FATHERS & SONS

By Dave Tippett

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STORY OF THE PLAY

A young father holds his infant son, contemplating the son's future...and the father's influence on that future. A short, one-act play that takes both father and son on a journey into the future. A future full of innocence, shared victories, growing disobedience and emotional distance, crisis, reconciliation and ultimate hope.

FATHERS & SONS is a perfect selection for your Father's Day event, for it explores the unique relationships between a father and son, and how the future, so easily affected by the past, can be changed through faith and trust.

DEDICATION

To my wife, Jill, for her unceasing encouragement, love, and for being the toughest editor a man could love; to Pastor Phil Fuller for his support and vision for Drama Ministries; to Pastor Thom Sneed, who's overall talents and abilities far exceed those of us mere mortals, and for all the wonderful and talented actors, actresses, and tech people at the Oregon Church of the Nazarene in Oregon, Ohio. I can write it all, but if they aren't there to make it come to life, I'm lost. To His glory.

The Playwright
Dave Tippett

CAST OF CHARACTERS

FATHER: Around 30 but ages in later scenes.
YOUNG MIKE: 7 or 8-year-old.
TEEN MIKE: 13 to 16-year-old.
ADULT MIKE: Late forties or early fifties.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Scene 1: Dad with infant Mike.
Scene 2: Dad at young Mike's Christmas play.
Scene 3: Dad and teen Mike play ball.
Scene 4: Dad and teen Mike go to church—maybe.
Scene 5: Mike turns his back on Dad—and God.
Scene 6: Mike is restored and Dad is grateful.
Scene 7: Mike thanks Dad for all he's done.
Scene 8: Mike tells an older Dad he's here for him.
Scene 9: Dad with infant Mike.

PROPS

Two simple chairs, card table, coat tree, blue blanket w/padding, play program, baseball caps, Bible, coffee mug, old cap/glasses.

COSTUMES

Sweaters, slacks/shirt, ties, bathrobe, suit coats, sport coats.

NOTES ABOUT THE ACTING

The actor playing the role of Father must make each and age believable through body movements, tone of voice, emotional level, pacing, and use of minimal props. During the transitions between scenes, the actor should not repeat the same thing over and over again, which can give the impression he is stalling for time.

Have a boy, aged 7-8 play Young Mike for Scene 2, and Teen Mike can play Scenes 3, 4 and 5. Adult Mike does the rest of the scenes. He has the same acting challenges as the character of Father in that his character ages.

The interchange between Father and Mike in the Scenes 2-5 is done without actually interacting on stage. Both actors must deliver their lines to the audience, as if they are interacting with each other. This changes at the end of Scene 6. The set consists of a single chair DSC. Another chair is brought out by Mike in Scene 7. The props/costumes are arranged USC on a small table, with some of the coats and sweater hanging from a coat tree next to the table. Father and Mike should wear wire-less lapel microphones.

Scene 1

(AT RISE: FATHER enters from SR. He is dressed in a short- sleeve white shirt and dark pants. He is holding a "baby" wrapped in a blue blanket.)

FATHER: *(Singing softly down at the bundle)* "Jesus loves me, this I know...for the Bible tells me so...little ones"...hey there...hey there, Mikey...oh, I'm sorry I woke you up... It's been such a long day and I just wanted to see you before I went to bed...coochi coo... Oh, yeah, sorry...you're right, guys shouldn't say coochi coo to each other...*(Pause)*...wow...look at those little hands...how are you gonna catch a baseball with such tiny fingers? Oh yeah, guess you'll grow some, huh? Be kinda hard to steal second base with your diaper dragging behind you and all. What's that? A smile? Daddy's so funny, isn't he? Daddy's so funny...Or was that gas? Whew, it was...hmmm. *(Looking around)* Don't tell anyone, but I'm kinda new at this dad stuff. What if I make mistakes? You didn't come with an owner's manual, you know. No manufacturer's rep I can call in case you break. *(Pondering)* What kind of dad will I be? Got to admit, the thought kinda scares me. What will our relationship be like? Hope it's better than what your grandpa and I have...or don't have. We're not...um...not...seeing things eye-to-eye. I'm afraid you may not see a lot of your grandpa, Mikey. Hmmm...I wonder what kind of person you'll be? Will you become a Christian? You'll have to choose. Hmmm. Maybe you'll become a great psychologist and you can help me figure out Mommy's...ohhhh, such a big yawn...*(HE yawns.)* Hey, don't do that, it's contagious. Guess I'm more tired than I thought. Let me just sit down for five minutes and rest my eyes. I won't go to sleep, just want to hold you for a while...*(Voice starts to fade)* five minutes...five minutes, that's all...

Scene 2

(AT RISE: FATHER sits for a beat, then gets up and moves back to the prop/costume table and puts down the bundle while continuing to speak his last lines from scene one. He puts on the sports coat, and takes the play program. He then goes and sits in the chair and looks out over the audience. At the same time, at SR, YOUNG MIKEY turns and faces the audience. He wears an old bathrobe.)

FATHER: *(Excited, straining HIS neck, talking with unseen wife next to him...anxious)* Do you see him, honey? Is that him? Ohhh, I can't see real well...*(Gestures in front of HIM)* Could this guy be any taller? All the seats in this place, and I have to sit behind Sasquatch. Do you see him? Huh? He's supposed to be one of the angels, but I don't...Oh! There he is!! That's my boy, all right. He's the third angel on the left. He really looks great in my bathrobe! Oh, quiet, quiet, here comes his big line...shhh...*(Waiting, MIKEY at SR struggles with the line.)*

MIKEY: Do...don't be...uh...er...umm...

FATHER: Ah, come on, Son, you can do it...come on...it's easy...ah, don't choke now, Mikey.

MIKEY: ...uh, er, uh, news...uh...

FATHER: Come on, kid! We worked all afternoon on this. You can do it...come on!

MIKEY: ...lots of joy...and stuff...uh....errr....ummmm.

FATHER: *(Frustration builds until finally, HE stands up and yells.)* DO NOT BE AFRAID FOR I BRING YOU GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY *(Voice trails)* that will be to...all...*(Stops, looks embarrassed and slowly sits down)* ...sorry, sorry. Please...continue. *(To imaginary wife)* Sorry!

(MIKEY looks straight out at audience, as if he heard his dad, and says confidently, while FATHER mouths the words.)

End of Freeview

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