

**MALE MONOLOGUES**  
**From Plays by Greg Jones Ellis**  
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***DIVINITY PLACE***

A comedy by Greg Jones Ellis

**Male | 20s**

**About the Play:** Despite religious differences, Jean and Buddy have decided to marry. World War II is on, and Buddy will probably be drafted soon. But they have a problem: the priest announces that no wedding can take place until Buddy signs a form promising he'll raise their children Catholic. But Buddy won't sign. His word has to be good enough. And Jean's behind him. The stalemate gets even crazier with the arrival of Buddy's tyrannical father, a highly pregnant bridesmaid and various other friends and family who try to convince the older generation that love really should conquer all.

**Time:** Summer 1942

**About the Scene:** Buddy is a sweet, thoughtful Philadelphia baseball fan who is deeply in love with Jean. She is Catholic. Buddy was raised with no religion, but adopted his Presbyterian religion as a grown man. The couple has just found out that the priest who agreed to marry them now refuses unless Buddy signs a promise to raise their children Catholic. He tries to explain to the old priest why he has to stay true to his own beliefs, and why he doesn't see why he should have to sign something. The priest has just asked him why he chose to be a Presbyterian.

**BUDDY:**

Well, one pal of mine went to a Presbyterian church. He took me along one week. I listened to a great guy, Reverend Foster, talk all about...well, I don't know – optimism, how God gives us all brains to think with, hearts to feel with, and bodies to take care of the two. Simple things. He got to me, that's the only way I can explain it. I sometimes think I was lucky, skipping all the Bible stories and baptisms when I was too young to think for myself. Now, when I read anything, I can use that brain God gave us and think it through. And when I finally got baptized by Reverend Foster, it *meant* something. Well, I guess Reverend Foster's a lot like you, Father. He's there whenever my opinion bumps up against something the church says. I go and ask him, and he listens to me. Most of the time, he says, "Well, Buddy, you're thinking and you're feeling. Don't let the fine print stop you." Now, your religion is *beautiful*. I love the smells of the incense, the loud music, the gorgeous windows. And, when Jean and I talk about religion, we seem to agree ninety-nine percent of the time. We just...don't let the fine print stop us, I guess.

## **DEAD AIR**

A drama by Greg Jones Ellis

**Male | 40s-60**

**About the Play:** A popular radio personality has become a TV treasure, thanks to her on-air charisma and down-to-earth advice. Along the way, fans have loved her stories of “my son the genius,” a never-seen character who has become a trademark part of her show’s identity. At home, however, the reclusive son is actually a bitter critic of his mother’s exploitation. This family drama uses the background of media celebrity to explore one uniquely modern path to success. It paints both a critical and a sympathetic portrait of a bright, ambitious woman whose talents and desire for validation lead her down that path. Her husband and son grapple with their own need for privacy in a world where everyone connected with a celebrity is fair game for public consumption.

**About the Scene:** FATHER and his teenaged son are talking about MOTHER. In an effort to bond with his son, FATHER has begun to explain what MOTHER was like when he first met her.

### **FATHER**

*(Lost in thought for a moment:)* I have a theory about looks. Good-looking people fade. But plain-looking people improve every time you see them. I mean, if you see them under—positive circumstances. Unattractive people who are unpleasant – they don’t get better looking. But your mother. Your mother was not particularly pretty. I know...but she would say it herself. I would never say that her. Nobody wants to hear anyone else say it... Of course, she often reminds me that I’ve lost *my* looks. I have. *(Pause)* Truth to tell, I wish I hadn’t. Please, don’t get me wrong. I wasn’t God’s gift when I was younger. But I was good-looking. It’s funny, you look at pictures of yourself after a long period of not seeing them, you notice. It really takes you by surprise. You say, “that guy’s pretty good-looking.” Of course, some of that is youth. But, no, I’ll say it. I was...handsome. Your mother was a lot of things, but she didn’t pay much attention to her looks back then. I was just the kid in a college town who didn’t go to college. Who was told that the college girls who went out with townie boys just wanted to slum a bit. And *(hesitates, then:)* well, you’re old enough. I didn’t mind them slumming with me if I, you know... Your mother was different. I think, anyway. Probably because I didn’t come on to her when I saw her around town. I was pretty shallow. And yet, each time I saw her, I would notice something. She had very shiny hair. Not greasy, I don’t mean that...but just with this natural shine. I noticed it first time when I saw her at a ballgame. The sunlight on her hair was really something. Then later, she came into the garage where I worked part time. I really looked at her eyes. Saw those little yellow sunbursts around the pupils. Very pretty. Over time, as I fell in love with her, she got prettier and prettier. I enjoyed finding new aspects of her. And when I asked her out, instead of either playing coy or acting snobby, she just said, “you seem really nice.” I said, “is that yes or no?” She looked kind of surprised. She said, “oh, yes.” *(Back to the present:)* It isn’t age. I just--- She still has the eyes and the hair. I just can’t see anything new--- I’m sorry. I shouldn’t be talking like this. It’ll be okay.

# DEAD AIR

A drama by Greg Jones Ellis

**Male | late teens-early 20s**

**About the Play:** A popular radio personality has become a TV treasure, thanks to her on-air charisma and down-to-earth advice. Along the way, fans have loved her stories of “my son the genius,” a never-seen character who has become a trademark part of her show’s identity. At home, however, the reclusive son is actually a bitter critic of his mother’s exploitation. This family drama uses the background of media celebrity to explore one uniquely modern path to success. It paints both a critical and a sympathetic portrait of a bright, ambitious woman whose talents and desire for validation lead her down that path. Her husband and son grapple with their own need for privacy in a world where everyone connected with a celebrity is fair game for public consumption.

**About the Scene:** SON is at the breaking point. His mother keeps pestering him to be on her show, and has just asked him why he can’t take all the knowledge he’s acquired and “do something with it.”

## SON

OK: the great philosophers: who’s right? Are humans innately good or innately sinful? Is life meaningless? An illusion? Plato. Buddha. The fucking Matrix movies. Take your pick. Who’s right? If I’m such a genius, shouldn’t I tackle the big questions? Is there a God? Yes. And he got a human girl pregnant who gave birth to---wait for it – God! Yeah, that makes sense. And he was the Messiah. Hold on – the Messiah hasn’t come yet. What’s a Messiah? There is no God. There is no heaven. There is no hell. How would that go over on your show? (*Getting angrier:*) How about this: All men are created equal. Wait, all *people* are created equal. Wait: the patriarchy is over. Wait: there are no genders anymore, so there is no patriarchy! Knowledge is power. We all know what power brings. Great men – sorry *humans* – like Jefferson. He was a genius. Wait – didn’t he rape his slaves? Well, history helps us. Really? So, we’re all clear on Hiroshima. It was good, right? Stopped the war early! Good triumphed. So...”good” can incinerate hundreds of thousands of innocent people. Hmmm. Let me think that one through. Except I can’t! (Turning on MOTHER:) Cause and effect. Things happen in a logical way and that you can create the effect you want. That’s the saddest part of this whole conversation. It’s where you and I can never meet. Your whole livelihood depends on your selling people the possibility of a logical outcome. “Today on Reggie: everything will be alright and you have control.” Except we don’t! That’s what I learned from all that reading. *We don’t have control.* And all the great minds are doing the same thing you’re doing! They try to make sense of senselessness! Do you know who Adelle Davis was? Adelle Davis was this great nutrition expert. She said that healthy eating leads to a long life. And she died of fucking cancer at 70. But before she died, she needed to justify herself. You know what she said? She said she got cancer because she ate junk food as a *teenager*. Before she became a health food nut. *She needed to find a logical reason why she wasn’t going to live to be 100. She needed answers.* You want there to be an answer. THERE IS NO ANSWER!

# ALL SAVE ONE

A comedy-drama by Greg Jones Ellis

**Male | 50s-60s**

**About the Play:** Hollywood: 1950 Once the most celebrated writer of his generation, Sims Glendenning engages a handsome young priest to serve as "technical advisor" on a play he's writing while in Hollywood.. Sims shares his rented home with his wife, famous actress Claire Morgan. Their household is completed by Basil Steele, once Sims's lover and now his acid-tongued secretary. To the outside world, theirs is a conventional arrangement. However, Claire has fallen truly in love for the first time with producer John Grant. Claire informs Sims that, like it or not, she wants out. There are two other complications that could only happen in Hollywood: Sims is being brutally treated by a blackmailing young hustler named Clay, who threatens to expose his sexual exploits. And it seems that, just as Claire has found real love with John, the House Un-American Activities Committee has called him up. The resolution to the "Clay problem" comes from the most unlikely member of this household: Basil.

**About the Scene:** BASIL has just solved the problem of the young hustler, but now he wants Sims to treat him not as a secretary, but as the true love he once was.

## BASIL

(To SIMS:) Every time that you've gone away for any length of time – on the road with a play, or on one of your less public escapades, I feel as if I've been....widowed. You see, I don't feel particularly free, or liberated by your absence. Instead I feel, well, grief. Yes. That's what I feel. I – I mourn the loss of your presence.

We live in the kind of world where...if you were to die -- which at some point this week I thought you might – the world's sympathy would go to Claire. And Claire, you must admit that, on some level, you wouldn't know what to do with that sympathy.

What would happen to me? Well, I might be asked to provide phone numbers of famous friends for some quotes in the press. Or some photos to accompany the obituary. Those in the know might wink and smile and wonder if I got any measure of your estate. But mostly I would be left to grieve alone. And this feeling of mourning that I've felt every time you go away would be there forever.

Hold your breath, Sims. Here goes: I love you. You don't have to say it. But I did. I love you, Sims. I realize that this is the mid-century moment for me as well. I want what Claire has had all these years. I want to be "it." But this isn't blackmail. I'm not Clay. I never was. I'm the one who stayed. It's your decision.