

# CONFESSIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

By Dennis Bush

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# CONFESSIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

*A Collection of Memorable Monologues*

**By Dennis Bush**

**SYNOPSIS:** Candor and courage come face to face with guilt and regrets, as fifteen compelling characters take audiences on a journey of searing honesty, heartbreak, and unexpected humor. As a collection presented as a showcase or evening of theatre, or as individual pieces performed in competitions or for auditions, the monologues in *Confessions and Consequences* will be thought-provoking and memorable.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(1-7 female, 1-5 male, 1-3 either; gender flexible)*

### OPENING THE DOOR

EMILY (f)..... 19, Prepares to confront her obsession—the guy across the hall.

### BYE-BYE BLUES

KRYSTAL (f)..... 20's, Faces her fears.

### IT'S WHAT YOU DO

JODY (f) ..... 16, Makes a big adjustment.

### DOLLHOUSE CONSEQUENCES

EMILY (f)..... 19, Deals with an explosive situation.

### THE PROBLEM WITH PEDESTALS

PHOEBE (f)..... 20's, wants to have her feet on the ground.

### LICKING THE FLOOR

JULIA (f) ..... 20's, has a craving.

### GHOSTLY CLOSURE

BRANDY (f)..... Early 20's, remembers a lost love.

**PRIVACY DENIED**

DAN (m) ..... 18, Tries to close the door on his past,  
but the door and his heart have been  
battered.

**NO QUESTIONS ASKED**

RANGER (m) ..... Early 20's, Divulges his secrets for a  
successful relationship.

**ON A MISSION**

KASON (m) ..... 20's, Describes the passionate pursuit of  
his dream girl.

**A NO-BRAINER**

GIL (m) ..... 17, Learns his lesson.

**COOKIE MAN**

JONAH (m) ..... Late teens, has got game.

**A HEARTBEAT AWAY**

PARKER (m/f) ..... 20's, Explains his special gift.

**NO PONY RIDE**

GABE/GABBY (m/f) ..... 20's, Sets the record straight.

**INDIVIDUAL COPIES**

AUBREY (m/f) ..... Late teens/early 20's, Finds the truth set  
in stone.

**DURATION:** 60 minutes

### DIRECTOR'S NOTE

*Confessions and Consequences* is a collection of monologues, each set in a different time and place. The monologues (individually or as collection) can be performed on a bare stage or with very limited set pieces. Only minimal costuming is needed to suggest the characters. Directors are free to arrange the order of the monologues, as they choose, and may opt to cast one performer per monologue or have fewer actors perform multiple roles. There is also gender flexibility, as indicated, with some of the pieces.

### AUTHOR'S NOTE

The monologues in this collection may be presented as a complete play or as individual performance pieces. Directors are free to arrange the order of the monologues, as they choose, and may opt to cast one performer per monologue or have fewer actors perform multiple roles. There is also gender flexibility, as indicated, with some of the pieces. The collection includes 15 monologues (7 female, 5 male, and 3 for either male or female) excerpted from Dennis Bush's plays, *Opening Doors*, *After Happily*, *Find Me*, and *Exposed*, all of which have had readings, workshops, and full productions, including performances in New York City.

### PRODUCTION HISTORY

*Confessions and Consequences* includes monologues that are taken from Dennis Bush's plays, *Opening Doors*, *After Happily*, *Find Me* and *Exposed*. The plays from which they were taken have all had readings, workshops and full productions, including performances in New York. Original performers included Meggy Lykins, Cera Naccarato, Tyler Caldwell, Rosemary Zinke, Chelsea Karnes, Isaac Gamus, A.J. Katek, Connery Morano, Alex Reust, and Tony Potts.

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OPENING THE DOOR

EMILY (f)..... 19, Prepares to confront her  
obsession – the guy across the hall.

**EMILY:** I can see him through the peephole. I watch him through the peephole. In the morning and the evening when he leaves and comes back. (*Simply, innocently.*) He's cute – almost handsome. A powder blue shirt and gray pants that were pretty tight. (*Clarifying.*) That's what he was wearing this morning. He looked nice...he always does. I think his tie was red-and-blue. I didn't get a good look. He had his back to me. When he's locking or unlocking his door, he talks to himself. He has actual conversations. With himself. He moved in across the hall in the middle of last month. On the 15th. That's the middle. At 6:17 a.m. He made a lot of noise. It woke me up. I looked out through the peephole and saw him. Talking to himself. And I thought, "What an interesting boy!" (*Clarifying.*) He's 18. The landlord told me. He volunteered the information. I think 18 is still a boy. (*Torn.*) But he has his own apartment. So, I guess he's more of a man. (*Truly curious.*) When does a boy become a man? Officially... Undeniably. That's a good question. It's something to ponder. I'm a year older. (*Stating facts.*) The boy should be older. Just like the boy should be taller. It's how it should be. The way of the world. But I'm willing to make an exception in this case. If we were going to date – and we really should date – I think he'd like me. If he met me. If he doesn't have a problem dating an older girl. An older woman. If we can get past the door that separates us. And we have to. (*A quick beat.*) He has wide shoulders – at least I think he does. The perspective through the peephole is a little skewed. My roommate thinks my perspective is skewed. She texted me that from Chicago, where she's on some kind of business trip. Or vacation. I'm not sure which. I don't pay attention when she tells me things. She used to call. Three or four times a day. I shut that down pretty quick. A bad habit that needed to be broken. Text me or be ignored. Officially. Undeniably. Ignored. I'm going to open the door, today. While he's unlocking his door and talking to himself, I'm going to open

the door and say, "Hello, hi, how are you?" Not "hello" and "hi," just one or the other, followed immediately by "How are you?" I'm going to smile and open my eyes wide, so I look energetic and friendly, but not so wide that I look insane. Nobody wants a crazy person living across the hall from them. And I'll say, "I've been looking forward to meeting you....to getting acquainted...to dating." I wouldn't really say that. Just the first part. And, maybe, the second. But I definitely wouldn't open my mouth and insert my foot all the way up to the ankle by mentioning dating right away. (*With resolve.*) I'm going to open the door and talk to him. I'm going to open the door and converse with him. I'm going to open the door and bond with him. I'm going to *open the door*. (*She grips the doorknob, then releases it; stepping back.*) Just not today.

## BYE-BYE BLUES

KRYSTAL (f)..... 20's, Faces her fears.

**KRYSTAL:** I think it's supposed to be funny. Or ironic. (*Quick pause.*) Having blue in the name even though the color is green. (*Quick pause.*) I'm hoping it does the trick. I need to be elevated – to feel lighter, I mean. There was a shade of deep purple – like eggplant on a bad day, that was part of the mood-elevating line of paint colors, but I didn't feel any lighter when I looked at the sample of it. I don't see how a dark color can elevate your mood. It seems counter-intuitive. Light colors lighten, dark colors darken. So I didn't buy the deep purple. I'm not usually a fan of green but I did feel a little bit happier when I looked at the tiny sample square of Bye-Bye Blues Green. And I figured if a small square of it could make me feel a little bit happier, then painting my whole room with it could make a huge difference. I stared at the walls for a while, after I was done. They're bright, that's for sure. I smiled a little. That's a step in the right direction. But nothing any more earth shatteringly mood elevating than that, so far. I was kind of hoping that, as soon as the paint dried, I'd have an overwhelming urge to laugh and do cartwheels or backflips. I've never done a backflip. Even the idea of doing a cartwheel scares me, so I'm not sure why I thought a change of paint would turn me into an instantly happy gymnast. I'm worried about crock pots. (*Pause; explaining.*) When people cook things in them. And leave them turned on all day while they're at work and the crock pot is cooking away with nobody watching it. It could explode. There have probably been hundreds of cases of exploding crock pots that've never made into onto the news because the crock pot manufacturers cover it up. I don't even own a crock pot. There's something sketchy about food that's been cooking all day. (*Quick pause.*) It seems like torture for the food. (*Back on track.*) But I still worry about the crock pots of the people who *do* have them. (*Quick pause.*) Exploding and catching the house on fire or blasting the windows and doors out from the force of the explosion. Sometimes, I drive down the street and worry about who might've left their crock pot on. An explosion from several blocks away can still do damage to your

house. (*An indisputable fact.*) Debris flies! Flaming debris can land on your roof and catch your house on fire! And olives. I worry about them. (*Quick pause.*) Not the olives themselves but the pimento that they're usually stuffed with. There are people who actually think that's how the olives grow in nature. Seriously. There are people who believe that. It makes me feel sad for unstuffed olives. Like Kalamata olives, which are delicious – are somehow lesser olives because they don't have pimento shoved into them whether they like it or not. (*Pause.*) And how did we end up with pimento being what got stuffed into the olives? How many things did the first olive stuffers try before they went with pimento? Was their testing and experimentation a sufficiently thorough process? Was pimento a planned option or a cheap accident? Why not use lemon rind or eggplant? Why not maraschino cherries? (*Quick pause.*) No, I take that back. I didn't suggest it. You didn't hear it. Never maraschino cherries. I worry about them. Little jars full of sticky sweet cherries and juice – at ten calories a pop! (*Indignant.*) Ten calories for each little maraschino cherry! And I'm worried about the women who raid our recycling bins. They have long sticks and wear masks. (*Quick pause; clarifying.*) The women who raid our recycling bins. On Monday morning, before the recycling truck comes to empty all the bins on our street, an army of women carrying long, pointed sticks and wearing masks invades our neighborhood and collects all the cans and bottles. With impressive precision. They're not playing around. They're on a mission. (*Pause.*) I'm not worried about the sticks or the masks or even having my recycling bin raided – though I think they should ask first. Two blocks over, there's another bunch of women who raid the recycling bins on *that* street. What's going to happen when they all start expanding their territory, gradually adding another street and another until we're right in the middle of a turf war between two gangs of recycling bin raiders?! It's a scary proposition. And with good reason! They're armed. A long, pointed stick can do a lot of damage. You can poke somebody's eye out. A long, pointed stick is nothing to joke about. And when everybody has one and valuable recycling bin territory is at stake, it could get ugly. Very ugly. There would be bloodshed. It could be a *West Side Story* kind of rumble except

without the singing and dancing. And who wants that in front of their house? Not me. *(Quick pause.)* So you can see why I'm worried. *(Quick pause.)* About the recycling bins. *(Quick pause.)* And the olives. *(Quick pause.)* And the crock pots...*(Quick pause )* and the mood-elevating paint. *(Pause.)* And me. *(Pause.)* I'm worried about myself.

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IT'S WHAT YOU DO

JODY (f)..... 16, *Makes a big adjustment.*

**JODY:** It was a difficult adjustment, after my dad left. He moved to Las Vegas. In the middle of the night. Just packed a few things, threw them in his car and drove to Vegas. He left my mom a voicemail that said, “Marriage is a gamble. We lost. Divorce papers to follow.” He left us with a lot of bills and no money to pay them. Things in the house started breaking and we couldn’t afford to get them fixed. What can you do? *(Pause.)* My mom met a guy at her job. She’s a dental hygienist. He had an appointment and she cleaned his teeth. My mom says that, when you’ve had your fingers and dental instruments inside somebody’s mouth, you have a very good idea of what kind of person they are. Rick had never had a cavity. His teeth were naturally straight. Bam! He’s a keeper. Well, good teeth and the fact that he had a job. A career. He’s a chiropractor. With a bunch of big-name athlete clients. He makes a lot of money and has a big house and three cars. And a son, Ryan – two years older than me. My mom and I moved into Rick’s house the day after my mom and him got married. It was nice. And a couple days later, Rick said he wanted to take me to work. I didn’t want to do it, but Rick was so excited. It was “Take Your Daughter To Work Day” and now that he had a stepdaughter, he was going to make sure I went to work with him, whether I wanted to or not. I definitely wasn’t excited. I didn’t think being a chiropractor was very interesting and I didn’t care about sports, so seeing pictures of Rick and some basketball players with their arms around each other wasn’t much of a thrill. And then his receptionist told me about a guy in the waiting room who was unable to move his arms or hands. Important parts of his body were paralyzed because he’d cracked his neck, like a hundred million people do every single day – and paralyzed himself. Now that’s fascinating. That’s exciting. The universe had dropped a learning opportunity into my life and I was ready for it. Class was in session. I asked Rick all about it. And he was very informative. It was probably the longest conversation we’d ever had. He got out like a medical mannequin thing and demonstrated how it was

possible to paralyze yourself by jerking your neck a certain way or just by cracking it too much. *(Pause.)* Good to know. You learn things when you need to know them. My stepbrother used to hold me down on the ground. Sometimes in the backyard behind the recycling bins where nobody could see. Sometimes in the house, on the floor in my room. And he'd choke me. Hard. So hard that you could see his fingerprints on my neck for two hours. They always faded before my parents came home. It's like he knew exactly how long the fingerprints would last. And my parents didn't believe me when I told them he was hurting me. I think my mom believed me but she wouldn't say so. She didn't do anything that would make my stepdad mad at her. She picked him over me. Ryan, my stepbrother – was perfect. He had all A's and was the wide receiver on the football team. The wide receiver is the one who catches the passes the quarterback throws. Everybody said Ryan had great hands. Coaches from colleges came to watch him practice. They offered him scholarships. The college coaches slapped Rick on the back as they watched Ryan catch the balls with his fingerprint-making hands. Rick liked the attention. Having a son who all the college coaches were trying to recruit made Rick feel like a big man. He didn't say so, but it did. Ryan walked around the house like he was a freakin' superhero. And when he choked me, he looked down at me like he thought I should feel lucky that he was giving me attention. *(Quick pause.)* Like I should be grateful. And when I screamed, he put his hand over my mouth. He kept one hand on my throat while he put the other hand over my mouth. And he smiled. *(Pause.)* Last Saturday, my mom and Rick went to a wedding. Somebody Rick knows from work. And they stayed overnight at the hotel where they had the wedding reception. Before they left, my mom showed me pictures of the hotel on the computer. It looked nice. She said it would be like having a princess weekend. I was alone in the house for a couple hours, while Ryan was at practice or out with his friends or something. I don't know for sure. It's not my job to keep track of his schedule. When Ryan got home, I was in the family room. *(Quick pause.)* Watching TV. *(Quick pause.)* It's what you do in the family room. Ryan threw his gym bag down on the floor. It wasn't zipped shut and some of his dirty clothes came out. And I

said, "Smooth move, Mr. MVP." That's all I said. I didn't even laugh after I said it. And – Bam! – Ryan grabbed me and shoved me down onto the floor next to his gym bag and the dirty clothes that fell out of it. And he choked me. Harder than ever before. So hard that I knew it would take longer than two hours for the fingerprints to fade. He spit in my face and I called him a bad name. He didn't appreciate that. He tightened his grip around my throat. I screamed. Louder than usual. I don't know what good I thought it was going to do, since we were the only people in the house. But I screamed. He took one hand off my throat and I thought he was going to stop choking me altogether but he didn't. He grabbed the smelly T-shirt that was halfway out of his gym bag and he started stuffing it into my mouth. I gagged, from his hand choking me and from the T-shirt being stuffed into my mouth – and I thought I was going to die. I actually thought, "I'm going to die on the floor with a dirty T-shirt coming out of my mouth like cotton vomit." I passed out. Unconscious. I don't know for how long. When I woke up, Ryan wasn't in the family room anymore. I looked. He wasn't there. But I know what he did. When I looked in the mirror, the fingerprints were already faded. I got on the computer and updated the status on my profile. "Faded." I knew what I had to do. And I knew how to do it. Today, when Ryan came home from practice, he said he was sore from some kind of tackling drill. My mom was at work and Rick was out of town at a golf thing. He loves to golf. He's not very good, but he pretends he is. He likes to feel like the big man. So I told Ryan that I'd massage his shoulders. I told him that Rick taught me how to do it. Which is true. He did. He showed me how to do it. I stood behind Ryan and I cracked his neck, just the way Rick showed me. *(Pause.)* And bam! I paralyzed his arms. *(Pause.)* I paralyzed everything from the waist up. He was having trouble breathing. I stuffed one of his dirty socks in his mouth and covered his lips with duct tape. *(Pause.)* I covered his nose, too. *(Pause.)* He's not breathing at all now. He's a pale shade of blue. He's sitting on the sofa in the family room. Watching TV. *(Pause.)* It's what you do in the family room.

DOLLHOUSE CONSEQUENCES

EMILY (f)..... 19, Deals with an explosive situation.

**EMILY:** I had a dollhouse, when I was little. And the door – the front door on the dollhouse – was like a clip...a clasp. And when you unhooked it, the door clasp – the house opened up and you were inside the house instead of just being able to look inside through the windows. As soon as I did it...as soon as I opened up the house like that, the first time, it made it seem vulnerable. Unprotected. And it was. The rooms were open. You could stick your hands right into the rooms and move things around. You could rearrange the furniture and put your dolls in different rooms. Of course, that's the whole idea. To make it feel like your dolls are actually living in the house. I had generic dolls. Like the generic version of a prescription medication, except it's a doll. Like Barbies that weren't actual Barbies but were supposed to look like Barbies and fool people into thinking they were Barbies. Even though they didn't. The Dollar-Store Barbies were a little off. Like their faces weren't quite perfect and sometimes one leg was a little longer than the other one. Or there was a dark spot on the doll's hand. I found the imperfections comforting. Real Barbies weren't. Comforting. They were intimidating. And condescending – quite self-satisfied in their plastic perfection. And not just the measurements – which, if an actual woman had those proportions, she'd be more than likely to have very serious back pain and wouldn't be taken seriously by anyone. Especially men. So no real Barbie was ever in my dollhouse. Only generic Barbies and mangled generic G.I. Joes that my brother injured in generic G.I. Joe battles. With real explosions. You don't know what disconcerting is till you've had a severed generic G.I. Joe head come flying at you from the other side of the backyard. I nursed them back to health. I was a like a war-zone hospital for injured generic G.I. Joes. Sometimes I mixed up the heads and the bodies they belonged to. No one seemed to mind. None of the generic G.I. Joes complained. They were just glad to be away from my brother and his explosions. Nobody likes explosions going off all the time. Not even generic G.I. Joes.

I turned the dollhouse into a rehab facility for the injured generic G.I. Joes. The kitchen table was perfect for surgery. And the generic G.I. Joes seemed happy in the dollhouse. I decided to leave it open so they wouldn't feel claustrophobic. Fresh air is important for healing and recuperation. I didn't think leaving the dollhouse unlatched and wide open would be a problem. I didn't anticipate any issues arising from my desire to enhance the convalescence of the injured generic G.I. Joes. *(Pause.)* I didn't anticipate the dog. *(Clarifying.)* My brother's dog. During a particularly explosive backyard battle, the dog came into the house to get away from the loud noises and generic G.I. Joe plastic body-part projectiles. But instead of hiding under the bed in my brother's room, the dog got into my dollhouse and chewed up the furniture and the generic G.I. Joes – which seemed even more gruesome than my brother sending them flying across the yard with explosive warfare. I hit the dog with the bottom half of a generic G.I. Joe that I pulled out of his mouth. Not hard. I didn't inflict pet abuse. I just said, "Very bad dog," and smacked him on the nose. He also chewed up a book my mom was reading. Some romance novel. So the dog wasn't allowed in the house after that. My mom's idea, not mine. And there was no ceasefire in the backyard. I told my brother to stop the war, even though part of me loved taking care of the injured generic G.I. Joes and didn't want to halt the flow of incoming wounded. I put my own needs aside and I told him to stop, but he wouldn't listen. Every day, for two hours after school and another two hours after dinner, explosions would go off in the backyard. You could hear them a few blocks away. And they made the dog bark. Since he wasn't allowed in the house anymore, he just curled up by the backdoor and barked. He howled sometimes, too. And the barking and howling annoyed my dad. When you work the night shift like my dad did, being able sleep when other people are awake is important. So the barking and the howling made him mad. Totally and extremely mad. And he said he was going to put a stop to it. So we went for a ride in the truck. My dad, me, and the dog. My brother stayed home and cried. Like a big baby. And we drove out into the woods. *(Pause; matter-of-fact.)* And my dad shot the dog. *(Pause)* He had to do something. *(Pause)* It was sad. I didn't

cry, though. I wanted to, but I felt like crying would make my dad feel guilty. And, really, it's my brother who should feel bad. His explosions made the dog bark. My brother was selfish and inconsiderate. And there were consequences.

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