

FALLEN

By Tom Akers

Copyright © MMXVII by Tom Akers, All rights reserved.
ISBN: 978-1-61588-395-0

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Heuer Publishing LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Heuer Publishing LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Heuer Publishing LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Heuer Publishing LLC.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this Work must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this Work. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the Work. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this Work is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice: ***Produced by special arrangement with Heuer Publishing LLC.***

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Heuer Publishing LLC.

HEUER PUBLISHING LLC
P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406
TOLL FREE (800) 950-7529 • FAX (319) 368-8011

FALLEN

By Tom Akers

SYNOPSIS: Ask any young person to close his eyes and consider factors that might contribute to suicide and chances are he'll quickly and all-too-easily ramble off three or four causes. The number of children and teens being admitted to U.S. hospitals for suicidal thoughts or actions is more than double what it was nearly a decade ago. This is Olivia's story. This is Olivia's why. Fallen, guardian of the bridge, helps Olivia piece together all of the actions, interactions and events which lead to her tragic suicide.

CAST OF CHARACTERS*(5 females, 2 males, 3 either, 1 non-speaking extra)*

- FALLEN (f/m).....Former teacher who committed suicide and is now the guardian of the bridge waiting for a replacement. *(67 lines)*
- OLIVIA (f).....A high school girl who has committed suicide. *(103 lines)*
- MR. BROOKS (f/m).....The school counselor in charge of facilitating the group discussion about the day Olivia committed suicide. *(20 lines)*
- MS. LITTLE (f/m).....Homeroom teacher. *(13 lines)*
- MOTHER (f).....Olivia's mother, typical parent who gets frustrated with her teenage daughter. *(17 lines)*
- FATHER (m).....Provider for the family but not terribly engaged. *(8 lines)*
- MACKENZIE (f).....The "mean girl" of the group who looks down at Olivia as the girl to bully. *(15 lines)*
- DAKOTA (f).....The high school athlete who appreciates Olivia's attention but still needs to remain cool. *(14 lines)*

- LEXIE (f).....High school girl who is friends with Olivia but wants to be in the “cool group” and is willing to sacrifice Olivia to be in the group. (13 lines)
- BLAKE (m)High school boy. “Cool group” follower. (13 lines)
- EXTRA (f/m).....The next suicide victim. (Non-Speaking)

AUTHOR’S NOTE

Fallen has been performed nine times in front of over 2,000 junior high and high school students in Illinois. After seeing the production, one counselor said: *"Thank you for today's assembly. I've had students coming in to my office to talk about things they haven't talked to anyone about. I also have teachers telling me about conversations they had in the classroom following the assembly. It turned out to be an amazing presentation."*

SET

The set is open — this was performed on both a stage and in a gymnasium. There are eight dominos used as the backdrop both up left and up right as the classroom and Hanna’s kitchen. They are four feet by three feet and painted black with domino dots. Stage right is a kitchen table with chairs with two dominos as a backdrop while there are three dominos used as the backdrop for the classroom stage left. The remaining three dominos are set down center that act as the bridge for Olivia and Fallen. This will make the movement of the pieces into a row easier for the actors.

SOUND

You will need a sound system/speaker for train noises and the clock. We also used music before the performance to set the tone and a song at the end as the Extra walks onto the stage.

PROPS

- Science tri-fold, backpack, and lunch bag/box (Olivia)
- Notepad and pencil (Mr./Ms. Brooks)
- Cell phone (Ms. Little)
- Coffee cup, things you would use to keep distracted while sitting at a table (Mother)
- Coffee cup, golf club is optional, wristwatch/cell phone to check the time (Father)
- Cell phone (Mackenzie)
- Cell phone (Dakota)
- Cell phone (Lexie)
- Cell phone (Blake)

Note: The high school kids can have anything in the classroom that would keep them occupied on stage since they are on stage for extended periods.

AT RISE: *Lights up on OLIVIA as she steps center stage. In the background, the whistle from a train can be heard. She steps downstage looking left and right off of the bridge. FALLEN steps onto the stage from up right and studies her for a moment. Another whistle is heard.*

FALLEN: Twelve minutes

OLIVIA: *(Startled, looks around.)* What?

FALLEN: *(Stepping downstage to OLIVIA.)* The trains, they come every 12 minutes, they slow from 55 miles per hour to about 35 because of the curve after the bridge.

OLIVIA: Oh, *(Confused but answering.)* sure. Who are you?

FALLEN: My name is Fallen.

OLIVIA: That's an odd name, what are you doing here?

FALLEN: I live around here. Yes, it is an odd name, but appropriate.

OLIVIA: I've never seen you before, how do you know my name?

FALLEN: I've been waiting for you, waiting for quite a while actually but I knew you'd be back here. Your name was given to me by a *(Chuckles.)* let's say a mutual acquaintance.

OLIVIA: My parents?

FALLEN: No Olivia, it doesn't really matter.

Train whistle sounds.

OLIVIA: What are you doing on the bridge?

FALLEN: Waiting.

OLIVIA: Waiting *(Looks around.)* for what?

FALLEN: You Olivia, please listen, we have some things to go over and I don't have much time left fortunately.

OLIVIA: I don't understand. What things? Fallen is it?

FALLEN: You don't need to understand. That's one of the things you'll have to work out on you own while you wait, we do need to discuss what happened here last week, and you need to witness.

OLIVIA: Witness what? I'm confused.

FALLEN: It has been my experience that in order for you to begin to understand what happened, you need to see how it all fit together like a puzzle, if you will. Once you've began to put things together, you'll be able to help the others when they come.

OLIVIA: What others?

Train whistles louder.

FALLEN: Wow, they come fast, you just happened to have really good timing, but I wonder what would have happened if you would have had to wait a few minutes, if the train would have arrived just a little later?

OLIVIA: *(Confused, looking towards the train.)* What do you mean?

FALLEN: I mean, would you have thought about it a little longer before you jumped? Who would you have thought about? Would you have actually done it?

OLIVIA: I don't know, maybe. *(Thinking as she looks down and to stage right.)* How do you know I was thinking about something?

FALLEN: Because you hesitated right at the end, right before you did it but then you lost your balance as if something came to you in the final second, something that made you not want to do it. I'm curious, what was it?

OLIVIA: *(Thinking.)* I'm not sure.

FALLEN: A lot of them have told me they think about their loved ones, whether or not they'll be missed, whether or not anyone cares, whether God will understand.

OLIVIA: I think it was about what all those people at school would think about me, yeah, I'm pretty sure that's what it was.

Lights come up down left on a classroom comprised of four students sitting around on a set of dominos. MR. BROOKS stands around.

MACKENZIE: Mr. Brooks, why are we here?

MR. BROOKS: You all know why you are here Mackenzie, last week was a tragedy for this school and I need to know, the school needs to know if there is anything, any connection to what Olivia did and the school. You all interacted with Olivia in some way the day she died.

MS. LITTLE: Well, I can understand why these students are here but I certainly don't understand why I'm here this afternoon.

MR. BROOKS: Ms. Little, you're here because you're her— (*Pauses.*)
—sorry, you were her advisory teacher and I'm hoping you can help me understand what led Olivia to do something like this.

MS. LITTLE: (*Shrugging.*) Well, I still don't understand why I'm here but whatever, let's get on with it.

MR. BROOKS: Look, all I'm asking for is each of you to describe what happened between any of you and Olivia last Thursday, no one's in trouble and I know we all feel badly but we need to get through this OK?

BLAKE: But Mr. Brooks, what difference does it make what happened that day?

MACKENZIE: Yeah, or any other time for that matter, she's gone and that's all that really matters, isn't it?

MR. BROOKS: No, think of it this way guys, the events leading up to Olivia's death are like a row of dominos, did any of you ever line up dominos and then knock them over when you were a kid?

STUDENTS nod and shake their heads positively.

MR. BROOKS: OK then, think of the things that led up to Olivia's suicide as a row of dominos, the school just wants to find out what those were and if there's anything else we could have done, OK?

STUDENTS and MS. LITTLE mumble various words of agreement, "OK," "Alright."

MR. BROOKS: Who wants to start?

OLIVIA: (*Stepping towards the group.*) I never expected this to happen. (*Motioning towards the group.*) I knew there would be questions, especially since I didn't leave anything for anyone.

FALLEN: Why didn't you leave anything Olivia, a note?

OLIVIA: I don't know I didn't have anything to say, I just felt so much all at the same time...I was overwhelmed

FALLEN: Anger? Pain?

OLIVIA: Loneliness.

FALLEN: But why couldn't you wait until you'd gotten home?

OLIVIA: Because I wasn't so sure it would get any better there.

Lights come up on MOTHER and FATHER sitting at a table made from dominos.

FATHER: Honey, you have to eat something, you haven't eaten all day.

MOTHER: She would've been home right about now five days ago, she would have been home.

FATHER: I know but you have to keep your strength up and it's not going to change the fact that she's gone.

MOTHER: But why, why is she gone. I keep playing that day, that morning, over and over in my mind wondering if I did something to her to make her do this.

FATHER: I don't know, why would you think you did something?

FALLEN: Why would she think she did something Olivia?

OLIVIA: Because she feels guilty for what happened that day, but I don't want her to think it was all about her, it wasn't, she was just another part. I don't want her to feel bad.

FALLEN: *(Putting his arm on her shoulder.)* Honey, I think it's a little too late for that.

DAKOTA: *(Sitting.)* Well, I guess I'll start, Olivia sat next to me in Mrs. Lewis's class. She was always trying to talk to me and ask me about stuff. Kind of weird, it's like she was creeping on me.

DAKOTA stands as OLIVIA enters the classroom area in this flashback.

OLIVIA: *(Assuming the role.)* Hi Dakota! How'd the football game go last night? Did you score any touchdowns? Did you make any tackles?

DAKOTA: *(To the others.)* She asked me after every game, my friends always gave me crap about her being my "Greatest Fan." Most of the time I just ignored her or gave her really quick answers just to shut her up, sometimes I would make stuff up just to be funny. *(To OLIVIA.)* Hey Olivia?

OLIVIA: *(To DAKOTA.)* Yeah?

DAKOTA: I scored three touchdowns last night in the football game.

OLIVIA: That's really great Dakota.

DAKOTA: Too bad I missed my free throws!

OLIVIA: Don't worry, you'll make them next time!

STUDENTS and MS. LITTLE laugh.

MACKENZIE: That's hilarious Dakota, what an idiot.

OLIVIA: What?

The STUDENTS get up and cluster around OLIVIA.

BLAKE: You really don't know do you?

OLIVIA: Know what?

LEXIE: OMG you are so clueless Olivia.

BLAKE: *(In her ear spinning away.)* Yeah, um touchdowns are in football.

MACKENZIE: *(In her face. Saying it slowly.)* And free throws are in basketball.

LEXIE: *(Sarcastically.)* You are such an idiot.

OLIVIA: Huh?

MACKENZIE: Dakota, your greatest fan really needs some help

OLIVIA: Greatest fan? What do they mean? Dakota?

DAKOTA: Listen, if you don't know what you're talking about stop talking!

MACKENZIE: Why don't you stick with what you know Olivia?
Ummmmm, what is it you know?

STUDENTS freeze as OLIVIA stands staring.

FALLEN: *(To OLIVIA.)* Is that it?

OLIVIA: Is what it?

FALLEN: Is that why you jumped Olivia? The way they treated you?

OLIVIA: No, believe it or not, all of these guys making fun of me actually felt... *(Pause.)* good?

FALLEN: How? How did that make you feel good Olivia?

OLIVIA: Well, you go through day after day of being ignored by these kids, the popular kids, and finally you get their attention, and it doesn't matter what they say to you, you count, you exist.

DAKOTA: (*Steps forward.*) I didn't mean anything by it. In a way, I really appreciated Olivia following the things I did, I mean not like that, but just someone who showed an interest in what I did. She didn't make comments about winning and losing or how many points I scored, everything was always positive. She always knew when I had a game and always remembered to ask. It was just when everyone else starting making fun of me for talking to her, I had to do something to stay in the cool group so I did what I had to do to fit in with the other kids, even if it meant hurting Olivia.

MR. BROOKS: Even if it meant being so mean to her?

DAKOTA: I guess, I mean I didn't mean anything by it, she knew I was kidding. I mean, we all roast each other all day long.

MR. BROOKS: But did Olivia know what you were doing?

DAKOTA: I don't know, she should have, we ALL do it to each other. (*Pausing.*) Come to think of it, she didn't ever do it with us; she just always asked how the game went.

FALLEN: Why didn't you, Olivia?

OLIVIA: (*Looking away from DAKOTA to FALLEN.*) Why didn't I what?

FALLEN: Say something. If you knew you were being made fun of, why didn't you say something back to them to join in?

OLIVIA: Because I knew how it felt and because I had to deal with it every day.

FALLEN: They did that to you every day?

OLIVIA: Not just them.

MOTHER: Olivia, get up, you overslept again!

OLIVIA: (*From behind the dominos that are set for MOTHER and FATHER.*) I didn't oversleep Mom, I was—

MOTHER: —cleaning that mess you call a room? You know, no other teenager I know has that problem, I really thought a girl would be neater. Get down here!

OLIVIA: (*Rushing in.*) No Mom, I was helping Michael, he woke up after you'd come down and—

MOTHER: Well now you're running late, you never keep track of time and I just checked your grades, missing two assignments in science. Seriously, is biology that hard?

OLIVIA: I was gone when they gave me those assignments; they put them in as zeroes until we make them up, it was a field trip Mom!

MOTHER: I don't care what happened, fix it by tonight or else you're grounded.

OLIVIA: But that's not fair Mom, it was a field trip at school, I'll make it up.

MOTHER: By tonight and don't forget your chores too. You're so lazy.

OLIVIA: No Mom, I'm not lazy, I'm busy.

MOTHER: I'm tired of your excuses, Olivia, by tonight or you're grounded, got it?

OLIVIA: Yes.

MOTHER: Where are you going?

OLIVIA: I'm walking to school, I got Michael dressed, he's playing with dinosaurs.

MOTHER: Michael, get down here

OLIVIA: *(Softly.)* You're welcome. *(Turns, picks up her backpack, science project and lunch bag and walks towards center stage.)*

FALLEN: *(Joining her at center stage.)* Was that how it was every day, Olivia?

OLIVIA: *(Wiping a tear.)* Pretty much, I mean, they provide for me, and deep down I know they love me, but Dad's at work all the time and when he's home, he's checked out from us and on the weekends, all he does is golf and watch sports. Mom's so caught up in Michael, it feels like they wouldn't even miss me if I was gone.

FALLEN: When, Olivia?

OLIVIA: What?

FALLEN: When you were gone.

OLIVIA: Yeah, that's right.

FALLEN: So you walked to school that day?

OLIVIA: Most days I walked to school. All we did was fight and it was only about a 20-minute walk, 15 if I cut over the tracks on the bridge.

FALLEN: Did it help?

OLIVIA: Some days it helped. I usually stopped crying by the time I got to school.

LEXIE: *(Walking down stage.)* I really don't know what I'm doing here, Mr. Brooks?

OLIVIA: *(Looking at LEXIE.)* Really?

MR. BROOKS: What do you mean Lexie?

LEXIE: I talked to her more than any of you guys. (*Thinking.*) I was in almost all of her classes. Now, all I can think about is the number of times kids teased her and made fun of her right in front of me and I didn't do anything about it.

MR. BROOKS: Why not?

LEXIE: I knew it bothered her, she never let the popular kids know it bothered her, but sometimes when we were alone in the hall, after school, or at lunch, she would change. She'd get quiet and just get this distant look in her eye. I'd try to talk to her but she just kinda stared at me with this helpless look in her eyes. Like this one time in the hall. Olivia had made a huge project for her Science group. Of course, all of the kids in the group had dumped it on her but she didn't mind, anyway, she was trying to walk through the hall with her stuff that morning.

Bell rings as OLIVIA attempts to walk down left. The other kids have gotten up and formed a hallway-type tunnel and begin bumping her.

DAKOTA: Watch it!

DAKOTA shoves OLIVIA into MACKENZIE.

MACKENZIE: Hey look out bitch! [Can replace "bitch" with "loser".]

MACKENZIE elbows OLIVIA into BLAKE.

BLAKE: Yeah, get out of the way, why are you even here?

BLAKE pushes OLIVIA who drops the tri-fold and her backpack spilling things out. MACKENZIE steps in and kicks OLIVIA'S lunch bag.

MACKENZIE: Great, now you've polluted the hallway with all your trash, look everybody a soccer ball! (*Kicks the lunch bag again.*)

OLIVIA: Stop it! That's my lunch!

OLIVIA looks around and makes eye contact with LEXIE who pauses then turns away. OLIVIA bends down to pick up her things as the kids drift away. LEXIE turns back to the audience.

LEXIE: Look, it's not like I ever started anything with her, EVER. Honestly, I just never stepped in or stopped the other kids. What's it called? (*Thinking.*) A bystander, that's what I was, an innocent bystander.

MR. BROOKS: Innocent?

LEXIE: What did you expect me to do? If I had stepped in and tried to stop it they would have all turned on me and then my life would be miserable. High school is hard enough, can you imagine what it would be like if those kids picked on me every day?

OLIVIA: Looking up at her. Yes, yes I can.

LEXIE: I wouldn't be able to take it, I'd snap.

FALLEN: So was that the reason you did it? The incident in the hall?

OLIVIA: (*Shrugging.*) No not really, like Lexie said, it happened everywhere, the hallway was just another example... Classroom, lunchroom, it happened everywhere, it would've just been nice if someone would have acknowledged it, you know?

FALLEN: (*Quietly.*) I do. Did you have anyone you could have talked to? Anyone who would have taken the time to help?

OLIVIA: I tried to find someone, especially at the end, but they just didn't have the time to help me.

Clock begins ticking softly but audibly and slowly as OLIVIA walks to her mom.

OLIVIA: Mom, do you have a minute? I need to talk to you.

MOTHER: Not now Olivia, I have to get Michael to flag football.

OLIVIA: But Mom, it's important, there's these kids—

MOTHER: —ask your father.

Ticking gets louder as OLIVIA approaches her FATHER.

OLIVIA: Dad, can I ask you something? I'm having a problem.

FATHER: Not now Olivia, I don't have time, I'm late for the golf course and the guys are going to kill me.

Ticking gets louder.

OLIVIA: (*Turning, she rushes to MR. BROOKS.*) Mr. Brooks, can I talk to you?

MR. BROOKS: Not right now Olivia, I have to get to class. (*Rushing away.*)

OLIVIA: Mr. Brooks, I really need—

MR. BROOKS: (*Frustrated.*) Olivia, maybe next hour? Please make an appointment.

Ticking gets louder.

OLIVIA: (*Pulling out phone, talking to herself as she texts.*) Lexie, I need to talk to you.

LEXIE: (*Receives message talking as she texts reply.*) Can't talk right now, no time gotta run.

Ticking gets louder as OLIVIA approaches MS. LITTLE who has her phone out.

OLIVIA: Ms. Little, do you have a minute please!

MS. LITTLE: Olivia, sit down and get your homework done, I don't have time for all this stupid high school drama, I have to teach.

Ticking is very loud. OLIVIA, sitting center stage, putting her hands over her ears one more tick and then silence.

BLAKE: (*Walking down left.*) I admit it Mr. Brooks, I picked on Olivia, but it wasn't ever anything worse than what the rest of us do to each other?

OLIVIA stays in the center of the stage with her hands over her ears.

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from:

FALLEN

By Tom Akers

*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

WWW.HEUERPUB.COM