

And Turning, Stay

By Kellie Powell

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Characters:

AMY
MARK
HOLLY
JACKSON
BETH
WARREN
COLLEEN
SCOTT
JANE
BRIAN

Setting:

A contemporary American high school

Scene One – A bare stage, an imaginary space

Scene Two – A party, outdoors. A week before Scene One.

Scene Three – The lunchroom

Scene Four – The lunchroom (continuous from Scene Three)

Scene Five – A hallway

Scene Six – Various locations around the high school

Scene Seven – Various locations around the high school, same as Scene Six

Scene Eight – A party, indoors

Scene Nine – Various locations around the high school, same as Scene Six

Scene Ten – Various locations around the high school, same as Scene Six

Scene Eleven – The lunchroom, same as Scene Three

Scene Twelve – A bare stage, an imaginary space, same as Scene One

Notes:

The poem “Woman” was written by Nikki Giovanni.

For more information about the award-winning poet, visit: <http://nikki-giovanni.com>

Scene One

(Lights up. All characters stand onstage, posed in a tableau, while BETH reads “Woman” by Nikki Giovanni from a piece of paper in her hands.)

BETH

“Woman” by Nikki Giovanni:

“she wanted to be a blade
of grass amid the fields
but he wouldn’t agree
to be the dandelion

she wanted to be a robin singing
through the leaves
but he refused to be
her tree

she spun herself into a web
and looking for a place to rest
turned to him
but he stood straight
declining to be her corner

she tried to be a book
but he wouldn’t read
she turned herself into a bulb
but he wouldn’t let her grow

she decided to become
a woman
and though he still refused
to be a man
she decided it was all
right.”

(The other characters clap politely. A pause.)

HOLLY

Wait...

JACKSON

Wait.

HOLLY

What does it mean?

JANE

I think it means... men suck.

JACKSON

Screw that. Poetry sucks.

SCOTT

Maybe you have to –

BRIAN

Maybe it doesn't mean anything.

AMY

(With scary conviction.) I know what it means. *(Pause. MARK grows noticeably uncomfortable, he stares downward while everyone else stares at AMY.)* She's saying that men are scared, and selfish, and... *(Pause.)* And she's right. They crush your dreams just for the hell of it. They make you question everything you thought you knew, they make you think your memories are fake... They make you think it's your fault. *(Pause.)* I wish I didn't know... I wish I could forget...

(For a moment each character stands, each staring at AMY, except for MARK, who continues to stare down in shame. All the other characters leave, and AMY and MARK are left alone.)

Scene Two
A Week Earlier

(AMY and MARK, having just been left alone onstage, spread out a blanket. They sit facing each other, and look starry-eyed, as though on a first date. SCOTT and COLLEEN enter, and begin dancing in the background, there is soft, slow music. Other characters enter but are only watching and mock-chattering amongst themselves. AMY and MARK mock-chatter, smiling and laughing, and then AMY sees the dancing couple. She looks at them painfully, and Mark notices.)

MARK

Amy? Earth to Amy?

AMY

Sorry.

MARK

Anything wrong?

AMY

Not really. *(Deep sigh.)*

MARK

That's a yes.

AMY

It's...It's just...them...That. *That's* what I want.

MARK

You can have that.

AMY

'Someday,' right? *(He doesn't answer.)* That's what you meant, right?

MARK

No... that's not what I meant.

(He holds out his hand to her, helps her up, and they embrace. They begin to dance, close and slowly. BETH notices, and points to them.)

BETH

They're cute together.

JANE

I guess.

(Blackout.)

Scene Three

(A table is brought on, and everyone, minus MARK, gathers around it. AMY, BRIAN, BETH, and JACKSON are the last to sit down.)

AMY

(Elated.) It was like a dream.

HOLLY

Like a dream...it couldn't last.

BRIAN

That's how people are,

COLLEEN

When they have something good,

JACKSON

They screw it up.

(They sit, and everyone begins talking casually. COLLEEN and SCOTT demonstrate non-verbally that they are a couple.)

BETH

What was going on with you and Mark Saturday? Are you two like,

HOLLY

A thing now?

AMY

(Grinning widely.) I don't know, I guess.

WARREN

The way

JACKSON

You guys were acting?

SCOTT

You're a thing.

COLLEEN

Definitely.

AMY

You think?

HOLLY

(Sighs.) One by one, everyone's going to pair off. First it was you two... *(Gestures at COLLEEN and SCOTT.)*

JANE

Now you *(Gestures to AMY)* and Mark, soon Holly and Jackson will be going out...

JACKSON

(Flatly but forcefully.) No.

HOLLY

That's not going to happen.

JACKSON

(Taking offense.) Why not?

HOLLY

(To Jackson.) It's nothing personal. I just have this philosophy: I think, therefore, I am single.

(Tone abruptly shifts.)

WARREN

I think, therefore, I am hiding.

JANE

Therefore, I am alone.

JACKSON

Free.

JANE

No strings.

WARREN

Running away.

HOLLY

I think, therefore I'm single.

(Tone returns to normal.)

JACKSON

Well, I don't want to go out with you either.

HOLLY

Good.

JACKSON

Fine.

WARREN

Would you guys just do it and get it –

JANE

Over with?

HOLLY

AUGH!!

(Laughing hysterically, BETH makes a sound resembling the noises guinea pigs make. Everyone else starts to laugh even harder.)

COLLEEN

Beth, you laugh like a guinea pig.

BETH

What?

AMY

(Laughing.) You're both crazy.

HOLLY

You're one to –

JANE

Talk. You're the one going out with –

HOLLY

Mark.

WARREN

He's... kind of a... well...

JACKSON

He's lucky you'll talk to him, let alone let him put his tongue in your mouth.

HOLLY

Eww!! I'm trying to eat here!

JACKSON

(Shaking his head and gesturing to HOLLY.) And *that* is why we will never date. *(Looking back to AMY.)* Seriously, though. I'm surprised you'll look at him.

AMY

I happen to like looking at him, thank you.

(Small pause.) You

look

so

happy.

I am. So happy.

(Sees MARK entering.) Oh hey...

(Turning to face him, smiling.) Hey.

(Deliberately avoids looking at AMY.) Hey.

(AMY stands, comes closer, makes gesture of affection. MARK noncommittally moves away.)

(Inhales sharply.) Oy vey.

Did I miss anything?

Did I? *(Looks at MARK.)*

Okay... See you guys later... *(He begins to walk away.)*

What...? *(Asking the table for advice.)* Should I...?

Yes.

Leave him alone?

COLLEEN

JANE

HOLLY

BETH

AMY

BETH

AMY

MARK

JANE

MARK

AMY

MARK

AMY

JACKSON

AMY

No. **WARREN**

No way. **COLLEEN**

Yes. **JACKSON**

Should I...? **AMY**

No. **HOLLY**

Go after him? **AMY**

Definitely. **BETH**

Yes. **BRIAN**

No. **HOLLY**

Yes. **JANE**

Okay, I'm going. **AMY**

(Meaning it.) Good luck. **BRIAN**

(AMY leaves, the people at the table freeze.)

Scene Four

(AMY catches up to MARK, who is walking away, she stops him on the opposite side of the stage. The following scene is split.)

(Calling after him.) Hey! **AMY**

What? **MARK**

Look at me. **AMY**

What? **MARK**

Look at me. **AMY**

(He finally does.) What? **MARK**

(MARK and AMY freeze.)

Rough morning after, wouldn't you say? **JANE**

I didn't see that coming. *(General agreement.)* **BRIAN**

Mark didn't seem like the type. **HOLLY**

It takes all kinds. *(Everyone at table freezes.)* **JANE**

I – I'm confused. **AMY**

Why? **MARK**

You're ignoring me. You... What's...? Mark! **AMY**

MARK

(Turns away.) Sorry. This is the way it has to be.

AMY

(Positioning herself in his path.) What are you talking about?

MARK

Look, Amy, I'm sorry. Really, I am. I'm sorry about what happened Saturday. I'm really sorry.

AMY

Mark, what's gone wrong. What'd I miss?

MARK

Too much. Look, just forget it. Forget it ever happened.

(MARK and AMY freeze.)

BETH

Did you see how cold he was to her? He actually *pushed* her away.

WARREN

That's not cool. You don't push a girl.

BRIAN

Maybe he's just afraid...

JANE

Or maybe he's just a bastard.

(Everyone at table freezes.)

AMY

Why are you doing this?

MARK

Just forget it. Let it go.

AMY

How can I?

MARK

I'm sorry.

AMY

How can I?

MARK

I'm sorry if I led you on...

AMY

Led me on?! That's an understatement.

(MARK and AMY freeze.)

BRIAN

Did you ever think that maybe this life is just a dream?

BETH

Sometimes.

JANE

I'll go you one better. Did you ever think that maybe, just maybe, this life is really Hell, but the joke's on us because we can't even remember what we did to get here? Maybe it's eternal damnation and we don't even know it.

WARREN

I've got one: Could there be such a thing as a narcoleptic insomniac?

(Everyone stares blankly at WARREN.)

WARREN

What?

(Everyone at table freezes.)

MARK

I'm sorry. That's all I can say. I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm - I just can't - I have to go. Look, Amy, just forget it, let it go. *(Exits.)*

AMY

How can I? *(AMY re-enters the other scene.)*

BETH

How'd it go?

BRIAN

What happened?

HOLLY

What's going on?

COLLEEN

What'd he say?

WARREN

Well...?

He said to forget it.

AMY

What?

JANE

Huh?

SCOTT

Why?

JACKSON

(AMY shrugs, bites her lip, and walks away. Everyone exchanges confused looks. BETH, JANE, and HOLLY follow AMY. Everyone else leaves, carrying the table off with them.)

Scene Five

BETH
(Cautiously) Are you okay?

AMY
(Swallows hard.) No.

HOLLY
This is why I don't get involved.

JANE
That scum! Let's kill him!

AMY
It's my fault.

JANE
Don't do that. Don't think that!

BETH
This is in no way your fault.

AMY
No, I...I must have misunderstood, I must've...

HOLLY
No.

BETH
No. No. He got your hopes up.

JANE
It's just the same as lying, just the same, just as –

BETH
Cruel. *(A pause.)*

HOLLY
Are you going to be all right?

AMY
Yeah, yeah...of course... It just... *(Holding back tears.)* It really hurts.

JANE
(Gesture of comfort.) I know...I know.

Scene Six

(People scatter. Four separate scenes create themselves (stage right to stage left): BETH and JACKSON; COLLEEN and WARREN; AMY, MARK and BRIAN; SCOTT and JANE. HOLLY stands offstage right at beginning. The other scenes are frozen. BETH and HOLLY cannot see or hear each other while they interact with JACKSON.)

BETH

What do you think will happen to Mark?

JACKSON

I think he's going to fade away. We've lost people over less.

BETH

Yes, but look at you and I. We manage to co-exist, despite...

JACKSON

I gave you an explanation.

BETH

(Obviously growing angry.) Oh, yes. The explanation. Something like

BETH & JACKSON

"Beth, you and I are just –

JACKSON

Too different. You want more than I can give you, a relationship, and I'm not ready for that. It's just not what I want or need right now."

(HOLLY enters.)

HOLLY

Jackson, listen. I just wanted to know, yesterday when you said you'd never date me... Why not?

JACKSON

Listen, Holly, you and I are too much alike. You aren't looking for a relationship right now, and neither am I. It's not what either of us wants or needs right now. But listen, Holly, if I did want to be with someone, *(turns to BETH.)* I'd want to be with you, Beth.

HOLLY

Jackson, that's so sweet...

JACKSON

It's true.

BETH

Jackson, that's such bullshit!

JACKSON

It's true! Don't get upset, Beth. (*Turns to HOLLY.*) Don't be mad, Holly. We both know what would happen. (*Turns to BETH.*) We both know what would have happened.

HOLLY

We'd both end up being hurt.

BETH

You would have used me.

HOLLY

We'd ruin our friendship.

BETH

And I would have lost you.

JACKSON

(*To HOLLY.*) I like you too much to do that to you. (*To BETH.*) I liked you too much to do that to you, I still do.

HOLLY

You're absolutely right.

BETH

You're completely wrong, Jackson. There's no difference between you and Mark. None at all. What he did to Amy, you did to me. It's no different!

JACKSON

I was honest!

BETH

Honest? You've never been honest. You can't even tell yourself the truth! Someday you're going to wake up and realize that you don't even know what it is anymore! Someday, Jackson...!

HOLLY

(*Referring to something entirely different.*) Maybe someday, Jackson?

JACKSON

(*Distracted.*) Yeah, sure. Someday.

HOLLY

Well, goodbye, Jackson.

JACKSON

(*Distracted.*) 'Bye Holly.

(*Holly saunters offstage.*)

BETH

(Angrily.) Goodbye Jackson.

(BETH storms off.)

JACKSON

Wait, Beth! You're wrong! Do you hear me? I am a horrible, horrible person! Everyone I have ever cared about, I have pushed away. If I know you, I will hurt you. And if I don't, you will meet me, you will love me, I will love you, and you will lose me. Do you hear me?

(JACKSON freezes.)

Scene Seven

WARREN

I never thought Mark was the type.

COLLEEN

The type?

WARREN

The kind of person who uses other people.

COLLEEN

Well, guess what. He led on his best friend. He dangled love in front of her face, then laughed at her and pushed her away. Jackson does the same thing, and he does it just to prove he can. And all the guilt he's ever felt, he'll throw on Mark to absolve himself. And we'll let him, because we're all hanging onto the idea that bad people get punished. We all have guilt, but we'll let Mark suffer for our crimes.

WARREN

No...

COLLEEN

It's true. If you look deep enough, everyone has some secret wrong. Jackson is the user. Holly is the virgin slut. Scott... Scott has one hell of a skeleton in his closet... nothing you want to hear about.

WARREN

But what about Brian? Or Beth? Or Amy? Or you?

COLLEEN

Our sin is being covetous, and hateful, and bitter because we're alone.

WARREN

Alone? You have Scott.

COLLEEN

But... I don't feel any less alone. Everyone is alone... Scott and I... we're alone together. *(Beat.)* Don't tell him, please, he would think it was his fault. And blame – Blame is meaningless... It belongs to no one, and everyone, this abstract idea we invest our souls in – like love.

WARREN

(To himself as much as to her.) I don't want to hear this.

COLLEEN

Don't worry, you won't have to. This... This is just my cynicism rearing it's ugly head. You'll see me tomorrow and I'll with Scott, and we'll be smiling, and happy... And when I cry, no one will see me. Because no one wants to.

WARREN

What about Mark?

COLLEEN

What about him?

(MARK, SCOTT, and JACKSON come out of their frozen positions to deliver the following lines directly to the audience.)

MARK

What I did was a terrible thing.

JACKSON

Hey, I did what I had to do.

SCOTT

We don't choose who we love.

MARK

Or who we are.

JACKSON

Or what we are.

(MARK, JACKSON, and SCOTT slip back into their positions.)

WARREN

Colleen, I hate the idea of you feeling this way. I wish you would talk to me.

COLLEEN

No, you don't.

(They freeze. Blackout.)

Scene Eight

(The lights come up on another party, like the first but with these differences: This gathering is indoors, MARK has not been invited, and AMY is physically present, but mentally absent.)

Amy? Earth to Amy? **BETH**

Yeah? **AMY**

You okay? **JANE**

Not yet. **AMY**

You can't let this – **HOLLY**

Take over your life. **COLLEEN**

Too late. **AMY**

He's a creep, Amy. I hate to say it – **JANE**

Then don't. Don't tell me let it go. I would if I could, but it's just not that easy. **AMY**

I'm sorry... **JANE**

No, I'm sorry. I'm bringing everyone down. **AMY**

No, it's – **JANE**

Okay... It's not – **COLLEEN**

Not your fault. **HOLLY**

Really.

BETH

Do you want us...

BRIAN

To talk to him?

JACKSON

Ask him –

WARREN

Why he's being such a jerk?

SCOTT

Well... would you mind?

AMY

Of course not. We want to help.

BRIAN

You guys are great...

AMY

We're all sorry, Amy.

BETH

(BETH hugs AMY. Blackout.)

Scene Nine

(The configuration from Scene Six is created again. BETH and HOLLY are absent. JACKSON, COLLEEN and WARREN are frozen as they were when they ended their scenes. Lights up.)

AMY

Brian, tell me the truth. Is there something wrong with me?

BRIAN

(Kindly.) No, of course not.

MARK

What do you think, Brian? Is there something wrong with me?

BRIAN

Yes. You're insane! You and Amy are perfect for each other.

MARK

Yeah. We're both runaways.

BRIAN

What?

MARK

I'm running away from Amy, and Amy... Amy's running away from being alone. Like she isn't a whole person unless she's with someone. I don't –

AMY

Get it. It's like he's a totally different person, and the person he was, the person I was falling for, was never real at all.

BRIAN

Well, I –

MARK

I could tell. When I was with her, she was this totally different person, and the person she was... was gone. Do you have any idea what that's like?

BRIAN

No, because –

MARK

It's terrifying. Like being alone in an alley, but the girl who comes to save you has a gun and she steals your wallet. Amy... just *needs*... too much. I don't ever want to need someone like that.

AMY

How did I let this happen? What's wrong with me?

BRIAN

Amy, there's nothing wrong with you. You only want what everyone else in the world wants. To feel loved. (*To MARK.*) Mark, you would be lucky to have someone like Amy. Luckier than I ever will be. And you are *screwing everything up*. Amy is in pain, and it's all because of you. Right now, no one but me will even *talk* to you. Think about that. Go home, and sleep on it. Because by tomorrow, you had better figure out what you want. If you don't, you're going to regret it. You know what they say. (*To AMY.*) Sooner or later, Amy, he's going to realize what he's missing.

AMY

(*Jokingly.*) You're so good to me, Brian. I should've fallen for you.

BRIAN

Well, you know what they say...

MARK

No, Brian, what do they say?

BRIAN

Hindsight is always...

BRIAN, AMY & MARK

Twenty-twenty.

AMY

(*Smiles.*) See you tomorrow, Brian.

BRIAN

(*Smiles.*) 'Bye Amy. (*AMY exits.*)

MARK

That almost sounds like a threat, Brian.

BRIAN

Go home, Mark. (*MARK stalks off. Brian freezes.*)

Scene Ten

JANE

“Let he among us without sin be the first to condemn.” Does that mean anything to you, Scott?

SCOTT

What the hell are you talking about?

JANE

I think you know.

SCOTT

No. What?

JANE

You have the least right of anyone to crucify Mark.

SCOTT

Amy is our friend.

JANE

And Mark hurt her, so he is the enemy. Doesn't change the fact that you're a hypocrite.

SCOTT

I didn't know you'd take it so hard.

JANE

Why? Because I'm tough? I'm a lot of things. I may be tough. But I have feelings. I cared about you.

SCOTT

No one had to do anything to me. The guilt was enough. When I heard –

JANE

That wasn't only about you! You were not the first! Not even close! God, it's never-ending. I started to think that night, that's what made me... *(Trails off.)* I just thought, “This is how it's going to be all my life. I'm always going to be alone like this.”

SCOTT

I really am sorry.

JANE

(Looking away.) It's okay. Hey, I'm tough, right? I can take it.

(They freeze. Blackout. Everyone exits.)

Scene Eleven

(Lights up as SCOTT, JACKSON, WARREN, and BRIAN bring on a table, and MARK enters from the opposite side of the stage. All sit except MARK – but as the conflict rises, they begin standing up. By the end of the scene, everyone is surrounding MARK.)

SCOTT

She really likes you, and –

BRIAN

You know you like her.

WARREN

Is it...? *(Thinks, but cannot think of anything.)* What is it?

MARK

It's nothing. There's... I just don't... It's not her, it's me.

JACKSON

Mark, what gives? Why are you screwing this up?

SCOTT

She's really hurting, Mark.

MARK

That was never my intention.

BRIAN

Why are you putting her through this?

JACKSON

We all saw you guys at Colleen's party. You can't say that –

WARREN

Was nothing.

JACKSON

Amy is our friend Mark, and we can't let you –

BRIAN

Do this to her.

MARK

I just... changed my mind, OK?

JACKSON

Why? She not hot enough? You think you can do better?

MARK

It's not like that.

SCOTT

Then what is it like?

BRIAN

What's the problem?

MARK

Why should I discuss this with you? It has nothing to do with you!

WARREN

Sure it does.

JACKSON

You're our friend –

SCOTT

And Amy's our friend –

BRIAN

And we want you both –

WARREN

To be happy. Mark, it's time to man up here.

JACKSON

Mark...

SCOTT, WARREN, BRIAN & JACKSON

What are you running from?

MARK

(Standing up and shouting.) I wish you would all just forget it happened. *I'm sorry!* Tell her... Tell her I'm sorry!

JACKSON

We can't let you off that easy. Sometimes sorry isn't good enough, Mark.

MARK

What are you talking about? Jackson? What are you saying?

JACKSON

I'm saying, "Mark, this is going to hurt me more than it hurts you."

(JACKSON makes a fist. SCOTT and BRIAN hold MARK in place. MARK yells, and the lights go out abruptly. When the lights come on again, MARK is holding his side, as though JACKSON has punched him in the ribs. If time and production limitations allow, other injuries can be added – a black eye, a bloody lip, etc. The others have exited, and MARK is alone onstage, crouched on the ground in pain. He stands up, painfully, and begins to walk offstage. AMY enters from the opposite direction and confronts MARK.)

AMY

Does that hurt?

MARK

(Not looking at her.) Yes.

AMY

Good. *(MARK tries to leave. She gets in his face.)* Don't you walk away from me! And don't tell me to forget it, and don't tell me to "let it go." God knows, I'd like to. I wish I could, but I can't. Stop being a coward. Stop running away. I don't care if you're scared. I'm scared too, Mark, but we – that night – you and I, we have something. I know we do. And I know it's worth fighting for. We could make it work. I'm not saying it would be easy, but I care about you. And I know deep down, under this... *(Spitting out the word) ...bravado,* you care about me. I know you do. And that's what it's all about. That's the human experience. You can pretend all you want, but you're only lying to yourself. You're running from what some people search for all their lives... from what I've searched for all my life. You're denying the simple and wonderful fact that you are emotional, and vulnerable, and *alive*.

MARK

I can't do this. It's not you, I just...I just don't have it in me! *(He tries to leave.)*

AMY

(Not letting him get away.) Yes, you do! I know it is. Can you honestly stand there and tell me that I mean nothing to you? That everything that happened that night was a lie? That you feel nothing? *(AMY is crying or close to it. The following is a painful statement that she makes not to attack or threaten Mark but rather, to allow herself closure with the situation.)* I feel sorry for you. Because... eventually... I'll move on. I'll find someone else. I'll be all right, because I will know that I *tried*. That I did everything I could. But someday you will look back, and you will realize what you threw away. And you will regret it always.

(MARK is speechless, AMY walks away. MARK walks off, as destroyed as AMY has been.)

Scene Twelve

(The stage is empty for a moment, but slowly everyone drifts back onstage. First MARK, looking shamefully downward, then AMY, looking sad but strong. Then BETH and BRIAN, with BETH reciting “Woman” once more, then the rest of the cast.)

BETH

“she decided to become
a woman
and though he still refused
to be a man
she decided it was all
right.”

AMY

She’s saying that men are really just boys... And really, it’s not just the men, it’s everyone, we are all children. People are scared, and it makes them selfish. And sometimes it makes them cruel. We’re all running around crazy, trying to connect with each other, but half the time we’re just making each other miserable... There’s no revolutionary, amazing truth in his refusal to be a man. *(AMY looks at MARK, who looks away, uncomfortably, stubbornly, shamefully. AMY looks back to the audience.)* The message, the meaning of the poem is in that she accepts this. She accepts how imperfect, how stubborn, how damaged he is. *(She wants to cry but instead she swallows hard. The following statement is said painfully.)* Because... That’s life.

WARREN

Hope is born...

JACKSON

People lie...

HOLLY

Dreams are destroyed...

BRIAN

Good people hurt each other.

COLLEEN

It begins...it’s brand new and shining bright...

SCOTT

And then all of a sudden, in an *instant*, it’s over.

BRIAN

Things change.

MARK

People change.

BETH

Love gets lost.

AMY

Life goes on.

(Lights out. The End.)

About the Playwright

Kellie Powell's plays have been produced by Love Creek Productions, Art International Radio, KNOW Theatre, Hinman Production Company, the Illinois State University Free Stage Festival, the Penny Dreadful Players, and Studio Z. Her plays have been published by These Aren't My Shoes Productions and JAC Publishing & Promotions.

Her poetry has appeared in a selection of literary magazines, and in the anthology *Ugly Poets, Beautiful Poems*, edited by Christine Casher and published by Canyon Drive Press. She has written non-fiction for *The Daily Vidette*, *The Feminist Review*, and *After Ellen*.

Powell was born and raised in Central Illinois. She wrote *And Turning, Stay*, her first extant play, while attending University High School in Normal, Illinois, and became involved in the founding of the independent theatre group Stick & Co. Productions. She attended Illinois State University, where she earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre. She has also studied at Binghamton University in Binghamton, New York. For more information, visit: <http://www.notmyshoes.net>

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--Kellie Powell

Advice for Performing Amy's Monologue

“The most important thing about performing Amy's monologue is showing the contrast between the beginning, when she is angry and devastated, to the end, when she accepts Mark's failings and achieves some level of closure. Whether you play the beginning with screaming or tears is up to you. Think about how you would feel if a close friend of yours betrayed you. Think about how you feel when you get your hopes up about something, and then are disappointed.

The important thing is to show Amy's personal growth at the moment she says, ‘I feel sorry for you, Mark...’ She *does* feel sorry for him. The monologue isn't just about Amy's anger and pain, it's about how she deals with that anger and pain, and moves beyond it. Amy lets go of her anger when she realizes what a coward Mark is, and how horrible it would be to go through life too afraid to experience love.”

--Kellie Powell

Other Plays By Kellie Powell



Confrontation over creative property erupts between two friends with a long and complicated history, when Shane rewrites Kim's play, and she refuses to allow the new version to be produced. Finally, Kim reveals that Shane was the inspiration for the uneven love story he has destroyed, and that their relationship has been more significant to her than he ever suspected.

"You're right. You promised nothing. But I knew I wanted those moments – few and far between as they were... I wanted whatever time and affection you could give me. No matter what it cost me. It was enough for me, somehow. I felt like you found comfort in me. And maybe I wasn't your first choice, you know? But I was glad that I was somewhere on the list. I let it happen again and again, more times than I can even count..."

I knew... you'd never strive for me. You'd never have to. When it comes to you, I can't afford to play hard-to-get. You'll never have to chase me, because I'll always be within reach.

I've seen the best and the worst of you... and I love you. I love the way you can tell me what I'm thinking. I love the way you tell a story, drawing me in. I love you for all the times you convinced me, with a stupid joke, or even just a look... to stop taking myself so seriously and just enjoy my life. Nothing could ever make me regret the way I feel about you."



A seven-year-old girl is traumatized and scarred after being attacked by a dog. Her classmates ostracize her and give her the name "Dogface", which continues to haunt her long after grade school. The alienation and rejection initiate a lifelong struggle with feelings of inferiority, and a desire to challenge America's obsession with beauty. Ultimately, Dogface must find a way to reclaim her self-worth, despite her alleged ugliness.

*"You're not **ready**? Welcome to the human condition! Trial and error, it's the only way to learn. No one's ever ready!"*

*You don't want something serious. Well, then... please explain to me how I'm supposed to act casual about something this intense, this rare? You're the first person to see me - how can that not be a big deal? I mean, look at me! How many chances am **I** going to have in life?*

Maybe that's what this is about, after all. Is it... are you ashamed? Is that why you bailed? What's the expression? 'Coyote ugly.' Right? You wake up next to the girl who's so hideous you chew your own arm off to get away.

*That's it, isn't it? You're ashamed. Right. I mean, who wouldn't be ashamed to be with me? I'm Dogface. You can fuck Dogface behind closed doors, but you can't publicly acknowledge that you like her. You certainly can't **date** her. You can't bring **her** home to meet your mom.*

You're giving me all these bullshit excuses about why you can't be with me, all this 'it's not you, it's me' – what am I supposed to think?"

Available from These Aren't My Shoes Productions
www.notmyshoes.net