

# Vanity Insanity

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(A monologue or Ventriloquist piece)

CAST: ONE WOMAN

There are essentially 3 characters in this play.  
They are all different versions of the same woman.  
All parts are played by the same performer.

‘SELF’: a woman in her 40s (acted by the performer)

‘ME’: a puppet /ventriloquist dummy of the same woman as above but in her 20s (manipulated and ventriloquised by the performer) – this character is also acted by the performer at the end of the play.

‘YOU’: a microscopically invisible inner soul of the same woman (voice-overed/ventriloquised by the performer)

## Scene:

‘SELF’ sits at a dresser table (or just a theatre block) just left of centre. The dresser ‘mirror’ could be removed so there is just a rectangle frame, so that looking through the mirror is actually looking through and out towards the audience. There is also a full-length mirror to stage right (this mirror may be suggested by the performer or actual). There is potential to treat the whole 4<sup>th</sup> wall as a mirror. A couple of costume items are hung or strewn about the room, including a handbag and high heel shoes. ‘SELF’ could be sipping wine and putting on makeup. She talks to herself in the mirror, as if practising for a date or to meet someone.

Vanity Insanity

LIGHTS UP

SELF:

**“Me?”**

**“Just here by myself”**

**“I’d love another drink. It’s my birthday”**

(She looks deeply into the mirror)

**Who am I kidding?**

(to herself in the mirror)

**Look at you! You used to look so good!**

**No, get a hold of yourself. You can do this.**

(She gets up and goes to the full-length mirror. She pushes up her boobs, checks out her butt, pulls in her gut etc, striking various super attractive poses. Then eventually, disgruntled, drops the act.)

**I wish I was more like the old Me...the young Me.**

(She starts putting on a jacket/scarf)

ME (Off Stage, ventriloquised by the performer) :

**Just go, already!**

(SELF jumps a little in fright, then thinking she has just imagined such a thing makes her way back to the dresser, cautiously sits and sips her drink)

ME (O.S.):

**So you’re going to ignore me are you?**

SELF:

**Ah. Hello.**

(SELF starts looking about trying to find where the voice is coming from)

ME (O.S.):

**Hello!?**

(SELF looks behind her expecting someone there)

**Where are you?**

ME (O.S.):

**Over here. Closer.** (SELF moves towards the dresser table)

**Closer. Getting warmer. Hot. Hot. Hotter... Hotter!**

(The performer gets the puppet from in the dresser drawer, or from behind theatre block, and puts her hand inside the puppet. ME enters as a puppet.)

ME:

**Gday!** (SELF is stunned)

**Well this is cosy. Oh dear. Someone needs to clean their room.**

SELF:

**Ah...Who...What the hell do you want?**

ME:

**Oh that's just lovely! Happy Birthday to you too!**

SELF (staring in disbelief) :

**You're *ME!***

ME:

**Congratulations, Einstein.**

SELF:

**This is crazy. Get out of my head.**

ME:

**Hey do I look like I'm in your head? I'm here to help you. Without me you'll never make it out of this room.**

SELF:

**Just...Leave. Me. Alone.**

ME:

**Hey, *I* am ME. And *you* better treat *ME* with more respect or you *will* be alone!**

SELF:

***Me*. If you were really *Me* then you would...I mean *Me* would...I mean *I* wouldn't...You don't even look like me! I'm more...more...**

ME:

**Older!?** (beat) Listen, I'm trying to save you the embarrassment of being overlooked for someone younger. You can dress up all you like but there's no way you're going to score tonight!

SELF:

What? See? *I* would never talk to my self in that way.

ME:

You've been talking to your *Self* like you're worthless for ages, so what's stopping *Me* from talking to *you* in the same way, now, huh?

SELF:

What's that supposed to mean?

ME:

Gee. Let me think. "I'm losing my looks. I'm too old to go dating. Who am I kidding" Sound familiar? Every Friday night you do this to yourself, and you never make it out the door. Then you wake up in the morning crying and...

SELF:

You know what *Me*... Forget it. You don't exist and I'm not going to have this stupid imaginary conversation.

ME:

Imaginary! You wanna talk about imaginary! You think that face cream is making you look younger do you? Those wrinkles aren't disappearing, honey. And doo you really think those stockings are going to hide all that cellulite and those varicose veins? And how many double chins do you actually have now? More like triple! Imaginary! Ha!

SELF:

I'm ignoring you.

ME:

No you're not.

(SELF almost falls for it - pause)

Dear *Self*. *Selfie!* You don't have the confidence to go out there on your own anymore. And... well... I can't go without you. So, now, we need each other.

(SELF pretends she isn't listening, resumes getting ready)

I can find someone nice for us because I still have your looks. I'm like your Dorian Gray.

SELF:

**Yeah, but meaner!**

ME:

**I'm just letting you know the truth kiddo. Isn't that what friends do?** (beat)  
**No one's gunna want you now. You've left it too late. There's no chance you're gunna ever get a date, let alone find your significant other, settle down and have kids. You know that don't you?**

SELF:

**Shut up!**

ME:

**But it's true. You're past your prime. You never were good at time management. Just face it. You wouldn't be a good parent even if you tried because you're too selfish. You don't give a hoot about anyone except your *self*!**

SELF:

**Stop it!**

ME:

**And how fake you are, always worrying about what *you* should wear or what *you* should eat or what *you* should say and feel. That's right, too busy worrying about what people will think of *you* to care about others! Others who might need you! Some friend you are! So let *Me* be the one to break it to you, honey...You've left it too late.**

SELF:

**Please stop...**

ME:

**You're going to wake up all alone every day, because you are a selfish, worthless, unattractive, boring, self-obsessed, self-centred aging hippy, who doesn't deserve any happiness and will die of old-age all alone by her little ugly sel-**

SELF:

**I SAID STOP!!!!!!**

(SELF has launched herself at ME and begins to choke and strangle her to death throughout this next section, maybe even throw her about the room)

**You horrible mean thing! I am not worthless! I am not selfish or boring! I am a caring person with feelings and I am not a hippy!! I am...as attractive as I want to be. I am whatever age I am. I am... *Me*. I am ME.**

(SELF realises she has killed ME. She stuffs the puppet back in the drawer, or behind theatre block. She continues to get ready. Puts on her heels and collects her handbag. She makes her way over to the full-

length mirror and checks herself out, trying to compose herself. She begins to sob. We then hear a small voice. It is 'YOU')

YOU:  
**Don't cry**

SELF:  
**Huh?**

YOU:  
**Don't' cry. You'll ruin your mascara. You look lovely.**

SELF:  
**Where are you?**

YOU:  
**Here. On the ground. Careful.**  
(SELF squats down to see & talk to a tiny spec)  
**That dress really suits you.**

SELF  
**Thanks. Who are you?**  
(SELF picks up 'YOU' to get a closer look)

YOU:  
**I'm your inner *You*. The real *You*.**

SELF:  
**You're *Me*?**

YOU:  
**No I'm *You*. You're *Self*. That (points to where puppet is) was *Me*.**

SELF:  
**Oh yes... What happened to *You*? I mean I can hardly see you.**

YOU:  
**You stopped believing.**

SELF:  
**Oh. But...**  
**So what happens now? I think I killed her. I mean I killed *Me*.**

YOU:

**See you do care. You aren't selfish. You can do anything if you believe in yourself.**

SELF:

**Myself, yes my *Self*. And *You*?**

YOU:

**I believe in you.**

SELF:

**You? In... Me? I mean Me-me. My *Self*? This is confusing...**

YOU:

**I *am* You.**

**Look.** (Together they look in the mirror)

**I'm You.**

**You will go out and face the world because you are beautiful just as you are.**

SELF:

**Yes but...**

YOU:

**You will know what to do. Follow your gut!**

SELF:

**My gut. Yes.**

YOU:

**You are still young, healthy and strong. Feel my strength inside you.**

SELF:

**Yes, my gut. *You*. Inside. Yes...**

(SELF puts 'YOU' into her mouth and swallows her. She feels her go down into her stomach. She imagines she is now a positive light-filled being. She looks in the mirror & smiles.)

**I am You. I feel...**

(The performer transforms physically into another character, an evil version of 'ME'. It's as if Self has become possessed.)

ME (now acted by the performer) :

**At last! Yes it's *ME*. There never was a *You*! Now *I* have control.**

('Me' laughs madly and goes towards the drawer and pulls out the lifeless puppet, whom she speaks to as if it is SELF)

**See? There was only ever *ME*. Now it is *Me* who is going out. You will have to stay home and wallow in your own *Self-pity*, again. Oh, and on your birthday too!**

(She throws down the puppet on the dresser, boldly picks up her handbag and goes to exit. She has one last check in the mirror)

(pause)

**Me?**

(Shocked, she looks in the mirror at her body. She inspects her face, noticing she has wrinkles and isn't the 20 year old she thought she should be)

**Who am I kidding?**

(She sits in chair, defeated, looking in mirror)

**BLACKOUT**

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