

Monologues for Easter

C. Scott Ananian

cananian@alumni.princeton.edu

April 1, 1996 (slightly revised April 6, 2006)

*[There are 2 male actors (MAN, SOMMERS), and 1 female (EVERHART).
LOVELACE and the WAITER can be either gender.]*

*[Stage right, a candle-lit restaurant. White tablecloth. Crystal and china.
Center and left, three people in separate areas wait to tell their stories.]*

*[The table in the corner. A MAN sits, stirring his coffee. Turns up the cup
and drinks the last. Puts the cup down, slowly. A WAITER approaches.]*

WAITER: More coffee, sir?

MAN: Yes, please.

[We shift to a man, LOVELACE, alone.]

LOVELACE: It's spring again. Seasons changing. The grass is greener, the flowers prettier, the squirrels awake again. Strolling weather. Weather to share...

[Back to the table.]

WAITER: Would you like to go ahead and order, sir?

MAN: Not just yet, thanks. *[pause]* Um — could you bring a second cup of coffee? For when she arrives? Two creams and three sugars.

[LOVELACE speaks, again:]

LOVELACE: Cruel weather, really. I walk outside and see couples laughing, songbirds in pairs... lonely weather. I... it's just... it makes me wonder. Hope, sometimes. Wish. It'd be such beautiful weather to share...

EVERHART: *[Not to LOVELACE.]* You don't want someone like me. Trust me, you don't. I've... done things. Things I'm not proud of. If I had the chance to do it over again, I'd probably do things different. But I don't.

[WAITER arrives with coffee.]

MAN: Thanks.

WAITER: Is there anything else I can get for you, sir?

MAN: No, thank you.

LOVELACE: It seems silly to talk about the weather. I wish it didn't make me feel like it does.

SOMMERS: Easter. I always used to go to church as a kid. Mom would dress us boys up real special for the service — and solemnly remind us that the day wasn't just about the Easter Bunny. I swear I was the only kid with scripture on my eggs and a bible in my basket. Sitting right next to the milk chocolate.

LOVELACE: I want — is wanting all right? I want someone to share my springtime with, the special moments. Is that selfish? I tell myself that God is always there; that Jesus is sharing every moment with me. Why do I still want a — I can't hold Jesus' hand in the spring sun, I can't feel him warm beside me. Is that wrong? Shouldn't I be able to?

SOMMERS: I don't feel anything this year. It's Easter; I should be overwhelmed with the meaning of the holiday... but I feel separate. Apart; unlike the passion play Peter, who seemed to feel everything so *strongly*. I feel... trapped. Trapped between death and resurrection. Like God's not around.

EVERHART: God's everywhere. I went to Catholic school; I know all the facts. God sees everything. He saw everything. I — you don't want me. You're so... good. Pure. I'm not. *[beat]* Years ago... A guy. I... loved him. It was his life. I went along. I wanted to be loved.

LOVELACE: I want to be loved. What's wrong with me? I *am* loved; I know it — all my friends, my family: they all love me. God loves me. But... I don't know. I've... I've never had someone look into my eyes and tell me that they loved me. Loved only me. Loved me more than any other. I... it's not selfish if I love them back, right? It's not like I want people to love me and I'm not going to love them back. I've got all this love inside me, boiling in there — all these things I want to share, all my dreams... no one to share.

EVERHART: I... I can't take that back. The things we did. I did. You — you deserve someone better. I love you, but... it won't work. It can't work. I'm not... I mean, I *know* what God thinks. I've blown it.

SOMMERS: It's my fault, maybe. I don't know. Everyone around me is... I mean, my Jewish friends are celebrating Passover; I'm supposed to be celebrating Easter, but... I feel dead. I don't feel. I don't know. I *do* feel. I just feel... alone. Why does God listen to everyone else and not to me? What's wrong with me?

[Back to the restaurant.]

WAITER: I don't mean to pry, sir...

MAN: No, go ahead.

WAITER: Why do you bother waiting for her? It's not the first night she's...

MAN: She needs me.

WAITER: Are you sure?

MAN: Yes.

LOVELACE: I wonder sometimes, I really do. Is there really someone out there for me? Really? It's a wonderful dream, you know... I walk outside on the grass, and I imagine smiles, a hand in mine... but is it true? Real? I mean, just because I want something doesn't mean that it'll happen. Someone gave me this book last week: "Called To Be Single"! *[shrugs]* They meant well. *[beat]* Does God *want* me to be lonely?

SOMMERS: Sometimes I manage to make myself completely alone. There's nothing but me and my work — I shut off everything else. God included. He doesn't

listen to me anymore. I've been off doing other stuff for too long. It doesn't work any more.

EVERHART: I've been away from it for too long. There's no way to redo the past. My life's a trashy soap opera, poorly written and worse acted, and it's been that way too long to change. You can't ask me to change. I can't.

[The restaurant, again.]

WAITER: No offense, sir, but she sure isn't acting like she needs you. Stood you up three times this week, as many last week and the week before. . .

MAN: Yes, I know.

WAITER: Then why do you still come here and wait?

MAN: *[pause]* Because I love her.

LOVELACE: I wonder if I even know how to love anymore. Maybe that's my problem. If it's not now, it will be. How could I love anyone who loved me? I've got no practice. Maybe. . . maybe I'm just not ready yet. If I pray harder, live my life better, love others more. . . maybe then I'll be ready to love someone else. Maybe.

MAN: *[To himself:]* I love her.

EVERHART: You can't love me. I don't even know how to love anymore. I. . . you're just too good for me. You're so wonderful, you do all these things for me. . . you cook me dinner when I'm hungry. I've never done that for you. I can't do that for you. Every time you do something like that for me, you just remind me that I've done nothing for you. I just wish you'd stop. Stop. Stop doing these things that make me feel guilty, stop loving me when you know I can never love you back. . . stop loving me! I'm just not good enough for you. Do you know what people say about us? Do you? They call us Beauty and the Beast. They can't imagine someone as nice and as good as you in love with someone like me. Just go away. Please go away. It hurts to be the Beast.

MAN: I love her.

SOMMERS: I've forgotten. I used to know. All that stuff. God used to listen to me. When I was nine, my mother, crying, sat my brother and me on her lap and said, "Pray, kids. I bought you fishing poles and drove you to the ocean because your daddy's not around to do those things with you anymore. But I can't fish and that bait just won't stay on the hook and I don't know what else to do. I'm a mommy, not a daddy, and I just can't teach you to fish. Kids, don't cry. Jesus is your daddy, 'cause you don't have another, and somehow fishing's his job now. Pray, kids. Jesus hears you." And in my nine-year old faith I prayed. I prayed. Sure enough, a nice old man, salt-stained, with grandchildren of his own, was walking the beach, and stopped to help that single mother and her two small boys that day. God heard me. And I touched Jesus' hand as he worked the bait onto the hook and felt him guide as he taught me to cast.

Where did he go? Where have I gone? I... I miss my daddy, now. I've had no time for him.

WAITER: It's nine o'clock now, sir. You've been here for hours.

MAN: Yeah. *[sigh]* May I have the check, please?

WAITER: Certainly, sir. Will you...

MAN: Yes. Please. Seven o'clock tomorrow, party of two.

WAITER: Yes, sir. You think she'll come?

MAN: *[A long pause.]* Someday, yes. And I'll be waiting for her.