

**MITZVAH**

**A new short play for One Woman**  
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Summer 2013

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*Hannah sits on the floor, she holds a doll. Hannah is an Orthodox Jew. They rock together.*

**Hannah:** *(Talking to the doll)* Daddy says to me: said the Rabbi to the Levite! Clean is the purest. Ugly is the devil. Clean is the purest! *(pause, plays with the doll)* Ugly is like poop.

Daddy sits me on his knees and teaches me Torah. No need to teach me that. I know there is no need to teach me that. Daddy sits me on his knees and sings to me:

*(sings) Hannah is tired, the little doll is tired too*

*Shadows in the room, they whisper*

*Time for bed, time for bed, time for bed -*

*(Hannah rests the doll beside her. She talks to the doll)* Daddy, why do you teach me Torah?

They say, the one who teaches his daughter Torah is the smartest of all. *(to herself)* What?

*(laughs)* No, they're not saying it like that. Yes, they are. Never mind. There are things that a little girl shouldn't know.

*(picking up the doll, speaking as the doll, whispering)* Hannah lies in bed so quietly

near her lie the doll and the bear

also her ball and a little bunny,

the Lord will make their dreams sweet and funny,

Daddy will take care of her too –

*(talks to the doll)* Mommy is quiet, she only says: save yourself, if you study too much, you might go crazy. Now I know everything. Don't want to know. My belly knows. It's because my head is too small.

*(rests the doll beside her, talks to her)* They're all asleep now. The doll and the bear and the ball and little bunny too

but suddenly I wake up

Daddy! Daddy! Where are you?

Come here quickly, scare away the shadows

scary shadows, bad-bad boys

*(talks as the doll)* you dummy

Your doll is laughing

the bear laughs too *(laughs)*

why to scare away the night?

The night is good for you, good for you... *(grabs the doll, hugs her)*

*(talks to the doll, hug her)* Fingers shake, close to my belly. Remember: Clean is the purest, ugly is the devil. Daddy said. He teaches me Torah, his knees shake, *(shakes the doll)* his head gets wet and red like a birthday cake. No. Yes. It's the joy of doing the mitzvah. Makes you happy. If I'll shake you like that, I'll get red and sweaty too.

*(Beat)*

Nice. See.

*(Beat. Shakes the doll in her lap)*

One good mitzvah and one. One good mitzvah and two. One good mitzvah and three. One good mitzvah and four. One good mitzvah and five. One good mitzvah and six. One good mitzvah and seven. One good mitzvah and eight. One good mitzvah and nine. One good mitzvah and... *(Beat)*

One good mitzvah and nothing. Impurity. I walk thought the gates of impurity. I am impurity.

Impurity mixes with impurity. Good thoughts, my good commandments. Clean is the purest.

Ugly is the devil. Ugly is like pig poop mixed with stinking yellow pee.

Eek.

*(Throws away the doll. Long pause. Grabs the doll and puts it back on her lap)*

Fingers. See. I'm Daddy, I love you. Don't be afraid. *(hugs the doll)*

*(talks as the doll)* I have nausea. Can I pee-pee now?

*(beat)*

*(talks to the doll)* I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders  
Psalms nine verse one O Lord I will be glad and rejoice in you; I will sing praise to your name, O  
Most High Psalms nine verse two My enemies turn back; no enemies O Lord, they stumble and  
perish before you Psalms nine verse three For you have upheld my right and my cause; you have  
sat on your throne, judging righteously Psalms nine verse four You have rebuked the nations and  
destroyed the weak; you have blotted out their name for ever and ever Psalms nine verse five  
Endless ruin has overtaken the enemy, you have uprooted their cities even the memory of them  
has perished Psalms nine verse six The Lord reigns forever; he has established his throne for  
judgment Psalms nine verse seven He will judge the world in righteousness; he will govern the  
people with justice Psalms nine verse eight The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold  
in times of trouble Psalms nine verse nine -

Who -

*(To the doll)* Oh daddy, I love you. *(Refers to the doll)* But I need to pee-pee now.

*(looks up)* I will praise you, O Lord, my God, God of heavens and hell, O God this is a Mitzvah,  
I know, but, please, I need to go Pee-pee now, God. Can I go please?

Pee pee. Now.

***End of play***