

DEATH WAITED HERE

A Dramatic Reading

by
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Five crosses, five crosses whose shadows lengthen in the evening sun! Their presence announces that death waited here.

Five people, so filled with happiness and wonder, rose from warm beds to hastily dress, eat and dash to their high school.

The morning, not as cheerful as they, was filled with a low heavy fog and the wide river flowing through the heart of town was almost hidden in the vapor of the sky. The tall soldier statue in the town square looked down through fog filled eyes--perhaps he knew what lay ahead; perhaps the crosses on the battlefields came back as symbols to his mind, and he recalled how death had waited there. The hills, bordering on all sides, might have looked down to the awakening houses and wished they could tell, because five crosses seemed to call to them.

Excitement bubbled from four high school kids and their music teacher joined in their laughter. After all, it was his day too. His day to show the folks of the valley how his school kids could bring home the trophy, how his soloist could reach the tough notes, how his clarinet player could bring down the house. Yes, it was their day and the low fog had nothing to say.

With many words of teenage affection, they may have argued who would ride with the teacher in the front or maybe Bill should be with Amy or Sally with Spud, or where would the band instruments go? The instruments that were polished and practiced within an inch of their musical lives.

Yes, it was a day of days and what an ending it would have when they brought home first place in the festival!

Out of the valley they went, their automobile opening the fog like a plow pushes its blade into the prairie grass. They moved up and the fog lifted a little as though the hills were pushing it away, as though the hills were telling; but no one heard.

The black ribbon of road was going ahead toward the city but today it moved slowly and would not unroll itself in the long distance to the horizon. Today it opened only for enough space to make itself more tempting and tormenting under the veil of fog.

Perhaps the time grew heavy, perhaps the hills forgot to call, perhaps fate moved in, perhaps the temptress of the highway rose evilly for one final blow. Perhaps God needed five musicians in Heaven. Perhaps five crosses must be planted to teach others about highway crosses.

Perhaps--but no one knows.

--- END OF FREE PREVIEW ---