



Elliot

From *Water by the Spoonful*

By Quiara Alegría Hudes

Age Range: Young Adult

Style: Dramatic, Contemporary

Monologue:

“My sister and I had the stomach flu, right? For a whole day we couldn’t keep nothing down. Medicine, juice, anything we ate, it would come right back up. Your co-worker here took us to the Children’s Hospital. It was wall-to-wall packed. Every kid in Philly had this bug. ERs were turning kids away. They gave us a flier about stomach flu and sent us home. Bright blue paper. Little cartoon diagrams. It said give your kids a spoonful of water every five minutes. A small enough amount that they can keep it down. Five minutes. Spoon. Five minutes. Spoon. I remember thinking, Wow, this is it. Family time. Quality time. Just the three of us. Because it was gentle, the way you said, “Open up.” I opened my mouth, you put that little spoon of water into my mouth. That little bit of relief. And then I watched you do the same thing with my little sister. And I remember being like, “Wow, I love you, Mom. My moms alright.” Five minutes. Spoon. Five minutes. Spoon. But you couldn’t sit still like that. You had to have your thing. That’s where I stop remembering. A Department of Human Services report. That’s my memory. Six hours later a neighbor kicks in the door. Me and my sister are lying in a pile of laundry. My shorts was all messed up. And what I really don’t remember is my sister. Quote: “Female infant, approximately two years, pamper and tear ducts dry, likely cause of death, dehydration.” Cuz when you dehydrate you can’t form a single tear.”

Play Synopsis:

The play begins with traumatized Iraq war veteran Elliot receiving the news of the sudden death of his mother, Ginny, and with him sharing the news with his musician cousin, Yazmin. As Elliot and Yazmin work through their own grief, cope with the grief of other family members, and struggle to make funeral arrangements that will please everybody, Ginny’s sister Odessa continues to run a pet project: an online chatroom that offers support for people, like her, struggling to recover from an addiction to crack cocaine. As the action of the play unfolds, it’s revealed that Elliot is himself addicted to painkillers, and that Odessa was his biological mother. Elliot continues to angrily blame Odessa for what happened, and when he reveals her past to a member of the chatroom community with whom Odessa was meeting in person, the guilt becomes too much for her and she relapses. Her subsequent re-use of crack leads to a near fatal overdose.

Purchase the Play Here:

<https://www.amazon.com/Water-Spoonful-Acting-Theater-Productions/dp/0822227150>