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# Best Student One Acts

## Volume 4

Winners of the 1998  
KENNEDY CENTER AMERICAN COLLEGE THEATER FESTIVAL  
One-Act Play Competition



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# **JULIA**

**Virginia Coates  
Villanova University**

## CHARACTERS

**FATHER ONE:** Casual but well-dressed, has a clean-cut look. A green hospital gown is lying next to him.

**FATHER TWO:** Also casual, but the clothes are more a working man's clothes and he is not as clean-cut looking.

**PLACE:** A hospital waiting room.

**TIME:** The present.

# JULIA

**SETTING:** *A small hospital waiting room.*

**AT RISE:** *FATHER ONE is sitting alone. After a few moments FATHER TWO enters, with loud footsteps, holding a small stuffed animal. FATHER TWO can go to the coffee maker or some other activity that keeps him from noticing FATHER ONE's reactions.*

**FATHER TWO.** Oh man. I had to get away. Thank God a quiet place. *(No response from FATHER ONE.)* Has yours already arrived? Looks like it, since you took off the gown. They sure as hell won't let you in that room without it. Makes you wonder what they think you could give them. I mean, how do they think the kid got here. That wasn't too sterile. Right? *(No response.)* Hey, you OK? You're not going to get sick or faint, are you?

**FATHER ONE.** No. I'm fine. It just got a little intense in there.

**FATHER TWO.** Ya, I know what you mean. All that rushing around. And the yelling, by my wife, that is. She swore she was going to be calm through the whole thing. "I can handle it." She wasn't going to take any drugs. After that first contraction, they couldn't give it to her fast enough. They just gave her Demerol. That's why I could leave. I wish I could drug her up like that all the time. Wish there was time to run down for a cigarette. Told her I was just gonna run out to give an

update to the family. *(Pause.)* I feel really bad for the wives though, you know? I thought mine was going to squeeze my hand off. Had to get away from it all, you know? The wife screaming, having to go give updates every fifteen minutes. I think my entire family and neighborhood is out in the waiting room. *(Pause.)* God, all those tubes in her, running every which way. It's weird to see her like that. You know what I mean? *(Pause.)* I guess you can tell this is our first, right? I've never been so nervous about nothin' in my life. How about you, this your first?

FATHER ONE. Yes, this was our first.

FATHER TWO. You got your family with you tonight?

FATHER ONE. No. Just us.

FATHER TWO. That's the way to go. That's what I told my wife. Maybe call our parents, that's it. But no, we have the entire family here, even cousins, some of our neighbors too. It's a zoo. *(Pause. Fiddles with the stuffed animal.)* Bet you're wondering what I have this for. I bought it a couple of months ago from one of the vendors down at central station. I wanted to be the first one to give her a present. Oh we're having a little girl. Found out through those ultra sounds. Did you know what you were going to have?

FATHER ONE. Yes, we knew. A little girl.

FATHER TWO. Wow, you too. Congratulations. I was thrilled when I heard it was a girl. My family thought I'd be disappointed, thinking I'd want a son first. But man, a little girl, can't wait till she starts asking me for new dresses and ballet lessons. And if my wife has her way, it'll be right away. Right. We've got the room all done up in pink. Pink wallpaper, pink curtains. Too

much, I know, but what the heck. *(Pause.)* Anyway, it's stupid, I know, givin' a present, but I don't know, you want to give them so much, that's what I realized when I saw this. I want to give her everything. I won't be able to, of course, and some things she'll have to get on her own but at least I can be the first, right? *(Pause.)* I really should be getting back in there but you just need a break, know what I mean?

FATHER ONE. Yes, I know what you mean.

FATHER TWO. Hey, you sure you're OK?

FATHER ONE. Yes, I'm fine.

FATHER TWO. Well, I gotta get back in there. It's not long now, or at least that's what the doctor keeps telling my wife. I think he keeps telling her that so she won't kill him. Sure everything is all night? *(Starts to leave.)*

FATHER ONE. The baby was born dead.

FATHER TWO. What?

FATHER ONE. Our baby. She was born dead.

FATHER TWO. Oh God, I'm sorry. How could I have been so stupid, me and my big mouth. I didn't think, well, you wouldn't, you know, I'm really sorry.

FATHER ONE. We knew. We knew before we came in. She wasn't due for another two months. My wife couldn't feel the baby yesterday. She went to the doctor and there was no heartbeat. She called me at the office, told me to meet her at the hospital. I knew as soon as I heard her voice. We'd been trying for months and just like that it was over. The months of trying, all the frustration and pain to get her, all for nothing.

FATHER TWO. I'm really sorry, but you can try again, right? You'll have another.