

BAKER'S DOZEN

13 Gay Plays and Monologues

By
Donald E. Baker

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

Copyright © 2023 by Donald E. Baker

CAUTION: Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that performance of **BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES** is subject to payment of a royalty. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of The United States of America, and of all countries covered by the International Copyright Union (including the Dominion of Canada and the rest of the British Commonwealth) and of all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention, the Berne Convention, and of all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations. All rights, including without limitation professional/amateur stage rights, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all other forms of mechanical, electronic and digital reproduction, transmission and distribution, such as CD, DVD, the Internet, private and file-sharing networks, information storage and retrieval systems, photocopying, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved. Particular emphasis is placed upon the matter of readings, permission of which must be obtained from the Author in writing. The

English language stock and amateur stage performance rights in the United States, its territories, possessions and Canada for **BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES** are controlled exclusively by Next Stage Press. No professional or nonprofessional performance of the Play may be given without obtaining in advance written permission and paying the requisite fee. Inquiries concerning production rights should be addressed to genekato@nextstagepress.com

SPECIAL NOTE

Anyone receiving permission to produce **BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES** is required to give credit to the Author as sole and exclusive Author of the Play on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play and in all instances in which the title of the Play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or a production thereof. The name of the Author must appear on a separate line, in which no other name appears, immediately beneath the title and in size of type equal to 50% of the size of the largest, most prominent letter used for the title of the Play. No person, firm, or entity may receive credit larger or more prominent than that accorded the Author.

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

DEDICATION

*This collection is dedicated, as always,
to my ever-supportive husband
Roy Hardison.*

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

INTRODUCTION

The pieces in this collection may be produced individually or performed together as one evening of theater. Individual actors can appear in multiple plays and/or monologues. The actors who perform *The Boys Across the Street* and *My Summer of Cypress Gardens* should be White. Otherwise, race/ethnicity is irrelevant. Set requirements for the plays are very minimal, at most a table and a couple of chairs. None of the monologues require any furniture.

PRODUCTIONS AND PREVIOUS PUBLICATIONS

The Boys Across the Street

Online Production: Stage Left Theater, Spokane (March, 2022)

The First Time

Publication: *Monologues by LGBTQIA+ Scriptwriters for LGBTQIA+ Actors* (June, 2023)

For a Man Your Age

Zoom Reading: Literary and Discourse Society Facebook Group (May, 2023)

I Invited Your Mother for Thanksgiving

Production: Chapin Theatre Company, Chapin SC (November, 2022)

Intestate: A COVID-19 Monologue

Publication: *Monologues by LGBTQIA+ Scriptwriters for LGBTQIA+ Actors* (June, 2023)

Production: Magnolia Arts Center, Greenville NC (February, 2022)

“Audience Favorite”

Online Publication: *some scripts literary magazine*, Issue 4: “Outbreak” (July, 2021)

Online Production: Talking Horse Productions, Columbia, Missouri (May, 2021)

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

What Happened This Time

Publication: *Fresh Words: An International Literary Magazine:*
Contemporary One-Minute Plays Volume III (November, 2022)

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

CONTENTS

Life Support (10-minute two-hander) The same-sex partner and the homophobic sister of a dying man meet for the first time in a hospital waiting room.

After It Stopped (5-minute monologue) A man recalls the sexual abuse he suffered when he was thirteen.

Feeling Devilish (6-minute two-hander) A man summons a demon on a dating app.

The Boys Across the Street (5-minute monologue) An older White woman discovers a mixed-race same-sex couple is moving into her neighborhood.

For a Man Your Age (10-minute two-hander) An older gay couple discuss aging, flirtatious baristas, and the *National Geographic*.

The First Time (5-minute monologue) A man who always thought he was straight fearfully questions his sexuality after an encounter in a public restroom.

What Happened This Time? (5-minute two-hander) A klutz's failed attempt to take a box to the trash means a trip to the ER and the pet cemetery.

Dad & Uncle Mark (10-minute monologue) An older man remembers what he saw spying through a knothole when he was thirteen.

Marvin and the Muses (5-minute three-hander) A playwright fires his muse, but will her hunky replacement be more distraction than inspiration?

Intestate (10-minute monologue) A 50-year-old gay man loses his partner and everything else to the COVID pandemic.

I Invited Your Mother for Thanksgiving (8-minute two-hander) One half of a gay couple is not pleased to find out his estranged mother is coming for Thanksgiving.

My Summer of Cypress Gardens (10-minute monologue) A White man in his seventies recalls the childhood trip to Florida when for the first time he truly "saw" Black people and also experienced the beginnings of sexual awareness.

Guilt by Association (20-minute two-hander) A pleasant father-son evening turns serious when the son mentions his best friend is considering suicide.

LIFE SUPPORT

CHARACTERS (1M, 1F)

JONATHAN. Age 30, Ben's partner, any race/ethnicity.

SANDRA: Age 42, Ben's sister, any race/ethnicity.

PLACE: A dreary institutional hospital waiting room, where they put people awaiting bad news.

TIME: The present.

Lights up on a private but dreary institutional hospital waiting room. Two chairs. Perhaps occasional hospital sounds are heard in the background. JONATHAN sits absent-mindedly toying with a cardboard coffee cup. When he finally realizes it's empty, he crushes it and throws it across the room. SANDRA enters.

SANDRA. I assume you're Johnny.

JONATHAN. And you must be Sandra. Even if I'd never seen a picture of Ben's family I'd know you were his sister. I'm sorry we have to finally meet under these circumstances.

SANDRA. *(Sitting.)* I'm sorry I have to meet you under *any* circumstances.

JONATHAN. And it's Jonathan. Nobody calls me Johnny except ...

SANDRA. I pictured you a lot younger. The last time I heard Ben's voice was the voicemail he left to say he was in love with a man. Johnny Harris he said. With a name like that I assumed you were just a kid.

JONATHAN. He spent the last five years hoping you'd call him back. Or answer any of the text messages he left.

SANDRA. Even if I'd wanted to, Mama forbade any contact. "That's not my son," she said. "I raised my son to be a good, normal, God-fearing man, not an abomination that lies with other men like unto a woman."

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

JONATHAN. Well, it sure didn't take us long to get around to the one verse anybody knows from the Book of Leviticus. Ben was no abomination. If anybody was made in God's image, he was.

SANDRA. I used to think that. Before the voicemail.

JONATHAN. Have you seen him? In there I mean.

SANDRA. I hardly recognized him. Battered and bruised. All swollen up. Tubes everywhere. Some kind of machine buzzing and blinking. Awful.

JONATHAN. Life support. Life support they call it. What a joke. I was home when they called. I had a pot roast in the slow cooker and red wine breathing on the counter. Wondering why he was so late. Another driver crossed the center line and they crashed head on. Took them a long time just to cut Ben out of what was left of the car. The doctors say there's no coming back from his injuries. They want to stop the machines and let him die. It's what he would've wanted.

SANDRA. That can't be right. Our family believes in leaving it in God's hands. Deciding when somebody dies. After Daddy's heart attack, Mama insisted they do everything they could to keep him alive for as long God wanted us to.

JONATHAN. He saw what that did to you and her. He didn't want to put you through it again. I'm just his boyfriend. I can't give the order. It has to be a family member. Since your mother has Alzheimer's, it has to be you.

SANDRA. How'd you know about Mama?

JONATHAN. Ben still had friends he kept in contact with back in Mt. Nebo. Mostly people he went to school with, people who could accept him even if his own family wouldn't.

SANDRA. Oh, Ben had lots of friends. He was very popular growing up. He was just naturally Mr. Personality. And he was smart and he was talented and he was athletic ... and he was so handsome. One time I overheard Mama bragging to one of her friends that Ben was the prettiest one in our family.

JONATHAN. Jesus.

SANDRA. Did you go to a small-town public school?

JONATHAN. I was an army brat. I was never in one place long enough to build lasting friendships.

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

SANDRA. Well, going to a small school means you have the same teachers your older brother did. And if you can't measure up to his impossibly high standards they let you know it. Oh, they don't mean to. You can just tell. ... But what's worse is your parents let you know it, too. "Why are you getting B's in algebra? Ben always got A's." "Ben always dresses so nicely. Maybe he could give you some pointers." But it was hard to resent him. There wasn't a conceited bone in his body. He *did* try to help me with my homework. He *did* try to help me with my wardrobe and my hair and what little makeup Mama would let me wear.

JONATHAN. But nobody realized he was gay?

SANDRA. It was hard to resent him but I managed to do it. And when Mama cut him off there was a little part of me that was glad. For the first time in my life I had her all to myself. I didn't have to compete. I had her full attention. Which lasted right up to the point where she no longer remembered who I am.

JONATHAN. He wanted to be cremated.

SANDRA. No. No cremation. If Mama was in her right mind she'd never allow it. He has to be preserved so when the time comes he can rise up and meet Jesus.

JONATHAN. Ben thought it took a certain kind of arrogance for someone to think they had a right to occupy space in the world in perpetuity. If God could make Adam from dust, He can gather up our ashes and make us whole again. That's what Ben believed.

SANDRA. Don't know where he got such a notion. It sure isn't in the Bible anywhere.

JONATHAN. It's in Job. "Though worms destroy my body, yet in my flesh I shall see God."

SANDRA. How'n the world would someone like you know that?

JONATHAN. You and Ben aren't the only people raised on church every Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday evening. But do what you want. Wherever Ben is—and that husk in there on life support sure isn't him—wherever he is, he's beyond caring.

SANDRA. He'll be in our plot at Mt. Nebo Cemetery. That's the way it's supposed to work. He's supposed to be with family.

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

JONATHAN. *(Standing.)* Where was his family the last five years? Oh, that's right. For the last five years I was Ben's family. Just think about that, Sandra. I have five years of memories of some of the best years of Ben's life. You and your mother and your kids could have had that, too. Ben's heart was big enough for all of us. And now it's too late. You have my sympathy. *(JONATHAN starts to exit, then pauses when Sandra speaks.)*

SANDRA. Johnny. ... **JONATHAN.** For what it's worth. Despite my resentments and him being what he is, I do love my brother. It is possible to love the sinner while hating his sin.

JONATHAN. And it was possible for Ben to love the believers while hating their beliefs. I'm not that charitable, but that was Ben. He loved you Sandra, you and your mother both.

(JONATHAN exits. After a moment Sandra takes her phone out of her purse, looks up a number, and dials the number of the Mt. Nebo local newspaper. Pauses in her monologue indicate the unheard responses.)

SANDRA. *Daily Chronicle?* This is Sandra Jennings. I need you to get an obituary notice ready. ... No, it's not Mama. It's for my brother Ben. He was in a car wreck. ... Yes. It was a huge shock. He's still hanging on, but we expect God to take him home soon. I'll let you know. I'm just glad Mama won't ever realize he's gone. ... O.K. ... Benjamin Herbert Thompson. Age 43. Originally from Mt. Nebo. Died from injuries sustained in an automobile accident. He is survived by his mother Edith Thompson, née Kleinschmidt, his sister Sandra Thompson Jennings, his brother-in-law John P. Jennings, a nephew and two nieces. His father Herbert W. Thompson preceded him in death. ... No. ... *(She looks toward the door Jonathan exited through, then away. Beat.)* There are no other survivors.

END OF PLAY

AFTER IT STOPPED

A monologue adapted from the play, *Everyday Monsters*

CHARACTER (1M)

TIMOTHY: A 38-year-old man recalling the aftereffects of the sexual abuse he suffered when he was thirteen. Any race or ethnicity.

PLACE and **TIME:** Indeterminate

WARNING. References rape and childhood sexual abuse.

People say I could have stopped it if I wanted to. I could have just said “no.” I tried. God knows I tried. But I was just a skinny thirteen-year-old kid. He was a grown-ass man, a lot bigger and heavier and stronger than I was and he wasn’t about to take “no” for an answer. It’s been twenty-five years and I still get nightmares about being smothered under the weight of him. I’ve asked myself over and over. Why me? ... Why *me*? Was it my fault somehow? Was I sending out subconscious signals that made him think I *wanted* him to touch me? Did he think I was queer? I’ve spent my whole life trying like hell to make sure nobody ever thought that about me again. When I got to high school and the girls started to pay attention to me, I’d go as far as they’d let me. Sometimes farther than they wanted me to. And then I bragged about it in the locker room so the other guys could see what a real man I was. And I needed to show everybody, including myself, that I wasn’t some weakling who couldn’t stand up for himself. I got into a lot of fights, anytime I thought a guy was looking at me funny. Whenever I came home with my trophies of cuts and bruises Mama would patch me up, all the time asking what happened to me. She didn’t mean the fight. She meant what happened to the son she *used* to have, the good son, the happy son, the son who wouldn’t even think of hitting another human being. That kid wasn’t all that athletic, either, but this new one? He went out for almost every available sport. Except wrestling. I knew I wouldn’t be able to stand having another guy on top of me pinning me down. And I

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

had to be the best in all of them. I felt so worthless I desperately needed my coaches to keep telling me how good I was. I was valedictorian of my class because I craved praise from my teachers so much I studied like my life depended on it. In a lot of ways it did. But there wasn't any real emotion involved in any of it. I didn't play basketball or study *David Copperfield* because I enjoyed it. I certainly didn't love any of the girls I forced myself on. It was all mechanical. Still is. I've been married twice. And divorced twice. Both my wives complained I was so emotionally distant they couldn't tell if I really loved them or not. Same with my kids. I was so afraid to touch them. I never hugged them. Never played with them. Never roughoused with my son. I might as well not have been there. My son. Exactly a week ago it was his birthday. He was thirteen. Thirteen. And I looked at him—happy and innocent and beautiful and having no idea anybody would ever want to hurt him—and I was thirteen all over again. It all came flooding back. The fear. The helplessness. A quarter-century of guilt and shame. Every last bit of it. And that's when I knew I finally had to do something. I finally had to break through and *do* something. I know where he lives, that monster who sentenced me and who knows how many other young boys to a life of self-loathing. Today I bought myself a gun. And tonight, I'm going to pay him a visit.

END OF MONOLOGUE

FEELING DEVILISH

CHARACTERS (1M, 1M/F)

ROGER: 30-ish. Male. Any race or ethnicity.

STEVIE: Roger's best friend. Any race, ethnicity, or gender expression.

PLACE: An apartment implied by a chair and a door to the outside.

TIME: Whenever.

Lights up on ROGER sitting in his apartment playing/working on his phone. There is a loud knocking on his door.

STEVIE. (*Off.*) Roger! Are you in there? Roger!!

ROGER. Stevie? (*Roger opens the door. STEVIE enters.*) Stevie, what's the matter!

STEVIE. Roger! Thank God! Are you alright?

ROGER. Of course I'm alright. What's gotten into you?

STEVIE. This text you sent. Something about meeting a demon. I was scared to death. On my way here I actually left a message for Father O'Brien asking him if he knew a good exorcist. Dammit, Roger. I expected to come in here and find you lying dead in a mess of blood and pea soup with your head on backwards.

ROGER. Well, he had my head spinning for sure. Calm down. As you can see, I'm fine.

STEVIE. How in the world did you meet ... it?

ROGER. His pronouns are he, him, his.

STEVIE. Whatever. Did you do the whole bit? Draw a pentagram and light candles? Or did you just stand in front of your mirror and chant a forbidden name over and over until he appeared?

ROGER. I found him online.

STEVIE. Like on Tinder?

ROGER. No. I came across this brand-new dating app. It's called R-Triple G dot com.

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

STEVIE. Which means?

ROGER. Really Good-looking Gay Guys. Dot com.

STEVIE. Don't take this the wrong way, but to be on a site called Really Good-looking Gay Guys, don't you have to *be* a really good-looking gay guy?

ROGER. Nah. Anybody can sign up. It's just they have this algorithm that determines how much you pay depending on how good-looking it thinks you are. Maybe I didn't get the lowest rate, but my subscription is very reasonable. Only six dollars and sixty-six cents a month.

STEVIE. O ... K ... But why were you online looking for a demon in the first place?

ROGER. I wasn't looking for one. I was just swiping left as usual and came across this profile that said the guy was a "demon in bed." And he was gorgeous. So I swiped right. Turns out he's a demon out of bed also.

STEVIE. An actual demon.

ROGER. Yep. Named Zippy.

STEVIE. Zippy!?

ROGER. He said humans can't pronounce his demon name—apparently it's twenty-one letters long and has three x's in it—so he simplifies it when he's here on earth. Or "this mortal coil" as he calls it. Isn't that cute?

STEVIE. Almost Shakespearean.

ROGER. And, Stevie, I think I'm in love.

STEVIE. With a demon named Zippy.

ROGER. You know sometimes I'm not averse to a little S&M.

STEVIE. No I did not know that. And I did not need to know it now.

ROGER. You would not believe how talented Zippy is in inflicting pain.

STEVIE. Actually I would believe it.

ROGER. It was so intense I felt like I was on fire. And we have the funniest safe word. It's "hun-ka-hun-ka"!

STEVIE. Elvis would be so proud. I hope you're not planning to see this—person—again.

ROGER. He gave me his phone number. See? *(Roger shows them Zippy's number on his phone.)*

STEVIE. All sixes? Isn't that the number for that personal injury lawyer? The one with the obnoxious TV commercials? "We'll give the big

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

insurance companies hell until we get you the money *you* deserve. So when you're in a fix, just call six!" I mean, talk about torture.

ROGER. That's him. Zip Barrister.

STEVIE. A demon lawyer? Isn't that kind of redundant? But how did you not recognize him? You must see his ads ten times a night. If nothing else, that head of flaming red hair should've been a dead giveaway.

ROGER. He was wearing a ball cap and switched his name around. Called himself Barry Zipshitz.

STEVIE. Sounds even more like a lawyer.

ROGER. But you want to know the best part? He lives right here in this building. On the sixth floor.

STEVIE. Room 666?

ROGER. How did you know?

STEVIE. Lucky guess. Look. I think you're out of your mind but you seem okay physically. So I'm going to go call Father O'Brien and tell him we won't be needing the bell, book, and candle after all.

ROGER. That's not exorcism. That's for excommunication.

STEVIE. Ex this, ex that. Who can keep track? Give me a call when you come to your senses. *(Stevie exits. After a moment Roger picks up his phone and punches in all sixes.)*

ROGER. *(Coquettishly.)* Hello, Zippy? This is Roger. You busy? I have a burning desire to see you tonight. ... Yeah. You might say I'm feeling a little devilish.

END OF PLAY

THE BOYS ACROSS THE STREET

CHARACTER (1F)

MABEL: An older White woman.

PLACE: A small town somewhere in Middle America.

TIME: Now.

Lights up on a comfortable, lived-in middle-class home in a small American town. Or an implied space.

Just wait till you hear what's goin' on right across the street from me. I looked out my window and there was a man and what I thought was his colored helper over to the old Thompson place. They was haulin' stuff outta the house and throwin' it into a big ol' dumpster. At the time, I couldn't have been more thrilled. Since the Thompson's both died it's just sat there all boarded up and bringin' down my property values. Well, I quick whipped up a batch of my famous chocolate marshmallow brownies and took 'em over to welcome the man to the neighborhood. I spotted his weddin' ring right off, so of course I said if he and his wife hadn't found a church home yet, they'd certainly be welcome at the Sturdy Rock Church and I'd be happy to take 'em to worship next Sunday if they'd like me to. That's when he called the colored man over and introduced him to me as his *husband*. There had never been any queers in this town and we surely never believed in race mixin' but here I was face to face with an interracial, same-sex, couple of all things! You can believe I skedaddled back home as quick as these old legs could get me here. Locked the door behind me and you know I never bothered to lock my door before. Now, I don't live under a rock. I watch Fox News so I know what's goin' on. I know the Supreme Court said gay marriage was o.k. a few years ago in that Ober- Ober- that case with the funny name. At the time it had most

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

ever'body I know all riled up tryin' to figure out how the Supreme Court could rule against God's Law. Well, now I got some hope. Now that those wonderful Supreme Court justices appointed by The Greatest President Who Ever Lived finally upheld the sanctity of life, maybe next they'll uphold the sanctity of marriage. You can bet I'll be on my knees ever' night prayin' to God to make that happen. Meanwhile, I'm gonna have a great big sign made sayin' "God made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve." First time I heard Reverend Barringer down to the Sturdy Rock Church say that, I thought I never heard anythin' so clever in my life. Once I get that sign I'm gonna put it up in my front yard, right where those boys across the street will have to see it ever' time they come outta their house. That'll show 'em they aren't welcome in *this* neighborhood. Oh where're my manners? I haven't offered you a thing. You want coffee? And maybe have a brownie with it? I got plenty. I sure wasn't about to leave any of my good brownies with *them*. They mighta thought it was a sign I approve of their sinful lifestyle choice. So. Would you like one? ... No? Are you sure? They're the best brownies you'll ever put in your mouth. The recipe's foolproof because of my secret ingredient. (*Beat.*) I. Make. Them. With. *Love.*

END OF MONOLOGUE

FOR A MAN YOUR AGE

CHARACTERS (2M)

MICHAEL: Older gay male, any race/ethnicity, fighting the aging process.

WILL: Even older gay male, any race/ethnicity, happy with who he is.

PLACE: A condo in a high-rise building. A couch or a couple of chairs.

TIME: Saturday morning. The present.

NOTE: A slash mark (/) indicates where the next speech breaks in.

WILL, an older gay man, perhaps a bit over 70, sits dressed in Saturday clothes, reading an intellectual magazine such as The Atlantic or ideally an ancient issue of The National Geographic. His husband MICHAEL, aged somewhere in his low sixties but trying to look and act younger, enters from the bedroom and crosses toward the outside door.

MICHAEL. Morning, sunshine.

WILL. Morning. Where do you think you're going?

MICHAEL. Down to the Pump and Grind for coffee. Like I do every Saturday morning. You want to come?

WILL. Didn't you read last week's email from the homeowners' association?

MICHAEL. I value my sanity too much to read emails from the HOA. What're they griping about now? Dog poop on the sidewalk again?

WILL. They were warning everybody the elevator will be off in the whole building this morning. Time for the annual inspection.

MICHAEL. On a Saturday? For how long?

WILL. For however long it takes.

MICHAEL. How am I expected to function without my coffee?

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

WILL. You could always make it yourself. You just like to go to the Pump and Grind because Myron the barista's young and cute and he flirts outrageously for extra tips.

MICHAEL. Just because we're married doesn't mean I don't appreciate a nice smile and a little attention from a younger man. But that's sweet. After all this time you still get jealous.

WILL. After thirty years together, I'm pretty sure you're not really planning to dump me for a boy nearly young enough to be your grandson.

MICHAEL. He's not *that* young.

WILL. Yeah. He is. And despite all the mythology to the contrary, there are very few good-looking young guys who want to spend the best years of their lives playing nursemaid to an old man.

MICHAEL. Watch who you're calling old, buster. If the elevator's out I can just use the stairs. I haven't got much exercise lately.

WILL. You never get much exercise. If you attempt to go down and back up fourteen flights they'll find you dead from a heart attack somewhere long about the fifth floor, if you even make it that far.

MICHAEL. If I'd known this was going to happen, I'd have insisted on a condo on the first floor.

WILL. Oh, no. You were the one who insisted on a de-luxe apartment in the sky-yi-yi.

MICHAEL. Maybe the Pump and Grind would deliver.

WILL. In your dreams. And even if your college boy cutie pie *were* willing to schlep it up Mt. Everest for a huge tip, the coffee would be cold by the time it got here. Surely you can find a way to distract yourself. Maybe read something for a change.

MICHAEL. I read.

WILL. Menus don't count.

MICHAEL. And your dusty old magazines do. How far have you gotten with your retirement hobby—working through that box full of ancient *National Geographics* in the back of the guestroom closet—the box you've been carrying around since before we moved in together?

WILL. I consider that box part of my dowry.

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

MICHAEL. Most guys would bring a carton of gay porn. *Big Boys of Brazil* or *The Prince and the Pool Boy*. But no. My husband brings *National Geographic*. No thanks. Some kid brought a *National Geographic* to school in the sixth grade. He'd discovered an article about lost tribes of New Guinea and couldn't wait to share it. First time I ever saw a picture of a naked woman. And the last. I've been afraid to open another *National Geographic* since.

WILL. Okay then, you want to be young again? Turn on some Saturday morning cartoons. Meanwhile I need to go re-fill the pill boxes.

MICHAEL. What're we doing taking all those pills? We used to get by with aspirin and a multivitamin. Now we've got morning pills, including *senior* multivitamins. Plus lunch pills. Dinner pills. Bedtime pills. It takes six color-coded boxes to hold all of them in those little compartments.

WILL. Which I have to fill every week because you can't keep track of who gets which when.

MICHAEL. They all sound alike. And some of them use the real name and some use the generic. And even when we take the same med it's different doses. It's just too much for me to try to deal with.

WILL. I never thought I'd say this, but you'd better go before I do. Without me you'd be lost as an Easter egg in tall grass.

MICHAEL. I'm more competent than you think I am.

WILL. You mean you're more competent than you let on.

MICHAEL. And you love it. You like taking care of me just as much as I like being taken care of. I don't even want to think about one of us leaving the other behind.

WILL. Right. If I know you, you've already picked out which one of our friends might be an adequate replacement if worse came to worse. Which one is it? Stephen? No. He's even older than I am. Bobby? Yeah. It must be Bobby.

MICHAEL. You think I'd hook up with an aging drag queen? There wouldn't be enough space in the closet for all her costumes or enough storage space for all the rolls of duct tape.

WILL. Someone a little less high maintenance then. But "high maintenance" pretty much describes everybody we know.

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

MICHAEL. Then I guess when the time comes I'll just have to see if Myron's still available.

WILL. He's not "available." Just because he doesn't button his top three shirt buttons so you can drool over his flawless café au lait chest/

MICHAEL. Aha! So you've been ogling him, too!/
/

WILL. Doesn't mean he's "available." Especially to someone as ...

MICHAEL. Yes? Go on.

WILL. (*Deep sigh.*) Michael, you know I love you to death.

MICHAEL. I thought I told you never to use that word in my presence.

WILL. But you need to let go of these fantasies of eternal youth.

MICHAEL. I don't have to act my age if I don't want to and you can't make me.

WILL. "Grow old along with me! The best is yet to be, the last of life, for which the first was made."

MICHAEL. You're trotting out Robert Browning. Really?

WILL. You married an English professor. Poetry comes with the territory.

MICHAEL. Well, then, how about a little reconstructed Dylan Thomas. No. I will not go gentle into my sixties.

WILL. *Into* your sixties?

MICHAEL. I will rage against every grey hair and age spot as long as I have breath.

WILL. The only reason you *have* breath is because you keep your asthma inhaler handy. Another reason you'd never make it up the stairs. I honestly don't know what you're so afraid of. You look terrific for a man your/

MICHAEL. Don't you go there. That's how you know you're on the downward slope. People start giving you backhanded compliments ending with "for a man your age." Like when the doctor sticks his finger up your butt and says (*wiggling his index finger*), "Your prostrate feels like it's in pretty good shape for a man your age." I don't want to look terrific "for a man my age." I just want to look terrific. Period.

WILL. Oh, honey, you know you'll always look terrific to (*WILL's cell phone emits a "new message" signal. He looks at it.*) Message from the HOA. The elevator's already back in service.

MICHAEL. Thank God! (*He grabs the cell phone and begins punching in numbers.*)

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

WILL. Who're you calling?

MICHAEL. Who do you think? *(Pauses in his telephone monologue indicate the unheard responses.)* Hello, Pump and Grind Coffee Shop? I want to place an order to pick up. ... *(Suddenly coy.)* Oh, hi, Myron! How are you? ... Yes, I need an extra large macchiato with soy milk, extra caramel, three packets of Splenda, and four pumps of espresso. ... That's what I said. Four. Pumps. Of espresso. It's been that kind of morning. I'll be there in ten minutes. ... *(Michael gets more and more deflated as his illusions dissipate.)* Oh, I thought for sure you'd recognize my voice. ... It's Michael. ... Michael from the high-rise. ... *(Stricken.)* Yeah. That's me. One of the *old* guys. *(Will pats him on the shoulder sympathetically.)*

END OF PLAY

THE FIRST TIME

A monologue adapted from the play, *Best Friends*

CHARACTER (1M)

EDDIE: A 25-year-old small-town blue-collar guy who always thought he was straight. He speaks with a country accent. Grammar anomalies in the script are intentional.

PLACE: Indeterminate

TIME: 1975

WARNING: References sex acts between adults and sexual exploration by adolescents.

They say you never forget your first sexual experience. 'Course, what my best friend Danny would say is, a couple of horny teenagers sharin' a hand job was not a "sexual experience." But 'til I married Michele that was all I had to go by. What I do know is, God didn't approve of what we were doin' down in Danny's basement when we were fifteen and I was supposed to be helpin' him with his algebra homework. But sometimes it just pops into my head, you know? How it felt with Danny. Sometimes even when I'm tryin' to get it on with Michele. Few years later here I am a married man with a two-year-old kid and one on the way. Got a decent job drivin' a truck out at the plant, mostly haulin' stuff to and from their other facility fifty miles away. Livin' the American dream, right? But then I was drivin' back coupla weeks ago and comin' up to that little rest area off the highway. You know the one. No secret it's a place where the queers like to hang out. Ever' few months the state cops'll arrest somebody outta there for public indecency and their names'll be in the weekly paper for ever'body to see. I only stopped 'cause I had to piss real bad. Honest! I was standin' there finishin' up when this guy come in. Stood at the urinal next to me. Made eye contact and then reached over and grabbed my dick. I didn't say "what the hell you think you're doin'!" I didn't shove him

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

away. And when he got down on his knees—I let him. I knew it was wrong. I knew I could be headed straight for hell. God sees ever’thing that happens, don’t He? But I never felt nothin’ like it. I swear my eyes rolled back in my head. When I came my knees buckled an’ I had to lean against the wall to stay upright. Dammit, all my life I thought I was straight. I mean, me an’ Danny, that was just a phase, right? You fool ’round with boys ’til you’re old enough to fool ’round with girls. But if I’m straight I’m not supposed to let some stranger come onto me like that. I’m supposed to be so disgusted I get the hell outta there. Maybe punch him a time or two on the way out the door. But I wasn’t disgusted ’til *after* it happened. And I wasn’t disgusted at him. I was disgusted at me. What if I got caught? What if I got some disease and took it home to Michele? I could’ve lost ever’thing. Wife, kids, house, job. I was drivin’ the company truck for God’s sake. It would of all been gone. Ever’thing. Gone. But I can’t stop thinkin’ ’bout it. An’ I’m carryin’ such a load of guilt I dunno if I can handle it. Problem is, I’m also carryin’ the card the guy gave me with his phone number on it. Should of tore it up and flushed it down the toilet right then and there. But I didn’t. Instead I stuck it in my wallet, in the secret compartment Michele don’t know ’bout. He said he’d like to see me again. But do *I* want to see *him*? That’s the million-dollar question, ain’t it? And if I don’t, then why the hell am I keepin’ that damned card?

END OF MONOLOGUE

WHAT HAPPENED THIS TIME?

CHARACTERS (2 Any)

SAM: The klutz of all klutzes.

JACKIE: The long-suffering spouse.

The performers can be any age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or gender expression.

PLACE: An apartment living room. A chair and enough wreckage to suggest a room in shambles. Door to the outside.

TIME: The present.

From the darkness is heard a cacophony of crashing, banging, and breakage, a small dog barking, an angry cat meowing, and SAM yelling at both animals. Then silence.

SAM. *(Off.)* Fluffy! Come down from there! *(Cat meows angrily.)* Oww! Whoaaaa!

Sound of a large crash. SAM moans. Lights come up to reveal the suggestion of a living room in shambles. Amid the wreckage is a box large enough to be cumbersome and to hold...well, you'll see. Its contents are not visible. SAM sits on what's left of a sofa or easy chair, all banged up and wearing an improvised sling. After a moment JACKIE enters from the street and scans the scene in horror.

JACKIE. Oh, Sam. What happened this time?

SAM. I was carrying that box to the trash and tripped on the cat.

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

JACKIE. You are the klutz of all klutzes! But if there's such a thing as a black belt in klutziness I think you've finally earned it. Looks like a tornado went through here.

SAM. Close enough. Fluffy got so scared she started running all around. The dog got excited and started chasing her so I started chasing both of them and, well, you can see the results for yourself. Finally Fluffy climbed up the drapes. I couldn't stand to see her up there trembling so I got the step stool from the kitchen to get her back down. But when I grabbed her she scratched my hand. I was so surprised I dropped her, lost my balance, and fell off the stool.

JACKIE. Are you all right? Aside from the obvious I mean. Do we need to go to the emergency room?

SAM. Might be a good idea. I think my arm may be broken. Otherwise I'll live. ... Fluffy on the other hand ...

JACKIE. What are you saying? Where is she?

SAM. Across the rainbow bridge. When I fell off the stool I kind of landed on her.

JACKIE. Sam!

SAM. I scraped her up and put her in the box. That was pretty tricky with only one functioning arm, I can tell you. We can drop her off at the pet cemetery on the way back from the ER.

JACKIE. Poor Fluffy. I loved that cat!

SAM. After the pet cemetery we need to pick up some club soda. There's a big stain on the floor in front of the window.

JACKIE. This place is going to need a lot more than club soda. Well, come on. Let's go.

SAM. Don't you want to know about the dog?

JACKIE. What about him?

SAM. You don't want to know.

JACKIE. Where is he?

SAM. In the box with Fluffy. ... It's a long story.

END OF PLAY

DAD AND UNCLE MARK

CHARACTER (1M)

DOUG: A man perhaps in his seventies.

PLACE and TIME: Indeterminate.

When a guy asks me about when I figured out I was gay—usually in the afterglow of fantastic sex—and yes, sex can still be fantastic after age seventy—I always say 1958, when I was thirteen and before I'd ever heard the word “gay.” That year my parents transformed the basement into what they called the “rec room.” You never saw so much knotty pine paneling in your life. And I'm not talking about those cheap sheets of fake wood an eighth of an inch thick. Dad used substantial individual tongue-and-groove boards. Uncle Mark helped him put them up. He wasn't really my uncle, but that's what you called your parents' close male friends back then. Dad and Uncle Mark had been best buddies since grade school. They did everything together. As part of the remodeling, Mother let Dad section off the area closest to the furnace for a workshop. My Dad could build or fix anything. Pretty soon he and Uncle Mark started making fancy birdhouses together to sell at flea markets on the weekends. These were not your run-of-the-mill birdhouses from a kit. Oh, no. My Dad dreamed up birdhouse-size Victorian mansions. And French chateaus. Tara from *Gone with the Wind*. They even did an Empire State Building purple martin house one time. Uncle Mark was the artistic one. He'd paint those miniature masterpieces in all kinds of colors and put in every little detail. Mother hated the sounds of sawing and hammering—said it brought on her sick headaches—so Dad and Uncle Mark would have their work sessions on Wednesday nights when she went out to her weekly bridge game. They'd never let me help. Said I'd just be in the way and the power tools were too dangerous. So while they were down there with the door shut, to keep the sawdust from going all over the place Dad said, I'd entertain myself watching TV or reading comic books or doing homework when I had to. It

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

was hard trying to study with all the noise from downstairs, but sometimes there'd be complete silence, usually for twenty minutes or so just before Uncle Mark left to go home. I was a nosy little brat so after a while I started to get curious. There was a place where a knot had fallen out of the knotty pine paneling. What I saw Dad and Uncle Mark doing through that knothole was a real education. Remember, I was thirteen. I had only recently figured out my wee-wee wasn't just for wee-weeing anymore. (Yeah, my wee-wee. In the 1950's I don't think anybody even knew the correct names for body parts "down there.") First off, the two of them were kissing each other. Full on the mouth. I never saw two guys do that before. Well, except in the wet dreams I'd started having a few months earlier. When my friends whispered about their own "nocturnal emissions"—as our priest called them—they always featured the cute girls in our class. Not mine. Mine were about the cute boys. After the kissing, their adult-sized wee-wees came out, which was a revelation in itself. Then as things went along a whole new world opened up to me. My wet dreams got even more interesting for sure. Naturally while I was spying on them my own wee-wee demanded attention. I tried to keep as quiet as I could but one night I let out a groan and my Dad heard it. I never saw Dad and Uncle Mark move so fast. Uncle Mark raced up the stairs and out the door. I ran for the stairs too, but Dad caught up with me and grabbed my arm so hard it left bruises. He never did anything like that to me before, but I realized later he was scared to death. He let me know in no uncertain terms what would happen to me if I ever told anybody what I'd seen—especially if Mother ever found out. He said she'd probably shoot him and go to jail for murder and I'd end up in an orphanage. That scared the bejesus out of me. I promised cross my heart and hope to die not to tell a living soul. It was years before I finally did. It wasn't long after the knothole incident that Uncle Mark moved to Chicago. There were Christmas cards for a few years but they stopped after Dad's heart attack. Years later I was in Chicago for a conference and I checked the phone book. If you don't know what a "phone book" is, ask your parents. As you can imagine there were a lot of people in the city with Uncle Mark's same name. I called a few of them but I never found him. Then when the internet came in I finally found his obituary. Turns out he died just a few days after my Dad did. No cause

BAKER'S DOZEN: 13 GAY PLAYS AND MONOLOGUES

of death listed. I hope the two of them met up again on their way up to the Pearly Gates. If they did, I got to figure by now heaven must be chock full of fancy birdhouses.

END OF MONOLOGUE

***THE PLAY IS NOT OVER!! TO FIND OUT HOW IT ENDS –
ORDER A COPY AT WWW.NEXTSTAGEPRESS.COM***