . for now.

JUMPER: What do you mean?

WATCHER: Nothing. So . . . are you going to jump?

JUMPER: Jump?

WATCHER: From the bridge. That's why we're here, isn't it?

JUMPER: Yes . . . that's why I'm here. Why are you here?

WATCHER: To watch.

JUMPER: To watch . . . you're here to watch me jump from the bridge?

WATCHER: No. I'm here to watch you jump . . . or to watch you not jump. I just watch. It's getting late, are you going to jump or not?

JUMPER: *(Crossing to the railing.)* I haven't decided yet. *(She looks down as the on stage pool of light appears. Three TEENAGE GIRLS enter the light. The GIRLS are wearing dark dresses and each is carrying a red rose. They do not speak.)* I can't make up my mind. There is someone down there.

WATCHER: Your parents?

JUMPER: No, my friends. *(Pointing.)* They're right there, can't you see them?

WATCHER: *(Looking.)* No.

JUMPER: *(Looking over the railing.)* They're crying, too . . . they're carrying flowers. *(Calling to her friends.)* Hey! Guys! Up here! What's the matter? Answer me! *(To WATCHER.)* They're not answering.

WATCHER: Maybe they're not there.

JUMPER: They're there! They're right there! What's going on? They're there . . . they're there, and they're crying.

WATCHER: Perhaps they've lost something.

JUMPER: Lost something?

WATCHER: Something valuable.

JUMPER: They're placing flowers on the ground. *(Pause.)* Now they're leaving. *(Calling.)* Don't leave! Come back! Hey, where are you going? Come back! It's me, I'm up here . . . I'm here.

WATCHER: Are you?

JUMPER: Yes! Yes! I tell you I'm here!

WATCHER: I believe you. You don't have to convince me. I'm a believer.

JUMPER: A believer?

WATCHER: Yes.

JUMPER: What do you believe in?

WATCHER: I believe in what is and what will be.

JUMPER: How do you know what will be?

WATCHER: I don't know . . . nor do you.

JUMPER: Then how can you believe in it?

WATCHER: Because, we can control it.

JUMPER: Control what?

WATCHER: The future. You and I, we control it . . . with our minds. Our minds create thoughts . . . thoughts that turn into action. So . . . have you decided to jump?

JUMPER: *(Slowly.)* I think so.

WATCHER: You think so? Well . . .

*Thank you for reading this free excerpt from THE BRIDGE
WATCHER by Mike Willis. For performance rights and/or a
complete copy of the script, please contact us at:*

Heuer Publishing LLC

P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406

Toll Free: 1-800-950-7529 • Fax (319) 368-8011

HITPLAYS.COM