



Proudly Presents

# **AND THE AWARD GOES TO**

**WRITTEN BY SHANNON CARTWRIGHT**

©2010



# AND THE AWARD GOES TO

**WRITTEN BY SHANNON CARTWRIGHT**

## IMPORTANT: PLEASE READ

This play is intended for educational classroom readings and performances. There are no royalties for performances, and directors may make photocopies for their students; however, it is strictly forbidden to share copies of this script with other individuals or schools within the same school district or otherwise. Also, this script is not to be stored in any form, or incorporated into any retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, which includes posting videotaped performances of this script on any social media site without the prior written permission of the publisher, Theatre Fresh. Violations of the above terms will result in legal action and will include punitive damages against the offender. Public performances in which a program is distributed must include the following statement: "Produced by special arrangement with THEATRE FRESH and TheatreFresh.com."

Inquiries should be addressed to the publisher.

ISBN 978-1-942109-45-7

I love movies. I think most people do. It's a form of escape. And who doesn't want to escape from their lives once in awhile? My favorites are the romantic comedies. You know Julia Roberts, Sandra Bullock, Meg Ryan, Amy Adams, Jennifer Anniston—they're the best. They help me forget. They let me escape the reality of my own life; even it's only for just a few hours sometimes. I don't like the dramas nearly as much as I like the romantic comedies. Why would I want to spend two hours watching someone else's depressing life? Especially when my *own* life would rival anything I've seen on the big screen. I've never understood why anyone would want to pay money to see a story about someone's miserable existence and cry in public like that. I mean, Hollywood spends millions of dollars on a story that is full of violence and abuse, and then movie-goers spend millions and *millions* of dollars to see it. If you want to cry, just give me ten bucks. I'll tell you a true story that could make you cry. I might even throw in some popcorn.

My life would make a pretty good movie, if I do say so myself. It probably wouldn't be one of those big-budget films you read about in the magazines. It would be an okay drama, though, if that's what you're into. My life would probably be best told as one of those TV Movies-of-the-Week. Yeah. I could see my story on the *Lifetime* network.

Like most movies, there is always at least one villain. For me, that villain was always my dad. He was scarier than Cruella DeVille and Darth Vader combined. It's hard to admit it, but my father used to abuse me when I was younger. It started out with him just playing around. He'd pinch me. He liked to see what kind of mark he could make on my skin. Mother would be off at her bridge party playing cards with her girlfriends. When she would come home, I would tell her what happened. She'd look at the red welts on my legs or arms, and she'd tell Dad to remember that I was only a baby—that he shouldn't be so rough with me. He'd laugh and try to make a joke out of it by saying, "We were only rough housing, Honey. I'm sorry. I'll be more careful from now on. If I was too rough, why didn't she say anything?" Then, when my mother wasn't in the room, he'd call

me a little *tattle-tail*. He'd warn me that Mom wouldn't always be there to baby me. He'd tell me that if I knew what was good for me, I wouldn't say anything anymore.

As the years passed, Dad's "playing around" transformed into something a little more serious. Dad was—and still is—a smoker. I would always smell like cigarette smoke. The mothers of the few friends I was allowed to play with would no doubt notice my smelly clothes. They'd teasingly ask me if I'd been smoking. Embarrassed, I would just giggle and tell them that my dad smoked in the house. There was one week—back a few years—that Mother had to visit my grandmother in the hospital. My grandparents lived out of state. With Grandma in ICU, there wouldn't be anyone to look after me in the hospital. So Mother felt it was safe to leave me with Dad. After all, he was my father. He would look after me like his life depended on it, right? Mother hadn't even been gone one day, when Dad decided I would be his full-time servant. I was still very young—around five or six or so. While Mother was tending to our grandmother six hundred miles away, I was now tending to Dad's every whim: getting him a beer from the fridge; getting the mail; bringing him the remote. Nothing I did was ever fast enough. I wasn't even allowed to play in my room. No, sir. I had to stay in the living room with him in case he needed something. I made Cinderella look lazy. No wonder I've never liked that story. Happy ending or not, Cinderella is a tragic fairy tale—no matter what anyone says. If I didn't get whatever he wanted fast enough, Dad would grab me by my arm and take the cigarette hanging from his mouth out and put it so close to my skin that I could feel the heat start to smolder there. He'd say, "The next time I ask you to do something, I think you need to move a little quicker." I just remember not being able to look him in the face. With my head bowed, I would promise him that I'd try to be faster next time. He'd then make me say I was sorry. I'd say the words, but I didn't mean them. How could I mean them? The only thing I was sorry for is that I didn't have a father who loved me like the dads I'd seen on television.