

(JAKE, a teen boy, stands next to a chair in a room--could be his bedroom. On the chair is a copious amount of rope, perhaps even a padlock or two. He locks the door. Throughout the monologue, he goes about the process of securing himself to the chair.)

JAKE

You're going to end up stealing saxophones from homeless people. My mother said this to me when I was three. I cried. I didn't even know what a saxophone was and I cried, because it didn't take knowing what a saxophone was to know this was a terrible thing.

(beat)

I know what she'd say--my mother who in her mind is never wrong. She'd say that by the time you're three, you're done developing. You are who you're going to be--at three. So she looked at me, took stock, and then projected a few years into the future.

(beat)

But she didn't have to say it. And what if she had it all wrong? Maybe I was growing up to be perfectly normal and then "why don't I start stealing saxophones from homeless people" just got planted in my head. It could be worse: the girl down the street--I'd hear her mother tell her every day, "You'll grow up to be a murdering psychotic who guts your family in our sleep with a butter knife and a pair of knitting needles." Her mother was wrong about the knitting needles.

(beat)

My Dad was no help. My Dad only shows up in my life in moments. Highlights. My first step--he comes the week after. My first word--he leaves work early and waits outside in his car. "You're going to end up stealing saxophones from homeless people." My Dad is standing right there for that one. Does he say, "No, he isn't" or "honey, you're wrong"? I'd have settled for a "you can't know that for sure." But my Dad stands there, absent again, and I'm three, and my mother has just changed my world.

(beat)

If my Dad had said something. If he had said anything, this never would have started. But he didn't--and it did. When I was five. Not with a saxophone. Not with a sleeping man living out of a bag huddled on the street with a saxophone at his feet. It never starts that way. It always starts with something small. Something that seems harmless.

Want to read the rest of the play? Click the back button on your browser and follow the instructions for ordering a perusal copy!