

A script from



## “Do You Love Me, Dad?”

by  
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- What** A young dad agonizes over his less-than-perfect fathering skills, and in the process has an epiphany about his relationship with his own dad.  
**Themes:** Comedy, Drama, Love, Relationships, Family, Father, Sons, Parenting
- Who** Darrell – Father of two younger children
- When** Present
- Wear (Props)** No costume requirements. No prop requirements, though objects representing a children's bedroom may be employed for staging or symbolic purposes.
- Why** Psalm 103:13; Proverbs 20:7; Ephesians 6:2-4
- How** Shifting from levity to dramatic tension and the actor's willingness to show emotional vulnerability are key to making this monologue work.
- Time** Approximately 3-4 minutes

*Darrell, a dad of two young children, addresses the audience.*

**Darrell:** So I finally figured out that my dad loved me. Not the way you want to find out—five years after your father dies—but better late than never, right? *(Smiling)* Oh, yeah. But, still, if I could have done it any other way...

So we're kissing our kids goodnight after twenty minutes of lollygagging: drinks of water, bathroom runs, the clearing of real and imaginary obstacles—glow-in-the-dark sneakers, dragon poop (don't ask). They're finally in bed. We're in the home stretch: lullabies, prayers, protective blessings—Daniel's only six, so he gets the Monster Shield; Rachel's 9, so she gets the Hyper-Positronic Cone of Sleepiness, which never works. We kiss 'em goodnight and I do the benediction: For Daniel it's, "I love you more than insert-increasingly-huge-object here"—at the moment it's "the Milky Way." For Rachel it's, "I'll never stop loving you." Only lately she's started cutting me off with, "I *know*, Dad." Guess I need a new line.

Later, Megan and I do our own bedtime ritual, hit the lights, and assume spoon drawer positions. And then it begins:

Titter, titter, titter.

Megan whispers, "Honey."

"Get back in bed!" I yell. The titters stop. Little feet thumpa-thump back into the kid's room. Megan and I start to drift off again.

Titter, titter, titter.

"You heard your Daddy!" Megan shouts. Silence. Drifting. Almost asleep.

Thumpa, thump, titter, titter, titter.

"Last time!" Megan warns. "Get back in bed and STAY there!" Even I'm scared.

Drifting. We've almost made it to slumberland when the thumps and titters resume. It's an unusually bad night.

"OK, that's it!" I shout. I leap from the bed. I'm out the door. I'm down the hall and into the kid's room just in time to see the covers wafting down onto their beds and hear the springs squeaking frantically. And then I lose it. I shout, but not like before, not in a controlled "parent" way. "Don't you dare get out of those beds again! Do you hear me? DO - YOU - HEAR - ME?!" Silence.

And then the worst sound in the universe: the sound of children crying—not ordinary kid-crying, but kids crying out of *fear*. Fear that I created, that I, their *father*, created. Because I was mad. In both senses of the term: angry and crazy. Because these are two of the three humans I love most in the universe.

My dad had this anger, you know? He'd go along for weeks, months at a time, and then something would set him off, and he'd just...blow up. Like an atom bomb. He scared the you-know-what out of me. But you know what I hated most about it? That I caught it from him.

So I look down at Rachel and Daniel, crying in the dark, and I suddenly know two things: I never ever want them to be afraid of me—ever; and I never ever want them to doubt my love for them. So I get down on my knees between their beds and ask God to forgive me. Then I ask Danny and Rache to forgive me. *(Pause)* Then Rache crawls out of bed and puts her skinny little arm over my shoulder and says, "I forgive you, Daddy...and I know you'll never stop loving me." Then Danny's there—crying because Rachel's crying—and he says, "I love you universes and universes full."

There was a third thing I knew that night: I knew for certain—for the first time, I think—that my dad loved me. Because for about five minutes I *was* him, all anger and self-loathing, and I suddenly realized that, along with his anger...I got his love. And I knew that he would have died a thousand deaths for me just like I would for my kids. Because he loved me.

*Lights out.*