

Remembering Davy Crockett:

An Unabridged Play Written & Revised by David Joseph Marcou. Copyright 2007-2013+, David Joseph Marcou. The World-Debut of DJM's Abridged Version of RDC Was Performed as a Community Event by the Mercury Matthews Players, Fri.-Sat., April 20-21, 2012, 7 PM, Aquinas Schools' Campbell Theatre, La Crosse, WI.

For our troupe's extended family & audiences, & the memory of Davy Crockett & Charlie Casberg.

Starring: Steve Kiedrowski as Davy's Old-Friend.

Playwright, Director, & Producer: David Joseph Marcou (CEO, Mercury Matthews Players).

Narrator & Assistant Director: Rourke Decker.

Newsboy: Danny Skifton.

Sally: Katherine Gentner.

Singers: Claire Olson & Nina Newton.

Script-Consultants: Steve Kiedrowski & Rourke Decker.

Lighting and Sound Technician: Paul McGettigan.

Set Design: Mark, Jean, & Bobbie Smith, & Steve & Deborah Olson.

Costume Design: Steve & Deborah Olson, Steve Kiedrowski, & Cast.

Aquinas Schools (AS) Principal: Ted Knutson.

AS Custodial Staff: Craig Lysne & Dan Kammel.

AS Admin. Staff, Especially Kurt Nelson, Rudy Nigl, Stephen Murray, & Christine Gongaware.

AS Theatre Director: Peter Bosgraaf.

AS Technology Teacher: Paul Callan.

Production Assistants: Mary & Kate Temp, & the Decker Family.

Business Advisers: David A. and Rose C. Marcou.

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Sponsors: Bp. William Callahan & the La Crosse Diocese; Patrick Stephens & Irishfest-La Crosse; Rev. Roger Scheckel; Matthew A. Marcou, Jessica Amarnek; Dennis A. Marcou & Polly Smith; Dan & Vicki Marcou; Tom & Joy Marcou; Diane & Robert "Rocky" Skifton; Lynn Marcou & Tyler Sattler; Mary & Kate Temp & Paul Frederick; Charles & Christine Freiberg; Prof. Roger & Charlotte Grant; the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration & the School Sisters of St. Francis (for Their Prayers); Zita Pretasky; Plus a Very Gracious Anonymous Sponsor.

Research: Kelly Krieg-Sigman, Anita T. Doering, Rochelle Hartman, & La Crosse Public Library/Archives/Reference Staff; J. Nelson, A. Kraushaar, H. Knies, S. Dorst, J. Lathrop, & the Entire Wisconsin Historical Society Staff; David

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Action: *(The Disney-Fess Parker "Davy Crockett" movie-theme plays, as the audience enters. When the show is set to begin, a soloist sings Verses 1 and 2 of "Shenandoah". The Narrator then enters.)*

Narrator *(In 19th century gentleman's garb):* Welcome. Stories about the famous frontiersman Davy Crockett have been plentiful. Davy set out for Mexican Texas, after losing a Congressional election in 1835, having sworn he'd leave, if he lost then. He fought bravely at the Alamo with the likes of Jim Bowie and William Travis, but despite the valiant efforts of the severely outnumbered Texans, that old Mexican Mission fell, on March 6, 1836. Soon after, Sam Houston's Army of Texans decisively defeated General Santa Anna's Army at the Battle of San Hasi-toe, renewing Davy's fame. Our setting is a village inn, somewhere in the United States, on July 4, 1876, our Nation's Centennial.

Old Man *(Man in bed awakens, speaks outright):* Gotta shake these cobwebs out of my head, and get on with the business at hand. *(Sits on bed's edge, sees audience.)* Well, hello all you good folks. Glad you could stop by for a visit. I'm an old wilderness frontiersman, old as Adam, and you're probably wondering why I'm up here all alone.

(Rises, hobbles on cane, stops, views audience closely, speaks outright.) How all you folks feelin' tonight? Me, I'm fair to middlin' myself. But I often think of what my good friend Davy Crockett said, "Remember these words when I am dead. First be sure you're right, then go ahead."

(Hobbles to desk, standing, touches papers, speaks outright.) Now, I've written some things for you, and I need to read 'em. Y'know, I'm nearly 90 years old, and my memory ain't what it was. Let's see, if you folks'll speculate a little with me, what do you think Davy would say today, if he were still alive – about the Alamo and such? Well, I consider myself what you'd call a – historian – and have some skill at determining these things. It's sometimes said that old people know a lot, but one thing I know for sure: I need to make peace with myself and history, before it's too late.

(Sits, reads aloud from manuscript.) "This is not a tall tale – just a true one – though there were at least a few tall tales written in the Davy Crockett almanacs published a while ago. Those almanacs helped make Davy into what you might call an American folk hero. But there's a lot more to the real Davy Crockett than tall tales.

(Reads aloud.) "I knew my friend David, or Davy, very well. I called him 'DC', for his initials. I remember we talked, argued, and laughed a lot in Tennessee. Sometimes we even cried together, because Life isn't always fair. It's even downright sad, sometimes. At other times, it's more joyful, and that's what people most live for, though it's funny -- folks sometimes cry then, too.

(Reads aloud.) "DC fought under General Andy Jackson in the War of 18 and 12. Our Cherokee allies from back then, appreciated Davy's vote against the Indian Removal Law of 18 and 30, a law President Jackson backed, which was passed, despite Davy's vote against it. In the 'Trail of Tears', the Cherokee had no shoes or moccasins for the march from the East Coast to Oklahoma, and their blankets came from a hospital riddled with small pox.

(Reads aloud.) "Now, only a few folks know that Davy, who'd been a Lieutenant Colonel in the Tennessee Militia, felt it his duty to save

President Jackson's life in 18 and 35, even though they weren't the best of friends. A crazed painter shot at the President during a funeral in the Carolinas, but his two derringers misfired. Davy tackled Richard Lawrence, and took his weapons. Andrew beat the man with his cane.

(Reads aloud.) “Davy and the men used to volunteer for war, fight like hell, then volunteer to go home, to plant fields and harvest 'em. DC served God, Wife, and Government -- not always in that order. When Jim Bowie wanted Davy put in charge over William Travis at the Alamo, DC said, 'I'm alongside you fellas. I'm not above you.' Bill Travis died as the Lieutenant Colonel in charge there, shot through the forehead while he manned a cannon. Davy was listed as a Private in the Texan Army, but what a splendid Private he turned out to be.”

(He lights pipe, speaks outright.) Don't know why I still light up this old thing. Reckon it could kill some folks, quicker'n lightning. Ain't killed me yet, though, thanks to the grace of God and some good luck.

(Reads aloud.) “DC owned a few slaves, but treated them decent -- considering they shouldn't have been slaves to begin with. His first wife, Mary, died young of malaria, and his second wife, Elizabeth, was a business-woman and matriarch, who tried to keep Davy out of debt.

(Reads aloud.) “DC had contracted malaria, too, fighting Indians in 18 and 14. His Indian allies said he would die, and he was left by the roadside to do just that. Later, after recovering, but having been reported dead, Davy said, 'I knew this was a whopper of a lie, as soon as I heard it.'

(Reads aloud.) “Abraham Lincoln admired Davy. Both men had a sense of humor. When Abe was asked why he blacked his own boots, then-President Lincoln retorted, 'Whose boots do you think I black?' Abe also shared DC's backwoods spirit, calling Davy an 'honest American'.

(Reads aloud.) “DC wrote of tough times -- surviving bears, snakes, Indians, and alligators. Once, he waded through icy waters, fetching gun-powder to feed his family. Nearly busted a gut with that keg. He'd have drunk it, if it had ale in it.

(Reads aloud.) “The good folks of Pennsylvania gave Davy a rifle in 18 and 34 – gold-inscribed. Still, DC once said, 'Fame is like a shaved pig with a greased tail. It's only after it's slipped through the hands of thousands that some fellow, by mere chance, holds on to it.'

(Reads aloud.) “Davy liked freedom – fame a while, too. One tale says President Jackson commissioned him to wring the tail off Halley's Comet – every word's true, unless it's false.”

(Speaks outright.) But why tell you Davy's story, when there are many other good things to do? – like fireworks, bicycles, iron-horses, baseball, and typewriters invented in Milwaukee, a city known for its beer! I once rode on an iron-horse – that was fun, and a lot faster than my mounts used to be. *(Sips.)* Still like my dark ale, in any case. But if you combine riding on an iron-horse with too much dark ale, I'll wager you come by a very painful head-ache, or a convulsive stomach-ache.

(Reads aloud.) “Davy was away from home often, a real trailblazer, just like Daniel Boone. Frontiers need talented men and women who take smart risks. He came from good French-Irish-Scotch-English stock – the family name used to be De Crocketagne. His ma was a Hawkins – Rebecca was her given-name. The Crocketts came from the area in Scotland where the ancient Picts lived. Named for their fearsome tattoos, the Picts were the only British tribe Caesar's Army couldn't conquer.

(Reads aloud.) “DC once visited New York to address the New York Stock Exchange. But he visited an area there, too, known for its brothels. Davy generally thought Irishmen were gentlemen, but he said about the Irishmen in that area, that they were 'too mean to swab hell's kitchen'. That's where the term 'hell's kitchen' came from in New York, from Davy Crockett.

(Reads aloud.) “DC didn't carry his rifle Old Betsy for nothing. But our leaders? Quite a few of them would rather send others off to kill for them than fight wars themselves.

(Reads aloud.) “Most folks think they know about Davy's dying, after he'd killed many Mexican troops at the Alamo Mission. The Texans may have holed up there, to be near God. There were other reasons, too. But, 'Be sure you're right, then go ahead.'”

(Reads aloud.) “Davy had hunted for the Tennessee Militia, and fought like a tiger against the Red-Stick Creek Indians, who were allies of the British. When hunting, Davy had a grin that practically caused racoons to slide down trees to surrender. No wonder he liked coonskin caps, especially after he saw a stage-actor playing him in 'Lion of the West', wearing one.

(Reads aloud.) “DC was a long hunter, named for the long rifle, and for being in nature long periods. Well, you know how hunters get when they've been out in the wilderness a long time – they get downright whimsical. As a joke, it's said Davy sent his tamed mountain lion into camp one night, giving a good scare to his men. One fella ran up a tree, as if that'd help him escape most cougars!

(Reads aloud.) “Back home, Elizabeth got tired of Davy's drinking, womanizing, and risk-taking. In fact, she got tired of what you'd call his being a man's man, and left him. What she wanted was a man to stay home and farm, like her pa. Davy always thought they'd reunite.

(Reads aloud.) “When criticized for being wayward, DC told the critics he'd never committed adultery, since he'd never run off with a married woman who wasn't willing; always planked down cash, to pay his debts; and no matter how much whiskey he drank, he never got drunk.

(Reads aloud.) “Then came the Election of 18 and 35. DC told voters, he'd serve them well in Congress, but if not re-elected, Davy said, 'You may all go to hell, and I will go to [Texas](#)'. And by God, he did. DC said, 'I'd rather be beaten and be a man than be elected puppy dog.'”

(Reads aloud.) “Everyone knew Davy. But in 18 and 35, he said he felt like a foreigner, and figured to help start a new nation, in what's now the Lone Star State. He lit out for the territories, like Mark Twain would. Davy headed towards the Alamo, ol' San Antone.

(Reads aloud.) “On the way, he visited Little Rock, Arkansas, and was praised as a hero. Folks swarmed to meet him at a big dinner, where he spoke about Independence.

(Reads aloud.) “As for Santa Anna, Mexico's dictator, he'd tried Independence from Spain, but turned Royalist. He called himself the 'Napoleon of the West'. The first time DC spied the blood-thirsty brute wearing a feathered hat, Davy said, 'He's quite the peacock.'

(Reads aloud.) “Davy was as bold as a badger, with a hawk's eye. DC said: 'I can run faster and shoot straighter than anyone, speak as well as any speaker, dive deeper than any diver, plus my father can whip any man in the county and I can whip my father.'

(Reads aloud.) “DC was real independent. He said, 'Look at my arms. You will find no party handcuffs on them.’”

(Hobbles to the bed, sits, speaks outright.) It's no fun getting old. Well, at least I'm still vertical, for now. What did Ma always used ta say, kinda feisty-like? “Sit up straight, Mister, or your back'll cripple ya before the gout.”

(Rap-at-door. Man stays in bed, speaks outright.)

Old Man: Come in. Oh, hi Danny. Got my newspaper?

Danny: Yes, Sir. Two cents. *(Hands man newspaper.)* Oh, and here's a note I'm supposed to give you. *(Hands man 5x7 note. Man pays two cents plus tip.)*

Old Man: Keep the change. You're a good lad.

Danny: Thanks, Sir. You're all right, too.

Old Man: Y'know, Danny, Life's kinda short, so look up and have fun while you're walking around upright. There's a lot to enjoy in this world, and news-papering is one thing you might want to do more of, writing I mean. Ever thought about it?

Danny: A little, Sir, but first I've got to get through school, which ain't easy. But I do like the people who work on newspapers. I guess I'm one of them already, so maybe the next step up wouldn't be bad.

Old Man: I may need the services of a good young reporter, in the future, to help spread my story around the country. Someday, you could be that good young reporter.

Danny: I hope so, Sir. You've always been good to me. Maybe I can do that job for you someday.

Old Man: Thanks, Danny. I'll see you again soon. And say hi to your ma and pa for me.

(Danny says "I will," waves, and exits.)

Old Man *(Reads note to self, refers to it with audience.)* We'll talk about this later.

(Studies newspaper.): Now, let's see what's going on in the newspaper, in 18 and 76. Not much, only it's THEE United States Centennial, today. Hallelujah! *(More.)* Oh, it says Jim Tronkey got hitched. 'bout time. He's 57 years old, for God's sake! Jim's having a big nest-egg doesn't hurt.

(Looks farther into newspaper.) It says here a group of ladies are declaring their rights today, led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony. They want the vote. I hope gentlemen agree with them.

(Still reading from newspaper.) Oh, the paper's predicting rain for tomorrow. That means it's going to be sunny, so I can go see one of those baseball games everyone's talking about.

(Puts newspaper down, rises, hobbles to desk, speaks outright.) Now, baseball is a game that's catching on with America. You can pack a picnic lunch, and take the whole family. I'm learning more about the game all the time – double-plays, hitting 300, stuff like that. If I was two years' younger, I'd be playin' it myself.

(Sits at desk, reads aloud from his writing.) “Y'know, DC had some hillbilly in him -- though for a hillbilly, he sure traveled to a lot of interesting places. When he and his sons came home from hunting, he'd break out his fiddle, after a big meal. Me and the ladies would dance. Davy even taught ME how to fiddle.

(Reads aloud.) “At the Alamo, Davy played in contrast to the far-off Mexican Army musicians, while the few brave Texans and a couple Mexican-Texican allies, held out, inside. I'll wager he played 'Shenandoah'. If anyone's fiddle would stop a bullet, it'd be Davy's.

(Reads aloud.) “It's said Alamo messengers were sent out for reinforcements, and that Davy was allowed to negotiate for peace with Santa Anna, if it could be arranged. An 8-year-old boy, Enrique Esparza – whose Texas-sympathizing Mexican father was killed in the battle, but whose mother, siblings, and he were allowed to live – said later that Davy was known as Don Benito, meaning the Blessed One. He said he could tell which Texan was Davy by his black whiskers. The boy didn't say he saw Davy dead, after the battle. A Mexican judge in San Antonio, named Jose Francisco Antonio Ruiz, claimed he saw DC's dead body, that he helped dispose of Mexican dead, and also helped burn the Texan dead. Judge Ruiz counted 182 dead Texans.

(Reads aloud.) “Anyway, when DC returned from the talks, he spoke to the Texans and asked if they agreed to Santa Anna's terms. The Mexican leader had promised he'd spare the lives of all surrendering Texans, but kill all Mexicans who sympathized with the Texans. The so-called 'Coward of the Alamo', Louis 'Moses' Rose, said later, that then Bill Travis drew his famous Line in the Sand, and said for anyone who stayed, it was “Liberty or Death”. Having served before under the real Napoleon, including the March on Russia, Moses was the only man in the Alamo to choose certain life. He was told he could leave, and jumped over the wall, using the lane of escape Santa Anna had temporarily opened. Moses had fought bravely at the Alamo for 10 days, but observed the Mexican Army and its maneuvers. He knew there'd be no escaping that siege, and wasn't ready to die yet. He started another life back East.

(Reads aloud.) “The Texans said Santa Anna was lying, and if they were to die anyway, they'd die fighting. Reinforcements never came. At that Mission, on March 6th, 18 and 36, Mexicans outnumbered Texans at least 7-to-1. Some say the final attack lasted an hour, some say longer. Santa Anna's secretary, Senor Caro, that's an interesting name, wrote: 'Every enemy-man died, 183. Among the Texans at the Alamo were five wounded, taken to Santa Anna, who ordered his men to kill them. He turned his back, and the five were killed.'

(Reads aloud.) “Today, it seems an outrage to humanity. But, it might as well have been Leonidas and his 300 Spartans that Santa Anna ordered killed, along with the 300-some Texans he ordered executed on the road from Goliad, on Palm Sunday, 1836, because the Alamo's 183 Texas troopers just aren't going to be forgotten, for fighting like over-the-top Rangers the day the Alamo fell.

(Reads aloud.) “Soon after, on April 21st, Sam Houston's Texans won the war in 18 minutes. Santa Anna had thought his Army safe, posting no sentries for the afternoon siesta. Many Mexicans died then, but 700 were captured, alive. As the story goes, a mulatto woman, I don't recall her name... Emily... or Sally -- last name... West... or Morgan maybe – she kept Santa Anna occupied shall we say, while the Texans crept up and attacked at San Ha-sin-toe. Later, that lady was called, 'The Yellow Rose of Texas,' which is where the name for the song comes from.

(Reads aloud.) “Davy must have been afraid, but he didn't sit around and mope. DC did many good things. He even wrote an early book. Critics say it's more humor than truth. I think it's skillful in both ways.

(Reads aloud.) “DC once won a shooting contest with skill and wit. Davy was the only man to hit a perfect bull's-eye, then said he'd repeat it. He went up to find where his second ball landed. No one else saw it on the ground. DC secretly popped it on top of his first ball, and won!

(Reads aloud.) “His pa was tough. Some folks'll tell you to 'Eat a rock', to give you strength. John Crockett fought in the American Revolution, and was a strong member of the Over-Mountain Men, who defeated the British at King's Mountain, on the border between the Carolinas.

(Reads aloud.) “Davy spent many nights, thinking up ways to keep his pa from punishing him. He even ran off for three years as a youngster – he had beat up a school bully, and feared he'd be whipped for it. When DC returned, sister Betsy threw him a big welcome-home party.

(Reads aloud.) “His pa then had him work for John Kennedy, a farmer who was owed money by the Crockett family. DC could shoot, ride, tote, work, and play. Was eloquent too, like President Lincoln, and Jesse's son, King David.

(Reads aloud.) “But Davy didn't like farm-work as much as wilderness-work. Once, a farmer kidnapped him, to force heavy labor on him. DC escaped, walking seven miles in two hours, in knee-deep snow.

(Reads aloud.) “Just as dramatic, escape-wise, were the twisters 'n' quakes in Tennessee. It seems someone always watched over Davy's brood. It's true -- 'There are no non-believers in storm-cellars or foxholes.’”

(Sips ale, speaks outright.) Ooohhh, I sure do like my dark ale. Too much. You know why they call it ale, don't ya? It's good for what ails ya. Jim Bowie told me that.

(Speaks outright.) Maybe I should tell you -- I kind of have a gal, Sally. She's fairly young, and likes yellow roses. First time we met, I gave her one. Haven't seen her in a while.

(Reads aloud.) “About Davy’s book, it foretold Mark Twain's works. Yep, Realism and Humor – or hard work and dreams. Y'know, even a simple farmer's or laborer's sense of humor can surpass the Queen of England's, though the Queen pays more for her writers. Mr. Twain steered riverboats, prospected for gold, reported the news, and became the author of America's best books. Never read a funnier springer-bites-the-dust story than 'The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County.’

(Reads aloud.) “There's also Realism in President Ulysses S. Grant. He didn’t like war in the 1840s, but helped end slavery later. I still dream of troops on their mounts, coming home through the hills by night,

torches in front, like a river of flame. 'course, if the Great Compromiser Henry Clay had lived 'til 1861, there likely wouldn't have been a War Between the States. And the slaves would have been freed, sooner or later. Slavery isn't the highest human state; freedom is. Yes, God lends rhythms to Life – for the things we have, don't have, then have again.

(Reads aloud) “In Washington, Davy was a doer of good deeds, not only a talker. His ideas about treaties and land-use still make good sense today. The rest crave re-elections and payment royally for taking trips with taxpayers' money. I wouldn't give a plug-nickel for but two Congressmen, one of them Davy. The other one might be here tonight.

(Reads aloud.) “Davy said the worst ticks is poly-ticks. The widow of a veteran who'd worked long after the war, wanted Government money. Davy said Congress shouldn't pay her from taxpayer-funds, but offered a week of his own salary, if his associates did the same. The bill died.

(Reads aloud.) “Another time, fellow Congressman Mitchell referred to Davy as 'The Gentleman of the Cane'. That was part-derogatory, about DC's coming from the backwoods, where sugar-cane flourished. Davy tried to retrieve an apology from Mitchell soon after, but wasn't satisfied, so later that day, DC spoke in Congress, wearing the cambric ruffle, a fancy shirt-decoration Mitchell usually wore. Davy wore it, not on a dress-shirt, but on his coarse, homespun shirt. This had the desired effect, bringing laughter down on Mitchell. From that day forward, Davy wore the title 'Gentleman of the Cane' as a badge of honor.

(Reads aloud.) “Now, Davy wasn't a regular church-goer, but he did read his Bible. Inspired by St. Matthew's Gospel, Davy re-phrased what Jesus had said in it: 'When I've seen a person suffer, I've been more anxious to relieve them than myself. It's never left my heart empty of things money couldn't buy, having fed the hungry and covered the naked.'”

(Speaks outright.) Oh, about my own upkeep, I've lived here for years. I play a little music and the owner likes me. Plus older ladies say I'm kind of pleasant-to-look-at. Well, everyone's entitled to their opinions, even as the eyes start to go. But a young woman told me 40 years ago

that I wasn't hard on the eyes. I hope she'd say the same thing about me today.

(Speaks outright.) I went walking one day, and a little girl comes up. She says, "Hey Mister, aren't you the man who knew Davy Crockett?" I says, "Yes. Do you want to know more about Davy?" She says, "Nope -- I already know he's an American hero. I want to know more about you."

(Reads aloud.) "Folks still say, 'Remember the Alamo'. Davy was its star. Banners went up and much has been written. Songs are still sung and photographs made. I like the circus, but it's bittersweet when it leaves town.

(Reads aloud.) "DC didn't personally create the After-Alamo fanfare. Even if Davy had survived that battle, who'd want to be known as the only American-Texican to survive the Alamo? People might think you a coward, like Moses the Frenchman, who hadn't even stuck around for the final defense. Y'know, some old wive's tale says Davy wanted out of the Alamo so bad that he dressed up like a woman, and sneaked out. Well, only thing wrong with that is, DC was kind of tall, some say six-foot-four, and he would have made a pretty conspicuous 'no-way-that's-a-lady', even if he had shaved his beard."

(Speaks outright.) If you live to be 90, or if you're real lucky and make 100, folks'll remember you. 'course, Davy'll be remembered longer 'n most. Sometimes, the good die young. As for me, I hope I can shake another great man's hand, dance again with a lovely lady, and make at least 90. But the Lord lets you know what's next, as soon as it happens.

(Speaks outright, exiting.) Now, if you folks'll excuse me, I need to go into the next room and fetch a little more of my favorite ale. But please do stay in your seats, cuz this story has a big ending.

(Lights up on Narrator): This isn't an intermission, but a minute to think about what the old man's said. He's talked a lot about his old friend Davy Crockett, and knows the history pretty well. Some of it is

well-known to the public, but a lot of it isn't. You'll learn more, as we continue. We're two-thirds of the way through a good story.

(Instrumental march music for "Yellow Rose of Texas" precedes and follows a capella singing of that song's lyrics by a soloist.)

Old Man *(Lights up, he reads aloud from manuscript)* "Davy wasn't outwitted often. But maybe that school-bully let DC win, cuz he knew Davy would catch hell for it, soon-enough. We can question history, but what matters most is – who works hardest with decent skill and good luck." *(Speaks outright.)* And y'know, wits are big, but looks sometimes turn out to be bigger. DC always did have good looks.

(Reads aloud.) "It takes real faith to get to Life's next good place. It's said Davy knelt and prayed in the Alamo chapel, as Mexican troops began their final attack." *(Speaks outright.)* I should pray more. Couldn't inflame my rheumatism any worse. Sally goes to church regular. She's smart and pretty. I hope she sees sense in this.

(Hobbles to window, speaks outright.) Heck, I check this window every day, hopin' ta see a friendly face a-comin'. *(Nods semi-resignedly.)* Even I like pleasant surprises.

(Hobbles forward, speaks outright.) I recall some of my old friends had lots of family and kids around 'em. *(Tears up.)* Old friends... family... memories... puppy dogs... other things. It seems the heart is a lonely hunter. I wonder where my kids are tonight.

(Tears up, speaks outright.) It never fails. *(Stamps cane on floor.)* It never fails. When an old warhorse like me has nobody special nearby, he always remembers lost love and family. But you folks are like my own family now. That's why I'm telling you this story.

(Hobbles to desk, standing, picks something up, speaks outright.) I found somethin' the other day you might be interested in – my old school report card. I got an F in Arithmetic. It took me a whole term to figure out figures.

(Sits at desk, reads aloud from manuscript again.) “Now, right after San Ha-sin-toe, Santa Anna dressed as a lowly corporal to escape his defeat. When he was captured and brought in, other Mexican prisoners shouted 'El Presidente!' The Texans, or Texicans as they used to be called, knew they had caught their big fish then.

(Reads aloud.) “Santa Anna signed a treaty as Sam Houston's prisoner. He gave up Texas -- hundreds of thousands of square miles. There were very few Mexicans living there then. I guess Mexico would like to have Texas back today. But then, in some ways, maybe Mexico already has it back.”

(Speaks outright, identifying something.) I'd best tell you now that the real author of this manuscript I've been reading from is Davy Crockett. Its title is: “Davy Crockett: The Lion of the West.” In the middle of this story, DC changes his voice, and pipes up:

(Reads aloud.) “I, Davy Crockett, still live! Many think I died at the Alamo with Jim Bowie, a man's man. Now, Jim, he was quite a character. In the famous Sand Bar Fight in 18 and 27, Jim fought two men on a Sand Bar in the Mississippi River. He took a saber in the chest-bone – which had been pulled from a false cane -- plus two bullets, one in the stomach, but he ended up killing both men with his Big Bowie Knife. Jim was sick with pneumonia at the Alamo, but died fighting. When his ma heard he'd passed, she said, 'I'll wager there were no wounds found in his back.' Those brave soldiers had been surviving on sips of hope that didn't fully materialize. All those good men went to heaven just a-hollerin.”*(Tears up a bit.)*

(Reads aloud.) Davy continues: “I was one of those wounded captives brought in and ordered killed. One guard ordered by his officer, faked a saber stab to my heart. I played along. The guard moved me to a tent to change clothes and to heal from my battle-wounds. Those two Mexicans were Texas sympathizers.

(Reads aloud.) “Some historians say the enemy didn't know who I was, but another Texan-captive had told the friendly officer. A Mexican trooper later said he saw me executed. He may have been partly wrong

about my death, but I do appreciate the trooper adding that he'd forever associate the name Crockett with Courage.

(Reads aloud.) “Having been almost executed, I remembered what I'd said early in life, 'A government big enough to give you everything you want is big enough to take away everything you have.' But I guess, in the end, we get from good governments, what we most need from them.

(Reads aloud.) “After I had healed up, the friendly guard and I headed out, and met up with with Sam Houston’s Army. I changed clothes again. I couldn’t let Santa get his hooks in me anymore. Oh, did I say Santa? Well, Santa Anna, Santa Claus – they're both short and stocky.”

(Speaks outright.) Davy's story gets real interestin' here.

(Reads aloud.) DC writes, “I talked with Santa Anna again, during peace treaty negotiations that year. But when I'd first seen him, right after the Alamo, I'd said, 'I thought you'd be taller.' I also let him know he was dealin' with a screamer, cuz I wouldn't go down without a fight, if I went down at all. Later, during the peace-negotiations, in disguise, I befriended his interpreter, persuading the pair to give up Texas.”

(Reads aloud.) Davy adds: “From a Mexican friend, I got a copy of a diary of one of Santa Anna's officers, Lieutenant Pena, who confirmed on the record, that I hadn't been killed in battle, and was captured, though wounded. But he said I was executed, the one thing he was wrong about.

(Reads aloud.) “Now, to be more fair to the Alamo's record and its aftermath, a white woman, Mrs. Dickson, and a black slave named Joe, who were allowed to live after being captured there, testified to the Mexicans that they saw my mutilated, dead body near the chapel. I can see why both sides might lie a bit. The survivors, to protect me -- and Pena, to shed a bad light on Santa Anna, who wasn't real popular in Mexico afterward. Question is, in the famous vault of ashes that bears my name with other famous Texans, who was really buried there?

(Reads aloud.) “But the reason I went to Texas in the first place, then stayed, after I'd originally thought to return to Tennessee, was because I'd fallen in love with Texas, and wanted to be part of somethin' big. I even remember saying then, 'I may not have been born in Texas, but I got here as soon as I could.' My wife moved there later herself, dying in Texas. Our son Robert fought in the Texan Army, while son John served in Congress from my old Tennessee district.

(Reads aloud.) “Texas is now part of the Union, which is a very good thing. But folks won't always sit still, as leaders send men off to war, and too often, die. Wars can tear families apart. And about the only ones wars make rich are Army suppliers and their bankers. 'course, even those two monied-groups are made up of human beings, and all humans have at least a little goodness in them. It's just actin' on that goodness that's hard, sometimes.

(Reads aloud.) “Well, later on, as a lawman up north, I nearly killed an innocent man whose twin brother was a murderer, so I gave up guns. I still keep an old rifle that's just like my famous travellin' companion, Ol' Betsy, but I don't shoot her, anymore.

(Reads aloud.) “Next, I moved to Crockett, Texas. It's nice they honored my memory by naming the town for me. No one guessed the real Davy Crockett was in their midst. But this story reveals the true, positive spirit of me, Davy Crockett.”

(Speaks outright.) Is life worth living? Maybe it all depends on how you live it. Well, it seems Davy just didn't want to be a big “hero” anymore, after that famous battle. And neither did he want to be known as the “Other Coward of the Alamo”, for he'd escaped death there, not because he wasn't courageous, because he was, but because two Mexican soldiers happened to have heard of Davy Crockett before, and realized he was someone that just shouldn't be executed.

(Speaks outright.) So, Davy became more of an everyday good man. I guess he's sort of ridden off into the sunset, the way all true heroes should – happy and content they did their best for others and for themselves. Yep, I guess we needed to extend the history of Davy

Crockett today, because he deserves to be seen more completely – not as a loser, not even as the heroic last man, but as a brave man who did the best he could for his state, his country, and the world generally.

(Waves hand over manuscript, speaks outright.) Now, maybe you think I made all this up, but this manuscript is in Davy's own hand-writing. *(Rattles cane on desk twice.)* Dated 18 and 75. He wanted me to have it, and had someone leave it with me. Verify, before you trust. I'm turning over a new leaf tomorrow, by going to the newspaper to publish it.

(Speaks outright, points to steamer-trunk with buckskin jacket draped over it, rises, hobbles to bed.) I'll even wear my best buckskin jacket. A great Indian chief gave it to me. It looks pretty regal, doesn't it? I'm real proud of that jacket, because I'm a blood-brother with that chief.

(Speaks outright, now seated on bed.) Y'know, sometimes I sit and wonder, if someday men and women explore other planets, and this little ol' planet Earth is abandoned, what if this manuscript were the only writing left from Earth's history. Would future beings think much of it? Well, I'll leave that to future generations -- I guess they've got plenty on their plates to worry about already.

(Views newspaper) What else is in the newspaper, this Centennial Year? It looks like a man named Alexander Graham Bell has invented the telly-phone, whatever that is. And at the Philadelphia Centennial Fair, a new fruit was introduced, called the Banana. Never heard of it, but it could be good. Ya never know. Here's a story about the Government ordering all Indians onto reservations. And General George Armstrong Custer and all his men just met their Maker, at the Battle of the Little Bighorn. I wonder if they were playin' "GarryOwen", when the Seventh Cavalry bit the dust then. *(Views audience directly.)* What ever happened to the Golden Rule, anyway? *(Back to newspaper.)* Oh, in Sports, it says the Indian game of lacrosse was just introduced to Canada and Great Britain.

(Speaks outright.) Gee, I hope my heart will be able to enjoy the excitement my manuscript will bring to America and her neighbors, fingers-crossed.

(Picks up fiddle and bow from steamer-trunk, sets them on bed, picks up note from trunk, speaks outright.) They've asked me to play a little music, downstairs, this evening. After all, it's Independence Day! THEE One-Hundreth Birthday of this Great Country. And my newsboy Danny brought me a nice note from my gal -- "I'll meet you in your room, tonight. Love, Sally." I'd best be sprucin' up a little. *(He does self-check, straightens, views mirror, combs hair with comb, views himself in mirror a moment longer, speaks outright.)* There, at least you look better than you did a minute ago -- right, Davy?

(Sitting on bed, begins playing "Shenandoah", stops, tears up, wipes eyes, speaks outright.) What was it, I, Davy Crockett said long ago? "Let your tongue speak what your heart thinks." Those poor, brave men who died at the Alamo, on both sides... Don't know why I survived. I'm fessin' up, Lord – I'm fessin' up. I'm sorry for my sins, but Thank You for my Life, and Thank You for Remembering Davy Crockett. Now I can go home and be with my men again. At last, I'm free! *(Wipes eyes, lies down, puts fiddle/bow on his own chest, drifts off... Rap-at-door.)*

Sally: Mr. Crocketagne. Dave. It's Sally. I know it's been a while, but I've been looking forward to seeing you again. *(Tugs at his sleeve, checks breathing.)* Wake up. *(No reply.)* Am I too late? *(Puts single yellow rose on his fiddle, kisses forehead, makes sign of cross, tears up.)* Why'd ya have ta leave me now? *(Sees manuscript on desk, goes to it, holds it.)* What's this? *(Reads in it, amazed.)* Yes, this makes sense... D-a-a-a-vy Crockett. *(She sees a thing hid behind books atop furniture-chest, gets it, puts it on DC's face. It's a coonskin cap, tail toward audience. Spotlight next on Davy Crockett asleep, with Sally kneeling in prayer. In second spotlight, stage-center front, a soloist sings Verses 3 and 1 of "Shenandoah". After song, lights out. Curtain calls. Then cast/crew mingle with audience. Instrumental music from John Wayne's "Alamo" movie-theme plays, as people exit.)*

"Shenandoah" – (Verse 1) Oh Shenandoah, I long to see you,///Away, you rolling river.///Oh Shenandoah, I long to see you.///Away, I'm bound away,///cross the wide Missouri. (Verse 2) Oh Shenandoah, I love your daughter,///Away, you rolling river.///For her, I'd cross your roaming waters.///Away, I'm bound away,///cross the wide Missouri.

“The Yellow Rose of Texas” – (Verse 2) Where the Rio Grande is flowin' and starry skies are bright,///She walks along the river in the quiets of the night.///I know that she remembers where we parted long ago.///I promised to return and not to leave her so. (Chorus) She's the sweetest little rosebud that Texas ever knew.///Her eyes are bright as diamonds, they sparkle like the dew.///You may talk about your Clementine and sing of Rosa Lee,///But the Yellow Rose of Texas is the only girl for me.

“Shenandoah” – (Verse 3, Then Repeat Verse 1) 'Tis seven long years, since last I've seen you,///And heard your rolling river.///Tis seven long years, since last I've seen you.///Away, we're bound away,///Across the wide Missouri.

(BACK-COVER-ONLY) AUTHOR'S BIO

David Joseph Marcou is a playwright, poet, journalist, documentary photographer, author, editor, and the father of an Army Medic, Matthew. David's parents are David A. Fitzgerald-Marcou and Rose C. Muskat-Marcou. He graduated from La Crosse Aquinas High School (1968), UW-Madison (BA-1973), UI-Iowa City (MA-1978), and UM-Columbia (BJ-1984). He taught writing and photography 11 years for Western Technical College. So far, he's published more than 35 of his personal books, plus 13 anthologies he's directed-edited. His newest personal books include his online history of Britain's “Picture Post” Magazine, “All the Best”, “Human Character” (5 hardcover photo-volumes); and “The Tenacity of Pleasant Surprises” (4 volumes of his East Coast documentary photos). Books published with his son include “Images”, “Fame: Among the People”, “Shine and Rise”, “Vital Washington”, and “American Eyes”. David was La Crosse correspondent for 15 years for the “Milwaukee Journal Sentinel”, and has free-lanced for more than 40 years (in more decades, via his firm, 3M Communications). He was a journalist in London and Seoul in the 1980s, and has written his memoirs about living in each city. His writings/photos are in the Permanent Collections of the La Crosse Public Library Archives, the Wisconsin and Missouri Historical Societies, the Smithsonian (many SI Archives), and many other leading archives and art/historical libraries, including six National Libraries globally, and the British National Portrait Gallery. David has exhibited his photos in many one-person and group shows, including at the Smithsonian, e.g., in the recent group show at the SI National Museum of American History Archives Center, “Gift of the Artist”. “Remembering Davy Crockett” was his first “fully-produced” (abridged form) play, in April 2012. David wrote, directed, and produced RDC, and his cousin, Steve Kiedrowski, played Davy's Old Friend. RDC is part-fact, part-speculation, but includes Mexican Alamo-survivor accounts not used on-stage before. David's plays also include “Bloody Math” (about the 1970 Anti-War Bombing at UW-Madison's Sterling Hall, which killed young physicist Robert Fassnacht); “As Angels Do in Heaven” (based on the life of a star photojournalist for “Picture Post”); “Borderline” (set near the DMZ in 1986 South Korea); “Korean Love Song” (about a serendipitous meeting between a young Korean woman and an American journalist); and his sequel to a Sean O'Casey classic (“Juno and the Paycock”), “Song of Joy—Or the Old Reliables”. David is CEO of the Mercury Matthews Players, and of the American Writers and Photographers Alliance, whose anthologies (1993-2009) include the award-winning “Spirit of America” Series, “Spirit of Wisconsin”, “Spirit of La Crosse”, “Spirit of the World”, “America's Heartland Remembers”, “Light, Shadow, and Spirit”, and “The People Book”, with works by many famous writers and photographers included. A group of David Joseph Marcou's Op-Eds from 2010's “La Crosse Tribune” were nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in Journalism Commentary in 2011; and “Remembering Davy Crockett” itself was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in 2013.

