

# **SHOULD'VE**

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## **Synopsis**

As “Should’ve” opens, Friedrich Wertheim, a German-born chemist, has taken his own life, blaming himself for putting an easy way to make a neurotoxin into the hands of terrorists. The circumstances and reasons for his death disturb profoundly the lives of three people connected to Wertheim – his daughter Katie (a scientist herself, a molecular biologist, but with very different ideas about the social responsibility of scientists), Katie’s lover Stefan (a conceptual artist), and Wertheim’s estranged second wife, Julia.

In 27 fast-moving scenes, these people’s lives are fractured by the suicide. The motive for Wertheim’s action aren’t as simple as they seem; there emerges a remarkable set of circumstances about his parents’ survival in Nazi Germany. The ethical conflict between Katie and her father is very, very deep. Questions arise on the responsibility of artists in society. And there is more than one skeleton in Stefan’s closet.

A play about the social responsibility of scientists and artists on one level, “Should’ve” is also about three people trying to resist the transforming power of death. They are unable to do so, sundered as they are by the memories and a past that emerges from that death. And, eventually, the consequences shape a different bond among the three.