

You Don't Know Us

And Other Monologues
For Teen Voices

By Dan Kehde

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About This Collection

Monologues are traditionally used for auditions and classroom work, but they are an overlooked form of performance art, especially for teenagers. This collection brings this usually standard genre into the performance spotlight. Like two other collections by Dan Kehde, this one was developed and performed in what has now become an annual, and ever more popular, event at the playwright's theatre. Funny, hard-hitting, and poignant, these are honest portraits of young Americans searching for freedom, love and self-worth in the labyrinth of adolescence. (Performer's gender follows in parentheses.)

1. MY NAME IS BRITTANY (*female*)
2. 64 REASONS (*female*)
3. A FEW WORDS ABOUT GOD (*either*)
4. THE ARTIST (*male*)
5. I HAVE TO TRY IT (*male*)
6. DO YOU THINK I'M CUTE? (*female*)
7. FLEA MARKET FIND (*female*)
8. MY GARAGE (*male*)
9. WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE GAY AND IN HIGH SCHOOL (*male*)
10. GROWING PAINS (*either*)
11. I WANT TO BE PRESIDENT (*female*)
12. CLARISSE'S NIGHTMARE (*female*)
13. KARMA KID (*either*)
14. LEARNING CURVE (*female*)
15. LOVESICKNESS (*female*)
16. ADMISSION TEST (*either*)
17. MY LOVE LETTER (*female*)
18. ALAN WILKERSON (*male*)
19. ODE TO FROST (*female*)
20. ONE OF THEM (*female*)
21. HER FAULT (*male*)
22. THE SECRET TO YOUR SUCCESS (*either*)
23. THE TRUTH ABOUT JULIUS CAESAR (*either*)
24. WHEELCHAIR RAY GUN (*either*)
25. YOU DON'T KNOW US (*either*)

1. MY NAME IS BRITTANY

My name is Brittany, and I am an addict. It sounds easy, doesn't it? Nine words that changed my life. Yeah, nine, and don't think I haven't counted them. You can't have any idea what it's like to go to that first meeting ... and stand up ... and give it all up. You can't ... unless you're one of us ... you can't. But I've been going now since I was seventeen ... okay, that doesn't sound like much, but being clean for 15 months. I've heard what you think ... it gets easier after a while, right? No. Never. Every day....

Do you have any idea ...? Of course not. And I'm glad. You non-addicts will never really know, but, I think maybe you might like to understand. I'd hope so, so that when you hear about things like methadone clinics and Betty Ford ...? No, that's too easy, the folks who go to Betty Ford ... you can forgive movie stars and politicians. Most folks can't forgive fathers and mothers whose addiction has destroyed their families and jobs and homes, or kids who get in so deep that we've become our own worst nightmares. All addicts are dirty, right? I mean, why don't we help ourselves, right? That's what the meetings are there for ... all we have to do is go, right?

Look, this isn't an after-school special. The guys at our meetings ... we all got hooked. God, I hate that term. We all became addicted in different ways and to different stuff ... it doesn't matter whether its oxycontin, or heroine, or crack or crank or crystals or snow. Or whether we started with weed, or booze or just a pack of Camels. Don't go there. It doesn't matter. You're not going to stop it ... not like that. Not by cutting down the supply ... don't you get it? If it's not one thing it'll be another and if you eliminate all narcotics from the world, someone will just invent something new for us. There will always be folks like me in the world. We are. Live with it. Understand it. Please. At least try.

What's it like? Okay. It feels great. No, it feels better than anything you can ever do on your own ... better than any sex or being in love or the euphoria from doing the right thing, or even from believing you're in the presence of God.

You Don't Know Us

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When you're on, you're immortal, you're infallible ... you're God yourself. I know you don't understand. This is not like getting a buzz at a Dave Matthews concert ... this is like being the Dave Matthews concert ... owning it ... massaging it, playing over the heads of the crowd. All is so right, so well with the world. How could this be wrong? Everyone should do this. Don't ever come down. The world is great! And once you get there how could you do anything else except want to get there again and again and again and again. And everything in your body, your brain, your blood, your muscles, your senses of taste and smell and touch and hearing and sight, they all scream ... Brittany ... let's go there again. And how could anybody not want to do that? How could anybody not want to?

And suddenly that's all that's important. Getting back up there. Every waking minute ... and that's way too easy to say. Look, to an addict, there is no time, no life, no purpose to life - except getting back on that train. Don't you see? It's everything. Nothing I own has any value unless it can get me there. Can I sell it, or trade it, and yeah, or steal it? And stealing is one of those lines a lot of us don't ever cross. Except to steal from ourselves and our families ... our savings, yeah, that's first, and those checks you get in mail from the credit card companies Me? Dear Brittany, you've been pre-selected ... yeah, I sure have. And then the borrowing. There are guys in the program who went from one of those big houses on the hill and a wife and four kids to the shelter downtown and he still wouldn't give it up. You don't ever want to give it up ... I still don't ... none of us do. There is not an hour in any day of any week that I don't want to go back. Sounds crazy, doesn't it? I've been clean for 15 months, 13 days, 2 hours and 15 minutes and I would still jump at the chance.

A lot of kids stole from their folks. And their folks catch them, and yell at them and send them to a shrink and then force them into a program. You see, it doesn't work. How can anybody force you to give up being immortal? You know better. See, it's not the program that cleans us up, it's not, it's us. I never stole from my family. At least I didn't do that.

And I never really went on the streets, look at me, how much do you think I could get?

But I got real familiar with my supplier every once in a while, and I'm not proud of that.

So, where does a 15-year-old high school kid get that kind of money? You know I've stolen from almost every store in the valley and I've never gotten caught? I'm not proud of that either. For the record, there are a lot of you out there doing it, and we all know guys who make you think they're doing you a favor by buying the stuff from you. And I know it's easy, and I know the ten ways to spot store security just as well as you do, but don't do it. That's irony right? A short speech on morality from Brittany, your friendly addict. But the thing is, when you're an addict, morality is the last thing on your mind, and that's why so many addicts end up in jail first. Nothing else matters. Nothing else matters.

So I spent two years of my life doing nothing ... nothing ... but getting dope, using dope, finding more dope, using more dope and when I couldn't get it, looking for dope or money for dope. I quit school ... duh ... left home ... duh ... lost a ton of weight ... and then I got real sick ... like pneumonia ... and two of the guys I was living with took me to the ER at 5 a.m. because I couldn't breathe. And at the ripe old age of 17, I saw myself, all 100 pounds of agony, I couldn't breathe, I needed a hit and suddenly, all I wanted to do was die. Nice, huh.

Fifteen months, 13 days, 2 hours and 15 minutes later and here I am. There's not a day. Not one So now you know. Now you know.

The End

2. 64 REASONS

1. My stuffed dragon
2. Thunderstorms
3. The smell of an October night through my bedroom window
4. A warm bath on a cold Friday night
5. Getting lost in a book
6. Ice cream
7. Chocolate
8. Hot fudge sundaes
9. The wave pool
10. The smell of a freshly-mown lawn
11. March clouds
12. Windy nights
13. Warm fires
14. Surprise gifts
15. Valentine's Day
16. Sunday afternoons after my homework's done
17. Midnight service on Christmas Eve
18. The smell of suntan oil and salt air
19. Harry Potter
20. Peaches
21. Andrew Wyeth
22. Creamsicles!
23. December stars
24. The softness of an August night
25. His hair...(Scratch that)
26. Sunrise on Easter morning
27. Dylan Thomas
28. Airports
29. Girls' nights
30. When he looks at me across the room in English class.
(Damn! Scratch that one too.)
31. The first daffodils
32. The last snow in March
33. Sleigh riding
34. Field trips
35. His eyes

End of Freeview

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