

Men's Monologues

Birth And After Birth by Tina Howe

(speaking to his 4 year old son, played by an adult)

Bill: If daddy didn't make videos on your birthday, then none of us would remember what you looked like when you were little. Hell, me and my camera were there when you popped out of mommy with your fist in the air! *(picking up his camera, shooting Nicky at close range)*. Time passes in the blink of an eye, Nick. Take it from your old man, before you know it you'll be crumpled up in a nursing home wondering where your life went. Why do you think that I take all these videos? To give you proof that you were here so you can see how incredible you were. I mean, *are!* You won't be one of those lonely old men, but will have videos to entertain you and all your pals at the nursing home-----birthdays, Christmases, trips to the zoo....Shit, you'll be the most popular guy in the place!" Have you seen Nick Apple's video of this fourth birthday party?," the little old ladies will say, crowding into your room with their wheelchairs. All for that backwards glance at the radiance of youth. Come on, give daddy a big smile. I tell you, when the Freeds see this video tonight, they'll eat their hearts out. Jeffery may take good slides, but I promise you he's never seen anything like this! When it comes to videos, I'm the best. King of the heap, leader of the pack!

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Jeffrey: I was an only child like Nicky and something of a loner. What kept me going was my stamp collection. I imagined that each one was designed for me personally by someone very special. A man with sad eyes, a woman with six fingers, a boy who heard voices. My favorite was a two cent stamp issued in 1961 showing a dare devil crossing Niagara Falls on a tightrope, but the printers screwed up and he had this.....faint shadow..... A dealer recently offered me \$250,000 for that baby, but I wouldn't sell it..... No way. I used to go up to the attic and pretend I was that shadow. *(Miming it)* The two of us would be inching along our wire, when he'd suddenly get an attack of vertigo and start to slip.....I'd grab him in the nick of time, but that would throw me off. So there we'd be.....5,000 feet above the rushing falls, clinging to each other for dear life, the crowd gasping, flash bulbs popping.....but I'd always save the day. Soon it became part of our act. He'd fake losing his balance so I could take over. It's weird.....You'd think I would have played the dare devil, but I didn't want that kind of attention. I preferred being invisible.... *Shadow Man!* *(Long pause)* Strange.....