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Mashed Potatoes and Davey

Megan Orr

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION

**SAMUEL
FRENCH**
FOUNDED 1830

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MASHED POTATOES AND DAVEY was first performed on November 21, 2008, at the Grace Baptist Christian School in Plymouth, Indiana. The cast was as follows:

DAVEY BRYANT	.....	Kyle LaFaive
JOHN MASTERSON	.....	Zach West
BETH MASTERSON	.....	Katie Hickey
JD MASTERSON	.....	TJ Mechling
MEREDITH MASTERSON	.....	Jessica Cleveland
TYLER MASTERSON	.....	Ace Elliott
LEXI MASTERSON	.....	Madi Burns
PASTOR BRIAN MALONE	.....	Logan Metzger
ERIN THOMPSON	.....	Heather Fishburn
KATIE THOMPSON	.....	Lena Gilbert
TARA THOMPSON	.....	Danielle LaFaive
MICK	.....	Kaleb LaFaive
RILEY	.....	Phathai Mechling

CHARACTERS

DAVEY BRYANT – Age 12; bus kid; a deeper, goofy voice; acts tough but actually sensitive deep down; slovenly; awkward; no manners; secretly thrilled to have been invited to the Mastersons' for Thanksgiving; in awe of everything

JOHN MASTERSON – Age 35; bus driver for Faith Baptist Church bus ministry; outgoing, energetic, big-hearted, comical

BETH MASTERSON – Age 34; John's wife; helps John on his bus route each week; great cook; enjoys playing matchmaker, although she is usually not too good at it

JD MASTERSON – Age 12; ringleader of the Masterson kids; intelligent and highly creative; the idea mastermind

MEREDITH MASTERSON – Age 11; tomboy; competitive, argumentative; TYLER's protector

TYLER MASTERSON – Age 9; quiet, shy, easily embarrassed; Davey's favorite person to tease

LEXI MASTERSON – Age 7; plays up her role as baby of the family for all its worth; immense lung power; spunky; mischievous

PASTOR BRIAN MALONE – Age 28; Faith Baptist Church's new, single youth pastor; teaches junior church; all the little girls have crushes on him, including Meredith, Katie, and Tara

ERIN THOMPSON – Age 29; widowed mother of Katie and Tara; Beth tries to set her up with Pastor Brian

KATIE THOMPSON – Age 10; Meredith's friend; intelligent; bossy, especially toward her sister

TARA THOMPSON – Age 8; Katie's younger sister; greatly admires her sister and often imitates everything Katie says; a follower

MICK – JD's church friend; speaking part

RILEY – JD's church friend; speaking part; male or female

FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH MEMBERS – non-speaking parts

TIME

Modern-day; week of Thanksgiving

SETTING

Church foyer; Mastersons' barn; Mastersons' dining room

ACT I

Scene One

(SET: Faith Baptist Church foyer; after the Sunday morning service the Sunday before Thanksgiving)

(Lights rise. BETH and ERIN stand at centerstage talking. Other church members also stand around talking to one another.)

BETH. ...And so after we had spent nearly thirty minutes looking for it, I finally decided to forget about the timer and just baste the bird. I took the turkey out of the oven...and the thing was *ringing*! Lexi thought I meant put the timer *inside* the turkey!

(ERIN and BETH laugh.)

ERIN. And I thought *my* girls were the only ones who did crazy things like that!

BETH. Nope. You are definitely not alone there.

ERIN. Which reminds me...thank you so much for inviting us over for Thanksgiving. Are you sure it won't be any trouble having three extra people around?

BETH. Of course it's no trouble! John and I are looking forward to it. And I'm sure Meredith will be thrilled to have Katie and Tara over.

(MEREDITH storms in, stage left, with KATIE and TARA trailing behind her.)

MEREDITH. *(shouting indignantly)* Mom!

BETH. Well, what do you know? There's my little angel now.

(turning to MEREDITH)

Meredith, honey? What have I told you about yelling in church?

MEREDITH. Mom, do you know what Davey Bryant did in junior church this time?! He had this little plastic baggie full of crumbs and another one full of black ants and he –

BETH. All right, Meredith. That's enough tattling for one Sunday.

MEREDITH. But, Mo-om!

BETH. Guess what? I've got some good news for you!

MEREDITH. (*sulking*) Unless the good news is that Davey's moving to Madagascar, I'm not listening.

BETH. Noooooo. But Mrs. Thompson, Katie, and Tara are coming over for Thanksgiving.

KATIE. Really??

MEREDITH. They are?? All right!

(**MEREDITH**, **KATIE**, and **TARA** run off stage right, excited.)

ERIN. (*laughing*) Well, that was sure a sudden change of heart.

BETH. Yes. That's one of the great things about children – they're easily distractible. At least, I know Meredith is. ...Now, what was I just about to tell you...?

(*with feigned realization*)

Oh! That's right. Where is my mind? Meredith must get that distractibility thing from me. I was *going* to tell you that John and I have also invited that new youth pastor, Pastor Brian, over for Thanksgiving dinner, too. I hoped you wouldn't mind.

(**BETH** shoots a sidelong glance at **ERIN**, trying to read her expression. **ERIN**'s expression never changes.)

ERIN. Of course not.

BETH. It's just that he doesn't have anyone to spend Thanksgiving Day with either. Poor guy. It must be hard being single in a church of mostly marrieds.

ERIN. (*laughing*) Tell me about it.

BETH. Oh, Erin! I'm sorry. There I go again putting my foot in my mouth!

ERIN. Don't worry about it. Most people don't think of widows as single. I suppose we're a little bit better off. At least I have my girls. Sometimes I don't know what I'd do without them.

BETH. (*laughing*) Well, with *my* girls, sometimes I don't know what to do *with* them. I haven't told them yet that Pastor Brian's coming to dinner because I just know Meredith will go crazy. She has this huge crush on him. You should see her face when she gets out of his Sunday school class; she practically glows.

ERIN. I know. Katie and Tara are the same way. In fact, I hear he has that effect on most of the little girls in that class.

BETH. I suppose I should be grateful. I mean, she *could* have a crush on a singer or a movie star or a professional athlete with green hair, six earrings, and a spike through his nose or something. At least the man she's looking up to is a man of God.

(**JOHN** bounds up to **BETH** and **ERIN** energetically, stage right.)

JOHN. Hey, Beth! Are you ready to go? The bus is waiting!

BETH. Oh, there you are, honey. I just invited Erin and the girls over for Thanksgiving dinner. I hope that's okay.

JOHN. Of course it is. You know my philosophy – the more the merrier!

BETH. (*whispering to ERIN*) That's why we ended up with so many kids.

(**DAVEY** enters stage right, strutting across the stage toward stage left exit. He is holding one of **TYLER**'s dress shoes. **JOHN** grabs him by the shirt sleeve as he passes by the group of adults.)

JOHN. (*good-naturedly*) Hey, there, Davey. Where do you think you're going? The bus is about to leave.

DAVEY. Oh. Hey, Mr. M. Hey, Mrs. M. I was just –

(JD storms up behind them, stage right. TYLER follows JD, hopping on one foot, his shoeless foot off the ground. JD grabs the shoe from DAVEY and hands it to TYLER, who quickly puts it back on his foot in embarrassment.)

JD. *(fiercely)* That is Tyler's shoe, Davey!

BETH. JD! Manners, please!

DAVEY. *(innocently)* Tyler?...Oh! You must mean "Cinderfella!"

(MEREDITH and LEXI enter stage right.)

MEREDITH. Mom! You should *see* the mess Davey made on the bus!

JD. Yeah. And then he stole Tyler's shoe and told him *he* had to clean it all up –

LEXI. *(loudly and shrilly)* And then he started running around singing, "Cinderfella, Cinderfella, day and night it's Cinderfella!"

(BETH, looking slightly overwhelmed, cups her hands over LEXI's mouth.)

BETH. Lexi! What have I told you?? Indoor voice, please!

(BETH releases a pouting LEXI. DAVEY has been grinning and listening the entire time. JOHN turns to DAVEY good-naturedly.)

JOHN. Well, young man, it seems as though you've got plenty of energy and some to spare. I guess our kids just aren't used to – Hey. Wait a minute. I've got an idea. Davey, do you have any plans for Thanksgiving?

JD. Uh-oh.

DAVEY. *(grinning broadly)* Nope.

JOHN. Well then...how would you like to come over to our house for Thanksgiving dinner on Thursday?

MASTERSON KIDS. What?!?

DAVEY. Really?? Oh boy! That'd be great!

JOHN. Well then, we'll ask your mom about it when we take you home today!

MASTERSON KIDS. WHAT?!?

DAVEY. Wow! A real Thanksgiving dinner! Thanks, Mr. M!

(DAVEY runs offstage right. JOHN watches him run off, a smile on his face.)

JOHN. Nice kid.

(JOHN turns toward his own kids and finally notices them staring at him in shock.)

What?

(The kids explode in a flurry of loud and fast complaints.)

JD. Dad...Are you insane???

MEREDITH. You just invited Davey "The Bully" Bryant over to our house! To our house!!

JD. I hope you're not expecting it to still be standing afterwards.

MEREDITH. Our house! Where we all live!

TYLER. *(whining; near tears)* I don't wanna have to eat my socks!

LEXI. *(shrilly; louder than all the rest combined)* He can't come over to our house! He's a boy! A mean, stinky, yucky – !

BETH. Lexi!! Indoor voice!

LEXI. *(even more loudly and shrilly)* But this is my indoor voice!!!

ERIN. *(to BETH)* Uh...Beth? I'm sorry, but I'd better go find Katie and Tara.

BETH. *(apologetically)* Oh, Erin, I'm sorry. I hope we haven't scared you away from coming over for Thanksgiving.

ERIN. No. It's okay. We'll be there.

(The adults continue to "talk" silently while the kids confer.)

MEREDITH. *(under her breath)* You ought to be more worried about Davey scaring everyone away.

JD. *(to the kids)* All right, you guys. I think this calls for an emergency meeting of the Masterson kids. As soon as we get home!

MEREDITH. I'll see if Katie and Tara can come over, too. If they're going to be here for Thanksgiving dinner then *they'll* have to suffer through Davey too. They should come to the emergency meeting.

JD. (*grimly*) Sure thing. We're going to need all the help we can get.

(The adults finish "talking" and ERIN exits stage right with a good-bye wave to BETH. Suddenly, BETH turns to JOHN, a confused look on her face.)

BETH. John?

JOHN. (*playfully*) Yes, dear?

BETH. Didn't you say the bus was ready to go?

JOHN. Yep. Ready and running. All the kids are waiting.

BETH. (*slowly*) Well, if we're all in here...who's waiting with all those bus kids out there?

(There is a moment of silence as the MASTERSONS stare at one another in horror.)

(SOUND: Loud bus honking)

(The MASTERSONS run offstage right.)

(Lights fade.)

End of Scene

Scene Two

(SET: The Mastersons' barn; Sunday afternoon)

(Lights rise. The scene opens in confusion, all the kids talking, shouting, and whining at once, complaining about what will happen if Davey comes over. Suddenly, JD jumps up on a hay bale.)

JD. Okay, okay, everybody calm down! I call this meeting of the Masterson kids to order!

KATIE. The Masterson kids and guests.

JD. Right. The Masterson kids and guests.

(The kids all take up seats on nearby hay bales while JD remains standing.)

All right, guys –

KATIE. And girls.

JD. Right. Guys and girls ...

(releasing a deep breath; dramatically)

We...have a serious problem here.

MEREDITH. I'll say!

JD. In just four days, our house will be invaded. By none other than –

LEXI. *(shrilly)* Martians?!?

TYLER. *(fearfully)* Martians??

JD. No!

TYLER. But you said we were going to be invaded!

JD. *(frustrated)* By Davey, you guys! Davey "The Bully" Bryant!

TYLER. Oh.

MEREDITH. I think I'd *rather* be invaded by Martians. At least then our house would be taken over by *intelligent* life.

JD. Okay, we're getting off the subject, guys.

KATIE. And girls.

JD. Right. Guys and girls. Okay. What my question to all of you is – what are we going to do about Davey?

(There is a moment of concerned silence.)

TYLER. *(softly)* If Davey's coming over here, I'm going to stay in my room and not come out the entire day.

MEREDITH. Tyler, you can't let Davey push you around like that! This is your Thanksgiving dinner, too!

(to the kids)

I say, we need to stand up to Davey!

(turning to TYLER)

Besides...don't you want any turkey?

TYLER. No. I'm too chicken.

JD. Look, I think we all agree that Davey Bryant is a problem that has to be dealt with. But I don't think we need to stand *up* to Davey. I say, we need to get *rid* of Davey.

KATIE. Okay. But...how?

MEREDITH. Yeah. How?

JD. *(thoughtfully)* Well, the first step is talking Dad into letting Davey come over a little early on Thanksgiving Day to "help" with dinner.

(turning to KATIE and TARA)

You two can come over early too.

KATIE. Thanks, but if Davey's going to be here, no thanks!

TARA. Yeah. No thanks!

JD. Oh, he won't be for long. Not if we can help it.

TARA. *(hushed)* What are you going to do?

JD. *(dramatically)* Come Thanksgiving Day, we're going to put on a little anti-bully campaign I like to call... "Davey Demolition Day."

MEREDITH. All right! He's gonna be sorry he ever set *foot* in *our* house!

LEXI. Yeah!

(The kids except for TYLER start drawing together into a huddle.)

TYLER. *(quietly speaking up)* Are you sure we can't just let the Martians have him?

(All the kids turn to look at TYLER. MEREDITH sighs and puts an arm around TYLER, drawing him into the huddle as the lights fade.)

End of Scene

Scene Three

(SET: Faith Baptist Church foyer; after the Wednesday evening service the day before Thanksgiving)

(Lights rise. JD, wearing a baseball cap, is standing at centerstage with MICK and RILEY. BETH is sitting stage right and upstage of the group of boys, looking over some papers.)

MICK. *(to JD)* Wow, man. I heard about Davey going over to your house for Thanksgiving tomorrow. Tough break.

RILEY. Yeah. I never thought I'd say this, but I am so glad I'm going to Grandma's for Thanksgiving.

JD. *(shrugging)* It's no big deal.

MICK. No big deal?? Aren't you worried he's going to smash all your stuff or something?

RILEY. Or burn down your barn?

MICK. Or blow up your house??

RILEY. *(slightly hysterical)* No, worse!...What if he eats all the pumpkin pie?!?

JD. *(smugly)* I don't think I'm going to need to worry about Davey Bryant. Because it just so happens that I've got a plan. A plan I like to call –

(DAVEY runs in, stage left. MICK and RILEY immediately look fearful.)

DAVEY. *(tauntingly to JD)* Hey! JP! Looks like I'm going to your house for Thanksgiving.

(DAVEY slings an arm around JD. The other guys inch away from him.)

(JD gives DAVEY a dirty look and shoves his arm off of him.)

JD. Yeah. Great. By the way, my name's not JP; it's JD.

DAVEY. JD? What's *that* stand for? Giant dimwit??

(DAVEY walks off stage left guffawing. JD, MICK, and RILEY exchange glances and then watch DAVEY leave.)

JD. I don't like that kid.

RILEY. Who does?

(DAVEY suddenly runs back in, stage left. He grabs JD's hat.)

DAVEY. Oh and by the way...thanks for the hat, PJ!

(DAVEY runs offstage left.)

JD. Okay. Now I *really* don't like that kid.

RILEY. *(patting JD's shoulder)* My condolences.

MICK. Yeah. It's been nice knowing you, man.

(RILEY and MICK exit stage right. JD heaves a sigh of frustration and marches off stage left. ERIN enters from stage left with KATIE and TARA in tow. She glances briefly at JD in concern as he passes them. Then ERIN crosses to BETH.)

ERIN. Excuse me...Beth?

BETH. *(looking up)* Oh! Hi, Erin. Hi, girls. What's up?

KATIE. The sky.

TARA. Birds!!!

(KATIE and TARA start laughing hysterically.)

BETH. *(smiling good-naturedly)* I should have known better.

ERIN. Sorry. They're a little...wound up. ...About dinner tomorrow ...

BETH. *(disappointed)* Oh no! Please don't tell me you can't come!

ERIN. Oh! No, of course we're coming! In fact, I think the girls are really looking forward to it.

KATIE. Yeah. Thrilled.

(ERIN gives KATIE a look and maneuvers KATIE behind her.)

ERIN. I was just wondering if there is anything that I could bring.

BETH. Oh! Well, aren't you sweet? Perhaps –

(PASTOR BRIAN steps in, stage left.)

PASTOR BRIAN. Uh, Mrs. Masterson? Sorry to interrupt, but there's a bit of a...heated dispute going on back in the youth room between some of the kids. Something to do with JD's hat?

BETH. *(with a sigh)* Not again. I keep telling him not to wear that ratty old hat to church.

PASTOR BRIAN. Also, I was wondering...is there anything you need me to bring to dinner tomorrow?

BETH. *(delighted)* Oh! Well, what do you know about that? *Miss Thompson* here was just asking me the very same thing! She's also going to be joining us for dinner tomorrow.

PASTOR BRIAN. Oh, great. Well, you know what they say...the more, the merrier!

BETH. Yes, exactly! That's what my husband always says!

(BETH begins crossing toward stage left, stopping to grab KATIE and TARA by the arms as she passes.)

Well, why don't you two talk it out between yourselves, and whatever you decide to bring will be fine by me! I'll just take the girls with me and we'll go see if we can't figure out what all the fuss in the back is about, all right, girls?

KATIE. *(suspiciously)* You're not trying to get *rid* of us, are you?

TARA. *Are you?*

BETH. Get *rid* of you? Of course not! Whatever gave you that idea?

(to ERIN and PASTOR BRIAN)

We'll be back in a bit. Ten minutes, fifteen, maybe...an hour. Take your time!

(BETH hustles KATIE and TARA offstage left. PASTOR BRIAN and ERIN look at one another shyly. There is a brief pause.)

PASTOR BRIAN. Uh...so...what are your feelings on pumpkin pie?

ERIN. Favorable. Especially when there's whipped topping involved.

(PASTOR BRIAN and ERIN, still "talking" silently, exit stage right. After a few moments, BETH peers in at them, stage left. She smiles happily. JOHN, walking up behind her, startles her out of her reverie.)

JOHN. What are you doing?

BETH. Oh! John! You scared me!

JOHN. Okay, Beth, what's going on?

BETH. (*innocently*) Nothing. I'm just...doing my Thanksgiving good deed.

JOHN. (*folding his arms, skeptically*) Uh-huh. You wouldn't happen to be meddling in anyone's personal affairs, now would you?

BETH. Meddling? No, of course not! I'm just... (*in a rush*) trying to get Erin and Pastor Brian together.

JOHN. Oh, no. Not again!

BETH. (*wounded*) What do you mean, "Oh, no. Not again!"? I've never tried to get them together before!

JOHN. You're right. You *haven't* tried to get them together before. And that's probably the only reason they're still speaking to one another.

BETH. John! That is so unfair.

JOHN. Unfair?? Don't tell me you don't remember all of your other church member matches gone awry.

BETH. Well...they didn't *all* go badly. What about George Schumann and Wilma Applegate? *They're* still great friends.

JOHN. Beth...he ran over her cat...on the first date! She wouldn't talk to him for nearly a month! And that was only after he went out and bought her a new Himalayan. Do you have any idea how *expensive* those cats are??

BETH. Well, what's one dead cat? She had fourteen others. Besides, "The course of true love never did run smoothly."

JOHN. Yes, I suppose that explains the Anita-and-Samuel fiasco. And Mr. Williamson and our *former* organist Miss Richards. Oh, and don't forget about –

BETH. Okay, okay. I get the picture.

JOHN. Face it, sweetheart. You're good at a lot of things, but...matchmaking is just *not* one of them.

BETH. Humph.

JOHN. Now, if we're going to have Pastor Brian and Miss Thompson over for Thanksgiving, I want you to *promise* me that you're not going to interfere in their personal lives, all right?...All right?

BETH. (*heaving a huge, disappointed sigh*) Fine. I guess I'll just leave them alone and let them stay miserable.

JOHN. (*patting BETH on the arm*) That's a good girl. You're doing the right thing.

(**JOHN** *peers past BETH toward stage right exit.*)

(*calling offstage*)

Lexi?! Honey, that's not our car! Now put down that antenna this instant!

(**JOHN** *hurries off stage right.*)

BETH. Well...*I* may not be allowed to meddle, but that doesn't mean the two of them can't figure out on their own how perfect they are for each other. And if it just so happens to be while they're at our house enjoying a lovely Thanksgiving dinner, well...so be it!

(**BETH** *cheerfully exits stage left.*)

(*Lights fade.*)

End of Scene

ACT II

Scene One

(SET: The Mastersons' dining room; Thursday morning)

(Lights rise slowly. There is a long moment of peaceful silence, and then JOHN suddenly bursts onto the scene from stage right and quickly crosses to centerstage.)

JOHN. *(calling off stage left)* Gooooooooood morning, everyone! Gobble, gobble! It's Thanksgiving Day! Get down here, you sleepyheads!

(LEXI bursts in from stage left, followed by a somber TYLER, a grouchy MEREDITH, and a sleepy JD.)

LEXI. Hi, Dad! Happy Thanks –

(LEXI comes to a sudden stop as she catches sight of JOHN.)

Aw, man! You're not wearing the turkey costume!

MEREDITH. Great. Then I've got something to be thankful about. Now can I go back to bed?

JOHN. Oh, come on now, Meredith. You don't *really* want to waste this beautiful Thanksgiving Day in *bed*, do you?

MEREDITH. Is that a rhetorical question?

JOHN. Now...I'm looking for volunteers! I need one person to come with me to go get Davey. The rest of you will stay behind to help your mother with kitchen duty. So...which one of you lucky little giblets wants to ride with me over to Jefferson Park?

(JD, MEREDITH, and LEXI look at one another and then turn to look at TYLER.)

TYLER. What??? Me?!?!!

JD. *(whispering)* You know the plan.

TYLER. *(whimpering)* But...but...but!...Do I have to??

JD. *(confidently to JOHN)* Tyler'll go, Dad.

JOHN. Great! Then let's get a move-on, little man. Hurry on upstairs and get dressed!

(With a pained sigh, TYLER trudges offstage left. JOHN rubs his hands together eagerly as JD and MEREDITH flop down into chairs.)

Okay! And while we're waiting, I think I'll pop into the kitchen and take a look-see at that turkey!

(JOHN exits stage left. As soon as he leaves, LEXI jumps up and begins to skip around the room singing "Turkey in the Straw," quietly at first, but growing louder and louder with each repetition. At first, JD and MEREDITH talk over her.)

MEREDITH. Have you ever noticed how much goofier Dad seems to get on holidays?

JD. Yeah. It is kinda strange, isn't it? This morning he came into my room and woke me up with a wild turkey call.

MEREDITH. That's funny. I thought Mom hid that from him last year.

JD. She did. I guess he must have found it.

MEREDITH. Well, it couldn't have been *too* hard. Mom's only got one hiding place.

JD & MEREDITH. Under the bed.

JD. Which, if you think about it, with all that other stuff she's got under there, it really does make a pretty good hiding spot. In fact, I bet –

(JD suddenly whirls to face LEXI.)

Lexi! For crying out loud!!

JD & MEREDITH. *(shouting; irritated)* Indoor voice!!

(LEXI stops skipping and turns to face them, screwing up her face.)

LEXI. *(even more loudly)* YOU MEAN *THIS ONE*?!?

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