

MULTIPLICITY

A collection of monologues

by
R. James Scott
with additional selections by
Bianca Cowan

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ABOUT THIS COLLECTION

Looking at life not frontwards, not backwards, not sideways, but slantwards, this collection of haunting and poetic monologues will have your actors deeply involved in character and commitment to what is wanted - the objective. Many of the characters, from a presidential assassin to a human duck, are intriguing, quirky, and entertaining. These monologues run from 2 to 8 minutes in length and are ideal for community theatre auditions or for college classroom work. Many of the male monologues can be used by females.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

MONOLOGUES FOR FEMALES

Talking Myself to Sleep - <i>7 minutes</i>	3
Touch Me With Your Eyes - <i>7 minutes</i>	5
Like Daughter Like Son - <i>4.5 minutes</i>	7
Here and There a Twig - <i>4.5 minutes</i>	9
I Hear You See Me - <i>4.5 minutes</i>	11
St. Chloe, Pray for Us - <i>5.5 minutes</i>	13
It's Not Easy Being Ugly - <i>7 minutes</i>	15
The Impaired Judgment of a Solicitous Catholic - <i>4.5 minutes</i>	17
Wrinkled Paper Windmills - <i>3.5 minutes</i>	19
A Percentage Basis - <i>5.5 minutes</i>	20

MONOLOGUES FOR MALES *(Many can be performed by females.)*

The Multiplicity of Me - <i>5 minutes</i>	22
And They Shall Speak My Name - <i>3.5 minutes</i>	24
The Brown Suit - <i>7 minutes</i>	26
The House That Dad Built - <i>6 minutes</i>	29
What Friends Are For - <i>5 minutes</i>	31
All Or Nothing - <i>4.5 minutes</i>	33
Birds - <i>4.5 minutes</i>	35
I Will Know - <i>7 minutes</i>	37
Dad - <i>7.5 minutes</i>	39
Only Hours Away From Home - <i>6 minutes</i>	42
Diary of an Insane School Teacher - <i>7 minutes</i>	44
Jarvis Glenfield - DOA - <i>6.5 minutes</i>	47
Leftovers - <i>4.5 minutes</i>	49
Lemon Is a Pretty Word - <i>2 minutes</i>	51
Man With a Bomb - <i>5.5 minutes</i>	52
The One Story Man - <i>3.5 minutes</i>	54
To Alan, Wherever He May Be - <i>6 minutes</i>	55
Worma - <i>3 minutes</i>	57
I Dream of Ducks - <i>7 minutes</i>	58

Talking Myself to Sleep by R. James Scott

FEMALE - 23 years old.
About 7 minutes.

(No one knows what goes on behind the glazed eyes of the chronic comatose. The days, weeks, and years seem to pass without any hint of mental function. This selection suggests that there be something we have simply been unable to detect. Jennifer Collins gives us a hint of such a possibility.)

JENNIFER

I tried, I really tried. It wasn't as if I just ... let it ... Oh, what am I saying? I am only twenty-three years old, twenty-three, my life is over, and I am only twenty-three years ... old.

I can cry now. I couldn't before, but I can now. I even managed to smile when they came to visit me. It all seems so long ago, everything is so distant, so vague. And it's all so unimportant ... really. I just feel ... I feel, a little, well, tired ... at rest, and I like soft things. I guess I've really done it to myself. I crammed all my living into a few short years and now I'm ... yes ... tired.

I think a lot, there's nothing else to do. In my mind I sing the songs I learned when I was a little girl. Everything is soft, quiet. I like it now. I like to rest, just lie here and rest, and think, and sleep. My arms and legs are strapped to the bed, but they needn't be. I won't roll off, I don't move at all. It's so nice, so soft, and I'm never hungry.

Mom and Dad, they've changed a lot. Mostly when they come, they just sit. They don't say anything, but when they leave they always pause to look at me. All so quiet ... quiet. They didn't used to be that way. They were always fighting, either between themselves, or with John. "I don't want no blasted hippie living here! You get out, and get your hair cut! Janice, where's the checkbook? Well, you used it last. Can't you keep track of anything?" John was older than me. He went to Canada because of the war, and he never came back. I wonder which was worse, Canada or the war? He might have come back from the war.

Am I lying to myself when I say I am satisfied with things as they are now, or am I really just trying to avoid reality? I don't know, I don't know ... I don't know, I don't know, I don't know. Who am I, I mean really? Have I really lived, or has it all been a hypnotic dream? Do I even really exist? Is my mind my only reality? I can't smell, I can't touch, I can't talk, or move in the least. One moment I care, and the next ... I don't.

Daddy, Daddy, I'm scared, Daddy! Don't leave me alone, Daddy, leave the light on! I don't like the dark, it's dark in the dark. I can't see, I can't see, I can't see! Daddy, Daddy, Daddy, Daddy! Daddy, Daddy, I don't want a new Mama, I want a real Mama. Daddy, I want my old Mama!

Everything is white here. I wonder why. The walls are white, the ceiling ... oh do I know that ceiling. Every mark, every crack, every slight discoloration. The sheets are white too.

My mouth is dry, constant breathing, breathe in, breathe out, breathe in, breathe out, on and on and on and ... Sometimes, when I am really tired, and I want to sleep, I forget to breathe. It's no big deal, I just forget. Then everyone comes running in like something terrible has happened. They stick needles in me, and push on me, and talk real fast. Then I remember, breathe, breathe I tell myself, so I do. It's nothing really, I would have remembered by myself, but I guess they want to feel important.

Once Mama was doing something behind the bed, and then there was kind of a loud noise, kind of like a siren, then a bunch of them came in and took my mother away. She was crying, and I felt

real bad for her, but I couldn't do anything. She didn't come back for a long time, and when she did, she always brought someone. She just sits in the chair and talks like I was really listening, and then after a while, Daddy comes and they go out. Oh, the days go so slowly, they drag on forever and ever, getting no better, no worse, always just the same, just the same. The only change is in what I am thinking, what I am telling myself. Will I ever talk to anyone else again? Will I ever walk, or sit in the old porch swing on a Sunday evening? Will I ever love, or be loved again? Will I ever feel the softness of kittens at my feet or dance in the old school gym?

Oh, why, why didn't someone tell me about this before? Or why didn't I listen if they did? Why should I be held captive by my own mind when all I wanted in the first place was to be free. My friends ... my friends, some friends, they put me here. For a while, they came to see me. They brought flowers, they talked. Some of them I believe even felt sorry for what they had done. They don't come any more, none of them. The only ones who care any more are Mom and Dad ... good old Mom and Dad. I guess they always cared for me, I just wouldn't let them into my life. I thought they were old, out-of-touch, miserable creatures who had no feeling, no insight. They were out of touch with the real world.

I was six once, six years old, can you believe it? First grade ... Mrs. King was my first grade teacher. Billy Sharpes sat next to me and taught me how to spell gas. G..A..S.. His dad owned a filling station down on the other side of the tracks. Susan Humphrey sat in front of me. In second grade she started biting everyone, not because she was mean, but just for fun. I liked Susan, she was one of my friends when I was ... six.

What am I doing here? Why am I lain out in this colorless room? I have a life to live, people to meet, things to do, and places to see. Why am I here? For what purpose do I lie like so many vegetables on a table?

Death ... I've thought about it before. I used to be terrified of death. Now my terror comes through thoughts of continued existence in my present state. It is so frightening though ... death I mean. If you die, and go to some kind of paradise, then you'll always wish you had died earlier. I really don't know what to make of it. Actually, it would be quite easy for me, just silently slip away during the night ... or the day, it really doesn't matter. All involved would be better off. Dad would go back to work, Mom would get over it ... she will be a grandmother soon. It would be ... easy. Just forget to breathe. Within a few short minutes, everything would grow fuzzy, sight would go, mind would slow, my hands would tingle for a few seconds, heart would slow, and then ... stop. And then I would know ... or I wouldn't. How many times have I gone over the whole thing? How many days have I had to pass every minute, every hour in a tedious reconnoiter of my past? A thousand times I must have gone over my childhood, years in school, visualized each of the faces in my Sunday school class. Let me out! Let me in! Just let me alone!

Memories haunt me like a thousand bad dreams, but no one wakes me up, no one hugs me better and makes it all right. Could the worst possibility of death be more painful? Would it be considered suicide to just ... stop living? In my present state I am totally deprived of all sensation, all experience, all of what life is about. If there is no perception, no action, no possibility of growth, reproduction, development, there is no life! I am dead. I am already dead! Everything about my total existence is with the exception of this tortured mind ... dead! A living vegetable. It's funny, I've never compared myself with a carrot before, but right now, I can see many similarities. The biggest difference is that the carrot fulfills a purpose, it will be eaten. I have no purpose, no future, no right to exist. I have no right, no right! Peace will come, and light, and life, but only through death. Only ... through ... death.

The End

Touch Me With Your Eyes by R. James Scott

FEMALE - 22 years old.
About 7 minutes.

(When we gaze upon the glossy pages of fashion magazines, or see the parade of beautiful people across the television screen, we are pretty much in awe at the splendor of their physical forms. We seldom have the opportunity to peer into the real lives of the models and celebrities who light up our everyday lives. Loni Teaseman, young, and beautiful, gives us some insight into the real world behind the glamour.)

LONI

Look at me. Look at me ... please look at ... me. Touch me ... with your eyes, with your smile. Please look at me. Tell me what you see. Am I not ... pretty? Am I not pretty as ... as a picture, as a princess? Am I not beautiful? Do you not love me? Do you not wish you were ... me? Look at me please, tell me what you see.

I love me, I am so clean, all over, squeaky clean, and soft ... and I am pretty. Pretty pretty me. Look at me, Mama ... Papa, see how pretty I am? See how clean, how soft, how beautiful I have become? They say I am pretty, I am beautiful, and I believe them, for I can see ... I am ... pretty.

I am pretty. I am pretty, and clean, and soft, and beautiful, and so pretty. Everyone likes to look at me, and touch my pictures, and they talk about me and invite me to parties, and everyone smiles when they see me, and they wear what I wear, and they wash with my soap, and they go where I go, and do what I do. They want to be pretty too, Mama, everyone wants to be pretty like me, and go to parties, and have everyone smile at them, and touch their pictures. They want to be like me, Mama, because I am pretty, and clean, and soft, and beautiful and ... and ... But I am pretty, Papa. Everyone likes me ... Mama. Everyone likes me, and does what I do, and everyone smiles when they see me, and I like them too, Mama, and they like me, and we like each other, and I am pretty, and clean, and soft, and I smell good, and everyone likes me. They do like me, they do, and I like them and they like me, and ... and ... and ...

But why am I sad, Mama? Why am I sad, and why do I cry, and why am I not happy? I should be happy, Mama, everyone likes me, and they think I am pretty, and I am, Mama, I am pretty. But no one loves me, Mama, no one really loves me, they only like me, and they touch my pictures, but they don't love me, Mama, they just don't love me! At night, when everyone else goes home to families and lovers, I can't go home! I have no home, I have no family any more, I have no lovers, I have only me, pretty pretty me. So I take a bath, and I smell good, and I am soft, but no one touches me ... except with their eyes, not their hands, and not with their hearts. They don't talk to me, they just look at me, and turn the page. They leave me to my bath, and my sweet perfumes, and my Loni shoes, and my Loni dresses, and my Loni make-up, and my Loni refrigerator, and my Loni garbage disposal, and Loni sunglasses, and to ... and to myself. They leave me, and go home to families and lovers and ... Leave me behind because I am pretty, and soft, and clean, and beautiful, and I really do smell good.

Sometimes I remind myself of those pretty china dolls that sit on top of a music box under a glass dome on the mantel. For once, I'd like to be the kind of doll little girls dress up and feed, and fix hair for, and snuggle up with at night when it's cold upon the mantle. A rag doll, with yellow yarn hair, and painted-on eyes.

I guess people naturally think that if you are pretty, everything else comes with it, you just automatically have everything a pretty person should have, everything. And I do ... at least, almost, because I am pretty.

What can I do, Mama? Tell me what to do. Am I too pretty, Mama? Did you make me just too pretty, Mama? Would people love me, and touch me, and listen to me, and smell me if I weren't so pretty, Mama? Well? I want to know, Mama. I want people to know that I am soft, and clean, and I smell good, And I want to go home with someone, Mama. I want a family, and a boyfriend, Mama. Can you hear me, Mama? Can ... you ... hear ... me ... Mama! I don't want to be pretty, Mama, I don't want to be pretty any more. I don't want to be pretty any more! I don't want ... It's no fun! It's no fun to be pretty, Mama!

I am sorry, Mama ... I am just feeling sad for myself. It makes me feel good sometimes ... to feel sad for myself. I really didn't mean what I said, Mama, I like being pretty. People like you if you are pretty, and clean ... and ... People really do like me, and I like them ... really, Mama ... I really do like them. And they like me ... because I am ... pretty. It's nice to be pretty, Mama, it's so nice. And I really do smell good, Mama.

But what will happen, Mama? What will happen when I become old? Oh Mama, who will like me when I am old, and the wrinkles come? Who will I be when I am not pretty any more? Who will take me to parties, and who will touch my pictures, who will I be then, Mama?

Oh Mama, Papa, why did you go? I need you to love me, to stay with me, to keep me warm. Oh, Papa ... I can feel it already, getting older. Each second, tick, tick, tick. One at a time, going on, and on and on. Wrinkles chasing me, running me down! Silver hairs growing, growing on my head! Who will I be then, Mama? Who will I be then, who will like me, who will wear my clothes, my shoes, my sunglasses? Who, Mama, who?

Look at me. Look at me please, look at me, Touch me with your eyes, with your smile. Please, look at me. Tell me what you see. Am I not ... pretty? Am I not a princess? Am I not beautiful? Do you not love me? Do you not wish you were me? Look at me please, touch me with your eyes ... tell me, what you ... see.

The End

End of Freeview

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