

From This Side of Heaven

By Don Zolidis

CHASE, 17, in a wheelchair.

CHASE

Oh thanks. Thank you're an expert I guess.

(CHASE starts getting out of his chair to go after his shoe.)

You know what sucks? Not as in –I didn't get asked to the prom sucks – but I mean, actual, truthful sucking. I've seen a couple of guys in here who've come from Afghanistan – and they'd had – you know they've been hit with IEDs or whatever – they get all torn up and they get amputated – they're like heroes, you know? They come home – there's a parade down the street, somebody puts them in a commercial... for the rest of their lives they got people standing up and saying thanks for your service. Whatever.

(He gets a hold of his shoe but stays there.)

It's so stupid to say it. I'm jealous... I'm jealous of guys who got a cooler story of how they got in a wheelchair – cause I've got – I've got no reason except dumb luck. Except bad luck – I mean I guess the luck I had was that I didn't die – and now I've got... you know I've got half of me that's never going to work again, I'm going to be lugging these useless things around for the rest of my life – if I had gotten blown up, if I had gotten amputated, then I'd get the artificial legs, I'd walk again – give me those Oscar Pistorious blades and I'd be like something out of the future and – instead I got this. Like I'm trailing dead snakes wherever I go.

You know I pretty much wet the bed every night?

FEVER

Chase.

CHASE

I'm learning to put on my clothes and I wet the damn bed every night. And I can't feel it, you know – I can't even feel it – I'm lying there in this mess and I don't even know – like I'm some kind of infant that can't – people don't look at me anymore, you know? They don't look at me. They look past me, or they crouch down next to me like I'm some kind of toddler or they look at my legs or the chair or –

FEVER

It's gonna be okay.

(She approaches and helps him with his shoe. He lets her.)

CHASE

Did you just say that? It's gonna be okay? No it's not –

FEVER

All right –

CHASE

This is me for the next sixty years. I've got sixty years of this.

To read the rest of this play, contact me at donzolidis@gmail.com