The Playground
The PLAYGROUND

In our times, the Four Horsemen Of The Apocalypse have been joined by a Fifth. His name is Anxiety. He is the most dangerous of all, for we waste ourselves with fear of the unknown. To his age-old fear of death, modern man has added his anxiety about life.

THE PLAYGROUND is a film about the paradox of mortality. It is a comedy in the true sense of the word, for it treats ordinary events in a light and satirical style. It has the qualities of life itself: laughter, chaos, sadness, triumph, and beauty.

This is a motion picture which people will talk about and think about. It has the broad scope of spectacle, and the thoughtful individuality of the art film.

THE PLAYGROUND is rich with the excitement of convincing characters, a unique story, and an individual style.

It is entertainment with something to say.

Richard Wilbur
... you are alone in a room. Someone knocks at the door. When you open it, there is no one there. You open the door on to a vast open desert. But no one is there, not even a footprint.
EVA: It's so cold. No wonder soldiers are afraid.
SMITH: Well, they don't want to die any more than you do.
EVA: Everything that lives has to die.
The Mortality of Mankind

A COMEDY

The PLAYGROUND
FISHBACK
This is a little irregular.
Usually we don't deal with the
customer in advance. Usually,
it's the loved ones . . .

PORTER
I don't love anybody. I don't
even like people — not even
him (indicates SMITH). I'm a
mean, irascible, bad-tempered
dirty old man. But I got the
money, and it's my money. And
one thing I want is a first-class
funeral all the way.

FISHBACK
I see . . .

SMITH
Do you have mourners
available, or will we have to
furnish those ourselves?

PORTER
I want people to cry and
carry on to beat hell. I want
some real actors!

FISHBACK
No problem . . .

PORTER (tapping a casket)
Tell me about this one.

FISHBACK
Now that is a really first class
piece of merchandise. It's
vacuum sealed, guaranteed in
perpetuity against seepage
and other outside intrusions.
You'll notice that the material
is nylon back up with a
high-class vinyl. Extremely
durable, yet comfortable . . .

PORTER
Comfortable! After I'm dead,
I won't care about comfort! I'd
better get in and try it
out for size.

FISHBACK
We don't usually have a
request like that.

PORTER
Damn it! If I'm going to
have to stay in the thing I've
got a right to find out if it
fits, don't I?

FISHBACK
I assure you that we'll get
you a model that is suitable.

PORTER
You've been talking about
comfort. Well, what's comfort
for one man is poison for
another. Some of those Indians
will stretch out on a bed of
nails like it was a beautyrest
mattress . . . (He starts to climb
in) Now . . . with or
without shoes?

FISHBACK (resigned)
Just as you wish.

SMITH
How is it?

PORTER
Not bad. Kind of restful. I feel
like taking a little nap.
(Settles back in coffin) Say,
you got anything to drink
around here? I don't mean
hard liquor. Just something cool.

FISHBACK
There's a coke machine in
the embalming room.

PORTER
Get me one, would you please?
MARY

It's just that I'm a professional Mr. Porter, and this isn't amateur night.

PORTER

How much?

MARY

One hundred dollars a night. Of course, it costs a bit more for specialty work.

PORTER

I'm too old for novelty.
MARY
Perhaps I'm chosen, singled out . . .

DR. ZIMMERMAN
No, it isn't special or unique. I could show you hundreds of case histories.
It's the most common fantasy for a prostitute to dream she is a nun . . .

The PLAYGROUND
MRS. PORTER
You're so young ... Are you sure you know what you're doing?

SMITH
For the first time in my life, I know exactly what I want.
MRS. CARTWRIGHT

I’m so disappointed. They didn’t play “Good Night Ladies”. They always used to play “Good Night, Ladies” at the end of parties. And then we would ride home in the dawn with everything so fresh and clean.
MRS. WILLIAMS
You must think me terribly old fashioned.

VIRGINIA
It's just that everybody talks about it. We have classes in school and everything.

VIRGINIA
Do you believe there's life after you die?

JOHN
Maybe it's like goldfish. You know. They freeze in a pond in winter. Then, in spring, when the ice melts, they start swimming around again.
WARDEN
Too late, Reverend.

FR. WILLIAMS
But . . . But I thought it was set for this afternoon.

WARDEN
I guess he wanted to save us the time and trouble. He killed himself first thing this morning.

FR. WILLIAMS
But why would he want to do a thing like that?

WARDEN
God knows! I don't.

The PLAYGROUND
DR. JAQUES
It's no better than embalming. 
Let him die, as nature intended.

DR. RONALD
There's always a chance. Science 
must do what it can!
The PLAYGROUND

Inspired by the book, MY BROTHER, DEATH
by Cyrus Sulzberger
Original Adaptation by Richard Hilliard
Screenplay by George Garrett

(CAST)

SMITH ............................................. Rees Vaughn
EVA ............................................. Inger Stratton
JASON PORTER .................................. Edmond Ryan
MRS. PORTER .................................. Andrea Blayne
MARY ............................................. Loretta Leversee

FR. WILLIAMS .......................... Richard Kilbride
MRS. WILLIAMS ...................... Marian Blake
VIRGINIA WILLIAMS .............. Carol White
DR. RONALD ......................... Peter MacLean
DR. JAQUES ......................... Conrad Jameson
JOHN ......................................... Roger Talbot

CLAYTON ...................... Stanley Greene
FISHBACK ......................... Philip Brown
DR. ZIMMERMAN ................. Sol Schwade
MRS. CARTWRIGHT .......... Ethel Shutta
DUNCAN CARTWRIGHT .......... Paul Schmidt

with
Sidney Braveman, Patricia Hall, Bernard Kessel, Beatrice Paipert, Anita Sangiolo and Brice Weisman

Photographed By: Urs Furrer
Assistant Photographer: Ronald Latour
Sound Recording: Peter Benzoni
Production Manager: Robert Giuliana

Assistant to the Producer: Jo Ann Sullivan
Assistant Editor: Romas Slezas
Production Designer: A. James Bravar
Set Decoration: Francis Mahard

PRODUCER - DIRECTOR
RICHARD HILLIARD
has been preparing for this film through eight years’ experience in theatrical features. He has been planning THE PLAYGROUND since 1961.

World Distribution Rights to THE PLAYGROUND available through

GENERAL FILMS, INC.
187 Clark Road
Brookline, Mass.
tel: REGent 4-4102
"Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past. The rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, and the time of singing of birds is come."

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