

**SOLILOQUY**

By Nature Lewis

What is she looking at? This is not the time for some chick to be messing with me. I'm picking my kids up from school and they are stressing me out. Especially that young one, lord, I should have said yes when the doctor asked me if I wanted my tubes tied after baby number three. He won't stop crying because I won't let him run in the middle of the street. Kids, first they take your body, then they take your mind.

My body, what ever happened to that? I'm 29 years old: with the legs of a 21 year old; hands of a 50 year old; stomach of a 21 year old that just had a baby; breasts of a 19 year old when I'm wearing my \$45.00 Victoria secret bra; that's keeping the secret that my breasts really look like my 80 year old grandmother's. The bottoms of my feet look like they belong to a 50 year old slave who's been picking cotton for 40 of'em, barefoot. My face, well it's riddled with acne scars, teeth out of place from years of neglect, hormone imbalance and periodontal disease. My lips are small but black. My eyes are light brown in the middle of dark circles, bags and incoming wrinkles that are hiding because they know it's too soon to come out. My pants have a hole in them because I only own two nice pairs of jeans and I refuse to rock them while going to pick up my kids. I know I don't take pride in my appearance like that chick across the street who can't stop looking over here at me. It's easy for her to keep up that video girl look. The kind of look that always caught my husband's eyes--I mean ex husband. I was married, been with that man for 13 years. I guess I fell into the comfort zone that everyone talks about. You know where you don't feel like you have to compete with other women. I didn't think I would ever have to compete, but here I am single and knocking on thirty. I

told myself I would be a lawyer with a big house, a loving husband and two angelic kids. I try not to let it bother me that I am close to thirty with five kids, no husband and no money; it's enough to make me want to jump off the roof. Especially when I prided myself on the fact that all my kids were from the same man and that he was my husband when everyone else I knew only had baby daddies. Well I'm one of those women now, walking down the street with five kids and no wedding ring on; sometimes I want to put it on just so no one thinks I had these kids out of wedlock, that they have different fathers and no one wanted to "wife" me. But I know I can't put it on because I'm not married and I have to accept that. Instead of blissful fantasy, I have pain and frustration. Pain over the choices I have made in my life. Not focusing on my marriage. Not going to college before I had my kids. Becoming a stay at home mom for five years and then trying to re-enter the workforce with no new skills. Nothing but a piece of paper that says I graduated college. A piece of paper I spent 10 years getting. A piece of paper I can't use because I can't find a decent job that will let me out of work early enough to get my kids from daycare before it closes at 6PM. As I close my door to this beautiful house I'm renting--that I will never be able to afford to rent if not for Section 8, a house I will never

be able to buy, because of my bad credit--I take one more look at her, her eyes still on me wondering if these are all my kids. Well yes they are, and they may be annoying, but I love each and every last one of them. They each bring me joy in a different way, and that joy is the only thing in this world that I know I could never live without. So keep your pity stares and your disapproving looks to yourself. You may have matching outfits, expensive weaves and the men that get these things for you, but I have the kind of love that you could never imagine until you are on that hospital table, tired from hours of sweat and pain, and holding a small person that traveled through your body, via God himself, to bring you the kind of love and happiness that no man and no money can provide.

**End.**