



drama by george

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Shattered

By George Halitzka

"Shattered" is the winner of the 2002 Christians In Theatre Arts Playwriting Contest, Drama Sketch Category.

(The suggestion of a homey, but worn and dusty, living room in a state of disarray. Downstage, a number of decaying cardboard boxes with markings in spidery handwriting. We discover RACHEL, a faded woman in her early thirties, sitting on the floor near the boxes. She is holding a picture frame and gazing at it somberly; thoughtfully. Several seconds pass before we hear a door shutting, off. RACHEL starts, then sets the picture carefully aside and scoots to the nearest box, where she begins sorting through her family's relics. Her brother SCOTT enters purposefully. He is wearing a polo and khakis; the attractive thirty-something businessman dressed casually for the weekend. SCOTT gives her a half-hug and looks around the room distractedly.)

SCOTT

Hey, Rache. Sorry I'm late.

RACHEL

It's okay. There isn't much left.

SCOTT

Wait for me long?

RACHEL

Since ten.

SCOTT

Sorry; date last night.

(rummaging through the chosen box; incredulously)
Can't believe how much stuff Mom kept. First grade report cards.

(SCOTT chucks a sheaf of papers carelessly aside.
RACHEL rescues them.)

RACHEL
Scott . . .

SCOTT
Hm?

RACHEL
I can do it if you want--

SCOTT
I got it, Rache.

RACHEL
Well . . . you're not *looking*.

SCOTT
It's just papers.

RACHEL
There's pictures. See?
(She pulls an old school picture from a pile.)
It's you. First grade.

SCOTT
(examining the picture)
"Mrs. McFadden's class." I remember her; world's worst
cigarette breath.

RACHEL
(sisterly teasing)
You were so cute. What happened?

SCOTT
(setting the picture carelessly aside)
I don't remember these kids. We moved in, what--third grade?

RACHEL
You should keep it!

SCOTT
(tolerantly)
Hey, if you want my first grade class for all posterity--

RACHEL
Someday, your kids will want to see Daddy when he was little.

SCOTT

Kids? I'm not inflicting these genes on another generation.

(A moment of silence. He sits down and ruffles through a sheaf of papers quickly. RACHEL peers over his shoulder.)

Rache . . .

RACHEL

Sorry. I just want to make sure--

SCOTT

I told you I'm *looking*.

RACHEL

This stuff's important to me.

SCOTT

I know. It was Mom's.

RACHEL

And . . . our childhood.

SCOTT

Yeah, *there's* a memory to treasure--

RACHEL

It's part of us.

SCOTT

(sighing)

I gotta leave at one. Let's just work on this, okay?

(A pause.)

RACHEL

Corinne had a game at eleven, Scott.

(Nothing.)

I'm missing my six-year-old's soccer game. Can't you--

SCOTT

Heidel's coming back from Seattle. You want me to leave him standing on the curb at the airport?

RACHEL

Who's Heidel?

SCOTT

Sales VP.

RACHEL

Then I bet he can afford a taxi. We talked about this two weeks ago--

SCOTT

Look . . . Rache, he *asked* me for a ride. Not Holschen. Not Majesky.

RACHEL

So?

SCOTT

So he wants to talk about something. This is how you get clients; take the boss for a drink--

RACHEL

Which is *much* more important than Rinne's game.

SCOTT

That's not fair.

RACHEL

Maybe when you have kids--

SCOTT

Rache--

RACHEL

If you ever grow up and have a family--

SCOTT

Grow up? Like you and Robert senior year?

(This was a low blow. SCOTT looks at RACHEL and tries to swallow his pride.)

Look . . . Rache. I love Rinne to death; you know I do. But you go to every game. She's six; take her to McDonald's and she'll forget by bedtime.

RACHEL

That's not the point--

SCOTT

If I miss this thing with Heidel . . . who knows? I heard he wants somebody new on the Med-Cor account. That's five figures--

RACHEL

Mom would be ashamed of you.

SCOTT

Well, she wouldn't want us fighting--

RACHEL

She'd want me at Rinne's game.

SCOTT

Mom's gone--

RACHEL

Rinne cries every time I miss one--

SCOTT

So go! I'll sort through the stuff.

(A moment.)

Did you hear me? Get out of here! Are you deaf?

RACHEL

You sound like Dad.

(A dangerous pause.)

You're not *looking* at anything, you're leaving in an hour--

SCOTT

(lashing out)

Believe it or not, I loved Mom, too!

(trying to calm himself)

Look at this! "Perfect Attendance, Third Grading Period, Second Grade." It's yours. Do you want it?

RACHEL

You're missing the--

SCOTT

"Best Father in the World" award. That's a joke, right? Or is it a keeper?

(going through the box)

The divorce papers. I think those can be burned.

RACHEL

No, I--

SCOTT

Oh, you want to remember what a bum dad was?

(A brief pause.)

Or how much he and your brother have in common?

RACHEL

I didn't say that--

SCOTT

Yes, you did. Thirty seconds ago.

(walking over to the picture that RACHEL held at the beginning of the scene)

What's this?

RACHEL

Just a picture--

SCOTT

This is the one, isn't it?

RACHEL

What are you--

SCOTT

Eighth grade; am I right?

RACHEL

If you don't want it, I'll take--

SCOTT

You remember what happened on the way there?

RACHEL

It was right after Mom got out of the hospital; they fought a lot--

SCOTT

No, that was the big one. Dad filed the papers the next day. I remember.

RACHEL

Let's just go through this stuff. So we can go home, okay?

SCOTT

The photographer kept looking at Dad, like how could he have kids like this? You wouldn't stop crying--

RACHEL

You were such a jerk, running around the camera--

SCOTT

Great reason to spank me. Right in front of them; I was twelve--

RACHEL

Mom was crying, and you didn't even--

SCOTT

But ten minutes later, everybody faked a smile, and we looked like the Brady Bunch.

(suddenly, picking up a random box)

I'm throwing it out.

RACHEL

(desperately)

Scott, if we forget, we do the same stuff all over--

SCOTT

You sound like that shrink.

RACHEL

You remember when Dad was saving for the Beamer? What did you drive today?

SCOTT

He was a loser; never bought it.

RACHEL

And chasing anything in a skirt--

SCOTT

Hang it Rache; that's so lame--

RACHEL

Kissing up to the boss on Saturday--

SCOTT

When Dad said he was working, he was with that slutty accountant. Do I *look* like--

RACHEL

Still too busy for anybody in your life--anybody without a C cup--

SCOTT

And you coasted through the family without a scratch, huh? But Mom got married young, too--when Dad knocked her up--

RACHEL

I can't believe you--

SCOTT

Yeah, she was June Cleaver! PTA president, those stupid piano lessons--

RACHEL

She wanted the best for us--

SCOTT

And you're only doing it because you love the kids, right? Not because you and Robert haven't had a real conversation in--

RACHEL

I love Robert!

SCOTT

This family is *not* controlling my life!
(indicating the picture)
Give me that.

RACHEL

Why?

SCOTT

I'm getting rid of it. It's a lie.

RACHEL

No! This is the last picture, before Dad--

SCOTT

Good. Give it to me.

RACHEL

No! Scott, stop it! Give it back--

(He wrestles the picture away from her.)

Don't do anything--Scott!

(SCOTT slams the picture onto the ground. The frame shatters. A long silence.)

SCOTT

One more way I'm like Dad, right? Bad temper.

(RACHEL walks over to the picture and picks it up.)

RACHEL

You ruined it.

SCOTT

Good.

(looking at the picture)

At least you can't see his grinning face anymore.

(RACHEL tries to remove some shards of glass.)

RACHEL

No.

(A moment.)

And you can't see ours, either.

(Slow blackout.)

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