The Last Scene

The Last Scene — Short Christian Playlet (15 min)

WHAT

A youth group visits a hospice. They have been told to just listen to one resident, a man named Ray with weeks left. Ray asks them a single question: what do you want your last scene to look like? Each teen answers with a viral video, a wedding, an Olympic medal, a packed stadium. Ray nods at every one. Then he tells them about his last scene: a kitchen table, his wife's hand, and the quiet certainty that eternal life is not a finish line, it is a door. Each teen reframes their answer. The skit ends with Ray asleep, the teens leaving in silence, one of them whispering John 3:16 at the doorframe.

THEME

Eternal life reframes the whole resume. The last scene of the Christian life is the first scene of the next one.

WHO

RAY — Late seventies. Hospice resident. Weeks left. Bright-eyed. Funny. Tired. The kind of dying that has already let go of being scared.

MS. ALI — Youth leader, mid-thirties. Quietly nervous about how this is going to go. Trusts Ray more than the teens.

MARCO — 16. Soccer captain. Ambitious. Not as hard as he looks.

KAYLA — 16. Video editor. Already plans her own funeral aesthetic.

DRE — 17. Going to be a doctor. Pragmatic. Awkward in soft places.

ESME — 15. Paints. Quiet. Listens harder than she speaks.

JAY — 16. Class clown. Disarms with jokes. Cannot sit with silence yet.

LIVI — 15. Brand new to the group. Has not told them she is bipolar. Watches Ray closely.

HOSPICE NURSE — Late forties. One brief appearance — adjusts the blanket and goes.

HOW (STYLE / TONE)

A hospice room. A single bed. A window with afternoon light. Six folding chairs in a rough semicircle. A small bedside table with a photograph in a frame, a Bible, a glass of water, a kitchen napkin. Ray's voice is calm but quiet — teens have to lean in. The teens are loud at the start, quieter every minute. Lighting drops imperceptibly across the skit, until only Ray's face and the photograph are lit at the end.

PROPS

- A hospital bed (or a hospital-style chair if a bed is impractical)

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- A blanket
- Six folding chairs in a semicircle
- A bedside table
- A small framed photograph (Ray and his late wife)
- A Bible (worn, dog-eared)
- A glass of water with a bent straw
- A folded white cloth napkin
- Backpacks for the teens (set down by chairs)

TIME

15 minutes

Scene 1 — The Doorway

(Lights up on a hospice room. RAY is in the bed, propped up. A blanket over his legs. The photograph on the bedside table catches the light. MS. ALI stands in the doorway with six teenagers crowded behind her, backpacks slung, energy too loud for the room.)

MS. ALI

Ray, hi. We made it. This is the youth group I told you about. Guys — this is Mr. Ray. We are going to sit with him for a little while.

RAY (smiling)

Come in. Come in. The chairs are not as comfortable as the bed, but I have the only ticket to that one.

(The teens shuffle in. They sit. They glance at each other. JAY sits closest to the door — easy escape. ESME picks the chair closest to the bed.)

JAY (whispering to MARCO)

Bro. What are we supposed to talk about.

RAY (cheerful)

Speak up, son. My ears are old. They are also nosy.

JAY (caught)

I — sorry, sir. I just asked Marco what we are supposed to talk about.

RAY

I have a question, if you do not mind. We can start with the question. Then we can talk about whatever you want.

Scene 2 — The Question

RAY

Here it is. What do you want your last scene to look like?

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DRE

Sir. Like — like the last scene before we die?

RAY

Yes.

KAYLA (slowly)

Like — like literally? Or like, the last scene of our movie? In a metaphor sort of way?

RAY

Whichever way you can stand to answer.

(A long silence. JAY shifts. MARCO looks at his shoes.)

MS. ALI (gently)

Marco. You start.

Scene 3 — Marco's Last Scene

MARCO (sitting up straighter)

Okay. Yeah. So — I would want the last scene to be — the World Cup. I am playing for the U.S. We are down by one. There is two minutes left. I score the equalizer. We go to penalties. I score the winner. The crowd goes nuts. Cameras everywhere. My family is in the stands. That is the last scene.

RAY (nodding)

That is a good last scene. That is a beautiful last scene. Anyone else?

KAYLA

Mine is — okay. Mine is at the Oscars. I am the first woman to win Best Director under twenty-five. The orchestra is playing. I walk up the steps. I give a speech that becomes a meme. My acceptance video gets two billion views by morning.

RAY (warm)

Two billion. That is a lot of people watching. Beautiful. Dre?

DRE

I — I would want to be the doctor who finds the cure for pancreatic cancer. The last scene is the press conference. The reporters. My parents. The kid who I told first.

RAY

Beautiful. Esme?

ESME (quietly)

I have not really thought about it.

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RAY

Well. Tell us when you do. Jay?

JAY (forcing a grin)

Mine is at a Lakers game. I am eighty. I just hit a half-court shot at halftime for a million dollars. I die at the free throw line, holding the check, smiling.

(Some nervous laughter. Ray laughs too — a real, kind laugh.)

RAY

Son, that is the most specific death I have ever heard. I am going to think about it all day. Livi?

LIVI (after a beat)

I just — I want it to be quiet.

(The room shifts. Ray looks at her for a long moment.)

RAY (gentle)

Okay, daughter. Okay.

Scene 4 — The Photograph

RAY

Hand me that picture there, would you Esme.

(Esme reaches for the photograph and gives it to him. Ray holds it carefully, both hands.)

RAY

This is my wife, Marlene. She passed two years and four months ago next Tuesday. We were married fifty-three years. She is the reason I know what my last scene is supposed to look like.

DRE

What is your last scene, sir.

RAY (quietly, smiling)

My last scene is at our kitchen table. Our old one. The one with the burn mark from when I tried to fry catfish in 1986. Marlene is across from me. She is holding my hand the way she did when she was alive. There is a kind of light I cannot describe coming through the window. And the door behind her is open, and there is somebody waiting in the doorway, and I know who it is, and I am not afraid.

(A long silence. The room is very still. Even Jay is still.)

KAYLA (small voice)

Sir. Are you scared?

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RAY

No, daughter. I have not been scared since I figured out what dying actually is.

ESME

What is it.

RAY

It is a door. It is just a door. I have been walking toward it my whole life. The whole time I thought it was the end of the hallway. Turns out it is the beginning of the next room.

Scene 5 — The Reframe

RAY

Marco. Tell me your last scene again. With the cup.

MARCO

I — score the goal. The crowd. The cameras. My family in the stands.

RAY

Beautiful. And after?

MARCO

After what.

RAY

After the crowd. After the cameras. After the family goes home and the locker room is empty and you are sitting on the bench by yourself.

(Marco does not answer.)

RAY

Kayla. After the speech that is a meme.

KAYLA

I — I never thought about after.

RAY

Dre. After the press conference.

DRE

After is — after is a lot of phone calls. And then a hotel room. And then more press conferences.

RAY

And then?

(Dre does not answer either. Jay opens his mouth, then closes it.)

RAY (gentle, not preaching)

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I am not telling you not to score the goal. I am not telling you not to win the Oscar. I am asking you what is on the other side of the door at the end of the hallway. Because the door is coming. And it does not care how loud the crowd was.

Scene 6 — The Bible

(Ray reaches slowly and lifts the worn Bible from the bedside table. He does not open it.)

RAY

Marlene gave me this in 1971. The cover is taped twice. The spine is broken in three places. The verse I have read more than any other is John three sixteen. Y'all know it?

JAY (instinctive)

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

RAY (delighted)

Son. There you go. There you go. Whoever believes. That is the door.

LIVI (very quietly)

Sir. Can I ask. Is the door — is the door open if you have not been good.

(The room goes still.)

RAY (softly)

Daughter. The door is open because of him. Not because of me. The door has never once been about how good I was. Marlene used to say — Ray, the door is held open by nail-scarred hands, not yours.

LIVI (close to crying)

Okay.

Scene 7 — The Nurse

(The HOSPICE NURSE enters quietly. She crosses to Ray, adjusts the blanket, checks his pulse. She does not speak.)

RAY

Five more minutes, Janie. They are good kids.

NURSE (smiling)

I will be back in five, Mr. Ray.

(She leaves. Ray's eyes are slower now. Tired.)

RAY

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Tell me again. Marco. What is your last scene.

MARCO (slowly)

I — I think — I think I want to score the goal. And I want my mom in the stands. But I think I want to know what is on the other side of the door.

RAY

There it is. Kayla?

KAYLA

I want the speech. I want the speech to mean something. To somebody. Not to two billion people. To one.

RAY

There it is. Dre?

DRE

I want the cure. And I want — I want to know whose hand I am holding when I am the one in the bed.

RAY

There it is, son. There it is.

Scene 8 — The Quiet

ESME (quietly)

Mr. Ray. My last scene — I think I want it to be quiet too. Like Livi said. Just — just quiet. With somebody who knows me. And the door open.

RAY (eyes half closed, smiling)

That is a beautiful last scene, daughter. Beautiful.

JAY

Mr. Ray.

RAY

Yes, son.

JAY

I think — I think I do not want to die at the free throw line. I think I want to die having been somebody to somebody.

RAY (almost a whisper)

You are already on your way, son. You are already on your way.

LIVI (from her chair)

Mr. Ray. Can I — can I ask one more thing.

RAY

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Daughter, ask me anything. The clock is no longer on my wrist. It is on his.

LIVI

If — if a person has been pretending to be okay. For a long time. So nobody worries about her. Is the door still open for her too.

(The room holds. Ms. Ali looks at Livi. Livi does not look back.)

RAY (very quietly)

Livi. Is that you. The pretending one.

LIVI (after a long beat)

Sometimes.

RAY

Then come closer, daughter. The door is wide open for the pretending ones. He is not waiting for the version of you that has it together. He is waiting for the version of you that is tired.

(Livi crosses to the bed. She kneels. Ray, with the last of his strength, places a hand on her hair. The other teens are very still.)

RAY

Beloved. He has been calling your name longer than you have known your name. You are not late. You are right on time.

LIVI (whispered)

Okay.

(Ray's eyes close. He is asleep. The teens look at each other. Ms. Ali stands and gestures for them to gather their backpacks.)

Final Moment — The Doorframe

(The teens gather their things. They tiptoe past the bed. Each one touches the doorframe on their way out — not planned, just instinctive. ESME goes last. She stops at the door. She looks back at Ray, sleeping, the photograph still on his chest. The afternoon light catches the bedside table.)

ESME (whispered, to the doorframe)

For God so loved the world. That he gave his only Son. That whoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

(She leaves. The lights drop until only Ray's face and the photograph are lit. A long held beat. Then — the lamp on the bedside table dims, then is the last thing to go. End.)

END

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