

NOCCA: DRAMA FEMALE AND MALE AUDITION MONOLOGUES – Spring 2018

FEMALE MONOLOGUES

PROOF, by David Auburn

CATHERINE: I lived with him. I spent my life with him. I fed him. Talked to him. Tried to listen when he talked. Talked to people who weren't there . . . Watched him shuffling around like a ghost. Avery smelly ghost. He was filthy. I had to make sure he bathed. My own father . . . After my mother died it was just me here. I tried to keep him happy no matter what idiotic project he was doing. He used to read all day. He kept demanding more and more books. I took them out of the library by the car load. We had hundreds upstairs. Then I realized he wasn't reading: he believed aliens were sending him messages through the Dewey decimal numbers on the library books. He was trying to work out the code . . . Beautiful mathematics. The most elegant proofs, perfect proofs, proofs like music . . . Plus fashion tips, knock-knock jokes – I mean it was nuts, OK? Later the writing phase: scribbling nineteen, twenty hours a day . . . I ordered him a case of notebooks and he used every one. I dropped out of school . . . I'm glad he's dead.

THE LITTLE FOXES, by Lillian Hellman

ALEXANDRA: Mama, I'm not coming with you. I'm not going to Chicago. I mean what I say with all my heart. There is nothing to talk about. I'm going away from you. Because I want to. Because I know Papa would want me to. Say it, Mama, say it. [Say no] And see what happens. That would be foolish. It wouldn't work in the end. You only change your mind when you want to. And I won't want to. You couldn't [make me stay], Mama, because I want to leave here. As I've never wanted anything in my life before. Because I understand what Papa was trying to tell me. (Pause) All in one day: Addie said there were people who ate the earth and other people who stood around and watched them do it. And just now Uncle Ben said the same thing. Really, he said the same thing. Well, tell him for me, Mama, I'm not going to stand around and watch you do it. Tell him I'll be fighting as hard as he'll be fighting some place where people don't just stand around and watch. Are you afraid, Mama?

ELEEMOSYNARY, by Lee Blessing

ECHO: Uncle Bill hardly remembers you, you know that? I asked him what you were like as a little girl, and he couldn't even say. He remembers Grandma even less. He didn't have one interesting thing to say about her – about Grandma. They don't have a single picture or her, either. Not even in their minds. To them, she's just a woman who lived a big, embarrassing life. They all think they've saved me just in time. Not just from Grandma – from you, too. (A beat.) So I started wondering if they weren't right. Maybe the smartest thing would be to forget you completely. And Grandma. After all, what did I ever get from the two of you, except a good education? You especially – what were you ever to me, except a voice on the phone now and then? And I looked around the new room where I was staying, and it was real nice and... blank, the way a thing is before you put any time into it. I thought, I could live a whole new life here. I could invent a whole new me. I could be Barbara if I wanted to, not Echo. I could fit in. I don't mean I'd become like Whitney and Beth. I'm not that crazy. But I could become like Robinson Crusoe, and adapt myself to a strange and harsh environment. I could live in a kind of desert. I could even flourish. Like you have. I could live without the one thing I wanted. But I kept hearing your voice. That voice on the other end of the phone, hiding behind spelling words, making excuses – or so energetic sometimes, so... wishing. I don't even remember what you said, just the sound of it. Just a sound that said, "I love you, and I failed you." I hate that sound. And I will never settle for it, because no one failed me. No one ever failed me. Not Grandma and not you. I am a prize among women. I'm your daughter. That's what I choose to be. Someone who loves you. Someone who can make you love me. Nearly all the time. I'm going to stay with you. I'm going to prepare you for me. I'm going to cultivate you. I'm going to tend you

YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU, by *Kauffman & Hart*

ALICE: No, it isn't-it's never quite that. I love them, Tony-I love them deeply. Some people could break away, but I couldn't. I know they do rather strange things...but they're gay, and they're fun, and...I don't know...there's a kind nobility about them [... ...] It goes deeper Tony. Your mother believes in spiritualism because it's fashionable, and your father raises orchids because he can afford to. My mother writes plays because eight years ago a typewriter was delivered here by mistake [... ...] And look at Grandpa. Thirty-five years ago he just quit business one day. He started up to office in the elevator and came right down again. He just stopped. He could have been a rich man, but he said it took too much time. SO, for thirty-five years, he's just collected snakes, and gone to circuses, and commencements. It never occurs to any of them...

PICNIC, by William Inge

MILLIE: Madge, how do you talk to boys? How do you think of things to say? I think he's a big show off. You should have seen him this morning on the high diving board. He did real graceful swan dives and a two and a half gainer, and a back flip... the kids stood around clapping. He just ate it up. And he was braggin' all afternoon about how he used to be a deep-sea diver off Catalina Island. And he says he used to make hundreds of dollars doin' parachute jumps out of a balloon. Do you believe it? Madge, I think he's... er... girl crazy, too. Alan took us into the Hi Ho for cokes and there was a gang of girls in the back booth – Juanita Badger and her gang. When they saw him, they started giggling and tee-heeing and saying all sorts of crazy things. Then Juanita Badger comes up to me and whispers, "I think he's the cutest thing I ever saw." Is he Madge? Madge, do you think he'll like me? I don't really care. I just wonder.

THE DIVINERS, by Jim Leonard Women

Darlene: Ick! Don't let those worms near me. I'm not about to let them touch me. How come? Cause I don't like worms. That's how come. If it was me, I'd make that preacher dig em up himself and put em in the can. Who ever heard of a man askin you out to go fishin and then makin you do all the work? Worms wouldn't bother me so much, see? But they used to be able to walk. It's true, Jennie Mae. Don't you guys read the Bible? (Not too happy about the fact.) Yeah, I gotta learn the whole thing. Like, say I'm sittin at the table and I want seconds on dessert, Aunt Norma says, "Give me a verse first, Darlene." If I didn't know the Bible I'd starve to death, see? But I been learnin who Adam and Eve are. You heard a them, ain't you? The first people. And they're livin in this great big old garden in Europe. And the thing about Eve is she's walkin around pickin berries and junk with no clothes on. Listen, Jennie Mae, they were like doin it all the time. All the time, Jennie Mae. That kind a stuff happens in Europe. But like I'm sayin, this snake comes strollin up, see? And he tells her how she's sittin there jaybird stark naked. Oh, there's lots crazier stuff'n that in the Bible. Like there's people turnin to stone. One minute they're sittin there just shootin the breeze—and the next thing you know they're all rocks! Lots a wierd stuff. So anyway, this business a bein naked really sets God off at the snake, see? Cause with Eve bein so dumb she didn't get in any trouble, but now it's like a whole not her ball game. And God wasn't just mad at this one snake either—he was mad at all a the snakes and all a the worms in the world. So he tells em "From now on you guys're gonna crawl around in the dirt!" God says, "From now on nobody likes you." God really said that. Right in the Bible. Later on he gets really mad and floods the whole world out. He kills em wth water. Floods em right under. He makes it keep rainin, see? It's in the Bible—it's true. THE

THE PIANO LESSON, by August Wilson

BERNIECE You ain't taking that piano out of my house. (She crosses to the piano) Look at this piano. Look at it. Mama Ola polished this piano with her tears for seventeen years. For seventeen years she rubbed on it till her hands bled. Then she rubbed the blood in ... mixed it up with the rest of the blood on it. Every day that God breathed life into her body she rubbed and cleaned and polished and prayed over it. "Play something for me, Bernice. Play something for me, Bernice." Every day. "I cleaned it up for you, play something for me, Bernice." You always talking about your daddy but you ain't never stopped to look at what his foolishness cost your mama. Seventeen years' worth of cold nights and an empty bed. For what? For a piano? For a piece a wood? To get even with somebody? I look at you and you're all the same. You, Papa Boy Charles, Wining Boy, Doaker, Crawley . . . you're all alike. All this thieving and killing and thieving and killing. And what it ever lead to? More killing and thieving. I ain't never seen it come to nothing. People getting burned up. People getting shot. People falling down their wells. It don't never stop.

INTIMATE APPAREL, By Lynn Nottage,

I didn't write them letters. I said I didn't write them letters. All this time I was afraid that you'd find me out. This good noble man from Panama. I have all of your letters here. I look at them every day. I have one that looks as though it's weeping, because the words fade away into nothing, and another that looks as though it's been through a hard day, because there's a smudge of dirt in each corner, and it smells of kerosene and burnt sugar. But I can't tell you what it say, because I don't read. I can't tell whether there are any truths, but I keep them, 'cause George give me his heart, though it covered in mud and filthy, but he give it to me in one of these letters. And I believed him. I believed him! But you ain't the man in these letters, because that gentleman would have thanked me. Who wrote them letters, George? Tell me! YOU TELL ME! I ain't really Mrs. Armstrong, am I? I been holding on to that, and that woman ain't real. We more strangers now, than on the eve of our wedding. At least I knew who I was back then. But I ain't gonna let you hurt that woman. No! She's a good decent woman and worthy. Worthy!

MALE MONOLOGUES

FENCES, by August Wilson

CORY: I live here too! I ain't scared of you. I was walking by you to go into the house cause you sitting on the steps drunk, singing to yourself. I ain't got to say excuse me to you. You don't count around here any more. Now why don't you just get out my way. You talking about what you did for me... what'd you ever give me? You ain't never gave me nothing. You ain't never done nothing but hold me back. Afraid I was gonna be better than you. All you ever did was try and make me scared of you. I used to tremble every time you called my name. Every time I heard your footsteps in the house. Wondering all the time... what's Papa gonna say if I do this?... What's he gonna say if I do that?... What's he gonna say if I turn on the radio? And Mama, too... she tries... but she's scared of you. I don't know how she stand you... after what you did to her. What you gonna do... give me a whupping? You can't whup me no more. You're too old. You're just an old man. You crazy. You know that? You just a crazy old man... talking about I got the devil in me. Come on... put me out. I ain't scare of you. Come on! Come on, put me out. What's the matter? You so bad... put me out! Come on! Come on!

JITNEY, by August Wilson

BOOSTER: Yeah Pop, you taught me a lot of things. And a lot of things I had to learn on my own. Like that time Mr. Rand came to the house to collect the rent when we was two months behind. I don't remember what year it was. I just know it was winter. Grandma Ada had just died and you got behind in the rent cause you had to help pay for her funeral. I don't know if you knew it Pop, but you were a big man. Everywhere you went people treated you like a big man. You used to take me to the barbershop with you. You'd walk in there and fill up the whole place. Everybody would stop cussing because Jim Becker had walked in. I would just look at you and wonder how you could be that big. I wanted to be like that. I would go to school and try to make myself feel big. But I never could. I told myself that's okay . . . when I get grown I'm gonna be big like that. Walk into the barbershop and have everybody stop and look at me. That day when Mr. Rand came to the house it was snowing. You came out on the porch and he started shouting and cussing and threatening to put us out in the street where we belonged. I was waiting for you to tell him to shut up . . . to get off your porch. But you just looked at him and promised you would have the money next month. Mama came to the door and Mr. Rand kept shouting and cussing. I looked at mama . . . she was trying to get me to go in the house . . . and I looked at you . . . and you had got smaller. The longer he shouted the smaller you got. When we went back to the barbershop you didn't seem so big no more. You was the same size as everybody else. You was just another man in the barbershop. That's when I told myself if I ever got big I wouldn't let nothing make me small

A RAISIN IN THE SUN, by Lorraine Hansberry

WALTER: Talking 'bout life, Mama. You all always telling me to see life like it is. Well- I laid in there on my back today... and I figured it out. Life just like it is. Who gets and who don't get. (He sits down with his coat on and laughs) Mama, you know it's all divided up. Life is. Sure enough. Between the takers and the "tooken." (He laughs) I've figured it out finally. (He looks around at them) Yeah. Some of us always getting "tooken." (He laughs) People like Willy Harris, they don't never get "tooken." And you why the rest of us do? 'Cause we get all mixed up. Mixed up bad. We get looking 'round for the right and the wrong; we worry about it and cry about it and stay up nights trying to figure out 'bout the wrong and the right of things all the time... And all the time, man, them takers is out there operating, just taking and taking. Willy Harris? Shoot - Willy Harris don't even count. He don't even count in the big scheme of things. But I'll say one thing for old Willy Harris... he's taught me something. He's taught me to keep an eye on what counts in this world. Yeah. Thanks, Willy!

ORPHANS, by Lyle Kessler

PHILLIP: I took a walk tonight. I walked over to Broad and Olney. I was breathing okay, Treat. I didn't have no allergic reaction like you said I would. I took the subway, Treat. Harold told me the secret. You can stand all day at the turnstile putting in nickels and dimes, you can say Open Assasime and all kinds of words, but it won't do any good unless you have one of these magical coins. If Harold hadn't given me one I never would have been able to take that ride. You never told me about them token booths! You never told me nothing! You told me I would die if I went outside. I can breathe, Treat. Look! My tongue ain't hanging out. My face ain't swollen! (Pause) I walked over to Broad and Olney tonight, Treat. I seen people walking, and I heard children laughing. I wasn't scared no more 'cause Harold gave me something. (Takes out a map) He gave me this! You never gave me no map, Treat. You never told me I could find my way! Nothing's gonna happen to me, Treat, 'cause I know where I am now. I know where I am, and you ain't never gonna take that away from me. I'M AT SIXTY-FORTY NORTH CAMAC STREET, IN PHILADELPHIA, TREAT! I'M ON THE EASTERN EDGE OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA! I'M ON THE NORTHERN AMERICAN CONTINENT ON THE PLANET EARTH, IN THE MILKY WAY GALAXY, SWIMMING IN A GREAT OCEAN OF SPACE! I'M SAFE AND SOUND AT THE VERY EDGE OF THE MILKY WAY! THAT'S WHERE I AM, TREAT! And you're it, Treat.

BRIGHTON BEACH MEMIORS, by Neil Simon

EUGENE: What are you putting on all those things for? You're leaving home? I have eight cents worth of stamps if you want that too. The medal you won for the hundred yard dash two years ago. You gave it to me. You can have it back if you want it. (Beat) I'll probably have to stay home and work if you leave. We'll need the money. What do you have to leave for? They'll get over it. They won't stay mad at you forever. I was mad at you and I got over it. I don't see what's so bad about you. (Eugene sits there in silence for a while, then turns to the audience.) I guess there comes a time in everybody's life when you say, "This very moment is the end of my childhood." When Stanley closed that door, I knew that moment had come to me... I was scared. I was lonely. And I hated my mother and father for making him so unhappy... I even hated Stanley a little because he left me there to grow up all by myself. And I hated [my mother] for leaving Stanley's name out when she called us for dinner. I don't think parents really know how cruel they can be sometimes... (A beat) At dinner I tried to tell them about Stanley, but I just couldn't get the words out... I left the table without even eating my ice cream... If it was suffering I was after, I was beginning to learn about it.

THE MATCHMAKER, by Thornton Wilder

CORNELIUS: Isn't the world full of wonderful things? There we sit cooped u in Yonkers years and years and all the time wonderful people like Mrs. Molly are walking around in New York and we don't know them at all. I don't know whetherfrom where you're sittingyou can seewell, for instance, the way her eye and forehead and cheek come together, up here. Can you? And the kind of fireworks that shoot out of her eyes all the time. I tell you right now: a fine woman is the greatest work of God. You can talk all you like about Niagara Falls and the Pyramids; they aren't in it at all. Of course, up there at Yonkers they came into the store all the time and bought this and that, and I said, "Yes, Ma'am" and "That'll be seventyfive cents, ma'am"; and I watched them. But today I've talked to one, equal to equal, equal to equal, and to the finest one that ever existed in my opinion. They're so different from men. Why, everything that they say and do is so different that you feel like laughing all the time. Golly, they're different from men. And they're awfully mysterious too. You never can be really sure what's going on in their heads. They have a kind of wall around them all the timeof pride, and a sort of play acting; I bet you could know a woman a hundred years without every being really sure whether she liked you or not. This minute I'm in danger. I'm in danger of losing my job and my future and everything that people think is important but I don't care. Even if I have to dig ditches for the rest of my life, I'll be a ditchdigger who once had a wonderful day

THE GLASS MENAGERIE, by Tennessee Williams

JIM: You know what I judge to be the trouble with you? Inferiority complex! Know what that is? That's what they call it when someone low-rates himself! I understand it because I had it, too. Although my case was not so aggravated as yours seems to be. I had it until I took up public speaking, developed my voice, and learned that I had an aptitude for science. Before that time I never thought of myself as being outstanding in any way whatsoever! Now I've never made a regular study of it, but I have a friend who says I can analyse people better than doctors that make a profession of it. I don't claim that to be necessarily true, but I can sure guess a person's psychology, Laura! Yep – that's what I judge to be your principal trouble. A lack of amount of faith in yourself as a person. You don't have the proper amount of faith in yourself. I'm basing that fact on a number of your remarks and also on certain observations I've made. For instance that clumping you thought was so awful in high school. You say that you even dreaded to walk into class. You see what you did? You dropped out of school, you gave up an education because of a clump, which as far as I know was practically non-existent! A little physical defect is what you have. Hardly noticeable even! Magnified thousands of times by imagination! You know what my strong advice to you is? Think of yourself as superior in some way!

TOM: What do you think I'm at? Aren't I supposed to have any patience to reach the end of, Mother? You think I'm crazy about the warehouse? You think I'm in love with the Continental Shoemakers? You think I want to spend fifty-five years down there in that celotex interior? With flourescent tubes? Look! I'd rather somebody picked up a crowbar and battered out my brains than go back mornings. But I go. For sixty five dollars a month I give up all that I dream of doing and being ever! And you say self- self's all I ever think of. Why listen, if self is what I thought of Mother, I'd be where he is, GONE! I'm going to the movies! I'm going to opium dens, yes, opium dens, Mother. I've joined the Hogan Gang, I'm a hired assassin, I carry a tommy gun in a violin case. I run a string of cat houses in the Valley. They call me Killer, Killer Wingfield. I'm leading a double life: a simple, honest warehouse worker by day, by night, a dynamic czar of the underworld, Mother. On occasion they call me El Diablo. Oh I could tell you many things to make you sleepless. My enemies plan to dynamite this place. They're going to blow us all sky high some night. I'll be glad, very happy, and so will you! You'll go up, up on a broomstick, over Blue Mountain with seventeen gentleman callers. You ugly, babbling old witch....