

THE BREAST MONOLOGUES

By
Robin Rice

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THE BREST MONOLOGUES

Breasts are everywhere -- never-ending sources of nurture, pride, mortification, desire and trouble. The monologues and duologues are based on interviews with women of different backgrounds, ages, communities and walks of life. Their stories paint pictures of their thoughts and feelings about their breasts, from the young girl who wants Santa to make hers grow, to the woman battling breast cancer and reconstruction with humor, to new mothers dealing with nursing their babies -- and much more.

The play is dedicated to the women who were interviewed. Thanks to Laura for pirate jokes, to Mom for raking leaves and laughing, to New York actors who turned out at a moment's notice to read the first draft with skill, enthusiasm and feedback. Thanks to Brazen-Faced Varlets, Looking for Lilith, The Pharmacy Theatre, and all undaunted, forthright, funny and thoughtful female theater-makers.

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The Pharmacy Theatre in Middletown, PA, artistic director Austin Shay, zoomed the premiere of THE BREAST MONOLOGUES in February, 2021 (accessible via YouTube). Director: Abbie Jean Litman. The cast:

Momo Burns-Min
Kimberly Lawson
Maddy Gillespie
Lucy Fletcher
Tabitha Borges
Abbie Jean Litman
Logan Floyd
Hannah Hedrick
Rita Hunt Smith
Kenya Grant
Alice Saltzman
Brynn Owen
Abby Gumper
Ann-Marie Lariccia
Deb Leamy

See NOTES FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT
following the monologues.

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CHARACTERS*

- PLAYWRIGHT/INTERVIEWER (Prologue, Margie's Lifelong Ultimate Bucket List) – Age 50+. Female.
- RITA (The Lord's Design) - 30-50. Fundamentalist. Tennessee.
- RAINBOW (Rampant) - Age 25. A hippie. Seattle. 1974.
- SUSAN (Defying Gravity) - Age 60. Jewish. Defiant. Slender. Toned. Upper Middle Class. New York City.
- RIGHT BREAST and
LEFT BREAST (Lumpy Lump, Mammogram, Walking Billboard) - Age 45. Share one woman so they are similar in size.
- CANDY (Dear Santa) – Age 13.* Tiny breasts. Innocent but hopeful. Vermont. 1950.
- JUANITA (Pros and Cons) - Age 25-40. Large breasts. Assembly line worker. Aggravated. Undecided. South Texas.
- LILLIAN (Lillian Thanks God for Paris) - Age 50. Sweet. Sheltered. Dayton, Ohio. 1938.
- TIFFANY (Tiffany's Sweet Sixteen) - Age 16. Mortified. Los Angeles.
- LAURA (Foobs and Fipples) - Age 29. Determined to be positive. Kentucky.
- LIZZIE and
JENNIFER (Nourishing Daughters) - Age 22-35. Lizzie is a gym teacher. Jennifer is primarily a homemaker. Nursing mothers. Unsure. Vulnerable. NJ.
- MAXINE (Maxine Maximizes) - Age 30-50. Determined. Focused. Anytown, U.S.A.
- BETTY (Betty's Breast Washer Report) - Age 15. Studious. Maine. 1935.

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MARGIE (Margie's Lifelong Ultimate Bucket List) - 50-60.
Plus size. Adventurous. Organized. Painfully self-conscious. North Carolina.

** 2-16 female actors. Age, ethnicity, size differ widely. May be performed as the characters' ages or the actors' ages except Candy should not be played by a child actor.*

** All monologues don't need to be performed. The order and monologues to be performed may be adjusted if desired. An intermission may be included if desired.*

TIME and PLACE

1930s-present. Throughout the U.S.A.

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PROLOGUE

PLAYWRIGHT/INTERVIEWER, female, age 50+, addresses the audience.

PLAYWRIGHT/INTERVIEWER. Breasts, boobs, bosoms, busts, bonbons, bazooms. Tatas, tits, titties. Out there, up front, admired, brushed against, dressed, undressed, caressed. Knockers, knobbers. Melons, moo-moos, muffins. The breasts of women. *(Pause.)* Round, oval, pointy, perky, jiggly, jouncy, floppy, flat, droopy, dumpy, lumpy, light, tight, scarred, smooth. Honkers, hoohas, hooters. Jugs. Nips. Pointer Sisters. A world of breasts with stories to tell. *(Beat.)* But a whole play about breasts? The inspiration light bulb flashes on when somebody on Facebook posts a magazine advertisement for a breast washer. A what? *(A moment.)* All I can find are ads in French from the mid-1930s. They feature photos of a smiling woman holding a large metal funnel over one exposed breast. Although in some of the pictures the funnel seems to be hooked up to a sink tap, I figure out -- with my high school French -- that washing wasn't the objective. Google has nothing more to offer about breast washers. They seem to have enjoyed a brief burst of popularity before fading into oblivion. *(Beat.)* I want to know more. I want

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to know who bought them. Breast-obsessed women? Wives of breast-obsessed men? Bored women? Curious women? Sex-starved women? Women with low self-esteem? What were their stories? Are they the same as the stories women would tell about their breasts today? *(Beat.)* And so it begins. The interviews. I'm hesitant at first. What do I say? Hi, I'm a playwright. Tell me about your breasts. Strangely, it works. The stories pour out. I turn the hands on the clock back to when and where each story happened. *(She leaves the stage, sits with the audience.)*

THE LORD'S DESIGN

RITA, 30-50, speaks to her younger sister who wants money for a breast enlargement. Tennessee.

RITA. Don't you dare! That is a bad and evil idea. No way on God's green earth would I give you what it costs to do that. Listen to your big sister and wipe that thought straight outta your head afore it feels at home. You are perfect as is. You been watchin too much tv. Brad always said: Satan created advertisin commercials for the purpose of destroyin our bodies. Our bodies are holy temples. Commercials eat brain cells. You gotta hold your Bible tight and resist. Like wardin off a vampire with a cross. When a temptin commercial came on the tv, Brad leaned forward in his La-Z-Boy and held the Good Book in front of the screen to block it out. *(A moment.)* Advertisin aims to convince folks that oversized female mammaries are good. You know and I know that no part of the human body is good or bad. Why you

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don't see flat-chested women sellin products on tv is 'cause the men in charge of makin commercials was raised wrong. What you're lookin at is straight outta some heathen man's wet dream. I buy Pantene Shampoo 'cause I like it, not 'cause a woman with 42-double-Ds uses it. What kind of women would let that influence 'em? Lesbians? Do lesbians buy Pantene Shampoo? Am I missin something here? *(Beat.)* Did you see the Superbowl? Hells bells! What do boobies have t'do with Doritos? Tela Flora for Pete's sake? Kia Optima: Dream car for real life? Real? Lord Almighty. If that's a real babe with real boobs in a real bikini leanin up on a car in real life then I'm the Virgin Mary. Anybody with a third-grade education can see through that one straight into Satan's eyes. Oh, oh -- how 'bout that Go Daddy dot com ad for some Infernal Cloud populated with half-naked women wigglin their boobies while the announcer winks and yells "World's largest domain name! Best service!" while they strip down to tank tops. Subtle as skunk cabbage. Brad would of turned the tv off and missed the second half if he saw that one. *(Pause.)* This is me when I watch them Real Housewives on the tv: Gol-ly Christmas! Who are they? No God-fearin woman would get her own sliced off and big shiny new ones stitched on! I want to take them Real Housewives behind the woodshed and shake 'em 'til their teeth rattle like a month of Januarys! They're goin to hell. Them from New Jersey, California, New York and Atlanta too. Bless their misguided hearts, but God is gonna punish 'em sure as shootin. I guarantee when their time comes they'll get plunked in a big ole vat of boilin oil labeled "vanity." *(Pause.)* Don't mutilate the body the good Lord gave you, Little Sis. You were made in His image. Tryin to improve on that is like sayin Jesus needs a makeover. Why risk eternal condemnation to the fiery furnace if

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you can avoid it? *(Beat.)* I don't paint my nails or dye my hair or nothin. It's right there in the Good Book: Let sleepin dogs lie. No boob jobs, no tatoos, no organ transplants, no spare replacement parts. No takin things out or puttin things in or on that weren't there to start with. No upgradin 'cause you're dissatisfied. The human body was not made by Apple Computer. *(Beat.)* Brad's kidney stopped workin 'cause Christ Almighty wanted it that way. I accept it. The girls accept it. We're too small and stupid to understand the Lord's reasons. *(A moment.)* I will confess that at the start when Brad was losin his battle with the big C, a part of me wished he'd have the bad kidney cut out and go for a transplant. I did wish that. Jesus forgive me. I didn't tell Brad or the girls my thoughts. I'm still askin forgiveness for my weakness. If I had tried to convince Brad to do other than what we both knew was right, I couldn't live with myself. No matter what the outcome. I know right from wrong in my heart. *(Beat.)* Them Real Housewives can get their mix and match. Women with cancer or other unfortunate circumstances who let doctors or advertisements talk them into alterin the Lord's design -- they can do what they want. I feel sorry for 'em. But you and me, we love the bodies God gave us, Little Sis. If He makes a tumor grow in one of my breasts or my girls' breasts we won't cut it out or off and I know in my heart you wouldn't neither. We won't change the master plan of what Jesus wants to happen. What we were born with is what we're meant to die with. We are satisfied with our original anatomicals. Praise the Lord. Am I right?

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RAMPANT

RAINBOW, 25, is in bed, sleeping or reading a book. Suddenly her lover leaps on her with a pair of tweezers. Seattle. 1974.

RAINBOW. Get off me with those tweezers! *(She puts her hands over a breast protectively.)* Sneaking up in the middle of the night, what the fuck? What're you smoking? I know it's there. I know it's black and long. I measured it last week. Three and a quarter inches. So what? It's my hair. It's my nipple. Back off. *(Beat.)* I didn't realize this would be repellent to you. I mean Christ – Janis, Woodstock, Antioch, SDS, The Stones, The Dead... Everything we've been through. Everything we believe in. You're blowin my mind! *(She smells her armpit.)* Smells like me. Would you rather I smelled like fucking deodorant? Should I get some fucking perfume -- spray myself head to toe so I smell like a fucking lily of the valley? Spray aerosol shit up my twat so it has rosebud essence which is a laugh because that crap smells like chemicals, not flowers. Advertising's a fucking military-industrial complex bad head trip. Madison Avenue gets in your head with glossy technicolor pictures of flowers and an eggbeater. Scrambles your brain so it thinks "flowers," when what your nose smells is chemicals. *(Pause.)* Man. I better start shaving my pits. Legs too, with you all hair-phobic. Has that been bothering you too? Are my hairy legs why it's not cool for me to meet your parents? Surely it's not my hairy nipple. I'd keep that covered. You know I would. *(A moment.)* If I pluck will you dig me? Pluck! Pluck! Pluck! Where do I draw the line? Eyebrows? Upper lip? Searching for hairs. Here? Here? Turn on the light. I need to see. Scour my body for hairs run amok. Head hair okay? I can chop it off. Hairs on my chin when I'm old and

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grey? Will you love me when I'm old and grey if I don't pluck my chin hairs? Where else should I search? My nose? My ears? Shall I shave down there for you? Is my breast ugly because of one brave, rampant hair? I thought our word for each other was "cherish" not "change."

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