

*Henry walks on, carefully carrying a lantern...*

John. It's midnight, you shouldn't be here.

JOHN. What?

HENRY. I said you shouldn't be here. Come with me. Come home.

JOHN. There is no home without her. There is no *where* to go.

HENRY. I know it feels that way. I know it does. But you can come with me.

JOHN. Why?

HENRY. Because this is the hardest thing you'll ever go through and I won't have you go through it alone. Elizabeth insists you come and eat with us. Come and eat.

JOHN. I have never thought food as useless as I do now.

*Pause.*

HENRY. Then we'll both starve.

Onstage.

In the dark.

*Henry sits down next to John on the empty stage.*

*Pause.*

When my first boy died, only months old, I couldn't imagine a loving God that would have any part in such a thing. And I told Him so in my prayers, silent because I know I'd be the one in the ground if anyone heard what I thought of God and His taking and taking and taking. Then I realized the great weight of every grieving father's prayers that must hit God every night, and must sound so much like my own. Sons who lost fathers, husbands without wives, mothers—oh God the mothers. All that grief on God's ear constantly.

Then I felt bad for God.

Which made me laugh.

Which made me feel alive again. Funny how that worked out didn't it.

JOHN. That's a good story. Why do we bother?

HENRY. With what?

JOHN. With stories. Dramas. Especially the dramas. Isn't that ridiculous? Grown men dressing up as kings and, even more ridiculously *queens*. And the people come to see it. And they laugh. But they also weep. They weep with us. Why do they do it?

HENRY. Because stories are real in their own way.