

AN ECCENTRICITY OF LOCKDOWNS

By Jon Jory

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AN ECCENTRICITY OF LOCKDOWNS

A Collection of Monologues

By Jon Jory

SYNOPSIS: All hail the monologue! A collection of 11 monologues perfect for virtual or in person, allows for improv, accommodates various acting skills, short and snappy. Bounces between funny, silly, and poignant. Bullwhips, French cuisine, talking dogs and running shoes optional!

DURATION: 35 minutes.

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SNAP

I'm incredibly attractive. That would be my main quality and ordinarily that just seems more than enough. See, it draws people to me and they work so hard to please me I don't have to have too many qualities. Now, don't get the wrong idea here. I am really smart and will go to medical school and be an incredibly attractive thoracic surgeon, but that is the future and this is the present where I am stuck indoors with my family, who are incredibly over my attractiveness and I'm not ready to operate on them yet. The problem is how does an incredibly attractive person like myself dominate and fascinate in these particular times? Well, I have figured that out and found a way to serve my community at the same time. I live in Los Angeles because, of course, I will eventually be incredibly attractive in action movies where I will stand around in gold armor and occasionally snap a bullwhip. But this is not that time. Though I will say I will be the first thoracic surgeon to star in a *Tomraider* movie. But I digress.

END OF SAMPLE.

Monologue is available in full with script purchase.

GRANDPA

I was down in the doldrums, y' know. I thought I would never miss school and now I'm missing it seriously bad. I mean, I was in marching band and sign club, where you draw up all the signs for activities and stuff. I was on the Battlebot team. I ran the sprints in track. I was a junior class treasurer. I mean, I was booked up, y'know, and then the COVID got going and now I'm all edgy and mean and rude and hateful and I'm down to watching house renovation shows on the TV and every DIY video ever made and I don't shower except Thursdays so I can smell myself and that's not a good thing. I've called about everybody I know or half know. I've even called people I don't know. Yesterday I was just making up numbers to call to see who answered. And my mom came in and I was just staring at the ceiling and she said, "Call your grandpa." And I told her I never called grandpa in my life and haven't seen him since the Thanksgiving before this one and Mom just pointed at me and said real stern, "Call your grandpa." Well, why not? I sure got me no pressing business, right? So I punch up grandpa who as far as I know is two hundred years old, and lives in a tree.

END OF SAMPLE.

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YOU TELL ME

Mom always wrote a journal, starting way back when she was a kid. She was a “by the clock” kind of person and she says she’d always do it right after breakfast when Dad had left for work and we were at school and I knew she did that—she even told us she did that—but we never knew where they were because she said that would be too big a temptation. And she’s probably right, right? You’d look wouldn’t you? I mean, what’s her secret life, right? A couple of times when she and Dad were out, I kind of poked around in the attic and garage, but all I found was a little packet of love letters Dad had written her and, I don’t know, it just didn’t seem right to read those. Seemed downright scary as a matter of fact. Hey, Mom was up front about it, she’d say she kept a journal and when you asked, “What about?” she’d just smile and say it was about “This’s and that’s of life plus some recipes.” I asked Dad once if he’d read them and he smiled and said one of the nicest things about her was a little sense of mystery. I’ve come to believe that’s just about the best thing about anybody. I read once that this singer person, I forget her name, said she never did more than one encore ‘cause it was always best to leave the audience wanting more. I see how that’s true too. I’m an over-explainer and I credit that as why I don’t have too many friends. I have enough, just not a slew. This friend of Dad’s told us about this book on primitive humans that said in every culture a hunting party is never more than ten and that’s about the number of friends we end up with. So when Mom got sick... and she was really sick, she said it was my job, if she didn’t make it to burn the journals and she told me where they were.

END OF SAMPLE.

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BLACKBOARD: IAMBIC PENTAMETER

So, we're doing video school, you know, online because, well you know, that's all the school we got. I kind of like it, but my brother Budge, he flat out hates it big time. He says you're stuck in a classroom, you know, but you got options in your living room. Only way he can stay on it is to eat a Girl Scout cookie every three minutes. He's fair about it. When he doesn't pay attention for those three minutes he doesn't get the "peanut butter sandwich cookie" and he has to give it to me. And I'm getting a lot of cookies. Budge says you just can't take an online teacher seriously 'cause they're so small. I mean, how can you take a teacher smaller than a puppet seriously? Plus he can't write notes to the girls which he says is the best thing about school, period. Me, I like it fine because I like to ask questions and seem smart on television. But here's the deal, yesterday's class with Miss Busti—that's spelled B-U-S-T-I—was a hoot. She doesn't use the blackboard because we're reading *Romeo and Juliet*, but while she talks on, the blackboard behind her opens up and somehow there's space behind it and Suzy Bouquet, who is what you might call a "live wire" is back there in a one piece red swimsuit and she's got cat makeup on and she imitates every gesture Miss Busti makes while she does kind of a dance which is like downright-hilarious and everybody online just falls out.

END OF SAMPLE.

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WIZARD

I got this dog, y'know, just a no account dog of who knows what kind—if he was a kind—he would be a beagle kind. You know those dogs, right? My sister got him down at the pound. She said she took him because he just turned inside out when she looked in his cage and she said he smiled, which isn't an ordinary dog thing, right? It was a good thing we got him when we did because right after that we got locked down which I guess they did pretty early in California. We all got pretty tired of each other real quick, but you couldn't help but be glad of Wizard. Dad named him Wizard 'cause he was pretty dumb. He didn't do tricks or anything like that and he pulled too hard on the leash when you walked him out. The good thing was he'd jump right in your lap and love you up when you were down. He knew that about you every time. He even knew that about Dad and Dad's pretty had to figure out. Now we had an old sandbox out back that Dad made when sis and I were little kids and Wizard didn't pee in it or anything like that, but he'd go out there and flake out in the sun. So this one day I got sent out to bring him in and he was kinda digging at the sand and Wizard sat down and smiled up at me and I said, "C'mon, Wizard." But he just sat there and I reached down to pick him up and I noticed that where Wizard had messed with the sand, it said, "Hi." I mean, real clear it said that. I didn't think much of it. I figured sis did it, but the next day the sandbox said, "Breathe."

END OF SAMPLE.

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HIDE THE FURNITURE

Boredom, y'know? Wow. I'm not a good bored person. I say things I shouldn't say to people I shouldn't say it to and then I have to run because I'm a physical coward and then I become a laughing stock which is not a good look in my high school. So boredom, right? It's bad enough to be bored by yourself, but during COVID, the whole family is bored. For a while we played hide-the-furniture which was pretty good because there are six of us counting the visiting student from Uzbekistan. Three on a team. Hiding chairs is easy, but hiding sofas? So anyway, you hide the chair, say, in a closet, and then you time how long the other team takes to find it and after three rounds you count up the times and the team with the least time on the clock wins. This I would not do if you have antiques. So when it's your turn on your team you get to pick the piece of furniture. And like all went well—I mean well in the COVID sense that we weren't bored—which is crucial, right? Until the kid from Uzbekistan chooses the refrigerator, which is like crazy and impossible, but nobody wants to be rude, you know, like “horrible Americans”? So everybody goes, “Oh, interesting choice. Very surprising and clever!” And he's on my team along with my dad so now we have to hide the refrigerator. So I quick look it up and it weighs like 300 pounds.

END OF SAMPLE.

Monologue is available in full with script purchase.

NIGHT RUN

I'm Suellen, you probably see me around the neighborhood, you know, the girl in bright colors who lives in the pink house on the corner of Castlewood and Creek? The runner? These days I sit at our big front window—maybe you've seen me? I need to see the humans, you know. I need to see there is life on earth outside the inside of my house. Don't get me wrong, I love my mom and dad. I finally figured out they just want good things for me even though I sort of think they don't know me deep down. But now, now I'm just serving that prison term they call COVID. I don't know about you, but sometimes I just want to scream 'til my insides are on the outside, but I don't. I just sit at the window. Mom won't let me run, but my dad gets it. He wakes me around three in the morning and just says, "Run free," and then he goes back to bed. I like how cool it is and even with the moon everything is just shapes. No humans, not even cars up in our neighborhood. Most nights the only human is this runner boy who passes by on the other side of the street, going in the other direction. Just a shape shadow and then he's gone. After a while we'd wave. I guess his was more of a salute, just one arm up steady 'til the dark ate him up.

END OF SAMPLE.

Monologue is available in full with script purchase.

WHO AM I?

Does it matter if you know who you are? I mean, do you have to know that? And if you knew that would that be a good thing? See I got into this whole thing because a guy [or girl] I had been, well sort of, pretty much maybe flirting with sent me a note that just said it straight up. On this folded piece of paper it just said, "Who are you?" and I thought, "Oh right, who gives a flying duck, what a phony question." But now I wonder and I have time to wonder and it's getting me crazy. If I'm defined by what I like I wouldn't even want to know me. I mean, I like basketball and *Game of Thrones* and Pokémon and kissing and fly fishing. So who's that? My dad likes reading *Popular Mechanics* and the business section of the paper and ping pong and my mom. I mean, will it say in my obituary "he liked basketball?" Will I have lived for basketball if I'm defined by what I do, I basically do what every other person at Leonardo da Vinci High School does with the exception that I'm a birdwatcher. If I'm my qualities I'm like half smart, I mainly have good manners, I love dogs, I'm talkative and I hate prunes and phonies. Does this answer the "who are you" question? I hope not. What all these answers are doesn't make a me. So what's the answer to "Who are you?" Or is this a question that someone else has to answer for you the day after you're bitten by a saw-scaled viper which is the world's most deadly snake?

END OF SAMPLE.

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THE BECOMING

I don't know about your house, but my house is not swingin' it. In the living room is my dad sitting in the EZBoy staring at the wall like he is zombie number one. Upstairs is my little sister Lilly throwing clothes around and screaming at her closet. In the backyard is my mom trying to drag a fifty pound bag of fertilized something or other over to where she wants to fertilize I'm not sure what and she is definitely not having a good time. Me? I'm listening to Mrs. Karmaluski who is kind of boring when you are in her classroom, but is both boring and terrified online in my trig class and is mumbling something about side lengths and the angles of triangles while sweating like a marathon runner plus the feed keeps freezing so I'm looking at Mrs. Karmaluski with dribble dripping out of the left side of her mouth. This is morning number ninety-seven of the Ziemian family's lockdown. Most of us live in pajamas so it looks like a really depressed pajama party. This is my life until late in the day when the following dialogue takes place between me and my mom. "Hey, Mom, are you dying if you have cramps in your legs that make you fall down after online school?" No, Carmen, dear, you just have been sitting too long." Hey, Mom, what's for dinner?" "Whatever you cook, dear." Boom! After I cook? I don't cook. I have never cooked. I don't even boil water. "Hey, Mom, I can't make dinner!" "Then we'll starve, dear." And she goes in the bathroom and takes a shower. Dad walks by and musses up my hair saying, "You're making dinner, huh?" And from upstairs my sister yells, "She'll poison us and we'll die and the dogs will eat us." So after I go into the closet and sit cross-legged for a half hour in abject terror, I venture down into the kitchen. The stove and the pans look at me expectantly. The dishwasher laughs and when I put my hand in a drawer a fork bites me. What do you cook?

END OF SAMPLE.

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OLD YELLER

The best thing about lockdown is the dreams. I never did dream until now, but now I got some doozies! I used to be a late-night person. After Mom said I had to go up to bed. I'd read these old cowboy and crime novels my dad had collected in these old-timey paperbacks. But now they've all turned into movies in my dreams and I'm starring in them sort of. Like my mind knows how bored I am, just sitting in the house and tries to fix it up in my dreams. I was in this kinda, well, cowboy-type movie last night. It was my first starring role in a western as I usually do kind of Marvel comic superhero dreams and the occasional rom-com. It started with me talking to my momma standin' out by my horse, Wildfire, while Momma cried into her handkerchief on the porch in her frontier-style ugly dress and I said, "Momma, I got to go again. Me and Wildfire got to head to Dodge City. I got scores to settle, Momma. Got to leave this place. Don't like myself here. I wasn't meant to be in one place no more than a timber wolf. A wolf's got to range out, Momma, and I do too. A wolf don't sleep two nights runnin' nowhere. See you got your domesticated stock and you got your predators and you got to know which one you are or you can't be destiny's child, Momma. Human animals is the only one criticizes itself for its nature and I do not subscribe to that practice. Stayin' here in Sandtown I'm just a target, Momma. I ain't like town folk—don't have no mate nor keep my silver in no bank, I'm just a borned outlaw.

END OF SAMPLE.

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MAKING MOVIES

I think I kind of took my parents for granted and mistook them for rules. My dad would be, "Be home by eleven," and my mom would be, "Take a shower." I draw pretty well, but I don't think I could draw them from memory. Which is weird, right? I mean, I've spent more time with them than with any other humans. Way more time. I like them and every once in a while I love them, but when somebody says, "What's your mom like?" I always think my answer sucks. And now they're gone and I live with my uncle. If you don't mind I won't talk about how it happened. It just did. I'll never know what Mom was like in high school or what exactly Dad did in the Navy or what city he lived in when he was six, but I'm kind of thinking you don't either. Know your parents I mean, except in very general terms like your dad owns a donut store. What's up with that? It makes me really mad at myself. I can't make that movie. I can't put the memory of my dad on a plane and then watch what he does in Russia. I can't bring him to life again in any real way. See, I would like to spend a whole day with my mom, but I have no way to really know what she did while I was at Roosevelt High.

END OF SAMPLE.

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