

DAVID IN GOLIATH

By Patrick Gabridge

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(This play is written for one person, but on stage, a silent MOTHER and FATHER may be used. Otherwise, DAVID will pretend to speak to each of his parents. This script should be very effective, with or without the other people on stage, yet you may choose either option.)

CAST: one male

AT RISE: *Mother sits next to a bed, a Bible in her hand, reading aloud the story of DAVID and GOLIATH—SHE should read nearly continuously, softly, throughout the play. Father sits in the corner, carving a piece of wood. DAVID stands behind his Mother, staring at the empty bed.*

I don't understand why she reads from that same book day after day. Every day she reads, but she makes no progress. Each morning, she opens the Book, and it's marked at the same page. Never makes any progress. You'd think she would notice that every day she reads the same chapters, that every day I get to hear my favorite story. If she's not going to listen, I don't understand why she bothers to read. Maybe she thinks it's for me, but "David and Goliath" is the wrong story. If I could just move the bookmark to the right place, would she hear me? Psalm 88: O, Lord, the God of my salvation, I have cried out by day and in the night before Thee. Let my prayer come before Thee. Incline Thine ear to my cry! For my soul has had enough troubles, and my life has drawn near to Sheol. I am reckoned among those who go down to the pit.

(Mother holds a glass of water with a straw near the empty pillow, then goes back to reading.)

Look how she nurtures that empty husk. Like serving water to a stone monument. A stone Goliath, sucking all the love from her. She doesn't understand the struggle. She thinks victory for David means the return of her son. **(BEAT)** Is it my favorite story or is it hers? I can never remember.

(Mother looks lovingly at the pillow, as if about to speak to it, then returns to reading from the book.)

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She hasn't spoken to me since I've been here. She tries, but she can't find her own voice. Not a word has passed from her lips to my ear. Instead, she's just a mirror, reflecting words off the page, sending them into the leaden brain of her child or what used to be her child.

Perhaps there are no words to say what she wants to say...maybe there's just nothing to be said.

(DAVID walks behind his father and claps his hands onto his father's shoulders. Father looks at the bed, then resumes carving.)

When I was young, I thought that my father just wasn't aware that I was too old to play with wooden ducks. I developed quite a collection before I realized that it's the only thing he can carve... He was never one for speechmaking. I never turned to him for advice, but somehow he knew when I was in trouble. Just when things seemed to be at their very worst, a duck would arrive in the mail. Who would ever expect to receive strength from a wooden duck? Does he think that's all it will take this time? *I have become like a man without strength, forsaken among the dead. Like the slain who lie in the grave, whom Thou dost remember no more, and they are cut off from Thy hand.*

Getting sick is something he can't understand. It's foreign to him, as am I... I can only remember him being ill one time. Stomach flu. I was not allowed in his room, not allowed to see him or speak to him. Somehow the whole concept of illness, of Father being sick, was totally unacceptable. Unacceptable. I try to understand, but some days all I want is for him to move his chair closer. Of course, he can't. He only sees Goliath. *Thou has put me in the lowest pit, in dark places, in the depths. Thy wrath has rested upon me, and Thou has afflicted me with all Thy waves. Thou hast removed my acquaintances far from me; Thou has made me an object of loathing to them;*

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