

## GLAD BAGS

by ALICE BASS

**GENRE:** Dramatic monologue

**SYNOPSIS:** While attempting to make a pair of earrings for a friend's birthday, a woman searches frantically for her lost "bag of hope."

**DIRECTOR'S TIP:** This monologue is a great example of a scene where the character's stage business (see definition) can convey as much as the words. For maximum impact of the message of this piece, you'll need to work to find the balance between speaking and doing or, in theatre terms, text and business.

**TIME:** Under 5 minutes

**CAST BREAKDOWN:** 1

**TOPIC:** Hope

**SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:** 2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 8:23-25

**CHURCH YEAR SEASON:** Any

**SUGGESTED USE:** Worship Service, Sermon Starter

**CHARACTERS:**

JULIE

**PROPS:** Beads, jewelry-making tools, a unique set of earrings

**COSTUMES:** Contemporary

**SOUND:** One wireless microphone

**LIGHTING:** General stage

**SETTING:** A small table in Julie's home

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www.DramaMinistry.com  
ISSN 1084-5917

Publisher: **Regi Stone**

Executive Editor: **Kimberlee Crisafulli** / Assistant Editor: **Scott Crain**

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*At lights up, JULIE is sitting at a small table, surrounded by beads and jewelry-making tools. She wears a unique pair of earrings. She is rummaging through stuff and finally slaps a pair of pliers on the table in frustration.*

**JULIE:** I just wanted to make a pair of earrings for Cindy's birthday present! Why can't I find any of the beads!

*She fingers the earrings dangling from her ear.*

Cindy always tells me how much she loves my earrings and I wanted to make a pair for her, just like mine.

*She looks at the earrings.*

These beads came from a bracelet my parents brought me from China. Jade beads on a red elastic string that came from near the jade market — “Not actually in the store, but quite near it.” I could picture a tiny, 300-year-old Chinese woman who grabbed scraps of jade from the real market to make elastic bracelets to sell to tourists. None of us were sure the elastic would last long, but it made it a year before an eight-year-old child, my child actually, tore it to pieces. Henry got mad at me, probably for a medium fries instead of a large, and when I reached into the back seat of our Olds Cutlass to pat his leg, he grabbed my hand and missed, taking hold of the jade bracelet instead. Circular beads flew everywhere. I scooped up what I could and made myself a pair of earrings. When the car was totaled I went through the seats and pulled out as many jade circles as I could find, probably twenty or thirty.

To make these original earrings I borrowed jewelry tools, went to the Macy's Outlet and bought broken necklaces on sale. Then I kept the bits and bobs in a Glad bag. That baggie of potential jewelry traveled with me through the two confusing years of my move to Texas, the failed business, and then the humbling journey back to my parents' house. All along that journey the Glad bag was hope — someday I'll turn all this colorful mess into something lovely. I took it out all the time to remind myself that I could make something nice out of what seemed like clutter.

But today I can't find the Glad bag.

Well...I guess I'll be late with Cindy's birthday present, no surprise to anyone I'm sure.

But that's not what's bothering me. I just can't get over that I've lost my Glad bag of hope. If I've lost the bag, then that is really a sad statement on how I treat my hope. But if I tossed it out, then at some point I decided I would never have the time, or inclination, or opportunity, or desire, or ability, to make something lovely out of my bag of colored hope. What a shabby way to treat my ziplocked heart. I don't want to do that to myself ever again. I want to be like what that Glad bag reminded me of — someone