

Life and Death, Laughter and Love

A Collection of Monologues

by
Dennis Bush

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ABOUT THIS MONOLOGUE COLLECTION

Step out of your comfort zone and take a creative risk with these 20 selected monologues. With a rich variety of strong characters, these short monologues were specifically written to challenge and inspire actors.

Playwright Dennis Bush says many of the monologues were based on remarks overheard at parties, in waiting rooms or while shopping. The characters emerge from observations. "Life stories can be spun from a vanity license plate, the contents of a shopping cart or a stranger's unexpected outburst, among other sources of inspiration," Bush explains.

He adds: "As you read through the monologues in this collection, imagine that you're at a party eavesdropping on the perspectives and life stories of an assortment of passionate, intriguing people."

Monologues for Young Actresses

(Some are easily modified for use by young actors.)

Daddy's Little Girl: *Loses her father to cancer.*

Unmarried to Barry: *Laughs her way out of her own wedding.*

Practice Escapes: *Reflects on her father's abandonment.*

Blind Dates and Bouquets: *Always a bridesmaid.*

You're History: *Tells her boyfriend to take a hike, forever.*

No Taking it Back: *Expresses her unrequited love.*

I Remember What You Did: *Confronts a man she hoped never to see again.*

Better Than the Best Ride: *Knows what friendship is.*

In My Dream: *Recounts a vivid dream.*

Voodoo and Cake: *Young, impulsive, demanding.*

Scary Visions: *Misses her grandmother.*

They Never Tell the Whole Story: *Her dad, the hero.*

A Lot of Hooey: *A determined old lady.*

Red Stuffing: *Late teens, a cutter.*

It Ain't a Lie but It Ain't Right: *A young mother's opinion.*

Monologues for Young Actors

(Some are easily modified for use by young actresses.)

How Much I'm Going to Miss You: *Speaks to his sister on her wedding day.*

Hip-hop Quandary: *Digs his new girlfriend.*

Make Peace, Not Doughnuts: *A peace-loving dude.*

Mick Jagger Spoke the Truth: *Wants a word from Mick.*

Front Page News: *Knows "fame."*

DADDY'S LITTLE GIRL

(29, Daddy's little girl, was a tomboy growing up.)

His said that he didn't want me to worry. He was the one who had just been diagnosed with cancer, and he didn't want me to worry. It had been almost a year since I'd seen him — I'd been living in California since I took the job at McKesson and he didn't like to travel. My mom had been out to visit, but dad couldn't be persuaded to get on a plane or sit in a car for that many hours no matter how much we tried.

I offered to fly back as soon as I heard he was sick. But he told me that was silly. I remember the lilting tone in his voice when he said, "Now, Meredith, don't be silly. You're busy with whatever it is that you're always busy with and I'm going to be fine, anyway, so there's no reason for you to come home and make everybody think this is worse than it is."

So, I didn't go see him. Not right away, at least. I called every couple of days and my mother usually gave me a whispered update on dad's condition. If he overheard her telling me anything too serious, I could hear him yelling in the background, "For God's sake, Joan, you'll have her a nervous wreck. Tell her I'm fine and there's nothing for her to worry about."

When I finally got some time off from work, I flew back home for a visit. My mom picked me up at the airport — she was actually offended that I suggested getting a rental car — and we made small talk all the way from the airport to their house. Just as we pulled into the driveway, she said, "He doesn't look like you remember him. But don't let him see you get upset. Do that much for him. Don't let him see you get upset."

Nothing she said could have prepared me for what I saw. He was yellow — jaundiced — from the chemo ... and he was so thin. He was sitting in his chair. My mom told me, later, that it

(Continued)

was the first time he'd been out of bed in three weeks, but he was determined to be sitting up so I'd think everything was all right. So, he sat in his chair and sipped a ginger ale and asked me about work. He told me he was glad his girl was home because he wanted to talk baseball and my mother was useless in that department. He wanted to know which players I thought had been using steroids. He had opinions on the off-season trades and Pete Rose's book. It wasn't like having a conversation with my dying father, it was like being a guest on some sports talk show on ESPN.

After that visit, I started calling every day to see how he was. One Friday afternoon, he got on the phone to tell me he was feeling better and made me promise to go out to dinner with some friends that night and drink a toast to him. I said I would, though I wasn't sure who I could round up for dinner with so little notice. He said, "I'm gonna go now, Meredith. I love you, you know." After work, I ended up getting take-out Chinese with a neighbor and, as promised, we drank a toast to my dad.

He died that night ... with picture of me in his hand and a baseball game playing on TV.

The End

UNMARRIED TO BARRY

(23, is relating the details of her recently unraveled wedding plans.)

(Giggling, looks forward, giggles more; it begins to bubble into an uncontrollable laugh.) I'm sorry ... I can't help it ... I really can't help it ... *(Dissolves into even more laughter.)* This is exactly what happened at the wedding *(Laughs.)* I ... just ... couldn't ... say ... I do

(Gradually the laughter is more controlled.) I've seen movies and TV shows where the bride leaves the groom at the altar, but it was always so dramatic. There was always shouting and tears. I think mine was the first wedding that got canceled because the bride laughed so much that she hyperventilated until she passed out.

It makes me think that wedding dresses should be made with a secret compartment that contains a paper bag. If I'd have had a paper bag to breathe into, I would have been able to stop hyperventilating. It might have helped stop the laughing, too.

But, then, I'd have been able to say, "I do" and ... I'd be married to Barry. I'd be Mrs. Barry Dingle. And I'd have a husband *(Begins to cry.)* whose listing in the phone book *(More crying.)* would be "Dingle, Barry." *(Full-out crying.)* and I couldn't handle that.

The End

End of Freeview

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