



THE END OF THE LINE AT THE END

by Anthony J. Piccione

EXCERPT

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By

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Scene 1

LIGHTS UP

MARK and JOSH are standing on the sidewalk facing each other.

MARK

You'll never get me to change my mind, Josh.

JOSH

That's what you think. But if I keep trying, then maybe I'll get you to finally see-

MARK

Don't bother. There's already plenty of facts and evidence out there that backs me up.

JOSH

Well, if you believe so much in facts, then show me how I'm wrong using, y'know...FACTS!

MARK

Please. Anyone who actually listens to reason over blind faith knows that there is no rational argument that God exists. If there is no proof that something is real, then there's no reason to have to prove that it is NOT real. As far as I'm concerned, there's no reason anyone with an IQ over 100 ought not to be able to see this.

JOSH

Oh God, Mark. Why do you always have to be like this?

MARK

What do you mean "WHY DO I ALWAYS HAVE TO BE LIKE THIS"?

JOSH

Why do you always have to always be such a self-righteous and condescending snob when we have conversations like-

MARK

I didn't even want to be talking about this! You're the one who brought it up, in the first place. At first, we were just having a nice conversation about the new Star Wars trailer that I saw the other day, and then you have to go and change the subject to-

JOSH

I'm just trying to save your soul, Mark. I'm doing this for your sake. You should be thanking me.

(CONTINUED)

MARK

You're delusional.

JOSH

Well then, you must think God is delusional, too. Because he's the one who told me to tell you this.

MARK

Ha! "God" told you to tell me this, did he?

JOSH

That's right.

MARK

Right...so this only proves my point even further. Seriously, Josh. If you're actually hearing voices that are telling you that, you should go see-

JOSH

I'm still waiting to hear some of that "facts and evidence" that's supposed to prove me wrong.

MARK

Okay, fine. Let me put it to you this way: Exactly what proof do you have that God DOES, in fact, exist? And please don't tell me "the Bible says so".

JOSH

I...I-But Mark, I mean...the Bible is the word of our Lord and Savior. How could anyone dare to question-

MARK

Oh boy.

JOSH

It is, Mark! If the New Testament says it's all real, then who are we to say that it's not-

MARK

It's just a book! A very well-written book, yes. But still, just a book! Just a bunch of fiction that was probably written by a bunch of stoners.

JOSH

(gasps)
Blasphemy!

MARK

Sorry, but it was. It was written thousands of years ago, back when people still thought the Earth was flat! There have since been several scientific breakthroughs that contradict what the Bible says, and personally, when the choice is between scientific evidence and that

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARK (cont'd)

old book from almost two thousands years ago,
it's obvious which side is-

JOSH

You do realize that all those secular, so-called
"experts" are going to burn in Hell for all the things
they made up that goes against the word of God, right?

MARK

Oh, THEY made things up? You
think-(pauses)

Alright, y'know what? Let me ask you this: Let's say
someone started an entire cult based around the
Harry Potter books. Let's say this cult believed
that magic and wizards were real, and that all the
evidence that suggested otherwise was just bogus.
You'd think that was crazy, right?

JOSH

Well sure, but-

MARK

Exactly! Most people would, as they should! Because it
sounds ridiculous! Right? So why should a cult based
around that work of fiction be considered ridiculous,
when another cult based around a much older work of
fiction has millions of followers across the world?? I
mean, how do you not see the similarities?

JOSH

I...I...c'mon, Mark. I mean...don't you ever wonder?

MARK

About what?

JOSH

About about all the unsolved mysteries of the world?
Like how our Earth was created? Or our universe? Or
how and why everything that goes on in the universe is
happening? Don't you ever think about the answers to
stuff like that?

MARK

Well, yeah. But that doesn't give us an excuse to
make shit up, and go around saying-

JOSH

Well, I have to believe that all the things that
happen in this crazy world we live in, well...it all
happens for a reason. That our Creator has something
big planned, and that there is a purpose in life for
each and every one of us.

MARK

Right...I'd really like to know what purpose there is for some of the things I see going on in the world right now.

JOSH

Just wait and see, Mark. I have a feeling that someday soon, something's gonna happen that's gonna help you see the light, and embrace Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior! And when that day comes, it's going to be the most incredible moment of your life! Just wait and see! I know for me, I'll be filled with joy when I see you finally-

A car drives by. As it passes by, one of the passengers looks out the window and shoots MARK in the chest.

MARK falls to the ground.

JOSH

Mark? Oh God! Mark, are you okay? Mark? MARK?!

FADE TO BLACK

Scene 2

LIGHTS UP

MARK is standing on top of the clouds, in front of a long line of strangers.

MARK

I...wh-where am I??

STRANGER 1

Look around. Isn't it obvious? Haven't you noticed how cloudy it is up here?

MARK

What did you say?

STRANGER 1

(shrugs)

Sorry, it's hard to speak over all of these people talking.

MARK

You think? There's gotta be like a million people here!

STRANGER 3

Probably more than that.

(CONTINUED)

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5.

STRANGER 2

Yeah. A LOT more than that.

MARK

Alright, well tell me, then! WHERE THE HELL ARE WE?!

STRANGER 2

The end.

Pause

MARK

What?

STRANGER 2

The end of life.

STRANGER 1

That's right. We're all here for the same reason...

STRANGER 3

We're all waiting our turn to receive our final judgment.

MARK

Wait, so...this is like, Heaven? And to think, I honestly never believed in Heaven, yet still I-

STRANGER 3

Don't get too excited. This is just Purgatory. Heaven is supposedly MUCH nicer than this place. Comparing this place to Heaven is like comparing Hartford to Manhattan.