

Sixteen Dead

By Seth Etcetera

Sixteen Dead is a short play that never ends. Upon reaching the final written line, return to the beginning and start anew. Additional actors may cycle in, or the same cast may perform the duration. Players should see no gimmick here; each line is spoken with its own sincere futility. Little should change from one round to the next; the play continues but does not intensify. There is no climax or catharsis.

white.	Sixteen dead.
blue.	Seventeen.
white.	No - sixteen.
red.	Sixteen plus -
blue.	One teacher.
white.	Sixteen kids.
red.	2nd grade.
white.	Like last year.
blue.	That was 3rd.
white.	3rd grade then?
red.	Now 2nd.
blue.	Imagine.
red.	Little kids.
white.	Imagine.
blue.	America.
red.	No motive?
white.	Just anger.
blue.	Just access.
white.	To bullets?

red.	He was sad.
blue.	And angry.
red.	He was sad.
blue.	You see her?
red.	The mother?
blue.	One mother.
red.	Of many.
white.	On TV?
blue.	She was sad.
white.	And angry.
red.	She would be.
blue.	Heartbroken.
white.	Heartbreaking.
blue.	Sam is 8.
red.	Karen's boy?
blue.	My nephew.
white.	8 years old.
blue.	He was mad!
white.	Sam was mad?
blue.	The gunman.
red.	He was angry.
white.	Imagine.
blue.	Sam at 9 . . .
white.	Growing old.
blue.	Sam at 10 . . .
red.	Imagine.
blue.	How could he?
white.	Here we go!
red.	Another?
white.	4 dead at -
blue.	A diner!
white.	This says that -
red.	Don't trust that.
white.	On Twitter -

red. I wouldn't.
blue. All women.
white. This says that -
red. On Twitter?
white. On Twitter.
blue. I'm tired.
red. The problem -
blue. What is it?
red. The issue -
blue. So, tell me -
red. Disrespect.
white. So simple.
red. No respect!
blue. For women?
red. What? No, not -
white. For children?
red. Well, sure, but -
blue. Human life?
red. Well, yes, but -
white. No respect for - ?
red. For the guns!
blue. No respect for -
red. For the guns!
white. Oh. Easy.
red. If only -
blue. Love your gun!
white. Treat it right.
blue. Start them young.
white. Teach them how.
blue. Waste no time.
red. It's a tool.
blue. Care for it.
white. So simple.
blue. Or mayyyyyybe -

white.	Don't say it.
blue.	I say we -
red.	Oh, shut up.
blue.	Just take them.
white.	You're dreaming.
blue.	Who needs them?
red.	We can't just -
blue.	Why can't we?
red.	The Second -
blue.	Oh, Jesus.
white.	Real men need -
red.	Don't start that.
blue.	Their bullets.
white.	Their anger.
blue.	I'm saying -
white.	Real men need -
red.	Their freedom.
blue.	They've got that.
red.	Can't we just - ?
blue.	No!
red.	No?
white.	No!
blue.	Can't we just - ?
red.	No.
blue.	No?
white.	Or we could - ?
blue.	No.
red.	No?
white.	Okay, then.
red.	So we just . . . ?
blue.	We dissent?
red.	To what end?
white.	We descend.
blue.	Tomorrow?

white.	More headlines.
red.	More discourse.
white.	It'll come.
blue.	Another gun.
white.	He'll be mad.
red.	Mad and sad.
blue.	And packing.
white.	He'll be free.
blue.	When will we?
white.	Wait and see?
red.	Wait and talk.
blue.	Talk and wait.
white.	Don't go numb.
red.	Or do.
blue.	What of us?
red.	We survive.
blue.	Or we don't.
white.	We descend.
blue.	Watch your head.

(Repeat from the beginning. The play does not end.)