

Enjoy these varied tales from the imagination of a lifelong writer. He will amuse you, frighten you, and take you to places you've never before imagined.

Some of My Stories

By Martin A. David

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The background of the cover is a photograph of a natural landscape. In the foreground, a waterfall flows down a dark, rocky slope. The water is white and frothy, contrasting with the dark rocks. In the background, a forest of tall, thin trees covers a hillside. The sky is bright, and the sun is visible, creating a lens flare effect that illuminates the scene from the top left. The overall mood is serene and natural.

SOME OF
MY
STORIES

MARTIN A. DAVID

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Print ISBN: 978-1-961266-23-0

Ebook ISBN: 979-8-88532-289-8

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Published by BookLocker.com, Inc., Trenton, Georgia.

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BookLocker.com, Inc.

2026

First Edition

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The Man Who Fell Apart

It was a Wednesday when his hand fell off. It just fell off and landed on the floor with a soft thud. He looked at it for a few seconds and then bent down and picked it up with his other hand.

It felt warm and moist. He studied it, turning it over slowly; a familiar object in an unfamiliar setting. He wasn't frightened, he was just curious.

“Damn,” he muttered in amazement.

The hand recoiled slightly. It looked so helpless.

“Disgusting,” he said. Then he got mad at it. It had served him well, solidly and firmly attached for almost seven decades. Somehow, he overlooked that record of faithful support and got thoroughly pissed at it.

“Fuck you,” he said into his open palm. His palm—he still thought of it as *his* even though it had fallen off.

The hand was defiant, downright sassy. It responded by curling three fingers downward and leaving the middle finger pointed skyward. The thumb remained neutral. Suddenly he had a *bad* hand. He was tempted to throw it against the wall. Instead, he put it back on. He stuck it in place and it stayed there. At first it was a little sensitive. He used it gingerly and with a great deal of circumspection. Then, little by little, he forgot about it—as much as one could forget about such a thing.

He didn't think of it a while later when his ankle went out. It left, took off, vamoosed, went AWOL—and took the whole damned foot with it. He was laid up in bed for a week until the foot was recovered and the ankle put in place. He limped for a while after that. When people asked

him what had happened, he told them, “Oh, my ankle went out and now I have a bad foot.”

He did think of punishing his bad foot for being bad but couldn't come up with anything appropriate. He eventually let it pass.

The process went on, sporadically, unpredictably. Nothing shocked him anymore, but new episodes always caught him by surprise. His eyes both went at the same time. He got hold of them before they rolled too far and was able to prevent further escape by always wearing his glasses in front of them.

His back went out one time and started doing all sorts of tricks—behind his back, as it were. So it went. There always seemed to be something wrong. Once, when he was downtown, a kidney popped out. He grabbed it before anyone could see it and stuck it in his jacket pocket. He hurried home. When he got there he took off the jacket and flung it in a corner. He went about his

business. Later, something made him think of it and he rushed back to find the kidney and put it in its place.

“That would have been something,” he thought, “if I had lost that somewhere.”

He had a sudden vision of his mother. She used to tell him, “You’d misplace your head if it weren’t attached to you.”

His head was still attached.

Not long after that, his head fell off. It just lay there with a silly expression on its face. A small, unimportant thing made it come loose, but once it started, it went all the way. He had a feeling he could just take hold of it and put it back on, but he didn’t. Somehow it was not an altogether unpleasant experience to be out to lunch, not home, out of his head, for a time. He got lots of attention over this one. People came and took care of him, made sure his needs were met, got him up in the morning and made sure his

clothing was on right (except for hats—he was not wearing any hats at that point in time.)

He didn't let his head get far away, though. He thought of his mother. He saw her gloating face coming back to haunt him if he really lost it.

“See I told you, you're always misplacing things.”

Eventually he got bored with this game and decided to bring it to an end. He managed to get his head on straight again and move forward.

For a while everything was fine. He held everything together. Even the days seemed to hang together. They connected, one to the other to make up weeks and, just as the neck bone is connected to the backbone, the weeks linked up to make months and the months piled on top of each other and formed a year.

The man who fell apart had no major losses to speak of. His hair, a few wisps at a time, packed

its bags and departed with absolutely no intention of coming back. Sizable chunks of memory either went their own way or hitched a ride with the hair. The eyes didn't wander any further off, but they often seemed to be more on vacation than on duty.

The winter came. The winter went. Sometimes things stayed and sometimes they left. Even when they stayed the parts became cantankerous and uncooperative. Time and again they just refused to work together at all. The man didn't know what to do. He tried to settle the disputes and disagreements the best he could and ignore the rest. He coped with the desertions and disappearances the best he knew how.

This business of keeping things together took more and more energy. Finally, he just gave up. He stopped holding it all upright like some precariously balanced stack of Chinese acrobats.

Predictably, when the man stopped monitoring everything, it all fell apart—hand, arm, back, ankle, kidney, eyes and head—all of it. Each went rattling off in its own direction.

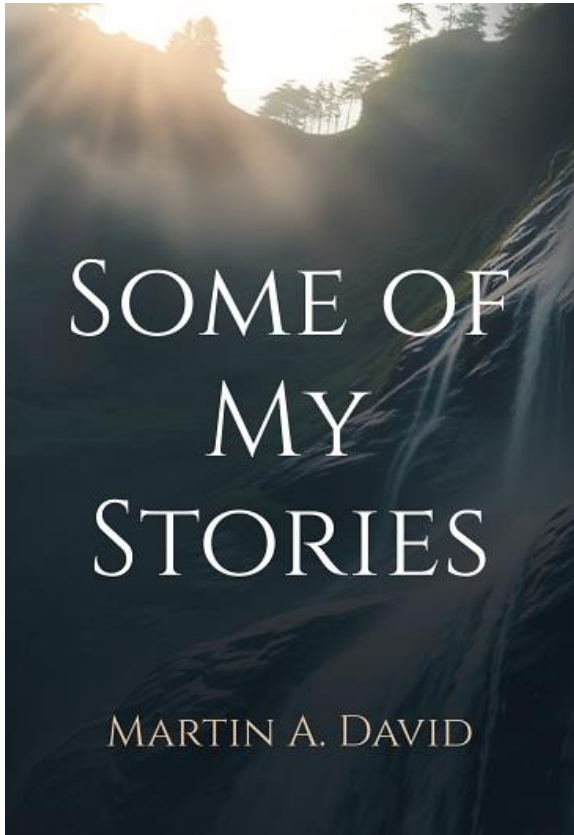
At the funeral, a distant relative who hadn't been around the man for a long time spoke to another, nearer, relative.

“It’s a shame. The last time I saw him, he seemed like such a healthy type.”

“He was,” answered the second. “He was—but then he just seemed to fall apart.”

About the Author

Martin A. David's professional history includes work as Journalist, educator, painter (he sold his first piece while still a teen), poet, dancer, choreographer, artist, editor, novelist, craftsman, jewelry designer, software engineer, cowboy, house-painter, migrant farm worker, and factory worker. He has also supported his community as an arts activist in capacities such as panelist, board member, and cultural commissioner.



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