

## Women's monologues!

**As always...read the entire script before performing your monologue. Don't be a slacker!**  
**When you are ready to print, please highlight, copy, and paste into a document. If you just hit "print" every single monologue will print!!!**

### Humorous

<u>All Kiding Aside</u>	<u>Bums--Evelyn</u>	<u>Bums--Mary</u>	<u>Bus Stop</u>	<u>Coupla Chicks</u>
<u>Courtship</u>	<u>Identity crisis</u>	<u>Diary Adam/Eve</u>	<u>Diviners</u>	<u>Fortinbras</u>
<u>House of Blue Lv</u>	<u>Greater Tuna</u>	<u>Jakes Women-Ma</u>	<u>Jakes Women-Ka</u>	<u>Loss of Roses</u>
<u>Killdeer</u>	<u>Last of Lovers</u>	<u>Luv</u>	<u>Marriage Bet/boo</u>	<u>Mary, Mary</u>
<u>Miss Firecracker</u>	<u>More fun Bowling</u>	<u>Naomi Living Rm</u>	<u>Missing Marisa</u>	<u>One Sunday</u>
<u>Play it again, Sam</u>	<u>Primary English</u>	<u>Sister Mary-Sis</u>	<u>Slow Dance</u>	<u>Anton in Show</u>
<u>Stanton's Garage</u>	<u>Starspangled Girl</u>	<u>Sylvia</u>	<u>Vanities</u>	<u>Laundry &amp; Bourbon #1</u>
<u>Nothing but Nonsense #1</u>	<u>Nothing but Nonsense #2</u>	<u>Couple White Chicks</u>	<u>Criminal Hearts #1</u>	<u>The Foreigner</u>
<u>Learning to Drive</u>	<u>Audition is Over</u>	<u>Criminal Hearts #2</u>	<u>Triplet, the bride</u>	<u>Jakes Women</u>
<u>Final Dress Rehearsal</u>	<u>Come Blow Your Horn</u>	<u>Bedroom Farce</u>	<u>Nice People Dancing Good Country Music2</u>	<u>Couple White Chicks 2</u>
<u>Cleopatra, on Suicide</u>	<u>Laundry &amp; Bourbon #2</u>	<u>Plaza Suite--Norma #1</u>	<u>Plaza Suite--Norma #2</u>	<u>Delicate Balance</u>
<u>Catholic Schoolgirls #2</u>	<u>Oh Dad, Poor Dad,</u>	<u>Butterflies are Free</u>	<u>Schoolhouse Rock/Conspiracy Theory</u>	

### Dramatic

<u>Agnes of God</u>	<u>All the way home</u>	<u>Anne of 1000 day</u>	<u>Bad Seed</u>	<u>Brighton Beach</u>
<u>Brdway Bound</u>	<u>Cat on Tin Roof 1</u>	<u>Cat on Tin Roof 2</u>	<u>Catholic School</u>	<u>Central Pk West</u>
<u>Crimes the Hrt 1</u>	<u>Crimes the Hrt 2</u>	<u>Crucible</u>	<u>Dark top Stairs</u>	<u>Diary Anne Frank</u>
<u>Father's Day</u>	<u>Gamma Rays 1</u>	<u>I Never Sang Dad</u>	<u>I ought to be in pic</u>	<u>Lemon Sky</u>
<u>I'm a Stranger</u>	<u>Independence</u>	<u>Invisible Friends</u>	<u>Kennedy's Child</u>	<u>Nice People Danc</u>
<u>Lettice &amp; Lovage</u>	<u>Little Foxes</u>	<u>Lost in Yonkers</u>	<u>'night mother</u>	<u>Seascape</u>
<u>Our Town</u>	<u>Outrageous</u>	<u>Picnic</u>	<u>Out of Father's</u>	<u>Roosters</u>
<u>She Was Lost</u>	<u>Sign in Sidney</u>	<u>Sister Mary-Di</u>	<u>Stage Door</u>	<u>To Be Young Gifted Blk</u>
<u>Streetcar #1</u>	<u>Streetcar #2</u>	<u>Summertree</u>	<u>Taken in Marriag</u>	<u>Two for Seesaw</u>
<u>The Guest</u>	<u>Teach Me How to Cry #1</u>	<u>Rashoman</u>	<u>The Necklace</u>	<u>She was Lost</u>

<a href="#">A Tantalizing</a>	<a href="#">Teach Me How to Cry #2</a>	<a href="#">Seascape Sharks &amp; Dancers</a>	<a href="#">Dog Eat Dog</a>	<a href="#">Come Back Little Sheba</a>
<a href="#">Impromptu</a>	<a href="#">Don't Look Down</a>	<a href="#">Getting Out</a>	<a href="#">Voices--Kate</a>	<a href="#">Voices--Grace</a>
<a href="#">Chicago--Roxy Hart</a>	<a href="#">Dancing w/Devil--Young woman</a>	<a href="#">Laundry &amp; Bourbon #3</a>	<a href="#">Haiku--Nell</a>	<a href="#">Never Been Kissed- movie</a>
<a href="#">Lily Dale</a>	<a href="#">They Shoot Fat Women (TV)</a>	<a href="#">Sisterhood of Traveling Pants</a>	<a href="#">Quilters Annie</a>	<a href="#">Quilters 2</a>
<a href="#">Quilters 3</a>	<a href="#">Quilters 4</a>	<a href="#">Nuts</a>	<a href="#">Oh Dad, Poor Dad</a>	

## Classic Monologues (pre 1904)

**CLICK HERE FOR THE [COMPLETE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE](#)**

**AYLI = As You Like It**

**MOV = Merchant of Venice**

**R & J = Romeo & Juliet**

**MAAN = Much Ado About nothing**

**MND = A Midsummer's Night Dream**

<a href="#">AYLI Ros 3-2</a>	<a href="#">AYLI Ros 5-2</a>	<a href="#">AYLI 5-4 Ros Ep</a>	<a href="#">AYLI Phebe 3-5</a>	<a href="#">AYLI Phe #2 3-5</a>	<a href="#">MOV Port 1-1</a>
<a href="#">MOV Por 3-2</a>	<a href="#">MOV Por 4-1</a>	<a href="#">MND Fairy 2-1</a>	<a href="#">MND Hel#1/1-1</a>	<a href="#">MND Hel #2 2-2</a>	<a href="#">MND Her #1 3-2</a>
<a href="#">MNDHel #3 3-2</a>	<a href="#">MAAN Bea 2-1</a>	<a href="#">R&amp; J Jul 2-2</a>	<a href="#">White Devil</a>	<a href="#">Doll's House</a>	<a href="#">Ideal Husband</a>
<a href="#">Hamlet-Ophelia</a>	<a href="#">Psyche</a>	<a href="#">The Miser--Frosine</a>	<a href="#">Midsummer's</a>	<a href="#">White Liars</a>	<a href="#">The Seagull</a>

## Monologues not from scripts--appropriate for theatre one

<a href="#">Amanda</a>	<a href="#">Amy's View</a>	<a href="#">Annie</a>	<a href="#">Arcata Promise</a>	<a href="#">Barbara</a>	<a href="#">Betty</a>
<a href="#">Brienne</a>	<a href="#">Cindy</a>	<a href="#">Darlene</a>	<a href="#">Doll's Life</a>	<a href="#">Ellen</a>	<a href="#">Felicia</a>
<a href="#">Jill</a>	<a href="#">Kate</a>	<a href="#">Love is a Place</a>	<a href="#">Marcie</a>	<a href="#">Mary</a>	<a href="#">Rose</a>
<a href="#">Sharon</a>	<a href="#">Shirley</a>	<a href="#">Sophistry</a>	<a href="#">The Audition</a>	<a href="#">Unwedded</a>	<a href="#">Victoria</a>
<a href="#">Strange Snow</a>	<a href="#">Draw the Line</a>	<a href="#">Going to extremes</a>	<a href="#">Gossip</a>	<a href="#">It's not you</a>	<a href="#">Kill our love life</a>
<a href="#">Karen</a>	<a href="#">Look at Yourself</a>	<a href="#">Love Pill</a>	<a href="#">Magnetic Person</a>	<a href="#">Making Scenes</a>	<a href="#">Migraines</a>
<a href="#">Mr. Universe</a>	<a href="#">Good Behavior</a>	<a href="#">Meticulous Person</a>	<a href="#">Mother's Day</a>	<a href="#">Modern Day Manners</a>	<a href="#">One Moment</a>
<a href="#">Only Ketchup</a>	<a href="#">Sense of Humor</a>	<a href="#">Seductive</a>	<a href="#">Betrayal</a>	<a href="#">Outcast</a>	<a href="#">Delinquent</a>
<a href="#">Ashley</a>	<a href="#">Picture of Perfection</a>	<a href="#">Ditched</a>	<a href="#">Hello Rick</a>	<a href="#">Alexis</a>	<a href="#">Phone Crazy (comedy)</a>
<a href="#">The Divorce</a>	<a href="#">Emily--drama</a>	<a href="#">Hallmark Holiday (comedy)</a>	<a href="#">Real (drama)</a>	<a href="#">Confused Teen (humorous)</a>	<a href="#">Wrong and Ready</a>
<a href="#">The First Day</a>	<a href="#">Driver's License is Piece of Cake</a>				

## AGNES OF GOD

by John Pielmeier

AGNES

Where do babies come from? Well, I think they come from when an angel lights on their mother's chest and whispers into her ear. That makes good babies start to grow. Bad babies come when a fallen angels squeezes in down there. I don't know where good babies come out. (Silence) And you can't tell the difference except that bad babies cry a lot and make their fathers go away and their mothers get very ill and die sometimes. Mummy wasn't very happy when she died and I think she went to hell because every time I see her she looks like she just stepped out of a hot shower. And I'm never sure if it's her or the Lady who tells me things. They fight over me all the time. The Lady I saw when I was ten. I was lying on the grass looking at the sun and the sun became a cloud and the cloud became the Lady, and she told me she would talk to me and then her feet began to bleed and I saw there were holes in her hands and in her side and I tried to catch the blood as it fell from the sky but I couldn't see any more because my eyes hurt because there were big black spots in from of them. And she tells me things like--right now she's crying, "Marie, Marie!" but I don't know what she means. And she uses me to sing. It's as if she's throwing a big hook under my ribs and tries to pull me up but I can't move because Mummy is holding my feet and all I can do is sing in her voice, it's the Lady's voice, God loves you! (silence) God loves you. (silence) I don't eat because I have been commanded by God. I'm getting fat, there's too much flesh on me. I have to be attractive to God. He hates fat people. It's a sin to be fat. Look at all the statues. They're thin. That's because they're suffering. Suffering is beautiful. I want to be beautiful. Christ said it in the Bible. He said, "Suffer the little children, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." I want to suffer like a little child. I am a little child, but my body keeps getting bigger. I don't want it to get bigger because then I won't be able to fit in. I won't be able to squeeze into Heaven. I'm too fat! Look at this--I'm a blimp! God blew up the Hindenburg. He'll blow up me. That's what Mummy said. But if I stay little, it won't happen. She says God presents us to our mothers in bundles of eight pounds six ounces. I have to be eight pounds again. I'm being punished. I don't know why. (she holds out her hand, bleeding) It started this morning, and I can't get it to stop. Why me? Why me?

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## ALL KIDDING ASIDE

by Charles Johnson

**Scotty**

Welcome to the show. My name is Scotty Devlin. I know what you're all thinking... How come she has a boy's name? Actually my real name is Heidi. But I had to change it when I lost my virginity. Everyone named Heidi must change their name when they lose their virginity. That's the rule. Look at these girls over here all rustling through their programs. You're all Heidis, right? Sorry. Am I embarrassed or what? Actually, I lied to you. Scotty is my real name. You see, when I was born the doctor was either far-sighted or a prankster, because as I popped out, I remember it vividly, he declared "it's a boy." In fact, I was a boy until my mother changed my diapers for the first time. Can you imagine their surprise. My mother fainted. My father just stared, "he can't be my boy." I was in stitches. They tried calling me Judy for a while but I just wouldn't respond. Would you have? There's a Heidi nodding her head. Oh, by the way, the part about all Heidis having to change their names when they lose their virginity, I didn't lie about that. That is a known fact. Yes, it's true. Think about it. How many grown women do you know named Heidi? All the Heidis I know are about 8 years old with long blond braids down their backs. They all wear pink dirndls with little white aprons. And are surrounded by goats. They skip their way into high school, getting A's in Home Ec. Then one day, probably on their 21st birthday- wham- Veronica, Yvonne, Desiree. This is absolutely true, I promise you. You've never heard of a child being called Yvonne, have you? If I had been called Judy, I'd have to change my name when I

stopped wearing bangs. Have you ever met a seventy year old woman named Judy? It sounds like she should be chewing gum and skipping rope. I'm not making this up. Right before middle age sets in, Cindys become Harriet, or Beatrice, they have that option. All Wendy's die at puberty. Regrettable, but necessary. I sort of like being called Scotty, besides it's better than my middle name- Doug. Look, I gotta run. But before I go, I just want to say that I hope all the guys who are sitting here tonight with a girl named Heidi, wake up tomorrow morning with a Desiree.

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## **ALL THE WAY HOME**

by Tad Mosel

MARY

Why don't they all leave? You too, Hannah. For I am not going to the funeral. You were right, Hannah. God is coming harder to me now. And Jay, too! I can't seem to find either one of them. Whatever made Jay do it, ever! The night we moved into this house, where did he go! And when he first went to work in Papa's office--! (stopping, remembering more softly) Not when Rufus was born, though. He was very dearly close to me then, very. But other times, he'd feel himself being closed in, watched by superinten-dents, he'd say, and--There was always a special quietness about him afterwards, when he came home, as if he were very far away from where he'd been, but very far away from me, too, keeping his distance, but working his way back. No, I'm not going to the funeral. Do you think he'll rest simply by lowering him into the ground? I won't watch it. How can he rest when he was lost on the very day he died! That's just what I don't know, if he was lost, or drunk or what. I never knew. Not for sure. There were times we all knew about, of course, but there were other times when it wasn't always the whiskey. He'd be gone for a night, or a day, or even two, and I'd know he hadn't touched a drop. And it wasn't any of the other things that come to a woman's mind, either, in case you're thinking that. Those are easy enemies. It was Market Square. And talking to country people about country secrets that go way back through the mountains. And anyone who'd sing his old songs with him. Or all-night lunch rooms, and even Charlie Chaplin. What's wrong with Charlie, he'd ask me, not because he didn't know what I'd say, but to make me say it. He's so nasty, I'd say, so vulgar, with his nasty little cane, looking up skirts. And Jay would laugh and go off to see Charlie Chaplin and not come home. Where he went, I can't even imagine, for he'd never tell me. It was always easier to put everything down to whiskey. Why couldn't I let him have those things, whatever they were, if they meant something to him? Why can't I let him have them now? I'm glad Ralph didn't tell me if Jay were drunk when he was killed. I must just accept not knowing, mustn't I? I must let Jay have what I don't know. What if he was drunk? What in the world if he was? Did I honestly think that was a gulf. This is a gulf! If he was drunk, Hannah, just if he was, I hope he loved being. Speeding along in the night--singing at the top of his lungs--racing because he loved to go fast--racing to us because he loved us. And for the time, enjoying--revelling in a freedom that was his, that no place or person, that nothing in this world could ever give him or take away from him. Let's hope that's how it was, how he looked death itself in the face. In his strength. That's what we'll put on the gravestone. In his strength.

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## **ANNE OF THE THOUSAND DAYS**

Maxwell Anderson

*Anne*

Will you give back what you stole from the monasteries, and the men executed? Will you resume with Rome? When you do that I'll take your word again, But you won't do it. And what you truly want— you may not know **it**— Is a fresh, frail, innocent maid who'll make you feel fresh and innocent again, and young again; Jane Seymour is the name. It could be anyone. Only virginal and sweet. And when you've had her you'll want someone else. Meanwhile, to get her, you'll murder if you must. (*Lashing* out.) Before you go, perhaps You should hear one thing— I lied to you. I loved you, but I lied to you! I was untrue! Untrue with many! You may think this is a lie. But is it? Take it to your grave! Believe it! I was untrue! Only what I take to my grave you take to yours! With many! Not with one! Many! I've never thought what **it** was like to die. To become meat that rots. Then food for shrubs, and the long roots of vines. The grape could reach me. I may make him drunk before many years. Some one told me the story of the homely daughter of Sir Thomas More, climbing at night up the trestles of London Bridge where they'd stuck her father's head on a spike, and hunting among the stinking and bloody heads, of criminals, still she found her father's head, his beard matted and hard with blood. And climbing down with it, and taking it home. To bury in the garden, perhaps. Would they fix my head up on London Bridge? No. Even Henry would object to that. I've been his queen. He's kissed my lips. He wouldn't want it. I'll lie in lead—or brass. Meat. Dead meat. But if my head were on the Bridge he wouldn't climb to take **it** down. Nobody'd climb for me. I could stay and face up the river, and my long hair blow out and tangle round the spikes—and my small neck. Till the sea birds took me, and there was nothing but a wisp of hair and a cup of bone. I must think of something to say when the time comes. If I could say it—with the axe edge toward me, Could I do **it**? Could I lay my head down— and smile, and speak? Till the blow comes? They say it's subtle. It doesn't hurt. There's no time. No time. That's the end of time. Go your way, and I'll go mine. You to your death, and I to my expiation. For there is such a thing as expiation. It involves dying to live. Death is a thing the coroner can see. I'll stick by that. A coroner wouldn't know you died young, Henry. And yet you did.

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## ANTON IN SHOW BUSINESS

By Jane Martin  
Casey

So, the casting agent says to me, "You're not right for it; you're a character woman." I die. My blood congeals. Fissures appear. It's the actresses' death knell. I go through menopause in five seconds. All fluids dry. I become the Mojave Desert. Character woman! I, who have screwed every leading man on the East Coast, become their mother. Vertigo. I scream out in a silent, unattending universe: "I'm too young to be a character woman!" and the echo replies, rolling out of infinite space: "They want to see you for the funny aunt at the wedding!" (*She ritually disembowels herself*) Bad day. I once believed I could be very good. I wanted to be so concentrated, so compressed, so vivid and present and skillful and heartfelt that any- one watching me would literally burst into flame. Combust. I never did it. It never happened. I used to think that theatre could change people's lives. The truth is, two months later the audience can't remember the name of the play. I mean, honestly, has anybody you know to be a sentient being ever walked up to you and said the play changed their life? No, fine, okay. *You* know who is changed by Chekhov? Me. I finish a play, it's like, "Get me an exorcist!" He eats my life. He chews me up. He spits me out. I'm like bleeding from Chekhov. The audience? Who knows what their deal is? They come from the mists; they return to the mist. They cough, they sneeze, they sleep, they unwrap little hard candies, and then they head for their cars during the curtain call. And once, once I would like to step out and say to the ones who are

up the aisles while we take the bows, "Hey! Excuse me! Could you show a little mercy because I just left it all out here on the stage and even if you don't have the foggiest notion what it was or what it meant, could you have the common courtesy to leave your goddamn cars in the garage for another forty seconds and give me a little hand for twenty years of work!"

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## **THE BAD SEED**

Maxwell Anderson

*Mrs. Daigle*

Thanks. I'm Mrs Daigle. You didn't have to let me in, you know. I'm a little drunk. I guess you never get a little drunk. Now, you, Mrs. Penmark. You've always had plenty. You're a superior person. Oh yes, your father was rich. Rich Richard Bravo. I know. Me, I worked in a beauty parlor. Miss Fern used to come there. She looks down on me. I was that frumpy blonde. Now I've lost my boy and I'm a lush. Everybody knows it. But I know what I'm about just the same. Just the same. May I call you Christine? I'm quite aware that you come from a higher level of society. You proly made a debut and all that. I always considered Christine such a genteel name. Hortense sounds flat—that's me, Hortense. "My girl, Hortense," that's what hey used to sing at me, "hasn't got much sense. Let's write her name on the privy fence." Children can be nasty, don't you think? You're so attractive Christine. You have such exquisite taste in clothes, but of course you have amples of money to buy 'em with. What I came to see you about, I asked Miss Fern how did Claude happen to lose the medal, and she wouldn't tell me a thing. You know more than you're telling. You're a sly one—because of the school. You don't want the school to get a bad name. But you know more than you're telling, Miss Butter-Wouldn't-Melt Fern. There's something funny about the whole thing. I've said so over and over to Mr. Daigle. Rest. Sleep. When you can't sleep at night, you can't sleep in the daylight. I lie and look at the water where he went down. There's something funny about the whole thing, Christine. I heard that your little girl was the last one who saw him alive. Will you ask her about the last few minutes and tell me what she says? Maybe she remembers some little thing. I don't care how small it is! No matter how small! Oh, my poor little Claude! What did they do to you? Somebody took the medal off his shirt, Christine. It couldn't come off by accident. I pinned it on myself, and it had a clasp that locks in place. It was no accident. He was such a lovely, dear little boy. He said I was his sweetheart. He said he was going to marry me when he grew up. I used to laugh and say, "You'll forget me long before then. You'll find a prettier girl, and you'll marry her." And you know what he said then? He said, "No, I won't, because there's not a prettier girl in the whole world than you are." Why do you put your arms around me? You don't give a damn about me. You're a superior person and all that, and I'm—oh, God forgive me! There were those bruises on his hands, and that peculiar crescent-shaped mark on his forehead that the undertaker covered up. He must have bled before he died. That's's what the doctor said. And where's the medal? Who took the medal? I have a right to know what became to the penmanship medal! If I knew, I'd have a good idea what happened to him. I don't; know hwy you took it on yourself to put your arms around me. I'm as good as you are. And Claude was better than your girl. He won the medal, and she didn't—I'm drunk. It's a pleasure to stay drunk when your little boy's been killed.

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**BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS**

by Neil Simon

**BLANCHE**

I'm not going to let you hurt me, Nora. I'm not going to let you tell me that I don't love you or that I haven't tried to give you as much as I gave Laurie... God knows I'm not perfect because enough angry people in this house told me so tonight... but I am not going to be a doormat for all the frustration and unhappiness that you or Aunt Kate or anyone else wants to lay at my feet... I did not create this Universe. I do not decide who lives and dies, or who's rich or poor or who feels loved and who feels deprived. If you feel cheated that I had a husband who died at thirty-six. And if you keep on feeling that way, you'll end up like me... with something much worse than loneliness or helplessness and that's self-pity. Believe me, there is no leg that's twisted or bent that is more crippling than a human being who thrives on his own misfortunes... I am sorry, Nora, that you feel unloved and I will do everything I can to change it except apologize for it. I am tired of apologizing. After a while it becomes your life's work and it doesn't bring any money into the house... if it's taken you pain and Aunt Kate's anger to get me to start living again, then God will give me the strength to make it up to you, but I will not go back to being that frightened, helpless woman that I created!.. I've already buried someone I love. Now its time to bury someone I hate.

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by Neil Simon

**KATE**

What do I want to do? Is that how it works? You have an affair, and I get the choice of forgetting about it or living alone for the rest of my life?...It's so simple for you, isn't it? I am so angry. I am so hurt by your selfishness. You break what was good between us and leave me to pick up the pieces...and still you continue to lie to me. I knew about that woman a year ago. I got a phone call from a friend. I won't even tell you who..."What's going on with you and Jack?" she asks me. "Are you two still together? Who's this woman he's having lunch with every day?" She asks me...I said, "Did you see them together?" „She said, "No, but I heard."...I said, "don't believe what you hear. Believe what you see!" and I hung up on her...Did I do good, Jack? Did I defend my husband like a good wife?...A year I lived wit that, hoping to God it wasn't true, and if it was, praying it would go away...and God was good to me. NO more phone calls, no more stories about Jack and his lunch partner...no more wondering why you were coming home late from work even when it wasn't busy season...until this morning. Guess who calls me?...Guess who Jack was having lunch with in the same restaurant twice last week?... Last year' lies don't hold up this year, Jack...This year you have to deal with it

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**BUMS**  
by Robert Shaffron  
*Evelyn*

I don\*t know when I stopped living my life and my life started living me. (*A beat.*) My mother was a Christian. A Bible slamming, fire and brimstone, hallelujah Christian. I remember the day — the night — of her conversion. I was sleeping. She tore into the apartment — I slept on the couch — and she was out of breath, and her hair was, well, some of it had slipped out from under the elastic band she always had it pulled back in. And she ran around the room turning on all the lamps, and she turned on the light in the little half-kitchen, and she turned on the lights in her bedroom and left the door open so the light came into the living room where I was sleeping. I sat up, I was scratching and trying to straighten the crumpled sheets under me with my eyes closed the lights were so bright and I asked her, "Ma why are you turning all the lights on like that it hurts my eyes." And she rushed over to me and she pulled me off the couch onto the floor and said, "Evelyn, we\*re gonna get down on our knees and pray. In the light. And we\*re gonna pray to the Lord that we may always live in the light. The clean, pure holy light that falls down on us from the good Lord in heaven." We\*d never prayed in our lives. I didn\*t even know what praying was, really. I knew people prayed in church. I\*d seen pictures of churches, and they always looked beautiful and scary with the colored lights all coming through the stained glass windows and shiny wood benches and gigantic stone arches, and I wondered how in hell we were gonna pray in our little apartment with the greasy walls and the chipped tile floors and bare lightbulbs — scary but not beautiful like the churches. (*A beat.*) All Mother wanted was a man who wouldn\*t leave her so she brought God home. And he stayed. Mother went crazy with religion. And as soon as I was old enough, I did the only thing I could think to do. I got pregnant and left home. Amen

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**BUMS**  
by Robert Shaffron  
*Mary*

*MARY is sitting, writing furiously in the margins of a discarded newspaper. SHE suddenly stops writing, and looks up at the audience, suspicious.)*

Whattaya lookin at? Whattaya lookin at?? Bastids always lookin, lookin — wanna see what İm writin here. Dirty bastids always lookin at me outa the sides a their eyes so they think I dont know theyre lookin. Know what İm writin here? İm writin the Bible. That's right. Ya read the Bible, aint ya, ya dirty bastid? Well, I wrote it. Only it aint finished. I gotta finish it. Sometimes I aint got enough paper and I gotta write it on the *New York Newsday*. Only first I gotta cross out all the words thats already printed there so nobody gets the Bible mixed up with the *New York Newsday*. (*A n outburst.*) **HEY YOU TRYIN TO LOOK UP MY DRESS YOU DIRTY BASTID I KNOW WHAT YOU WAS LOOKIN AT YOU SLIMY SCUMBAG YOU JUST GET YOUR EYES OUTTA THERE AINT NOthin UP THERE YOU GOT NO BUSINESS GOOGLIN AT! I KNOW WHAT YOU WAS TRYIN TO LOOK AT SNEAKINPEEKS UP MY DRESS WHILE**

*İM WRITİŇ THE HOLY WORD YOU LOWLIFE SCUM BASTID!!* (A *beat*, then back to normal tone.) You know why İm writiŇ the Bible? You know why? God te! me to. God the little infant Jesus te! me to. That bastid. You know why he picked me? He knows what I seen. He knows the evil I seen. ThaŇs right. I seen somethiŇ. I seen the worst evil in the world and the Holy Lord our savior Jesus Christ tells me the word and he writes the Holy Epistle through me. İm a vessel. İm a vessel of the Lord. You wanna know my name? İll tell ya. İŇs Mary. ThaŇs all. NothiŇ else. Just Mary. Used to be Evelyn Kantmeier. Now İŇs Mary. Whattaya lookiŇ at?? Filthy bastid ya was lookiŇ at my bag, wasŇt ya? Wanna see whaŇs in my bag, doncha? Wanna see what I got in here. Everybody does. Everybody wants to see. Wanna know? Wanna see whaŇs in here? Youll rot in hell first. Nobody gets in my bag. İŇs my bag. İŇs fulla my treasures. Man touched my bag once. HeŇs sorry. I was sittiŇ in Grand Central Station I like it there you can feel the LordŇs presence in the echoes. İm sittiŇ there writiŇ the Bible with my special bag down between my feet I keep the handle wrapped around my leg so no stinkiŇ scumsucker bastid can steal it ‘cause everybody wants it. Wants to possess it İŇs precious. İm sittiŇ right on that bench writiŇ and keepiŇ an eye out for evil — İm the Holy LordŇs guardian of evil. I keep an eye out when God is watchiŇ over things over in Italy or somethiŇ — bastid comes up tries to touch my bag. Musta been crazy is the only thing I can figure. But I got him. Fixed the crazy son of a bitch good. Put a curse on him. Ordained his hands to fall off. He!l never touch another bag again. Eye for an eye. I wrote that. (A *beat*.) DonŇt touch my bag. You donŇt ever touch my bag. Thou shalt not lay a rotten finger on my bag and thaŇs a commandment. (A *beat*.) You wanna know whaŇs in my bag? Huh? You wanna? Sacraments. Holy sacraments and treasures and some sacred relics. And some cigarettes. (A *beat*.) Airight. İll show ya. But only if you swear on the holy mothers eyes not to covet nothiŇ in here. But you will. Youll covet it all. İŇs holy. (SHE pulls out an old cardigan sweater with pearls or sequins on it. Its wrinkled and dirty.) Here. This hereŇs sacred vestments. Jesus wore this at the Last Supper. Then he gave it to me. IsŇt it beautiful? (SHE shakes it so the sequins catch the light.) It glows. ThaŇs holy light. You wanna touch it? It heals. You wanna touch it? (SHE hold it out, then snatches it back.) DonŇt even try. (SHE rummages in the bag and finds a keychain with keys on it. SHE shakes it.) This hereŇs JesuŇs lucky keychain. He blessed this. Sometimes it spouts wine. (SHE goes back into the bag, pulls out a crumpled box of Count Chocula cereal.) This is the holy communion. This box got the wafers thaŇs the flesh of Christ. (SHE opens the box, places a single piece of cereal on her tongue.) AiŇt supposed to chew it. Gotta let it lie on your tongue and count your sins while it melts. (SHE takes a handful of cereal and eats it.) Only I aiŇt got no sins. I been purified. ‘Sgot marshmallows in it. (SHE rummages in the bag again, pulling out a succession of objects, until SHE comes up with a tattered baby doll.) This is Him. This is the Holy Infant Jesus himself. Not Him. His image. The Baby Jesus. My beautiful, blessed Baby Jesus. This hereŇs loaded with holy magic spiritual power. No one, *no one* can ever hold this Infant Jesus. ‘Cept me. One little touch and he!l resurrect and smite you but good.

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## **BUS STOP**

by William Inge

*CHERIE*

Mebbe I'm a sap. I dunno why I don't go off to Montana and marry Bo. I might be a lot better off'n I am now. But all he wants is a girl to throw his arms around and hug and kiss, that's all. The resta the time, he don't even know I exist. I never did decide to marry him. Everything was goin' fine till he brought up that subjeck. Bo come in one night when I was singin' "That Ole Black Magic." It's one a my best numbers. And he liked it so much, he jumped up on a chair and yelled like a Indian, and put his fingers in his mouth and whistled like a steam engine. Natur'ly, it made me feel good. Most a the customers at the Blue Dragon was too drunk to pay any attention to my songs. Anyway...I'd never seen a cowboy before. Oh, I'd seen 'em in movies, a course, but never in the flesh...Anyway, he's so darn healthy-lookin', I don't mind admittin, I was attracted right from the start. But it was only what ya might call a sexual attraction. The very next mornin', he wakes up and hollers, "Yippee! We're gettin' married." I honestly thought he was crazy. But when I tried to reason with him, he wouldn't listen to a word. He stayed by my side all day long, like a shadow. At night, a course, he had to go back to the rodeo, but he was back to the Blue Dragon as soon as the rodeo was over, in time fer the midnight show. If any other fella claimed t'have a date with me, Bo'd beat him up. He kep tellin' me all week, he and Virge'd be by the night the rodeo ended and they'd pick me up and we'd all start back to Montana t'gether. I knew that if I was around the Blue Dragon that night, that's what'd happen. So I decided to beat it. One a the other girls at the Blue Dragon lived on a farm 'cross the river in Kansas. She said I could stay with her. So I went to the Blue Dragon last night and just sang fer the first show. Then I told 'em I was quittin'...I'd been wantin' to find another job anyway...and I picked up my share of the kitty...but darn it, I had to go and tell 'em I was takin' the midnight bus. They had to go and tell Bo, a course, when he come in a li'l after eleven. He paid 'em five dollars to find out. So I went down to the bus station and hadn't even got my ticket, when here come Bo and Virge. He just steps up to the ticket window and says, "Three tickets to Montana!" I din know what to say. Then he dragged me onto the bus and I been on it ever since. And somewhere deep down inside me, I gotta funny feelin' I'm gonna end up in Montana.

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## **CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF #1**

by Tennessee Williams  
*Margaret/Maggie*

Yes, it's too bad because you cant wring their necks if they've got no necks to wring! Isn't that right honey? Yep, they're no-neck monsters, all no-neck people are monsters? (*children shriek downstairs*) Hear them? Hear them screaming? I don't know where their voice boxes are located since they don't have necks. I tell you I got so nervous at that table tonight, I thought I would throw back my head and utter a scream you could hear across the Arkansas border an' parts of Louisiana an' Tennessee. I said to our charming sister-in-law, Mae, "honey, couldn't you feed those precious little things at a separate table with an oilcloth cover? They make such a mess an' the lace cloth looks so pretty!" She made enormous eyes at me and said, "Ohhh, nooooo! On Big Daddy's birthday? Why, he would never forgive me!" Well, I want you to know, Big Daddy hadn't been at the table two minutes with those five no-neck monsters slobbering and drooling over their food before he threw down his fork an' shouted, "Fo' God's sake, Gooper, why don't you put them pigs at a trough in th' kitchen?"- Well, I swear, I simply could have di-ieed! Think of it, Brick, they've got five of them and number six is coming. They've brought the whole bunch down here like animals to display at a county fair. Why, they have those children doin' tricks all the time! "Junior, show Big Daddy how you do this, show Big Daddy how you do that, say your little piece fo' Big Daddy, Sister. Show you dimples, Sugar. Brother, show Big Daddy how you stand on your head!"- it goes on all the time, along with constant little remarks

and innuendos about the fact that you and I have not produced any children, are totally childless and therefore totally useless!- Of course it's comical but its also disgusting since it so obvious what they're up to!

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## CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF #2

by Tennessee Williams

*Margaret*

Brick, y'know, I've been so God damn disgustingly poor all my life!- that's the truth, Brick! Always had to suck up to people I couldn't stand because they had money and I was poor as Job's turkey. You don't know what that's like. Well, I'll tell you, its like you would feel a thousand miles away from Echo Spring!- And had to get back to it on that broken ankle? without a crutch! That's how it feels to be as poor as Job's turkey and have to suck up to relatives that you hated because they had money and all you had was a bunch of hand-me-down clothes and a few old moldy three-per-cent government bonds. My daddy loved his liquor, he fell in love with his liquor the way you've fallen in love with Echo Spring!- And my poor Mama, having to maintain some semblance of social position, to keep appearances up, on an income of one hundred and fifty dollars a month on those old government bonds! When I came out, the year that I made my debut, I had just two evening dresses! One, mother made me from a pattern in Vogue, the other a hand-me-down from a snotty rich cousin I hated! - The dress that I married you in was my grandmother's weddin' gown? So that's why I'm like a cat on a hot tin roof! You can be young without money, but you can't be old without it. You've got to be old with money because to be old without it is just too awful, you've got to be one or the other, either young or with money, you cant be old and without it. - That's the truth, Brick? Well, now I'm dressed, I'm all dressed, there's nothing else for me to do. (*Forlornly, almost fearfully*) I'm dressed, all dressed, nothing else for me to do? (*She moves about restlessly, aimlessly, and speaks, as if to herself.*) What am I-? Oh!-my bracelets? (*She starts working a collection of bracelets over her hands onto her wrists, about six on each, as she talks.*) I've thought a whole lot about it and now I know when I made my mistake. Yes, I made a mistake when I told you the truth about that thing with Skipper. Never should have confessed it, a fatal error, tellin' you about that thing with Skipper.

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## CATHOLIC SCHOOLGIRLS

Casey Kurtti

*Elizabeth*

(*To God, as if she is in church.*) Hey, come on out, I want to talk to you. It\*s me, Elizabeth. You can hide behind any statue in this place, but you better listen to me. I don\*t know if you know this but after my grandmother moved in with us, everything was different. We used to sit in my room, after school. She\*d ask me questions about all sorts of things. Then she\*d listen to my answers real close because she said I was an important person. Some nights, after we went to bed, I would hear her talking to my grandfather in the dark. If I made any noise she\*d stop. Because it was private. One night I saw that she was crying. I made some noise and she stopped. Then she asked me if I remembered my grandfather. I did,

she liked that. We fell asleep on her bed like sisters. Sunday mornings were kind of strange. Nobody would give up eating bacon and some smells made her sick. My father would tell her if the grease bothered her so much, to take her eggs and go into the bedroom and wait until breakfast was over. I helped her stuff towels into the cracks under the door; but the smell got in anyway. Then my father would make me come back to the table and eat with the rest of the family I'd go, but I wouldn't eat that bacon. Sometimes, if she was feeling a little better we'd take short walks. After we had rested, she'd tell me stories about my mother and bring along pictures that I had never seen. I didn't know why my mother was so sad and neither did my grandmother. One day, my father came home from work and told me that my grandmother would have to move back to the Bronx. He said it was just not working out. She needed more care and besides she was making the family crazy. I told him that she wasn't making me crazy I told him she let me be near her. He didn't understand that. And now I see that you didn't either. You took her and I don't think that's fair. You're supposed to do the right thing, all the time. I don't believe that anymore. You just like to punish people, you like to interrupt their lives. You didn't let me finish. She doesn't know what I think, and I was almost ready to tell her. Why don't you take my mother next time? Oh, you like to take little kids, don't you? Grab one of my brothers next, they're all baptized. Why don't you take my whole stinking family, in one shot, then you won't waste any time. That would be some joke. But I want to tell you something. It's a personal message, I'm delivering it, myself Don't you ever lay your hands on me, cause if I ever see you, you can strike me dead. . . try . . . I will spit all over your face, whatever it looks like. Because you and everyone else in this world are one big pack of liars. And I really think I hate you. Something else: You don't exist.

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### **CENTRAL PARK WEST**

by Woody Allen

*Carol*

I won't sit here and be accused. I am *not* having an affair with your husband. It's not me! Alright!! I admit it! What do you want me to do? We fell in love! You're such a bully! Bully! Bully! We fell in love--nobody planned it--nobody wanted to hurt anyone. This affair has caused us nothing but anguish and pain. Don't dirty it up--it's not what you think. It's not just about sex. Stop being so judgmental--you know from your work these things happen--it's chemistry--two people meet--and a spark flares up and suddenly it has a life of its own. It's serious, Phyllis. It's been going on for barely three years. We haven't been sneaking around town--we have an apartment. The East Fifties. It's small. Only three rooms. Stop being snotty--we're trying to communicate— It's just a place to go to, to be calone--to relax--to--to--to talk— Phyllis, we're in love--oh God--I never thought I'd be saying this--it's--everything--yes, it's sensual, but it's more--we share feelings and dreams. Phyllis, what do you want me to say? He fell out of love with you years ago. I don't know why. Certainly not over me. It was finished in Sam's mind between you two before he ever said anything to me. It happened New Year's Eve at Lou Stein's party. There was no groping. It wasn't like that. He came over to me--I was watching the fireworks--and he whispered in my ear--can you meet me next week for lunch without mentioning anything to Phyllis. Well, as you can imagine, I was a bit surprised. I said, why? And he said I need your help on something. You had led a group out onto the terrace, against their will, in the five degree temperature, to watch the fireworks. And Howard was in the kitchen getting the Stein's recipe for Babaganoush. And I said, what kind of help? With what? And Sam said, Phyllis's birthday is soon and I want you to help me get her something but it has got to be something special. So the following Thursday we met for lunch at his club and we pitched some gift ideas back and

forth. And after lunch we went on our shop--I remember going to Bergdorfs and Tiffany\*s and James Robinson and finally in this tiny old antique store on First Avenue we found a stunning pair of art-deco earrings--diamonds with tiny rubies— Well, I was flabbergasted. He bought them, and we walked out on the street and then he handed the box to me and said, "Here, I want you so badly." I said, whoa--wait a minute--we came to buy Phyllis a birthday gift--if I take this we have to at least pick out *something* for her. Yes, we got you're the silver candlesticks...Please, they cost a fortune! Phyllis, face it. He couldn\*t stand being married to you anymore and he told me that over lunch--he initiated the relationship.. he salivated over me--he looked me in the eye at lunch and tears formed--I\*m not happy, he said— so. From the first moment Howard and I met you and Sam I knew he was miserable. This woman is not making him happy--I told that to Howard that first night we met you two—She may be a brilliant shrink and the center of every conversation with some new variation of how great she is—but she's not enough woman for him—she's not thre to gudie him—to bring him coffee—Sam had tremendous hostility—but you know that now. I did nothing wrong. Your husband stopped loving you before he met me. Believe me, I did not seduce Sam. He played around plenty before I came on the scene. Face up to it! Ask Edith Moss and Steve Pollack's secretary. Don't lay it all on me! I didn't turn your husband into a philanderer. You're such a phoeny—pretending your marriage is so perfect—You were a laughing stock.

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### COUPLE OF WHITE CHICKS SITTING AROUND TALKING

Hi. My name is Hannah Mae Bindler. I live right across there, across that little patch of grass. My back door faces your back door. If you saw someone painting our place last week and figured someone was moving in, well, Honey, you were a hundred percent right, cause we just did. Me and my lug Carl Joe. We\*re your new next door neighbors. How about a cup of coffee? (*Takes cup out of purse.*) I brought my own cup. I don\*t leave you much choice, do I? If I was you, I\*d fill my cup and ask me to sit down. Already we couldn\*t be happier with Westchester County and we only hope Westchester County can be happy with us. Back home in little ol\* Austin, Texas, Westchester County is notorious for its opulent homes, proximity to the Big City, and wives constantly messing around. Saw you mowing your lawn last night. Immediately I became intrigued. I love physical activity, but Carl Joe doesn\*t permit me. Then you were done. The light goes on in your TV room. You sit down, but you don\*t turn it on. You just sit there looking at the blank screen. "Goddang," says me to myself, "this is one Westchester honey who\*s different. Must be some kind of unique thoughts filling up her head." Boy, am I excited. When I get excited, I have trouble breathing. It\*s a common occurrence with people of passion. Finally your light goes out. I don\*t go upstairs to Carl Joe, no ma\*am. I sleep right there on the couch near the window. When I wake up, Carl Joe\*s already on the train to work, and Goddang if my smile wasn\*t better than ever. That\*s when I knew that little ole me had to come knock at your door and say "Hi!" Hi! You\*re just like my sister Lucy Sue. Boys used to say she was born to moan. Anyway, Lucy Sue wasn\*t much of a talker either. The more you want her to say something, the quieter she gets. Standing there like she knew a whole lot of stuff about you that was way over your head. One day I figured her out. She didn\*t have any secrets. Just didn\*t really trust the thoughts she did think and was afraid that saying 'em out I wouldn\*t look up to her no more. (*Phone rings. After third ring.*) Honey, your phone\*s ringing. Sure you got yourself a sweet-looking kitchen. Everything where it oughta be. Right out of *Better Homes and Gardens*. Got to bring Carl Joe by and show it to him. We\*re remodeling and we still haven\*t landed on the right color scheme. Wait till you see the shoulders

on Carl Joe! A guy\*s body ain\*t supposed to mean as much to us as ours do to them, but on our second date he took off his shirt and that was it. Carl Joe played tackle for Texas football back in the late '50s and like he says,"Except you, Hannah Mae, everything since then\*s been a real anti-climax. Really love the lug.

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## COURTSHIP

by Horton Foote

Laura

Oh, my God! That worries me so. Suppose I think I\*m in love with a man and I marry him and it turns out I\*m not in love with him. (*A pause.*) What does being in love mean? I wish I didn't think so much. I wish to heaven I didn\*t. Everything bad that happens to a girl I begin to worry it will happen to me. All night I\*ve been worrying. Part of the time I\*ve been worrying that I\*d end an old maid like Aunt Sarah, and part of the time I worry that I\*ll fall in love with someone like Syd and defy Papa and run off with him and then realize I made a mistake and part of the time I worry.. (*A pause.*) that what happened to Sibyl Thomas will happen to me and.. (*A pause.*) could what happened to Sibyl Thomas ever happen to you? I don\*t mean the dying part. I know we all have to die. I mean the other part having a baby before she was married. How do you think it happened to her? Do you think he loved her? Do you think it was the only time she did? You know.. (*A pause.*) Old, common, Anna Landry said in the girls room at school, she did it whenever she wanted to, with whomever she wanted to and nothing ever happened to her. And if it did she would get rid of it. How do women do that? I guess we\*ll never know. I don\*t trust Anna Landry and I don\*t know who else to ask. Can you imagine the expression on Mama\*s face, or Aunt Lucy\*s or Mrs. Cookenboo\*s if I asked them something like that? (*A pause.*) Anyway, even if I knew I would be afraid to do something like that before I got married for fear God would strike me dead. (*A pause.*) Aunt Sarah said that Sibyl\*s baby dying was God\*s punishment of her sin. Aunt Lucy said if God punished sinners that way there would be a lot of dead babies

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## CRIMES OF THE HEART

by Beth Henley

BABE

I can't tell you what happened right before I shot on account of I'm protecting someone. (*after a moment*) Well, do you remember Willie Jay? Cora's youngest boy? Well, Cora irons at my place on Wednesdays now, and she just happened to mention that Willy Jay'd picked up this old stray dog and that he'd gotten real fond of him. But now they couldn't afford to feed him anymore. So she was gonna have to tell Willie Jay to set him loose in the woods. Well, I said I liked dogs, and if he wanted to bring the dog over here, I'd take care of him. You see, I was alone by myself most of the time 'cause the Senate was in session and Zackery was up in Jackson. So the next day, Willie brings over this skinny old dog with these little crossed eyes. Well, I asked Willie Jay what his name was, and he said they called him Dog. Well, I liked the name, so I thought I'd keep it. Anyway, when Willy Jay was leaving he gave Dog a hug and said "Goodbye, Dog. You're a fine ole dog." Well, I felt something for him, so I told Willie Jay he could come back and visit with Dog any

time he wanted, and his face just kinda lit right up. Anyhow, time goes on and Willie Jay keeps coming over and over. And we talk about Dog and how fat he's getting, and then, well, you know, things start up. Like sex. Like that. I know he's fifteen and a black boy. I was so lonely. And he was good. Oh, he was so, so good. I'd never had it that good. We'd always go out in the garage and....anyway, we were just standing around on the back porch playing with Dog. Well, suddenly Zackery comes from around the side of the house. And he startled me 'cause he's supposed to be away at the office, and there he is coming from round the side of the house. Anyway, he says to Willie Jay, "Hey, boy, what are you doing back here?" And I say, "He's not doing anything. You just go on home, Willie Jay! You just run right on home." Well, before he can move, Zackery comes up and knocks him once right across the face and then shoves him down the porch steps, causing him to skin up his elbow real bad on that hard concrete. Then he says, "Don't you ever come around here again, or I'll have them cut out your gizzard!" Well, Willie Jay starts crying--these tears come streaming down his face--then he gets up real quick and runs away, with Dog following off after him. After that, I don't remember much too clearly; let's see...I went on into the living room, and I went right up to the davenport and opened the drawer where we keep the burglar gun...I took it out. Then I heard the back door slamming. So I waited for Zackery to come on into the living room. Then I held out the gun and I pulled the trigger, aiming for his heart but getting him in the stomach.. *(after a pause)* It's funny that I really did that.

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## **CRIMES OF THE HEART 2**

by Beth Henley

*BABE*

*Babe is talking to her attorney, Barnette about how she shot her husband "as a result of continuous physical and mental abuse". Babe shot her husband after he beat a young black boy with whom she was having an affair*

After I shot Zackery, I put the gun down on the piano bench, and then I went out into the kitchen and made up a pitcher of lemonade. I was dying of thirst. My mouth was just as dry as a bone. I made it just the way I like it, with lots of sugar and lots of lemon- about ten lemons in all. Then I added two trays of ice and stirred it up with my wooded stirring spoon. Then I drank three glasses, one right after the other. They were large glasses- about this tall. Then suddenly my stomach kind of swole all up. I guess what caused it was all that sour lemon Then what I did was? I wiped my mouth off with the back of my hand, like this? I did it to clear off all those little beads of water that had settled there. Then I called out to Zackery. I said, "Zackery, I've made some lemonade. Can you use a glass?" But he didn't answer. So I poured him a glass anyway and I took it out to him. And there he was, lying on the rug. And he was looking up at me trying to speak words. I said "What? ?Lemonade?? You don't want it? Would you like a Coke instead?" Then I got the idea- he was telling me to call on the phone for medical help. So I got on the phone and called up the hospital. I gave my name and address and I told them my husband was shot and he was lying on the rug and there was plenty of blood. I guess that's gonna look kinda bad. Me fixing that lemonade before I called the hospital. I tell you, I think the reason I made up the lemonade, I mean besides the fact that my mouth was bone dry, was that I was afraid to call the authorities. I was afraid. I - I really think I was afraid they would see that I had tried to shoot Zackery, in fact that I had shot him, and they would accuse me of possible murder and send me away to jail. I mean, in fact, that's what did happen. That's what is happening - 'cause here I am just about ready to go right off to the Parchment Prison Farm. Yes, here I am just practically on the brink of utter doom. Why, I feel so all alone.

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## THE CRUCIBLE

by Arthur Miller  
Mary Warren

I never knew it before. I never knew anything before. When she come into the court I say to myself, I must not accuse this woman, for she sleeps in ditches, and so very old and poor. But then- then she sit there, denying and denying, and I feel a misty coldness climbin' up my back, and the skin on my skull begin to creep, and I feel a clamp around my neck and I cannot breathe air; and then (*entranced*) I hear a voice, a screamin' voice, and it were my voice- and all at once I remembered everything she done to me! (*Like one awakened to a marvelous secret insight*) So many times, Mr. Proctor, she come to this very door, beggin' bread and a cup of cider-and mark this: whenever I turned her away empty, she mumbled. But what does she mumble? You must remember, Goody Proctor. Last month- a Monday, I think--she walked away, and I thought my guts would burst for two days after. Do you remember it? And so I told that to Judge Hathorne, and he asks her so. "Sarah Good," says he, "what curse do you mumble that this girl must fall sick after turning you away?" And then she replies (mimicking an old crone) "Why, your excellence, no curse at all. I only say my commandments; I hope I may say my commandments," says she! Then Judge Hathorne say, "Recite for us your commandments!" (Leaning avidly toward them) And of all the ten she could not say a single one. She never knew no commandments, and they had her in a flat lie!

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## DARK AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS

by William Inge  
LOTTIE

Cora, did you hear what the old maid said to the burglar? You see, the burglar came walking into her bedroom with this big, long billy club and...(she is laughing so hard she can hardly finish the story)...and the old maid...she was so green she didn't know what was happening to her, she said...(stopped by Cora, and a bit shamed and embarrassed) Shucks, Cora, I don't see what's wrong in having a little fun just telling stories. Oh, Mama and Papa, Mama and Papa! I know the way they brought us up. And maybe they didn't know as much as we gave them credit for. Do you remember how Mama and Papa used to caution us about men, Cora? My God, they had me so afraid of ever giving in to a man, I was petrified. So were you until Rubin came along and practically raped you. (chuckling at the memory) My God, Cora, he had you pregnant inside of two weeks after he started seeing you. I never told. I never even told Morris. My God, do you remember how Mama and Papa carried on when they found out? And Papa had his stroke just a month after you were married. Oh, I just thought Rubin was the wickedest man alive. Maybe I shoulda married a man like that. I don't know. Maybe it was as much my fault as Morris'. Maybe I didn't...respond right...from the very first. Cora, I'll tel you something. Something I've never told another living soul. I never did enjoy it the way some women...say they do. Why are you so surprised? Because I talk kinda dirty at times? But that's all it is, is talk. I talk all the time just to convince myself that I'm alive. And i stuff myself with victuals just to feel I've got something inside me. And I'm full of all kinds of crazy curiosity about...all the things in life I seem to have missed out on. Now I'm telling you the truth, Cora. Nothing ever really happened to me while it was going on. That first night Morris and I were together, right after we were married, when we were in bed together for the first time, after it was all over, and he had fallen asleep, I lay there in bed wondering what in the world all the cautioning had been about. Nothing had happened to me at all, and I thought Mama and Papa

musta been makin' things up. So don't come to me for sympathy, Cora. I'm not the person to give it to you.

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## **'IDENTITY CRISIS**

by Christopher Durang

*JANE*

When I was eight years old, someone brought me to a theatre with lots of other children. We had come to see a production of Peter Pan. And I remember something seemed wrong with whole production, odd things kept happening. Like when the children would fly, the ropes breaking and the actors would come thumping to ground an they'd have to be carried off by the stagehands. There seemed to be an unlimited supply of understudies to take the children's places, and then they'd fall to the ground. And then the crocodile that chases Captain Hook seemed to be a real crocodile, It wasn't an actor, and at one point it fell off the stage, crushing several children in the front row. Several understudies came and took their places in the audience. And from scene to scene Wendy seemed to get fatter and fatter until finally by the second act she was immobile and had to be moved with a cart. The voice belonged to the actress playing peter pan. You remember how in the second act Tinkerbell drinks some poison that Peter's about to drink, in order to save him? And then Peter turns to the audience and he says that Tinkerbell's going to die because not enough people believe in fairies, but that if everybody in the audience claps real hard to show that they do believe in fairies, then maybe Tinkerbell won't die. and so then all the children started to clap. we clapped very hard and very long. my palms hurt and even started to bleed I clapped so hard. then suddenly the actress playing Peter Pan turned to the audience and she said, " that wasn't enough. You didn't clap hard enough. Tinkerbell's dead. " uh..well, and..and then everyone started to cry. The actress stalked offstage and refused to continue with the play, and they finally had to bring down the curtain. No one could see anything through all the tears, and the ushers had to come help the children up the aisles and out into the street. I don't think any of us were ever the same after that experience.

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## **DIARY OF ADAM AND EVE**

*Eve*

*(Staring our front, taking in the world for a moment)* Sunlight? Hummingbirds? Lions? Where am I? I? What am I? *(She looks down at herself)* OH!! Whatever I am, I'm certainly a beautiful one. *(She laughs suddenly)* It's very peculiar—but I feel like—an experiment. *(Laughing again)* In fact, it would be impossible to feel more like an experiment than I do. Then am I the whole experiment? *(She carefully surveys herself again)* I don't think so. I better start making notes right now. Some instinct tells me these details are going to be important to the historians some day. Saturday. June 1<sup>st</sup>. Eden. Note: I arrived, feeling exactly like an experiment. Around me there is an incredible profusion of the most delightful objects. So many creatures and things, each is wondrous and beautiful. I see nothing that isn't to my liking here in Eden. There's plums and peaches and grapes, and the apples are especially inviting. It's all so perfect and ideal, and yet I have one tiny reservation. There's no one to talk to. Now, how did I get here? Where did I come from? What is my ultimate aim? I don't know, but I'm glad I'm here. I just wish there was someone to talk to. *(She sees Adam carrying in a fish)* Drop that pickerel, you monster!! Put it back, do you hear me? If you don't throw that pickerel back, I'm going to clod you right out of that tree. And don't you ever do that again, you bully! I'm warning you! Now, I must talk

to you. Please come down. There is something and I think it's immensely important. I want to talk to you about us. What's us? That's a name I thought of. It means you and me. I think we've both been put here for a great and noble experiment! I think I'm the main part of this experiment, but you have a share in it, too. You see, you're the only other animal that can talk! What? The parrot can talk, too? I didn't know that! Well, I call it a parrot because that's what it looks like. I just happen to have this talent. The minute I set eyes on an animal, I know what it is. I don't have to think. The right name comes out by inspiration. So far, you're the only exception. What is your name? Adam...Adam... Why do you hate me so much? I just can't understand it! I'm a very interesting person. And if you'd only talk to me nicely, I could be twice as interesting. (*Adam leaves*) Somehow we got off on the wrong foot. I seem to aggravate it. I think it's a reptile. But I do wonder what it's for. I never see it do anything. Nothing seems to interest it—except resting. It's a man!! If it is a man, then it isn't an *it*, is it? No. It should be: Nominative: He. Dative: Him. Possessive: His'n. Adam....that sound is pleasanter in my ears than any I have heard so far.

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## DIARY OF ANNE FRANK

### ANNE

Look, Peter, the sky. (*she looks up through the skylight*) What a lovely, lovely day! Aren't the clouds beautiful? You know what I do when it seems as if I couldn't stand being cooped up for one more minute? I think myself out. I think myself on a walk in the park where I used to go with Pim. Where the jonquils and the crocus and the violets grow down the slopes. You know the most wonderful part about thinking yourself out? You can have it any way you like. You can have roses and violets and chrysanthemums all blooming at the same time? It's funny. I used to take it all for granted. And now I've gone crazy about everything to do with nature. Haven't you? (*softly*) I wish you had a religion, Peter. Oh, I don't mean you have to be Orthodox, or believe in heaven and hell and purgatory and things. I just mean some religion. It doesn't matter what. Just to believe in something! When I think of all that's out there. The trees. And flowers. And seagulls. When I think of the dearness of you, Peter. And the goodness of people we know. Mr. Kraler, Miep, Dirk, the vegetable man, all risking their lives for us everyday. When I think of these good things, I'm not afraid any more. I find myself, and God, and I... We're not the only people that've had to suffer. There've always been people that've had to. Sometimes one race, sometimes another, and yet...I know it's terrible, trying to have any faith when people are doing such horrible things, but you know what I sometimes think? I think the world may be going through a phase, the way I was with Mother. It'll pass, maybe not for hundreds of years, but some day I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are really good at heart. Peter, if you'd only look at it as part of a great pattern? That we're just a little minute in the life? (*she breaks off*) Listen to us, going at each other like a couple of stupid grownups! Look at the sky now. Isn't it lovely?

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## THE DIVINERS

### by Jim Leonard

*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.

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**DOLL'S HOUSE**

by Henrik Ibsen

*Nora*

Sit down there, Torvald. I have a lot to talk about. Sit down. It\*s going to take a long time. I\*ve a lot to say to you. You don\*t understand me. *And* I\*ve never understood you - until this evening. No, don\*t interrupt me Just listen to what I have to say. You and I have got to face facts, Torvald. Doesn\*t anything strike you about the way we\*re sitting here? We\*ve been married for eight years. Does *it* occur to you this is the first time we, two,, you and I, man and wife, have ever had a serious talk together? In eight whole years - no, longer - ever since we first met — we have never exchanged a serious word on a serious subject. You have never understood me. A great wrong has been done to me~ Torvald. First by papa.. And then by you. You have never loved me. You just thought it was fun to be in love with me. It\*s the truth, Torvald. When I lived with papa, he used to tell me what he thought about everything, so that I never had any opinions but his. And if I did have any of my own, I kept than quiet, because he wouldn\*t have liked them. He called me his little doll, and he played with me just the way I played with my dolls. Then I came here to live in your house I mean, I passed from papa\*s hands into yours. You arranged everything the way you wanted it, so that I simply took over your taste in everything — or pretended I did it\*s as if I\*ve been living here like a pauper, from hand to mouth. I performed tricks for you, and you

gave me food and drink. But that was how you wanted it You and papa have done me a great wrong. It\*s your fault that I have done nothing with my life. Have I been happy here? No; never. I used to think I was. But I haven\*t ever been I\*ve just had fun. You\*ve always been very kind to me. But our home has never been anything but a playroom. I\*ve been your doll-wife, just as I used to be papa\*s doll-child. *And* the children have been my dolls. I used to think it was fun when you came in and played with me, just as they think it\*s fun when I go in and play games with them. That\*s all our marriage has been. Oh, Torvald, you are not the man to educate me into being the right wife for you. And now what about me? Am I to educate the children? Didn\*t you say yourself a few minutes ago that you dare to leave them in my charge? You were perfectly right. I am not fitted to educate them. There\*s something else I must do first. I must educate myself And you can\*t help me with that. It\*s something I must do by myself That\*s why I\*m leaving you. I must stand on my own feet if I am to find out the truth about myself and about life. So I can\*t go on living here with you any longer. I\*m leaving you now, at once. It\*s use your trying to forbid me anymore. I shall take with me nothing but what is mine. I don\*t want anything from you, now or ever. I must think things out for myself; and try to find my own answer. I don\*t know where lam in these matters. I only know that these things mean something quite different to me from what they do to you. No, I don\*t understand how society works, but I intend to learn. I\*ve never felt so sane and sure in my life. Oh, Torvald, it hurts me terribly to have to say it, because you\*ve always been so kind to me. But I can\*t help it. I don\*t love you any longer. That\*s why I can\*t go on living here any longer. It happened this evening, when the miracle failed to happen. It was then that I realized you weren\*t the man I\*d thought you to be. I\*ve waited so patiently, for eight whole years - well, good heavens, I\*m not such a fool as to suppose that miracles occur every day. Then this dreadful thing happened to me, and then I *knew* ‘Now the miracle will take place!’ When Krogatad\*s letter was lying out there, it never occurred to me for a moment that you would let that man trample over you. I knew that you would say to him: "Publish the facts to the world!" And when he had done this, then I was certain that you would step forward and take all the blame on yourself and say "I am the one who is guilty!" You\*re thinking I wouldn\*t have accepted such a sacrifice from you? No, of course I wouldn\*t! But what would my word have counted for against yours? That was the miracle I was hoping for, and dreading. And it was to prevent it happening that I wanted to end my life. But you neither think or talk like the man I could share my life with. Once you\*d got over your fright -and you weren\*t frightened of what might threaten me, but only of what threatened you - Now the danger was past, then as far as you were concerned it was exactly as though nothing had happened. I was your little songbird just as before - your doll whom henceforth you would take particular care to protect from the world because she was so weak and fragile. Torvald, in that moment I realized that for eight years I had been living here with a complete stranger, and had born him three children Oh, I can\*t bear to think of It! I could tear myself to pieces! I can\*t spend the night in a strange man\*s house. When a wife leaves her husband\*s house, as I\*m doing now, I\*m told that according to the law he is freed of any obligations towards her. In any case, I release you from any such obligations. You mustn\*t feel bound to me in any way however small, just as I shall not feel bound to you. We must both be quite free. Here is your ring back. Give me mine. Torvald, for me to come back, you and I would have to change so much that—life together between us would have to become a *marriage*. it would be the miracle of miracles. And I do not believe in miracle any longer. Goodbye, Torvald.

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## FORTINBRAS

by Lee Blessing

OPHELIA

Yeah, yeah, yeah—I'm Ophelia. Big deal. Who cares? No one did in life—right Pop? Oh, huzzah, hooray, ring the bells. Ophelia the ghost speaks. Of course I spoke. What am I supposed to do? Stand around like him? Ghosts do what they like—haven't you figured that out? We're supernatural. Super-natural. Got it? At least compared to you. Why am I here? I haven't come to you. I'm just here to collect this old idiot. I'll tell you what ghosts know. They know what they did wrong in life. It's all they can ever think about. That and a second chance—which never comes. Right, Dad? Dad talked too much in life. You see where that got him. Now he's afraid to open his mouth. It's really the only good thing I can say about being dead. Hey, Dad—I think I'm still in love with Hamlet. What should I do? (*She laughs*) Do you really want to know what he's been yearning to say when he comes to see you? The truth—that's all. About anything. When he was alive he couldn't tell the truth even when he tried. Now he won't say anything until he can be absolutely sure it's true. Which, of course, is never. Isn't that right, Dad? I was the fool in life. Now it's him. Do you remember when we last met? Yeah, I was young and fair....you saying I'm not now? Yes, death is a pretty harrowing experience....It's been hell on my looks, I'll admit it. You still look great. Didn't know you could feel me,, eh? It usually comes as a shock. I can turn it on and off. Comes in handy. Say, why don't you get rid of the girls. We can, um....talk.....unless you're getting other ideas....Are you coming or not? ...It's not only possible, it's terrific. Did you know women don't reach their sexual peak until after they're dead? You're afraid you won't satisfy me, aren't you? Don't worry. You'll still be the only one who ever tried.

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## **EFFECT OF GAMMA RAYS ON MAN IN THE MOON MARIGOLDS**

by Paul Zindel

### **BEATRICE**

How did I get the vegetable wagon out without him seeing me? That was easy. Every time he got home for the day he'd make us both some sandwiches--my mama had been dead for years--and then he'd take a nap on the old sofa that used to be...there! And while he was sleeping I hitched up the horses and went riding around the block waving to everyone. I had more nerve than a bear when I was a kid. Let me tell you it takes nerve to sit up on that wagon everyday yelling "Apples! Pears! Cucum...bers!" Then my father came running down the block after me and started spanking me right on top of the wagon--not hard--but it was so embarrassing. And you better believe I never did it again. You would have loved him, and gone out with him on the wagon...all over Stapleton yelling as loud as you wanted, "Apples! Pears! Cucum...bers!" My father made up for all the other men in this whole world, Ruth. If only you two could have met. He'd only be about sixty-five now, do you realize that? And I'll bet he'd still be selling vegetables around town. All that fun and then I don't ever think I really knew what hit me. Well, it was just me and Papa...and your father hanging around. And then Papa got sick...and I drove with him up to the sanatorium. And then I came home and there were the horses...And I had the horses...taken care of. And then Papa got terribly sick and he begged me to marry so that he'd be sure I'd be taken care of. (she laughs) If he knew how I was taken care of he'd turn over in his grave. AND NIGHTMARES! DO YOU WANT TO KNOW THE NIGHTMARE I USED TO HAVE? I never had nightmares over the fights with your father or the divorce. I never had nightmares over any of that. Let me tell you about my nightmare that used to come back and back: Well, I'm on Papa's wagon, but it's newer and shinier and it's being pulled by beautiful white horses, not dirty work horses--these are like--circus horses with long manes and tinsel--and the wagon is blue, shiny blue. And it's full, filled with yellow apples, grapes, and green squash. You're going to laugh when you hear this. I'm wearing a lovely gown all covered with jewels...and my hair is piled up on top of my head with a long feather in it...and bells are ringing, hug bells swinging on a gold

braid strung across the back of the wagon, and they're going DONG DONG, DONG DONG, DONG DONG. And I'm yelling APPLES! PEARS! CUCUM...BERS! And then I turn down our street and all the noise stops. This long street with all the doors shut tight and everything crowded next to each other and there's not a soul around. And then I start getting afraid that the vegetables are going to spoil...and that nobody's going to buy anything, and I feel as though I shouldn't be on the wagon, and I keep trying to call out. There's not a sound. Not a single sound...Then I turn my head and I look at this house across the street...I see an upstairs window...the curtains slowly part...And I see the face of my father.

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## **FATHER'S DAY**

By Oliver Hailey  
*ESTELLE.*

I admire Marian very much. At the orphanage, the biggest battle they had with us was self-pity. They were always having people come and talk to us about it. I usually didn't listen. I'd put my fingers in my ears. Who needed it - right? I only remember one old guy - I think he was a Lutheran - but I remember him because he didn't try to kid us. Everybody else was always telling us it didn't matter whether we had a mother or a father-it wasn't that important. He said hell yes it mattered. Face it, we'd gotten a lousy break - but that was the way it was. A husband, a wife, a set of kids -life doesn't always work out that neatly. Sometimes all you get is an aunt in Dubuque who might come and get you next year. Bits and pieces. So what you have to do is take those bits and pieces and ~ only then I put my fingers in my ears again. Because I knew what *I* was going to do. I was go- ing to get out of that place and get married and raise a family and : no bits and pieces life for me. Only this evening I lost my ., husband - really lost him ~ and the twins are going to love her - and love meeting all the DuPonts - who wouldn't? - and so I'm back to bits and pieces again. Only Marian's shown me what you do with them. You take them and you put them together as best you can. Of course there'll always be people to tell you you can't. You can't make a life that way. Lives aren't made that way. Well, you're wrong, Louise. Lives are made every way. The thing to do is to keep them going. And not to hate. Marian doesn't hate. I'm not going to, either. I wish you wouldn't.

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## **GREATER TUNA**

by Jaston Williams, Joe Sears, Ed Howard  
*VERA.*

*(to an audience member)* Oh-Hiii. Vera Carp. Welcome to Coweta Baptist Church, where everybody's welcome. Even Catholics. *(to another)* Hi. How are you? Isn't that just the prettiest dress. I used to have one just like that-years ago. . . Isn't it wonderful how some people can just wear anything! *(to another)* Why, I thought you were dead! I don't remember who told me that, but I'm so glad they were wrong. *(to another)* How are you? *(to another)* How're

you? (*VERA begins meeting.*) I, Vera Carp, Vice-President of the Smut Snatchers of the New Order, in the absence of our president, the Reverend Spikes; do hereby declare this meeting to be officially open. (*She bangs gavel.*) Now, we need to send out a communique from our education committee. Now after all the vicious things they've said about us in the newspapers, we've decided to become more flexible on bi-lingual education, and we do indeed have a bi-lingual education program to submit to the Tuna schools. The difference is, our program is one of moderation. It entails learning the following Spanish phrases.

(*The following are pronounced with a distinct East Texas accent:*)

"Habla.. usted ingles?", which means, "Do you speak I English?"; "Cuanto?", which means, "How much?"; I "Donde puedo cambiar este cheque?", which is "Where can I cash this traveller's check?"; "Por favor, envieme un botones para recoger mi equipaje", which is "Please send me a boy for my luggage"; and the last one is "No he pedido esto", which is "I didn't order this!" Now that's all the Spanish any red-blooded American oughta feel obligated to learn. Now let's just see the newspapers make fun of that! . . . Well, he's still not here, *so* I'm gonna forge ahead. We need to send out a snatch squad . . . Well, we *do*. We need *to* send out a book-s snatchin' squad to the Tuna High School Library to check those dictionaries. Now, we have a new list of words that have been declared possibly offensive or misunderstandable to pre-college students. Now the words are: hot, hooker, coke, clap, deflower, ball, knocker and nuts. Now after much prayer and soul searching with the Lord, the Committee has decided not to include the word snatch on this year's list. We know some of you have very strong feelings about snatch, but we just can't afford to change our letterhead at this time.

(*SPIKES enters.*) Well, here he is. I hereby turn this meetin' over to our honorable president, the Reverend Spikes. (*She bangs gavel again.*)

## HOUSE OF BLUE LEAVES

By John Guare  
BUNNY

Oh, I love you! You said you'll come with me to see the Pope! That's tantamount to a promise. Tantamount. Tantamount. You hear that? I didn't work in a law office for nix. I could sue you for breach of promise. (*Near tears*) I know what you're going to say--- I won't cook for you---You bend my arm and twist my heart, but I got to be strong. Now rinse your mouth out to freshen up and come on, let's go. It's really cold out so dress warm---look, I stuffed the *New York Post* in my booties---plastic just ain't as warm as it used to be. I won't cook for you! I cooked veal parmigeena for me last night. It was so good I almost died. But I won't cook for you till after we're married. I'm no that kind of girl. I'll sleep with you anytime you want. Anywhere. In two months I've know you, did I refuse you once? Not once! You want me to climb in the bag with you right now? Unzip it---go on---unzip it---Give your fingers a smack and I'm flat on my back. I'll sew those words into a sampler for you in our new home in California. We'll hang it right by the front door. Because, Artie, I'm a rotten lay and I know it and you know it and everybody knows it---I'm not good in bed. It's no insult. I took that sex test in the *Reader's Digest* two weeks ago and I scored twelve. Twelve, Artie!! I ran out of that dentist office with tears gushing out of my face. But I face up to the truth about myself. So if I cooked for you now and said I won't sleep with you till we're married, you'd look forward to sleeping with me so

much that by the time we did get to that motel near Hollywood, I'd be such a disappointment, you'd never forgive me. My cooking is the only thing I got to lure you on with and hold you with. Artie, we got to keep some magic for the honeymoon. It's my first honeymoon and I want it to be so good, I'm aiming for two million calories. I want to cook for you so bad I walk by the A&P , I get all hot jabs of chili powder inside my thighs...but I can't till we get those tickets to California safe in my purse, till Billy knows we're coming, till I got that ring right on my cooking finger...Don't tempt me....I love you...

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## I NEVER SANG FOR MY FATHER

By Robert Anderson

Alice

You're staying because you can't stand Dad's wrath. You've never been able to stand up to his anger. He's cowed you. He'll call you ungrateful . . . and you'll believe him. He'll lash out at you with his sarcasm, and that will kill this lovely, necessary image you have of yourself as the good son. Can't you see that? The difference between us is that I accept the inevitable sadness of this world without an acute sense of personal guilt. You don't. I don't think anyone expects either of us to ruin our lives for an unreasonable old man. I think this is all rationalization to make tolerable a compulsion you have to stay here. You hate the compulsion, so you've dressed it up to look nice. What do you think you'll find? You hope to find love. Couldn't you tell from what he just said what you're going to find? Don't you understand he's got to hate you? He may not think it in his head or feel it in his heart, but you are his enemy! From the moment you were born a boy, you were a threat to this man and his enemy. He wants your balls . . . and he's had them! I'm sorry. I want to shock you. When has he ever regarded you as a man, an equal, a male? When you were a Marine. And that you did for him. Because even back there you were looking for his love. You didn't want to be a Marine. "Now, Poppa, will you love me?" And he did. No, not love. But he was proud and grateful because you gave him an extension of himself he could boast about, with his phoney set of values. . . . When was he ever proud about the thing *you* do? The things you value? When did he ever mention your teaching or your books, except in scorn? You're looking for something that isn't there, Gene. You're looking for a Mother's love in a Father. . . . Mothers are soft and yielding. Fathers are hard and rough, and to teach us the way of the world, which is rough, which is mean, which is selfish and prejudiced. I've always been grateful to him for what he did. He taught me a marvelous lesson, and has made me able to face a lot and there has been a lot to face, and I'm grateful as hell to him. Because if I couldn't get the understanding and compassion from a Father, who could I expect **it** from, in the world? Who in the world, if not from a Father? So I learned, and didn't expect **it**, and I've found very little, and so I'm grateful to him. I'm grateful as Hell to him. Good night, Gene.. .Suddenly I miss Mother so . . .

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## I OUGHT TO BE IN PICTURES

by Neil Simon

*Libby*

I was wondering if I could discuss something with you. It's about sex. Don\*t get nervous. If you get nervous, I'll get nervous. I'm in trouble...I mean...I don\*t know how to do anything sexual. Most of the people left the party. And Gordon and I were sitting at the bottom of the hill in a car. And he wanted to fool around. He\*s not gorgeous but he\*s kinda cute. And I felt very grateful to him, and I didn\*t want to hurt his feelings. And I wanted to fool around too. Only I didn\*t know what was right. I didn\*t want to be one of those girls they call ‘‘easy,\*\* but I didn\*t want to be impossible either. So I just kissed him and got out of the car and decided not to deal with it. But this Saturday night I think I\*m going to have to deal with it. I never talked about these things with my mother because she doesn\*t trust men too much. You can guess why. And Grandma.. well, sex isn\*t her best subject. I brought it up a couple of times but she pretended she was dead. I know how sex works. I don\*t have any mechanical problems. I've seen five X-rated movies. I could pass a test on it. I just don\*t know what to expect—emotionally. And I need to discuss it and you're my father. And what you think means a lot to me. If it\*s a major trauma for you, I understand. I mean, I could always take a couple of glasses of wine and just plunge in. I've got to have my first time sometime. If it\*s not Gordon, I could always use the information. Should I ask you some questions? Well . . . Emotionally, is it different for the man than it is for the girl? It *is*? How old were you the first time? FIFTEEN? Who was the girl? Okay, nevermind. So, what was it like with Mom? ... That\*s a very personal question, isn\*t it? Did you do it with her before or after you were married? She said after. I knew she lied. She just couldn\*t talk to me about those things. That\*s why I\*m talking to you. I wanted to know how she felt. If she was scared or excited. Was it fun? Was it painful? I didn\*t think it was an unreasonable question. I mean, if she could teach me how to walk, why couldn\*t she teach me how to love? So what was she like? Making love. Because she was so angry when you left. So bitter. I don\*t think she ever slept with another man after you were gone. It\*s like when you left, you took her with you. That\*s why I was so angry with you. It was bad enough you were gone, but you could have left my mother there for me. She used to hug me so hard sometimes. Like she was trying to squeeze all the love out of me that she wasn\*t getting anywhere else. So instead of growing up to be me, I grew up to be a substitute—I know Grandma\*s dead. I know she probably can\*t hear me. But I speak to her everyday anyway because I\*m not so sure anyone else is listening. If I have to go for an interview, my heart pounds so much you can see it coming through my blouse. . If you want the God\*s honest truth, I don\*t even want to be an actress. I don\*t know the first thing about acting. I don\*t know *what* I want to be. . . (*Beginning to break down.*) I just wanted to come out here and see you. I just wanted to know what you were like. I wanted to know why I was so frightened every time a boy wanted to reach out and touch me . . . I just wanted somebody in the family to hold me because it was *me*, Libby, and not somebody who wasn\*t there. (*Crying*) I love Mom so much. I didn\*t mean to say anything against her. It\*s just that she won\*t let me inside. When she holds me, all I can feel is her arms . . . but I never feel what\*s inside. (*Crying openly now; turns away.*) Boy oh boy . . . Really opened up the old waterworks. I never expected to do that. I hope you have flood insurance.

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## IDEAL HUSBAND

by Oscar Wilde  
*MABEL*

Well, Tommy has proposed to me again. Tommy really does nothing but propose to me. he proposed to me last night in the Music-room, when I was quite unprotected, as there was an elaborate trio going on. I didn't dare to make the smallest repartee, I need hardly tell you. If I had, it would have stopped the music at once. Musical people are so absurdly unreasonable. They always want one to be perfectly dumb at the very moment when one is longing to be absolutely deaf. Then he proposed to me in broad daylight this morning, in front of that dreadful statue of Achilles. Really, the things that go on in front of that work of art are quite appalling. The police should interfere. At luncheon I saw by the glare in his eyes that he was going to propose again, and I just managed to check him in time by assuring him that I was a bimetalist. Fortunately I don't know what bimetalism means. And I don't believe anybody else does either. But the observation crushed Tommy for ten minutes. He looked quite shocked. And then Tommy is so annoying in the way he proposes. If he proposed at the top of his voice, I should not mind so much. That might produce some effect on the public. But he does it in a horrid confidential way. When Tommy wants to be romantic he talks to one just like a doctor. I am very fond of Tommy, but his methods of proposing are quite out of date. I wish, Gertrude, you would speak to him, and tell him that once a week is quite often enough to propose to any one, and that it should always be done in a matter that attracts some attention.

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**I'M A STRANGER HERE MYSELF**

by Ev Miller  
 Lori

This rehearsal was awful. (*She sighs.*) But, bad or not, we open tomorrow night. It just wasn't your night, Casey. It doesn't hurt to have a bad dress rehearsal. I know you can do it, Casey. (*trying to avoid a fight*). Look, every play has nights like this. Sometimes it's even better if things don't come together perfectly until opening night. We had a bad rehearsal. Now let's just look forward to opening night. Get a good night's rest. You're going over Mark's now? Oh? Well, suit yourself. No, I don't hate him. I know he's your friend. I'm your friend, too, Casey. Mark says a guy can't be friends with a female? Mark says a lot of things that are off-base, don't you think? Do I hate him? To be honest, I hate him for what he's doing to you, Casey. Mark Lee is a bitter, angry person who thinks everybody in this world is out to get him! I don't know that much about him. I do know this. If he's going to spend all his life in some hellish kind of hate, he's got no right to take you with him. and you've got no right to go with him. Yeah, you can do anything you want to do.. Do whatever you want. Spend the rest of your life feeling sorry for yourself the way he does! Follow Mark Lee to hell if that's what you want to do! Yes, you think I'm nice and safe in my little life. That I don't know what it's really like! Casey, I haven't lived in a glass cage. I know as much about being hurt as you do. But to live is to hurt. . . I know that much. Can't you see that? (*A pause.*) I hurt now, Casey. Because. . . because I care for you. I'm not sure yet exactly how, Casey . . . as a friend . . . other ways, too. You love me, too? You're sure? Casey, how can you love me? How can you love anybody until you start liking yourself a little more? You can't love anybody until that happens. Casey, you've ignored me every night since we had that argument on the way home. You have made a point of it in front of the others for the past week. I don't like to be treated that way. Look, just go home, Casey, or go over to Mark's. I want to be alone tonight for a while. Everything is so mixed up in my head. . . especially my feelings about you. I have to have some time. Right now, I don't think you know what you want at all. Someday you probably will, but not now.

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## INDEPENDENCE

by Lee Blessing  
JO

Kess? Kess!? Can you come down? Where's Mom? I'm okay. So, Mom's not here. I've been on an errand. I had to go over to Waterloo. Kess, do you remember when you asked me to come up and stay with you? Did you mean that? I want to come up. I want to come up right now. I want to stay for the summer at least, maybe longer. You said I could come up. You said that roommate of yours, Susan, you said Susan thinks it's okay. I have to get away from Mom. (a beat) I just did a...very odd thing. I went over to Heidi's house. I thought I was only going over to talk with her. Just to....look her in the eye once, and ask her if she really slept with Don while he and I were...you know, like Sherry said...But as I turned the corner I saw her pull out and driver away. So I followed her. I watched. I watched the way she drove. I watched the way she shopped., She hit all the bridal shops, plus a few others. She's a good shopper. No, she didn't see me. I hid. I stayed two cars behind her, like on tv, and I hid behind pillars in the stores. I never lost her. I stared at her and stared at her for four hours, and she never saw me and I never lost her. I didn't want to talk with her anymore. I just wanted to watch her. On the way home, I thought "My God, why am I doing this!?" But i just kept following. I thought "Mom should be driving this car. I should be Mom doing this." then I thought "I am." Kess, I love Mom. But I thought of how I'll be in ten years if I stay with Mom. Kess, I can't be Mom. How can I help her if I'm just like her? I want to leave tomorrow. And I want to stay with you. Is that all right? Kess... I don't care how Mom is, I don't care how lonely she is. She'll never be all right. I can't stay here. I'm coming up north, and I'm living with you. You offered it. And I need it. You owe me! I don't care how guilty you feel about Mom, Kess. I don't. We can't save Mom. Save me.

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## INVISIBLE FRIENDS

By Alan Ayckbourn  
LUCY

Come with me if you will. Upstairs. If you listen very carefully you can just hear the distant sound of the greater spotted Grisly Gary, my unbelievably talkative brother. Here we go, I'll just have a quite word with him, you might want to cover your ears. (*Talking loudly, and quickly*) Hallo, Grisly. It's your loving sister, Lucy. Just wanted to tell you that I have been picked for the school swimming team. Thought you'd like to know. Bye, Grisly. I enjoyed that chat. He didn't hear a thing. This is my room. No one is allowed in here except for me. I'm a very tidy sort of person. Which is a bit extraordinary in this house. I think I must be a freak. I actually like to know where I have put my things. This is my bed. And this is my desk. And up there on the shelf are my special, most favorite books. Actually one of the reasons that I keep it tidy is because my very, very special friend, Zara, also likes things tidy. Oh yah, I ought to explain to you about Zara shouldn't I? You may have heard my mum talking about my invisible friend? Do you remember? Well, that's my invisible friend, Zara. This is Zara. I want you to say hallo to her. Zara, say hallo to my friends. And won't you say hallo to Zara, she did say hallo to you. I invented Zara, oh years ago, when I was seven or eight. Just for fun. I think I was ill at the time and wasn't allowed to play with any of my real friends, so I made up Zara. She's my special friend that no one else can see, except me. Of course, I can't really see her either. Not really. Although sometimes I? It's almost as if I could see her, sometimes. If I concentrate vary hard it's like I can just glimpse her out

of the corner of my eye. Still. Anyway. I've kept Zara for years and years, its been almost 10 years now actually. Until they all started saying I was much too old for that sort of thing and got worried and started talking about sending for a doctor. So then I didn't take her round with me quite so much after that. But she's still here. And when I feel really sad and depressed, I sit and talk to Zara. Zara always understands. Zara always listens. She's special. Aren't you, Zara? What? Yes, I wish he'd turn his music down, too. I've asked him, haven't I? (mimicking) but he just says, 'how can I hear the music then if I turn it down. I can't hear the bass then!' I used to have pictures up on the walls of this room, but every time he put a CD on, they would all fall down off the walls. I wish he would listen to quiet music, just once, like some Bach or Mozart. Of course, if he did that he wouldn't be Grisly Gary now would he be? Oh Zara, I almost forgot to tell you. I got picked for the school swimming team today. I know, I'm really excited too. I did the breast stroke and freestyle just like you told me to do and I got in. No.. no they didn't come..i mean its not like I? no? why should they have? (*yelling*) If anyone cares at all, I was picked for the school swimming team today. How about that folks? Mom? Dad? Anybody that cares? Great, thanks everyone. God dammit, they could have?. They could? But no, no of course not, they don't? of course not, what was I expecting, some one to actually? Yah, yah Zara. I know you're always here. Its just that sometimes? I get so lonely.

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## **JAKE'S WOMEN**

by Neil Simon

*MAGGIE*

Well, unfortunately, it wasn't mine, either. For as long as I can remember, I was molded and shaped in the form of somebody *else's* concept of a woman, never mine. The church taught it to me, parochial schools taught it to me, my mother, my father,—God, you couldn't get out of the Midwest without its stamp of approval. I was taught to be a good girl, a wife and a mother but never a person. You could be a carbon copy but don't mess with being an original. That's what you married eight years ago, Jake. A good girl. As good and as obedient as my mother, never suspecting, of course, that it was three martinis a day that kept her obedient...and then one day I woke up and said to myself, "I don't want to be anyone's concept of me except me...not even Jake's"...You are so important to me, but you're also so consumed with creating your own images and characters, planning every detail in their life, molding them and shaping them into *your* creations, *your* concepts. And I said, "Jesus, I just left all this in Michigan, what do I want it in New York for?"...and the minute I tried to step out on my own, to try to be someone I created, that I controlled, you made me pay so dearly for it. You made me feel like a plagiarist...and so one day in Chicago, I let myself become a very bad little. Girl. The next morning I looked in the mirror and sure didn't like what I saw. But I saw the possibility of becoming someone who would have to be accepted on *her* terms and certainly not someone who was considered a rewrite of someone else. And until you begin to see *me*, Jake, *my* Maggie, I am getting out of this house, out of this life and out of your word processor...I may be making the biggest mistake of my life but at least it'll be mine...Dear Lord, Creator of the Universe, forgive. And if not, not.

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## **JAKES WOMEN 2**

by Neil Simon

*Karen*

Why is it whenever I try to help you, you push me away? You're that way with *all* women. You're so — so — standoffish. What you love is to *love* women. You love to have women in love with you. You even love to love women who love you because you're standoffish. But intimacy, *aha*, *that* you're afraid of. I said, "Aha, *that* you're afraid of." I think you're afraid to lose control in a relationship with a woman. To let a woman in so close, so deep inside of you, that she'll gobble you up and you'll lose whatever you think you are. You always have to be the Master, Jake. The Master, the Conductor, the Director and the Attorney General. You don't think it's strange that you sit around here thinking about women and making up what they say to you? And then you think up that *we* make up that we come over here on our own? Come on! How much more control do you want? ... They love you, they leave you, they come back to you, they worry about you, they die, they live, they grow up, they fall down, they fight for you, they cry for you — it's a three ring circus in here and all the horses and lions and elephants are women ... You're the star of the show, Jake. You're the one they shoot out of a cannon and you fly around the tent with an American flag in your mouth and all the women go crazy and faint and they take them away to hospitals ... The trouble is — it's very hard to get close to a man who's flying around in a tent with a flag in his mouth. That's what I call trouble with intimacy.

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## KENNEDY'S CHILDREN

by Robert Patrick

CARLA

*Carla is disillusioned model who dreamed of becoming the next Marilyn Monroe. She has just taken seventy-four sleeping pills and come to the bar "to wash them down"*

I wanted to be a sex goddess. And you can laugh all you want to. The joke is on me, whether you laugh or not. I wanted to be one- one of them. They used to laugh at Marilyn when she said she didn't want to be a sex-goddess, she wanted to be a human being. And how they laugh at me when I say, "I don't want to be a human being; I want to be a sex-goddess." That shows you right there that something has changed, doesn't it? Rita, Ava, Lana, Marlene, Marilyn- I wanted to be one of them. I remember the morning my friend came in and told us all that Marilyn had died. And all the boys were stunned, rigid, literally, as they realized what had left us. I mean, if the world couldn't support Marilyn Monroe, then wasn't something desperately wrong? And we spent the rest of the goddamned sixties finding out what it was. We were all living together, me and these three gay boys that adopted me when I ran away, in this loft on East Fifth Street, before it became dropout heaven- before anyone even said "dropout"- way back when "commune" was still a verb. We were all- old movie buffs, sex-mad- you know, the early sixties. And then my friend, this sweet little queen, he came in and he passed out tranquilizers to everyone, and told us all to sit down, and we thought he was just going to tell us there was a Mae West double feature on somewhere- and he said- he said- he said- "Marilyn Monroe died last night"- and all the boys were stunned- but I- I felt something sudden and cold in my solar plexus, and I knew then what I wanted to do with my life. I wanted to be the next one. I wanted to be the next one to stand radiant and perfected before the race of man, to shed the luminosity of my beloved countenance over the struggles and aspirations of my pitiful subjects. I wanted to give meaning to my own time, to be the unattainable luring love that drives men on, the angel of light, the golden flower, the best of the universe made womankind, the living sacrifice, the end! Damn!

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## THE KILLDEER

by Jay Broad  
*SPARKY*

I got up, went to the bathroom, made breakfast, argued with you, threw my cup across the kitchen when you slammed the door as you went out, answered the telephone, Susan's car is broken, so I came back, washed the dishes, then Mumsey called about coming to visit--like you said they would--then Frieda came over, we drank coffee, talked out her divorce, talked about her lawyer, talked about her alimony, then the bank called and I had to run down there to transfer out of our savings, that's wrong...to transfer what was left of our savings to cover your overdraft, then I came back and the phone rang again, it was Safeway telling me our grocery check had bounced, I told them to send it back through and the man said he would if I would bring him over two dollars to cover the redeposit cost, so I drove over to Safeway, I was very embarrassed but I did it anyway because I knew you wouldn't eve if you said you would and I'd just have to answer the phone again tomorrow or start shopping somewhere else, the I heard screaming out on the street and I ran out, the Carlson's dog had been run over and nobody knew what to do, so I wrapped him in a towel and put him in the back of our car and drove over to the Vet's, he was dead when I got there and there was blood all over the back seat and there was nobody to help me get him out of the car except a smart little bastard who wanted to know why I brought a dead dog to the Vet's, then I came back here and cleaned the back seat, it's still wet, and the man came to give an estimate on the roof, it'll cost nine hundred and ninety dollars, not including any new spouts or gutters he may have to replace, I told him you'd call him tonight or tomorrow, and Georgia called, she was behind getting ready for the party and wanted to know if I'd do some shopping for her, I said OK and back I went to Safeway, the groceries for Georgia came to fourteen something and all I had was ten, I asked if they'd take a check and we went through that whole thing again, but I promised and they did and I took the groceries to Georgia, Susan was there and her car was still broken so I did the afternoon kiddie run for her, I came back here, Huck and Spike were home, Spike had gotten mad at Huck and locked him out, so Huck went over to Lynch's and got on the telephone and called Spike and called him he a dirty name so Spike came out and hit Huck in the nose, and buy this time I was back, but Spike had let the door close behind him and locked us all out and my keys were inside there on the counter so we had to bread the lock on the garage window and Huck crawled in, and by that time I'd had my fill of one day on this green earth so I told them to make their own supper and I went in the garage, closed the garage door, and sat in the car listening to the radio and drinking my martini...and it's the best twenty minutes I've had this year. Then I heard you come home, so I came in here and you were standing there shouting about the TV...and you're lucky I didn't knock your teeth out...

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## LAST OF THE RED HOT LOVERS

By Neil Simon  
*ELAINE*

You hypocrite! You soul-searching, finger-smelling, hypocritical son of a bitch! Who are you to tell anybody how to go through life? What would you have done *if* I came in here all fluttery and blushing and "Ooh, Mr. Cashman, don\*t put your hand there, I\*m a married woman"? Were you going to tell me how much you respect me, admire me and, at the moment of truth, even love me?\*You know damn well tomorrow you\*d be back behind that counter opening clams

and praying to Christ I\*d never come back in your restaurant) And you know something? That\*s the way it should be. Forgive me for the terrible, sinful thing I\*m about to say but I happen to like the pure physical act of making love. It warms me, it stimulates me and it makes me feel like a woman— but that\*s another ugly story:\* That\*s what I came up here for and that\*s what you were expecting. But don\*t give me, ‘When I was nine years old my mother ran off with the butcher and I\*ve been looking for someone to love me ever since., I don\*t know your problems and I don\*t care. keep your savory swordfish succotash stories to yourself. No one really cares about anything or anyone in this world except himself, and there\*s only one way to get through with your sanity if you can\*t taste it, touch it or smell it, forget it! .If you want a copy of that speech, send fifty cents and self-addressed envelope— It\*s getting late ... and I have to feed the lion at six. Don\*t waste your time. We\*re incompatible. Together, Barney, we blew one of the very few free afternoons we have allotted to us in this life. But I\*m not putting the blame on you. It serves me right. If I had a craving for corned beef and cabbage I\*d be in some big Irishman\*s apartment right now having the time of my life... *C\*es: Ia vie! (At the door)* Good luck, Barney, in your quest for the Impossible Dream. *(Opens the door)* Oh, please God, let there be a cigarette machine in the lobby.

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## LAUNDRY AND BOURBON

By James McClure

*Hattie*

Say mind if I use your phone? Figure I better check on the kids. No telling what devilment they've gotten up to. *(Dialing.)* Everything gonna turn out fine you'll see. *(On the phone.)* Hello? Cheryl? Cheryl dear, this is Mommy. . . Mommy. . . *your mother.* *(Aside.)* Child needs a hearing aid. What's that dear? Vernon Jr. threw a rock at you? Well, throw one back at him, honey. Show him who's boss. Cheryl, sweetheart, put Grandma on the phone. . . Cheryl this week! *(Pause.)* Sounds -like they're running her ragged. Hello? Little Roger. Is that you. I don't want to talk to you right now punkin, I want to talk to Grandma. . . 'cause I want to talk to Grandma . . . yes Grandma does have baggy elbows. Now lemme talk to her. . . what's that? Honey of course Mommy loves you. . . I love you all the same. . . Do I love you more than who? Fred Flintstone. Yes. More than Paul Newman no, but Fred Flintstone yes. . . It's a grown-up joke honey. Now put Grandma on . . . She's what? Tied up! You untie her you hear me? You want a switchin'? . . . Then you untie her, right now. . . Marion? That you. . . Oh, you were playin' . . . Oh good I thought they had you tied up for real. . . How they doing. . . yes . . . yes. . . yes I agree there is too much violence on TV. . . yes I'll pick them up at five. . . No I won't be late. . . You have my solemn word. . . Goodbye. What's that? Little Roger? . . . Yes it's nice to hear your voice again too . . . You're playing what? Sniper? Vernon Jr. has climbed a tree in the backyard and he has a brick? Well, little Roger, listen and listen carefully, under no circumstances go under that tree. . . He's gonna drop the brick on your head, sweetheart. . . So don't go under the tree. That's just what he wants. . . OK . . . OK . . . "Yabba dabb doo" to you too. *(She hangs up.)* He'll walk right under that tree. The child has no more sense than God gave a screwdriver.

**LEMON SKY**  
by Lanford Wilson  
*Carol*

I know, it's late, I wasn't watching the time. Where's Doug? Is Doug here? He went on to work? *(To herself)* Went to work~ Well, of course, he went to work, Carol, what'd you think, he stayed here with his son? *(To Ronnie)* Damn, Ronnie, don't start. I know it's two o'clock. We've been sitting out in front for over an hour, didn't you hear us drive up, I thought I saw you at the window. Well, I don't care, either. He was so sweet. We talked— Sonny's dad has a ranch in Texas—over twenty thousand acres, which he says is small— That's probably larger than Rhode Island. And they raise Herefords and houses and oil and have about half the money in the country and investments everywhere. His mom and dad are paralyzed over what's going on in Cuba, apparently they own it. Oh, Ronnie, would you stop it! Just stop it, already! No he doesn't lay me, no, never, not once, look at my hands for God's sake! You think I can stand it? *(Exposing her hands, which are bloody on the palms.)*—Well, it isn't stigmata, you can count on that. Sonny is Catholic with a vengeance and I've never thought I could be in love with anyone. There it is! *(Rather to the audience.)* Carol's problem, never thought she could cut it and I am—very much in love with a Rich Texan Catholic and he has land, lots of land and principles that I never even knew were principles. And I used to take "downs," but pills are wrong, of course, so I promised him I wouldn't take them any more. No, we no longer live in a yellow submarine, we live on a Red Perch. And he makes out so damn beautifully and I can't ask *him* and I can't be "bad," his word, not mine, and I can't calm down with the pills and I claw my *hands*, the palms of my hands apart. *(Totally breaking off—disgusted with herself.)* Well, crap, Carol, there\*s no sense in causing a war about it, I cut my nails down yesterday, I'll cut them off tonight. But that won\*t help, because I'll bite my lip or something else if I can\*t get a hold of something to take to calm my damned, frazzled—Ronnie, don\*t make excuses for me for God\*s sake, I know that if you see one pill, or tranquilizers, you'll report it. I know you worry about your kids taking something of mine by accident. You don\*t have to tell me that. Do you think Sonny would stand for it? He\*s a lot better police dog than— a LOT better police dog than you, believe me— I know! I heard about the two different cases in the last year of kids being poisoned by taking barbiturates left around the house. *(Screaming.)* You don\*t have to tell anybody any goddamned thing! Because I PROMISED him, you know what that MEANS? *(Regains her control, holding her hands.)* That I didn\*t need them. Yes, my hands hurt. Yes, they hurt like fire.

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**LETTICE AND LOVAGE**  
by Peter Schaffer  
LETTICE

Language was Mother's passion. As I grew up I was never permitted to read anything but the grandest prose. "Language alone frees one," she used to say. "And History gives one place." Every night she enacted for me a story from our country's past, fleshing it out with her own marvelous virtuosity!...Richard's battlefield of Bosworth! King Charles the First marching to his beheading like a ramrod on a freezing January morning, wearing two shirts of snowy white linen, lest if he trembled from cold his enemies would say it was from

fear!...(rapt) Wonderful!...On a child's mind the most tremendous events were engraved as with a diamond on a window pane!...And to me, my tourist---simply random holiday makers in my care for twenty minutes of their lives--are my children in this respect. It is my duty to enlarge them. Enlarge--enliven--enlighten them. When I first began leading tours at Fustian House I spoke nothing but fact! Exactly what was set down for me--in all its glittering excitement. By the time I'd finished, my whole group would have turned gray with indifference. I myself turned gray every afternoon!...Fustian is a Haunted House, Miss Schoen. Haunted by the Spirit of Nullity! Of Nothing Ever Happening!...It had to be fought. My tongue simply could not go on speaking that stuff!...No doubt I was excessive. I was carried--I can't deny it--further and further from the shore of fact down the slipstream of fiction. But blame the house---not the spirit which defied it! So. I am fired. I am condemned. Please, do not compose a letter of reference. I would not ask you to lie on my behalf. That is not your forte', Miss Schoen--think things up. At the moment you exude a certain gray integrity. Please do not try to contaminate it with color. (rising to leave, stopping majestically) I leave you with a true story concerning color. Check it in the books if you like, for accuracy. Are you aware how the Queen of Scots behaved at the moment of her execution? It was the custom for victims on the scaffold to shed their outer garments to avoid soiling them with blood. Queen Mary appeared in a dress of deepest black. But when her ladies removed this from her--what do you imagine was revealed? A full-length shift was seen. A garment the color of the whoring of which she had been accused! The color of martyrdom--and defiance! Blood red! (She steps out of her cloak to reveal a brilliant red ankle-length nightdress) Yes--all gasped with the shock of it! All watched with unwilling admiration--that good old word again--all watched with wonder as that frail captive, crippled from her long confinement, stepped out of the darkness of her nineteen years' humiliation and walked into eternity--a totally self-justified woman! That is a strict and absolute fact. A long good-bye to you!

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## THE LITTLE FOXES

by Lillian Hellman

*BIRDIE*

That was the first day I ever saw Oscar. The Ballongs were selling their horses and he was going there to buy. He passed and lifted his hat--we could see him from the window--and my brother, to tease Mama, said maybe we should have invited the Hubbards to the party. He said Mama didn't like them because they kept a store and he said that was old-fashioned of her. (*Her face lights up*) And then, and *then* I saw Mama angry for the first time in my life. She said that wasn't the reason. She said she was old-fashioned, but not that way. She said she was old-fashioned enough not to like people who killed animals they couldn't use, and who made their money charging awful interest to poor, ignorant blacks and cheating them on what they bought. She was very angry, Mama was. I had never seen her face like that. And then suddenly she laughed and said, "Look, I frightened Birdie out of the hiccoughs. And so she had.... Who would have thought--(*quickly*) You all want to know something? Well, I don't like Leo. My very own son, and I don't like him. (*Laughs gaily*) My, I guess I even like Oscar more. Why did I marry Uncle Oscar? I don't know. I thought I liked him. He was kind to me and I thought it was because he liked me too. But that wasn't the reason--Ask why *he* married *me*. I can tell you that: he's told it to me often enough. (*Speaking very rapidly, tensely*) My family was good and the cotton on Lionnet's fields was better. Ben Hubbard wanted the cotton and Oscar Hubbard married for him. He was kind to me, then. He used to smile at me. He hasn't smiled at me since. Everybody knew that's what he married me for. Everybody buy me. Stupid Stupid me. I don't have a headache!! I've never had a headache in my life. You know it as well as I do. I never had a headache, Zan. That's a lie they tell for me. I drink. All by myself, in my

own room, by myself, I drink. Then, when they want to hide it, they say, "Birdie's got a headache again" You know what? In twenty-two years I haven't had a whole day of happiness. Oh, a little, like today with you all. But never a single, whole day. I say to myself, if only I had one more *whole* day...

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### **LOSS OF ROSES**

by William Inge

*LILA*

Helen, I can't really tell you what my marriage to Ed Comiskey was like. You've never known people like those Comiskey brothers. They're just out of another world entirely. You wouldn't believe the things I told you. Ed was very sweet to me. But he was weak. You see, the other Comiskey, Vincent, was not Ed's real brother. No. They called their show the Comiskey Brothers Comedians, but Vincent wasn't Ed's brother at all. Vincent was Ed's *father*. But I din know it for quite a while after we were married. Then I found out that old Vincent Comiskey dyed his hair to keep the gray from showing. He wanted to stay young and keep on playing the leading man. Vincent was the real boss of the show. And a few months after we were married, he started sending Ed out on booking trips . . . Ed wasn't a very good actor. And then, when Ed was gone, old Vincent started coming to my room, trying to force himself on me. I told you you'd never heard of people like them. Oh, he was a horrible old man. I just couldn't stand him. He tried to force me to make love to him . . . in all sorts of ways that . . . that just made me sick, Helen. Oh, Mrs. Comiskey knew all about him. She din care what he did. She was in love with another man, a man who played the xylophone between the acts, and he had a wife, too, and two little kids. And the xylophone player's wife was in love with the crew boss, the man who had charge of putting up the tent and taking it down. I told you you wouldn't believe me. But we were in a new town every week, Helen, and I never knew anyone. But old Vincent knew everyone in every town we went to. And people just loved him, too. I couldn't have gone to the police and told them to arrest Vincent Comiskey. The police would have arrested me for being a trouble-maker. I tried to tell Ed after he got back from his first booking trip, but he wouldn't believe me. He didn't wanta believe me. He was scared of his father, and he wouldn't have known how to protect me. It . . . almost made me sorry for Ed. It's not your fault I married him. *You* couldn't have known all that would happen. Living back there in that little Oklahoma town where everybody was so honest and friendly, we never guessed there were people like Vincent Comiskey in the world! Sometimes I get the feeling all men are like that. Finally, I just ran away one day. I hardly knew what I was doing, I was so fearful and anxious; but I managed to get on a train somehow, and ended up in Bismarck, North Dakota, in the middle of winter. I just locked myself up in a hotel room and din see anyone, I felt so terrible. Then . . . some people found me. Well, I . . . I guess I'd tried to kill myself, Helen. Oh now, don't sound so horrified, Helen. I din really mean it. It was just a half-hearted attempt I made, with some sleeping medicine a doctor gave me. It's never gonna happen again. I've learned a lot since then. They took me to a big hospital, a . . . a mental institution. Oh, it scared me to go to such a place, but after I'd been there awhile, I began to feel a lot different. They kept me there for three months, seeing a doctor, and making pottery and sewing. I learned a lot from that doctor. Men don't scare me any more, like they did then. I was just too goody-good in lotsa ways, Helen. I didn't tell Mama, Helen! Imagine Mama getting a postcard saying, "Dear Mama, I'm in the loony bin. Love, Lila." Why, they'da had to take her to one, too. No. I just wrote Mama that I was visiting a friend up in North Dakota. She musta wondered where I ever met anyone in North Dakota, but I guess Mama wondered about a lotta things in my life. I'm kinda relieved she's dead now. I don't feel I have to account to

anyone any more. I\*m never gonna do anything silly again with that darn sleeping medicine. This doctor, he made me see things a lot differently. He said that immature people expect the whole world to be rosy, and when they have to face reality, it looks hard and ugly. So, I just don\*t expect so much a life any more, Helen. And I been gettin\* along just fine. I don\*t fight things like I used to. I\*ve learned to take things as they come and make the best of them. We just gotta make the best of it.

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## **LOST IN YONKERS**

by Neil Simon

BELLA

You think I can't have healthy babies, Momma? Well, I can...I'm as strong as an ox. I' e worked in that store and taken care of you by myself since I'm twelve years old, that's how strong I am... like *steel*, Momma. Isn't that how we're supposed to be?...But my babies won't die, because I'll love them and take care of them...And they won't get sick like me or Gert or be weak like Eddie and Louie...My babies will be happier than we were, because I'll teach them to be happy....not to grow up and run away or never visit when they're older or not be able to breathe because they're so frightened...and never, *ever* to make them spend their lives rubbing my back and my legs because you never had anyone around who loved you enough to want to touch you, because you made it so clear you never wanted to be touched with love...Do you know what it's like to touch steel, Momma? It's hard and it's cold, and I want to be warm and soft with my children.... Look, Momma, I'm not crying...I know you're very angry with me, but I'm not crying. And it's not because I'm afraid to cry. Its because I have no tears left in me. I feel sort of empty inside. Like *you* feel all the time. You don't think I know anything, do you? You think I'm stupid, don't you, Momma? ....I'm not a child. If God wanted me to stay a child, why did me make me look like a woman? ... And feel like a woman inside of me? And want all the things a woman should have? Is that what I should thank him for? Why did he do that, Momma, when I can do everything but *think* like a woman?...I know I get confused sometimes....and frightened. But if I'm a child, why can't I be happy like a child? Why can't I be satisfied with dolls instead of babies? Let me have my babies, Momma. Because I have to love somebody. I have to love someone who'll love me back before I die...Give me that , Momma, and I promise you, you'll never worry about being alone....Because you'll have us...Me and my husband and my babies...Louie, ell her how wonderful ha would be... Gert, wouldn't that make her happy?...Momma? Please say yes....I need you to say yes...Please?

*It is deathly silent. No one has moved. Finally, Grandma gets up slowly, walks to her room, goes in, and quietly closes the door.*

Hold me....Somebody please hold me...

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**LUV**

by Murray Schisgal

**ELLEN**

What I have to say will only take a few minutes. There may not be many more of them. You didn't come home until after one last night. It wouldn't give me any satisfaction to prove you're lying about where you were, so we'll just let it stay like that. I have something to show you. I made this while you were out last night. *(she hooks graph to lampost)* Let me explain it to you *(she pulls graph down to its full length, points with finger)* These black vertical lines divide our five years of marriage into months: these blue vertical lines divide the months into weeks. Now. Each time this red horizontal line running across the top of the graph hits the blue vertical line that indicates the number of sexual experiences over a seven-day period. No, we won't talk about it later. That's a favorite play of yours. No, Milt, not tonight. These things must be said while the still can be said. I'd like to continue if you don't mind. Now. You'll notice on this graph how at the beginning of our marriage the red horizontal line touches the blue vertical line at a point of 14, 15 times a week, and how, gradually, the number of contacts become less and less until 18 months ago, when we have an abrupt break-off, the last time being July 23rd, the night of your sister's wedding, and after that date the red horizontal line doesn't touch the blue vertical line once, not one! I have nothing further to say, Milt. *(she tugs down on the graph so that it snaps up cleanly and disappears in the wooden casing, pause)* When something like this is allowed to happen to a marriage, you can't go on pretending. You want to pretend. Oh, the temptation is great to overlook, to find excuses, to rationalize. But here, Milt, here are the facts. Our relationship has deteriorated to such an extent that I don't feel responsible any more for my own behavior. It isn't a question of being mad at you. Yes, I think our marriage is a failure, however, there will be no divorce. We've made a mistake, but we've got to make the best of it...I have no intention of doing otherwise.

**back to top****MARRIAGE OF BETTE AND BOO**

by Christopher Durang

**BETTE**

Hurry up, Boo. I want to use the shower. *(Speaks to the audience, who seems to be her great friend:)* First I was a tomboy. I used to climb trees and beat up my brother Tom. Then I used to try to break my sister Joanie's voice box because she liked to sing. She always scratched me though, so instead I tried to play Emily's cello. Except I don't have a lot of musical talent, but I'm very popular. And I know more about the cello than people who don't know anything. I don't like the cello, it's too much work and besides, keeping my legs open that way made me feel funny. I asked Emily if it made her feel funny and she didn't know what I meant; and then when I told her she cried for two whole hours and then went to confession twice, just in case the priest didn't understand her the first time. Dopey Emily. She means well. *(Calls offstage:)* Booeey! I'm pregnant! *(To audience:)* Actually I couldn't be because I'm a virgin. A married man tried to have an affair with me, but he was married and so it would have been pointless. I didn't know he was married until two months ago. The I met Booeey, sort of on the rebound. He seems fine though. *(Calls out:)* Booeey! *(To audience:)* I went to confession about the cello practicing, but I don't think the priest heard me. He didn't say anything. He didn't even give me a penance. I wonder if nobody was in there. But as long as your conscience is all right, then so is your soul. *(Calls, giddy, happy:)* Booeey, come on!

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by Jean Kerr

*Mary*

I suppose I should take a course and find out what a girl should answer when a gentle. man says "Tell me, pretty maiden, are there any more at home like you?" Though it would hardly pay. It doesn't come up that often. Oh, I suppose most little girls learned things like that when they were three years old. (*Sits on the ottoman.*) But I'm a very retarded case. It's only just this year I learned how to put my hair up in rollers. Before that I wore it pinned back in a bun. And when it had to be cut, I cut it, or I went somewhere and *they* cut it. Lately I've been going to Elizabeth Arden Salon, and I want you to know that it's a whole new way of life. At Arden's they don't just cut your hair—never. They *shape* it. And they honestly think a good shaping is as important as a cure for cancer. The hairdresser really blanched when he saw my bun. I could hear him thinking, "Thank God she came to me—another month and it might have been too late. I'd love to think I was a puzzle. A woman of mystery. Smiling and enigmatic on the surface—but underneath, a tigress. (*Change of mood, straight forward.*) I hate to admit it, but what you see is all there is. Underneath this plain, girlish exterior, there's a very plain girl. I decided *that* when I was thirteen years old. At thirteen, all by yourself, I guess I decided that. Oh, there were people around, but I can't say they gave me any argument. Do you ever look at little girls? You take two little girls. One of them is pink and round, with curly hair and yards of eyelashes. The other one is pale and bony, with thin, wispy hair and two little ears poking through—like the handles on a sugar bowl. Okay, which one of these little girls is going to have to wear braces on her teeth? That was me. Braces on my teeth, band-aids on my knees, freckles on my nose. All elbows and shoulder blades. For two years running I got picked to play the consumptive orphan in "Michael O'Halloran." Once I sent away secretly for Stillman's freckle cream. I guess I used too much, because I just peeled and peeled. I had to pretend it was a sunburn. When I was a kid, I mean really a kid, I never worried about the way I looked, because I thought—I *knew*—I'd grow up to be beautiful just like my sister Clara. She had bright red hair and brown eyes and she always had a faintly startled look, as if she'd just come out of a dark theater into the sunlight. People who met her would be so busy staring they'd forget to finish their sentences. I thought it was insurance. Clara was six years older than I was, and I thought 'I'll grow up to look just like that.\* One day I was measuring myself—I was about fourteen— and I realized I hadn't grown at all, not an inch, in a whole year. And then it came to me. I wasn't going to grow any more. I was *up*. And I didn't look anything at all like Clara. I went rushing to my father, and I asked him when I was going to look like Clara. Poor man. He didn't know what to say. He said "Darling, we wouldn't want two Claras. You're the bright one." That did it. I could have faced being plain, but to be plain *and* bright! In the high school I went to, that was a beatable combination. I used to imagine all the time that I was really Catherine Earnshaw. The girl in "Wuthering Heights." Cathy. I used to dream that somewhere there was a strange, dark man whose heart was quietly breaking for *me*. On rainy nights I'd open the window and imagine I could hear him calling—"Oh, my wild, sweet Cathy!" The colds I got! And of course the only dark man I ever saw was the middle-aged dentist who used to adjust the braces on my teeth.

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### A Midsummer-Night's Dream

**Helena.** Lo! She is one of this confederacy. Now I persieve they have conjoined all three to fashion this false sport in spite of me. Injurious

Hermia, most ungreatful maid, have you conspired, to bait me with this foul derision? Is all the counsel that we two have shared, the sister's vows, the hours that we have spent, when we have chid the hasty-footed time for party us—O! Is all forgot? All schooldays friendship, childhood innocence? We, hermia, like two artificial gods, have with our needles created both one flower, both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion, both warbling of one song, both in one key; as if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds, had been incorporate. So we grew together, like to a double cherry, seeming parted, but yet an union in partition, two lovely berries moulded on one stem. So with two seeming bodies, but one heart, due but to one, and crowned with one crest. Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it; though I alone do feel the injury.

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### MISS FIRECRACKER CONTEST

by **Beth Henley**

CARNELLE

Popeye's going to be using this red material to make my costume for the Miss Firecracker Contest. You see, I registered today. See, Elaine was Miss Firecracker way back when she was just eighteen. Anyway, it was way back that first year when I came to live with them. She was a vision of beauty riding on that float with a crown on her head waving to everyone. I thought I'd drop dead when she passed by me. Anyway, I just thought I'd give it a whirl. I'm twenty-four. Twenty-five's the age limit. I just thought I'd give it a whirl while I still could. Course, don't expect to win--that's crazy. I'm just in it for the experience---that's's the main thing. That's actually why I dyed my hair red; I thought it would be more appropriate for the contest. Did you bring that dress along with you that I asked you about on the phone? You know, the beautiful red antebellum dress that you wore at the Natchez Pilgrimage the first year you got married. See, it's gonna be perfect for me to wear in the contest. I'm trying to make crimson red my thematic color. I'll just need them in the actual contest for the opening Parade of Firecrackers. Why do you think I should just wait until after the audition and see if I make the pageant? Don't you think I'll make it? I know they only pick five girls. I've thought about it, and I, frankly, can't think of five other girls in town that are prettier than me. I'm speaking honestly now. Course I know there's Caroline Jeffers, but she has those yellow teeth. I know why you're worried. You think I've ruined my chances, cause of my reputation. Well, everyone knew I used to go out with lots of men and all that. Different ones. It's been a constant thing with me since I was young and---I just mention it cause it's different now, since Aunt Ronelle died and since I got that---disease. Anyway, I go to church now and I'm signed up to where I take an orphan home to dinner once a week or to a movie; and I work on the cancer drive here just like you do in Natchez. My life has meaning. People aren't calling me Miss Hot Tamale anymore like they used to. Everything's changed. And being in that contest--it would be such an honor to me...I can't explain

the half of it. I'm not all that ugly. I wish you had about a drop of faith in me.

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## **MISSING MARISA AND KISSING CHRISTINE**

by John Patrick Shanley  
Christine

I feel sorry for all men. They suffer like dumb beasts. That's right, I'm single. Being single is mysterious. It's silent. You live large parts of your life unobserved. There's no one there saying, "That's the third time you've gone to bathroom. Why do you laugh like that? Are you going to do anything today?" There's no one saying, "You look unhappy. What is it? I find for myself that when I live with someone, my life lacks depth. It has scope, it has activity. . I don't know what I'm trying to say. Single, married, both ways are hard. Sometimes you want to suffer and not be seen. Then it's better to be single. Sometimes you don't even suffer unless there's someone there seeing you. Then it's much better to be single. It's better to be married when it's better to be married. For a woman, it's great when you're checking into a hotel and you're Mrs. Whatever. Very solid feeling. I guess it doesn't matter whether you're married or nor. I guess I don't think it matters very much one way or the other. Did you read about the cop who talked a guy out of committing suicide and then committed suicide himself? It's like he made a deal with Death. That cop made a speech and turned a man around from taking his own life. Do you believe that somebody could say something to you that would make your whole life better or work or improve in some important way? What could someone say to you? After my accident, when I was lying paralyzed for six months, I had a lot of time to think. I thought about all the cruel things I'd done in my life. I tried to remember every generous thing I'd ever done. Moments of insight, of terrible pain, of pleasure. I tried to see patterns in my lists. I saw some things. I made some connections. But after a while it all began to dissolve away like a lace cookie dissolves away in your mouth. Some sweetness, then all gone like a dream. At first it felt like I was wearing an iron hat that was just a little too small. That was the concussion. My brain was actually swollen, pressing against my skull. After a time, that lessened. The feeling of the hat. But I could feel myself then like a tiny object caught in a great flood. I still have that feeling. Like I'm bound up, a little splinter, pitching along in a black rush. People said I was different after the accident. That the blow to my head had hurt me. Maybe. Six months to think about things changed me. Banging my brain changed me. But I look at people and people change. Don't you agree?

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## **MORE FUN THAN BOWLING**

Steven Dietz  
LOIS

About ten years ago we went to a dance at the V.F.W. Hall on the Fourth of the July. All the guys came dressed as their favorite president. Half came as Washington. Half as Lincoln. Vo-Tech's not long in the history department. My date came as F.D.R. so he wouldn't have to dance. We sat for two hours in the corner, eating mints. Then he asked if I'd ever seen a "real...smooth...pickup." And I

said maybe not, and he lifted me up over his head and took me out to the parking lot. That was pretty smooth, I said, and he said "That wasn't it. This is it." He pointed to his shiny sliver Ford pickup truck with metallic green shell on back. "Want to get inside and get to know each other?" he said. Before I knew it, someone had sucked out all my common sense with a straw and I said "Sure" and we sat there smelling the fresh vinyl seat covers. He didn't say a word. I turned on the radio. He turned it off. He said he had something to show me and he unzipped his pants and reached way down in them and pulled out a very....small....key. "This key opens my gun rack" and sure enough there was his twelve gauge shotgun locked to a rack behind our heads and he took down that gun and began to clean it with his white handkerchief. He explained every detail of that gun to me during the next half hour as he caressed it with that handkerchief. Then he loaded it. Then he lifted the edge of my skirt with it and said, "now, what are *you* gonna show *me*. After showing him the entire contents of my purse...only four minutes had elapsed. So, I started to unbutton my blouse. And he started to smile. Then I stopped. I said "For the good stuff we need to get in the back." "Under the shell?" he said. "Yeah," I said. "I just put new carpeting back there" he said. "Your choice," I said, and after considering it for the moment...he nodded. "Take off all your clothes," I said. "Even my shorts?" he said So there he was, naked in the back of the shell. And there I was, about to climb in—when I grabbed his clothes, slammed the cover shut, locked him in and drove the pickup to the front door of the V.F.W. Hall. I walked inside, grabbed he microphone from the stage and yelled, "HEY, I GOT A KEG OF BEER IN THE BACK OF MY PICK UP. EVERYBODY HELP THEMSELVES." That metallic shell didn't last long an F.D.R. would've been proud of how fast that boy ran away naked into the night.

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**NAOMI IN THE LIVING ROOM**  
**by Christopher Durang**  
 NAOMI

And this is the living room. The dining room is where we dine. The bedroom is where we go to bed. The laundry room is where we do laundry. And the living room is where Hubert and I do all of our living. Our major living. So that's the living room. Please, sit down, don't lit my manner make you uncomfortable. Sit on one of the sitting devices, we use them for sitting in the living room. DON'T SIT THERE. I WANT TO SIT THERE!!! Jerks! Ingrates! It's my house, it's my living room. I can ask you to leave! (*calling off*) Leonard! Oh Leonard. Come on in here in the living room and have some conversation with us. You don't want me to soak up everything our son says all by myself, do you? (*To her daughter-in-law*) You probably didn't know John was Leonard's and my son, did you? SHUT UP!! Goodness, my mood switch quickly. Tell me all about yourselves, do you have children? Uh huh, uh huh. Isn't that interesting? Excuse me if I fall asleep. I'm not tired yet, but I just want to apologize in advance in case your boring talk puts me to sleep. I don't want to offend you. (*Screams*) AAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!! I'm just so bored I could scream. Did you ever hear that expression? AAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!! Really, children these days have no sense. In my day we killed them. Stop talking about your children/ I heard you the first time. God, some people can't get over their own little personal tragedies, what a great big crashing boor. Lots of people have it worse girlie! Boy, you can't take criticism, can you? Insane? I'll give you insane! What's the capital of Madagascar? You don't know, do you? Now who's insane? What's the square root of 347? You don't know, do you? Well, get out of here, if you think I'm so crazy. I don't want you here. I can have Christmas by myself. I can burn the Yule log by myself, I can wait for Santa by myself. I can pot geraniums I can buy a gun in a store and shoot you. By myself! Leave here. I don't need you, and you're dead!! (*They leave, Naomi cries enormous heartfelt sobs, when they subside, she is like an infant with a new*

*thought and she seems to be fairly contented.*) Well, that was a nice visit.

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### **NICE PEOPLE DANCING TO GOOD COUNTRY MUSIC**

by Lee Blessing

*CATHERINE.*

Well, I've . . . been on retreat for awhile from the convent. You can go on retreat from a convent. (*Pause*) You know, I really could cook up here . I'm not dodging your question I like eating simply. So, it's no shame to go on retreat. They don't kick people out. That's not how they do it. How do they do it? They ask them to go on retreat. And if that doesn't work out, they ask you if you wouldn't be more comfortable in a secular mode. I mean, I'm not unhappy. There's no need. Really. It was just the logical outcome of . . . certain events, that's all. Things I said. Not bad things. Nothing awful, really. Just inappropriate things. Things that made people in a strict order uncomfortable. Not political things, or reform things... Dirty words. It's a very sort of unexpected but not entirely unheard-of syndrome I developed recently. I noticed it one day a few months ago. I was going to breakfast one morning — a morning like any other morning—and I passed one of the sisters in the hallway. She's a woman I saw every day, someone I'd never harbored an evil thought about. She smiled as she went by, looking serene, and I smiled back at her and said, "Isn't this a lovely morning, Sister Shit?". I don't know where it came from. It's one of my clearest memories, though: the look on her face, the way she recovered almost at once, and asked me to excuse her, but she hadn't quite heard . . . And even *I* wasn't sure at that moment, just what I'd said. I couldn't have said what I thought I'd . . . So anyway, I smiled pleasantly and apologetically, and took a deep breath, and said, "You heard me, Fart-face," and walked on. I did. I swear I didn't mean to. Sister Beatrice never hurt me in her life. She was one of the ones I liked best. And **it** not even a matter of that. We're in the same holy order, we're children of God. It just came out of me. Like speaking in tongues or something. The words just leaped out of me. They had to be spoken. That's what my psychologist said. Wouldn't you see a psychologist? I saw everybody. I saw lots of people in the Church: priests, nuns, bishops — everyone. I cussed them out. All of them. Except God and my psychologist. Eve, I never meant to say any of those things. But I couldn't help it. I started swearing like a linebacker every time I saw the convent. And I'd say other things, too. Irrational things. I'd recite the backs of Wheaties boxes. Not at breakfast — other times: during devotions, working in the garden. I didn't even know I read the backs of *Wheaties* boxes. It was just there, suddenly, word for word. I don't know why Wheaties, it's what we ate. But other things, too. Things I'd heard on the radio, rules from games I played as a kid, bird calls, sounds from comic books: Bam! Rat-a-tat-tat! Ka-boom! Usually during meditation. The psychologist said that I wasn't cut out to be a nun. He said I was unconsciously trying to break out of the constraints of convent life. It's not the obscenity. I got no bigger thrill saying fart-face than yelling "red light green light" or barking like a dog. It was the impropriety of **it**. That's all I wanted. To shock people. To shock myself. I've been numb for months. I mean, there I was — I had everything planned out. I was committed to a life of service in the Church, and suddenly it was . . . Sister Shit. My parents didn't say anything. Nothing helpful. I went home to explain — you know, maybe stay a week? I was there three days. They couldn't believe I'd failed at 'my life's mission. They spent the whole time whimpering like a pair of lost puppies. (*Sighs.*) Finally, Mom accused me of wanting to have children, and I left. So, I came down here. I didn't know where to go. Nobody up there would talk to me. And I didn't want to go see Aunt Margaret. I don't know what I'll do now.

Live a normal life, I guess. I always thought I'd be special, a little more . . . something than the usual person. But I'm just the usual person.

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### **'night Mother**

by Marsha Norman

JESSIE

Mama, I only told you I was going to kill myself so I could explain it, so you wouldn't blame yourself, so you wouldn't feel bad. There wasn't anything you could say to change my mind. I didn't want you to save me. I just wanted you to know. Don't you see, Mama, everything I do winds up like this. How could I think you would understand? How could I think you would want a manicure? That we could hold hands for an hour and then I could go shoot myself? I'm sorry about tonight, Mama, but it's exactly why I'm doing it. I'm not giving up! This is the other thing I'm trying. And I'm sure there are some other things that might work, but might work isn't good enough any more. I need something that will work. This will work. That's why I picked it. Mama, listen. I am not your child, I am what became of your child. I found an old baby picture of me. And it was somebody else, not me. It was somebody pink and fat who never heard of sick or lonely, somebody who cried and got fed, and reached up and got held and kicked but didn't hurt anybody, and slept whenever she wanted to, just by closing her eyes. Somebody who mainly just laid there and laughed at the colors waving around over her head and chewed on a polka-dot whale and woke up knowing some new trick nearly every day and rolled over and drooled on the sheet and felt your hand pulling my quilt back up over me. That's who I started out and this is who is left. *(There is no self-pity here)* That's what this is about. It's somebody I lost, all right, it's my own self. Who I never was. Or who I tried to be and never got there. Somebody I waited for who never came. And never will. So, see, it doesn't much matter what else happens in the world or in this house, even. I'm what was worth waiting for and I didn't make it. Me...who might have made a difference to me...I'm not going to show up, so there's no reason to stay, except to keep you company, and that's...not reason enough because I'm not...very good company. *(A pause)* Am I? Just let me go, Mama, let me go easy.

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### **ONE SUNDAY AFTERNOON**

**By: James Hagan**

AMY

*This lovely, if somewhat sentimental play, written in 1930, is about young love in a small Midwestern town. Amy, a romantic young girl, has a crush on the town bully and she's describing it to her friend Virginia.*

I don't know. Maybe it was love, I don't know, but-- Well, when I was very young -- of course, that's a long time ago, you understand. It was

in school. There was this boy. I don't know--he never looked at me and I never...Virginia, did you ever have a feeling in your heart--Something that you feel is going to happen and it doesn't--that's the way my heart was--(*she touches her heart*) It wasn't love, I know that--(*pause*) He never even noticed me. I could have been a stick in the mud as far as he was concerned. Virginia, this boy always seemed lonely somehow. Everybody had it in for him, even the teachers--they called him bully--but I know he wasn't. I saw him do a lot of good things--when the big boys picked on the smaller ones, he helped the little fellows out. I know he had a lot of good in him--good, that nobody else could see--that's why my heart longs for him.

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### **OUR TOWN**

Thorten Wilder

*Emily*

I can't bear it. they're so young and beautiful. why did they have to get old? Mama, I'm here! I'm grown up! I love you all, everything! I cant look at everything hard enough. oh mama, just look at me once as though you really saw me. mama fourteen years have gone by! I'm dead! You're a grandmother mama- I married George Gibbs, mama! Wally's dead too -mama. his appendix burst on a camping trip to Crawford notch. We felt just terrible about it. Don't you remember? But just for a moment now were all together-mama just for a moment lets be happy- lets look at one another. I can't! I can't go on! it goes by so fast. we don't have time to look at one another. I didn't realize so all that was going on and we never noticed! take me back up the hill to my grave, but first: wait! one more look, goodbye! goodbye world! good bye Grovers Corners - mama and papa goodbye to clocks ticking and my butternut tree! And mama's sun flowers and food and coffee- and new ironed dresses and hot baths and sleeping and walking up! oh earth you are to wonderful for anyone to realize you! does any human being ever realize life while they live it every, every minute?

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### **OUTRAGEOUS**

by Jules Tasca

Meg

I'm Meg. This is our house, 2216 Columbia Way. The people next door to us sold their house to John and Sally Robinson, the first non-white people to come into our neighborhood. Harry, my husband, was not happy. (*To Harry*) That person of color, Harry, is John Robinson. He and his wife Sally bought the house...Harry, you're not gonna put your hands on anybody. Control yourself. You're in a rage. Let me get you a drink and and your supper. Keep your voice down, they'll think you're prejudiced.... (*Out to audience*) Harry used to like to sit out back in the yard after supper, but John Robinson was trimmin' and Sally was cuttin' flowers, so Harry moved his lawn chair around to the side of the house which is on sort of a hill. He sat and talked to himself...That night in bed, Harry couldn't

make love...(to Harry) What's the matter with you tonight? God, Harry, if you're gonna make yourself sick over the Robinsons, we can move, you know. Why don't you go over and talk to them? What do you mean, you don't talk *jive*? Jive? John Robinson is the Dean of the Engineering Department at Boston University. And Sally, she's a guide in the museum. Mrs. Kramer called me. The Kramers're organizing. They're gettin' everybody to give the Robinsons the silent treatment. I'm not givin' anybody the silent treatment. Harry, I can't live like that. (*Back out*) The welcome wagon of Columbia Way was loaded withounly fear and bitterness and mean spirit. Harry was out all day. In one neighbor's house and then another. Talking, complaining, cursing. It was a horrible Labor Day I spent, all alone in the house. That night, Harry came home with a smile on his face talking about a meeting in Curt Bunsen's basement and all we had lost. (*To Harry*) The only things I lost were in this house, Harry Hart! You don't talk to me! We got no sex life! We can't even sit out int he back yard together! Harry!! Talk to me! (*Back out*) Harry and his gang planned to "take care of business," After dark, when we were at my brother's house, the gang broke the basement window, dumped gasoline; then they threw in a match. It burned fast. The gang was wild, but they didn't have much head for detail. Instead of 2218, the Robinson house, they thought it was 2216, our house. We had nothing ledt but the clothes on our backs and the station wagon. Harry and Curt Bunsen and the others were all convicted of conspiracy, harassment, violation of the civil rights act and accomplices in an act of arson. Harry's doin' two years for burnin' down his ouwn home. And our insurance company won't give us a dime because of Harry's part in the fire. Harry's cell mate is a black man.

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## **OUT OF OUR FATHER'S HOUSE**

By Daniel Schrier  
*Elizabeth Cady Stanton*

I am Elizabeth Cady Stanton, born in New York State in 1815 . . . The same year my father was elected to Congress. The custom of calling women Mrs. John This and Mr. Tom That, and colored men Sambo and Zip-coon is founded on the principle that white men are the lords of all. I can not acknowledge this principle and therefore I cannot bear the name of another. If the 19th century is to be governed by the opinions of the 18th, and the 20th by the 19th, then the world will always be governed by dead men. I would rather make a few slanders from a super- abundance of life, than to have all the proprieties of a well-embalmed mummy. We must make the voyage *of* life alone. It matters not whether the solitary voyager be a man or a woman. We come into the world alone, unlike all who have gone before us: We leave it alone under circumstances peculiar to ourselves. No mortal ever has been, no mortal ever will be like the soul just launched on the sea of life. Nature never repeats herself, and the possibilities of one human soul will never be found in another. The same individual is not the same at all times. Each individual has a middle self, which is not the one of today, nor of yesterday, nor of tomorrow, but among these different selves. In youth our most bitter disappointments, our brightest hopes and ambitions are known only to our- selves. Even our friendship and love we never .fully share with another. The solitude of individual life: its pains, its penalties, its responsibilities. The solitude of self. It is the height of cruelty to rob the individual of a single natural right. Our inner being which we call ourselves, no eye nor touch has ever pierced. Such is individual life. Who can take . . . dare take. . . on himself, herself, the rights, the responsibilities, the duties of another human soul?

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## PICNIC

by William Inge  
ROSEMARY

Now it's your turn to dance with me. I may be an old-maid schoolteacher, but I can keep up with you. Ride 'em cowboy! (*she continues to sip a drink through the rest of the monologue*) I used to have a boyfriend was a cowboy. Met him in Colorado when I went out there to get over a case of flu. He was in love with me, 'cause I was an older woman and had some sense. Took me up in the mountains one night and made love. Wanted me to marry him right there on the mountain top. Said God'd be our preacher, the moon our best man. Ever hear such talk? You know what? You remind me of one of those ancient statues. There was one in the school library until last year. He was a Roman gladiator. All he had on was a shield. (She gives a bawdy laugh) A shield over his arm. That was all he had on. All we girls felt insulted, havin' to walk past that statue every time we went to the library. We got a up a petition and made the principal do something about it. (She laughs hilariously during her narration) You know what he did? He got the school janitor to fix things right. He got a chisel and made that statue decent. (Commanding him imploringly) Dance with me, young man, Dance with me...Young? What do your young. And I'm old?! You been stomping around her in those boots like you owned the place, thinking every woman you saw as gonna fall madly in love. But here's one woman didn't pay you any mind. Aristocratic millionaire, my foot! You wouldn't know an aristocratic millionaire if he spit on you. Braggin' about your father, and I bet he wasn't any better'n you are. You think just 'cause you're a man, you can walk in here and make off with whatever you like. You think just 'cause you're young you can push other people aside and not pay them any mind. You think just cause you're strong you can show your muscles and nobody'll know what a pitiful specimen you are. But you won't stay young forever, didja ever thinka that? What'll become of you then? You'll end your life in the gutter and it'll serve you right, 'cause the gutter's where you came from and the gutter's where you belong.

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## PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM

by Woody Allen  
Linda

I hope I\*m not bothering you . . . what do you have for an anxiety attack? I need a tranquilizer. I have a throbbing in the pit of my stomach. My stomach feels jumpy. I'm finding it hard to breathe. I feel frightened, and I don\*t know over what. Oh . . . I always get this way when Dick goes on a business trip. He had to fly to Cleveland for the day. I got up, helped him pack, drove him to the airport, and threw up in the United Airlines terminal. I don\*t know what it is that upsets me so. My analyst would say I\*m feeling guilty because I really want him to go. I know you don't understand me. . . You think I've got everything going for me. I'm bright . . . people photograph me for magazines. I read, play Bach on the recorder, I'm happily married. I mean, why should I be a mass of symptoms? Well, you\*ve got a lot going for you, too, and you\*re a mass of symptoms. I guess it happens to us when we\*re children . . . you know, you think you\*re ugly and your parents get divorced . . . you feel abandoned . . . you must have had the same thing. Do you really think I\*ve got a lot going for me?

It\*s funny. I never thought you liked me very much. You know, when I married Dick. You thought I thought you were an oddball? I never really knew you. I mean we never spent any time together. Dick described you as the first guy who sat through "The Maltese Falcon" twelve times in two weeks. Then when the four of us went out together you acted differently than now. I feel I\*ve really gotten to know you in the past few weeks and I\*ve come to a very interesting conclusion. You definitely are an oddball... but you\*re one of the best people I\*ve ever known.

I'm glad we're just friends. I like a Platonic relationship. They\*re so much less complicated. Not that I\*m down on male-female relationship, although marriage is a tough proposition at best. Dick and I are constantly "reappraising" marriage. Especially in the last year. You know he's gotten deeper and deeper into his work and my interests have gone in another area. That is, they always were. There are certain things we both need that we don't' give each other.

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## PRIMARY ENGLISH CLASS

By Isreal Horowitz

*DEBBIE*

Listen now, I'll just go really slow. (*Pauses, smiles.*) My name is Debbie Wastba. (*She writes her name on blackboard. Each takes notebook and copies down the name.*) W-A-ST-B-A. That's pronounced Wass-tah-bah: Wastba. (*She links each of the three syllables together on board, in the following way: WA ST BA.*) Think of Wah as in wah-tah. Splash. Splash. Stah as in stah-bility. And Bah as in Bah-dum... as in (*Sings "Dragnet" theme.*) Bum-tah-bum-bum. Well, listen. It was literally double its length in its ancient, biblical form. (*Pauses*) Actually, that tune was wrong. It would be much more like... (*Sings again, to tune of "My Funny Valentine."*) Bum bum-bum- bum-bum-bum...bum bum-bum bum-bum-bum... bum bum-bum-baaahhhmmmmmm... (*Pauses: sees they are confused.*) Well, anyway, really, you can easily check your Bibles if you want. (*Rummages through stack of papers on desk, holds up lesson plan.*) This is our lesson plan. That's lesson... plan. Lesson plan. We're going to be together for several hours and I thought it would be highly professional and competent for me to make a plan. And I did. And her e it is: (*She reads, smiling confidently.*) One. A pleasant welcome and normal chatter. For two, I've planned your basic salutation, such as the goods- good morning, good afternoon, good night, good luck, and good grief. (*She laughs.*) That was a mildly amusing joke: "good grief." Later in the night- after we've learned a bit of English- you'll be able to, well, get the joke. (*Pauses.*) Let's move along. Three will be basic customs: ours here. (*Reading again.*) Four will be a short history of our English language. (*As the students take their notes, they, as we, begin to realize that Wastba is only writing the numbers one through six on the blackboard- no words. They raise their hands in question, but she waves them away, barging ahead.*) Five will be the primary lesson on the primary English class, according to the book. And six will be the very essential verb "to be." At some point, we shall also inspect the very basic concept of silence. (*Smiles.*) Now then, as you can see, there are only six points to cover and hours and hours ahead in which to cover them. (*All stare blankly at her smiling face.*) Now then: Questions?

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## QUILTERS 1

*Annie*

My ambition is to become a doctor like my father. I'm my father's girl. My greatest accomplishment was when I was ten years old and was successful in chopping off a chicken's head and then dressing it for a chicken dinner. My mother tries to make me do quilts all the time, but I don't want nothing to do with it. I told her, 'Never in my life will I stick my fingers 'till they bleed!'. Very definitely. My sister Florry is a real good quilter, I guess. Mother says so all the time. Florry's favorite pattern is the Sunbonnet sue. Mother taught her how to do applique blocks and since then she's made prob'ly a dozen Sunbonnet Sue quilts. You seen 'em, they're like little dolls turned sideways with big big sunbonnets on. Florry makes each one different. In one her little foot is turned this way or that, or she'll give her a parasol or turn the hat a little bit. People think they're soo cute. She made one for everyone in the family, so now there are little Sunbonnet Sue quilts all over the house. She made a couple of 'em for her friends, and last spring when we all got promoted at school, she presented one to our teacher. I nearly died. And she's still at it! Let me tell you, she's driving me crazy with her Sunbonnet Sues. So I decided to make one quilt and give it to Florry. Like I said, I'm not such a good quilter as her, but I knew just what I wanted to do with this one. It's real small, twin bed size. I finished it and put it on her bed this morning, but I don't think she's seen it yet. I guess I do some new things with Sunbonnet Sue. I call it the Demise of Sunbonnet Sue. Each little block is different, just like Florry does it. I've got a block of her hanging, another one with a knife in her chest, eaten by a snake, eaten by a frog, struck by lightning, and burned up! I'm sorta proud of it. You should see it ...it turned out real good!

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**QUILTERS 2***Cassie*

My husband and I married back in Virginia and he wanted to go west as soon as he could. He got a job laying track for the first railroad into New Mexico. when that job was done he got put to work inspecting twenty miles of track. He walked it. Could do it in a day easy if there wasn't any repair work. I was home caring for the stock and the kids and I wanted to make something nice for him so I started on a quilt that took me two years to finish. I was always hidin' it before he came in...sometimes runnin' when he hit the door...or stashin' it in the craziest place, like one time the stove! When it was done, I called in Elizabeth, my oldest to give it to him. Her took it and studied it and studied it-I was just thinkin' maybe there was something wrong with it, when he rushed over to me and wrapped the quilt around me, swung me off my feet and sashayed me all around the kitchen. Both of us laughin' to beat the band. He was some man all right. Next spring, I had wrapped up my work for the day and was piecin' up some scraps to cover the baby that was due in the summer. I had just lit the lamp when we heard a lot of horses comin' up the road and ridin' hard. My heart stopped and I reached way down to get my breath and ran out to the porch. There was five men from the railroad. They were sweatin' and talkin' over one another's words. There was a big bushel basket on the ground in front of them. Jim Rice thought maybe he fell and hit his head on the tracks. Slim Henson thought maybe the heat had got to him. None of 'em could figure out why he didn't hear the train. We never did get a clear reason, but they had to bring him home to us in that bushel basket. They tell me I didn't cry or say a word. I just sat down on the porch, kinda in a little ball and started rockin' back and forth-rockin' and starin', rockin' and starin'. Course I don't remember much now...hardly anything in fact. Just what they tell me. I stayed in the back room...never came out. I guess it musta been my momma came in and set a piecin' bag in front of me, a needle, a spool of thread, a pair of scissors. I didn't know what those things were for. But one morning, my hands

reached out...my hands remembered...they grabbed the top piece and sewed it to the next piece, and the next-didn't matter what it looked like. I never laid a cuttin' edge to any of 'em. Four months later I had a whole quilt and the baby was born and my eyes came clear again.

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### QUILTERS 3

*Katherine*

No. I never married. Once, I almost did, but it didn't work out. I was twenty-seven years old. I was quite a go-getter in those days. Very headstrong. I'd been away to teacher's college and was very definite about my career. Well, I was sick when I was younger and I couldn't have children. It didn't bother me though, I was so busy with my teaching and church work and all. So, anyway this doctor came to town. He was from California. My, he was so handsome. He had a gap toothed grin that would stop your heart. Well, we just fell in love, you know. I'd never thought about marrying anybody before...never met anybody I'd consider spending my life with. But him. well, I thought he was pretty special. I told him right off about not being able to have children. I wanted that out in the open right off. I told him I was happy with my work and it didn't make a bit of difference to me. Maybe later on, you know, if I changed my mind, I might want to adopt some kids. But all in all it suited me just fine. He looked me right in the eye and said it suited him just fine too. He said he'd never been so sure about kids himself, and even so, it was me he wanted and that was enough. We had a few months of happiness after that. Oh, he could be so much fun! Then one day he told me he'd made a mistake. He really did want children real bad. I could tell by the way it kinda tore him up that he was real sorry. Shortly after that, a woman he knew from California moved to town and they got married. I taught both their children in school before I retired. Like I said, I never married. Living alone always suited me just fine.

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### QUILTERS 4

*Nan*

Dear God, why is this happening to me? They teach us that your loving and forgiving and only punish bad people and sinners. I don't remember doing anything to deserve this. Mama calls it 'the curse' and says that all girls get it till they're old. Why would you want to put a curse on all the girls? Lord, it hurts so much sometimes in my stomach and back, I think there's something wrong inside of me. I'm so afraid to that people will see, that it'll show through. It's bad enough that it comes from there, but God, why'd you have to make it red? And Lord, if it happens to every girl, why did you choose me to be first? All the other girls think I'm... awful or something. Please, Lord, what I'm askin' of you is, please, make it go away. I ask this in Jesus's name. A-men

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## ROMEO & JULIET

Juliet

O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?  
Deny thy father and refuse thy name;  
Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,  
And I'll no longer be a Capulet

'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.  
Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.  
What's Montague? It is nor hand, nor foot,  
Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part  
Belonging to a man. O, be some other name!  
What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
By any other name would smell as sweet.  
So Romeo would, were he not Romeo called,  
Retain that dear perfection which he owes  
Without that title. Romeo, doff thy name;  
And for thy name, which is no part of thee,  
Take all myself.

What man art thou that, thus bescreened in night,  
So stumblest on my counsel?

My ears have yet not drunk a hundred words  
Of thy tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound.  
Art thou Romeo, and a Montague?

How camest thou hither, tell me, and wherefore?  
The orchard walls are high and hard to climb,  
And the place death, considering who thou art,  
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

thou knowest the mast of night is on my face;  
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek  
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.  
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully

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## **ROOSTERS**

by Milcha Sanchez-Scott

*Chata*

Juana, Who taught you how to make totillas? Look at this. You call this a tortilla? Have some pride. Show him you're a woman. Ah, you people don\*t know what it is to eat fresh handmade tortillas. My grandmother Hortensia, the one they used to call "La India Condenada" ... she would start making them at five o'clock in the morning. So the men would have something to eat when they went into the fields. Hijo! She was tough ... Use to break her own horses ... and her own men. Every day at five o'clock she would wake me up. "Buenos pinchi dias," she would say. I was twelve or thirteen years old, still in braids ... "Press your hands into the dough," "Con fuerza," "Put your stamp on it." One day I woke up, tu sabes, con la sangre. "Ah! So you\*re a woman now. Got your cycle like the moon. Soon you\*I'll want a man, well this is what you do. When you see the one you want, you roll the tortilla on the inside of your thigh and then you give it to him nice and warm. Be sure you give it to him and nobody else." Well, I been rolling tortillas on my thighs, on my nalgas, and God only knows where else, but I\*ve been giving my tortillas to the wrong men ... and that\*s been the problem with my life. First there was Emilio. I gave him my first tortilla. Ay Mamacita, he use to say, these are delicious. Aye, he was handsome, a real lady-killer! After he did me the favor he didn\*t have the cojones to stick around ... took my TV set too. They\*re all crap. (*Sees Hector enter*) Yeah, Hector, I mean you, too. Men are shit. Pure shit. They called me the encyclopedia of love. You want to turn a few pages? Your Aunt Chata could show you a few things. Is that what fascinates you, honey? Is that why I always find you peeping at me, mirrors at the keyhole, your eyeballs in the cracks spying when I[\*m sleeping, smelling my kimono. I ain't drunk. What I drink ain't none of your business. Don't tell me what to do, Hector. You got nothin' to say about it, you ain't my man, and you ain't your mama's man. The sooner you learn that the better. So, you take your rooster, leave it, eat or sell it, but get out of here. What are you hanging around here for? Go on! Get out! It ain't your home anymore!

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## **SEASCAPE WITH SHARKS AND DANCERS**

by Don Nigro

Tracy

I don't want to sit down! Fine! I'm relaxing. Is it going to make me less pregnant? I hate children. My father hates children. He hates ME. That\*s different? Why is it different? Ya know, you treat people like they were characters in books. You have no sense of cause and effect. You have no sense of reality. You have no sense. You\*re an idiot. They should lock you up and eat the key. You don\*t understand anything about anything. And do you know why? I\*I'll tell you why. You can\*t connect things up in your mind. When I tell you I\*m going to meet you someplace and you go and wait there for two hours and then come home and find me sitting here eating a popsicle, what do you do? Do you yell at me? Do you beat me up?

Do you throw me out? No. You come over and lick my popsicle. Like you expected me not to come but you waited anyway and then you come home and act like you're not even mad. But you DON'T accept me. You don't even SEE me. You see some nice little drippy-eyed girl who just can't help herself because of her unfortunate childhood toilet training experiences, when in reality I am a normal healthy person who screams a lot and knows exactly what she's doing. You can't be anybody's father. You're unfit. You can't just ACCEPT your children. You've got to teach them how to handle themselves and how rotten the world is. We can't have a baby. That's another thing wrong with you. You're always trying to make the best of things. Do you realize what a pain in the ass that is? There are many things you just can't make the best out of, and I'm one of them. I am not domesticable, I never WAS domesticable, and I'm never going to BE domesticable, so just forget it. Boy, I should have got out of here so fast when I could have. Babies are the worst trap there is. They make you old. We'll be OLD.

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### **SHE WAS LOST AND IS FOUND**

by **Richard Hensley**

Sue

I don't know if I really want to marry Walter. I know I accepted his proposal, but, Mother, you encouraged it. Maybe I was so used to trying to please you that I just went along—until, before I knew it—we were engaged. You and Dad were certainly pleased about it. I did not say I didn't love Walter. I said I'm not sure now that I'm ready to marry him. Things just aren't as clear now. You never really asked, did you? Neither of you. Mother, for all of my life, you have planned my every move. You have created a perfect daughter, and for the past two years—since Janie disappeared—you've buried your life in what I've been doing. I've become the living antidote for what Janie did to our family reputation. And you, Dad, you've always petted your daughters and bragged to others about how charming we were—that is, when you had time. We've never really talked, have we? We don't really know each other very well. You've attended the important ceremonies of our lives, and you've paid our bills. But what did this tell you about us as individuals? For the last two years, you've been involved with only two things—your job and finding Janie. This has been a silent household when the three of us have been here. Haven't we always been interested mostly in achievements and in recognition, not in feelings or personalities? We're in the same house but on different wave lengths. I want to be looked on as something more than a Blue Ribbon winner at the Child Show. I—I think Janie did, too. Yes, you showed me you loved me, and all you gave me you fave from love. I know that. Yes, you have given us a great deal. You've given us everything, and I do appreciate it. But you didn't give us a chance to give. Maybe we had something to give you . . . if you'd just let us.

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### **THE SIGN IN SIDNEY BRUSTEIN'S WINDOW**

by Lorraine Hainsberry

*Gloria*

Hey-Sid, lookit me! Whiskey, I've joined the human race. No more goofball pills-I'm kicking everything. I did the whole gooey farewell bit with some of the kids. Adios, Muchachas! I'm going to marry him. Yes, I mean after we talk about it. I wouldn't unless I told him. I know girls who've done that. Doesn't work out: you run into people. Never works out. I'm going to sit down and tell him-"I was a nineteen-year-old package of fluff from Trenersville, Nowhere, and I met this nothing who took one look at this baby face of mine and said, 'Honey, there's a whole special market for you. Slink is on the way out; all-American wholesomeness is the rage. You'll be part of the aristocracy of the profession!" Which is true. Only they don't exactly describe the profession. After that you develop your own rationales: (a) "It's old as time anyhow!" (b) "It's a service to society!" and (c) "The real prostitutes are everybody else; especially housewives and career girls." We trade those gems back and forth for hours. Nobody believes it, but it helps on the bad days. And, sweetie, there are a lot of bad days. I was on this date once, Sid. He had a book of reproductions by Goya. And there was this one-an etching, I think. Have you ever seen it? There's this woman, a Spanish peasant woman, and she's standing like this-reaching out. And what she's reaching for are the teeth of a dead man. A man who'd been hanged, And she is rigid with-revulsion, but she wants his teeth, because it said in the book that in those days people thought that the teeth of the dead were good luck. Can you imagine that? The things some people think they have to do? To survive in this world? Some day I'm going to buy that print. It's all about my life...Aw, what the hell am I carrying on for-the life beats the hell out of that nine-to-five jazz-SIDNEY! WHAT HAPPENED TO MY LIFE!? I'll be twenty-six this winter and I have tried to kill myself three times since I was twenty-three...I was always awkward...But I'll make it.

**back to top****SISTER MARY IGNATIUS EXPLAINS IT ALL FOR YOU**

by Christopher Durang

*Sister Mary*

*(reads)* Are you ever sorry you became a nun? I am never sorry I became a nun. *(reads)* It used to be a mortal sin to eat meat on Fridays, and now it isn't. Does that mean that people who ate meat on Fridays back when it was a sin are in hell? Or what? People who ate meat on Fridays backwhen it was a mortal sin are indeed in hell if they did not confess the sin before they died. If they confessed it, they are not in hell, unless they did not confess some other mortal sin they committed. People who would eat meat on Fridays back in the 50s tended to be the sort whowould commit other mortal sins, so on a guess, I bet many of them are in hell for other sins, even if they did confess the eating of meat. *(reads)* What exactly went on in Sodom? Who asked me this question? I'm going to talk about Sodom a bit. To answer your question, Sodom is where they committed acts of homosexuality and bestiality in the Old Testament, and God, infuriated by this, destroyed them all in one fell swoop. Modern day Sodoms are New York City, San Francisco, Amsterdam, Los Angeles,... well, basically anywhere where the population in over 50,000. The only reason that God has not destroyed these modern day Sodoms is that Catholic nuns and priests live in these cities, and God does not wish to destroy them. He does, however, give these people body lice and hepatitis. It's so hard to know why God allows wickedness to flourish. I guess it's because God wants man to choose goodness freely of his own free will; sometimes one wonders if free will is worth all the trouble if there's going to be so much evil and unhappiness, but God knows best, presumably. If it were up to me, I might be tempted to wipe out cities and civilizations, but luckily for New York and Amsterdam, I'm not God. *(reads)* Tell us some more about your family. I had 26 brothers and sisters. From my family 5 became priests, 7 became nuns, 3 became brothers, and the rest of them

were institutionalized. My mother was also institutionalized shortly after she started thinking my father was Satan. Some days when we were little, we'd come home and not be able to find our mother and we'd pray to St. Anthony to help us find her. Then when we'd find her with her head in the oven, we would pray to St. Jude to make her sane again. Are all our prayers answered? Yes, they are; what people who ask that question often don't realize is that sometimes the answer to our prayer is "no." Dear God, please make my mother not be crazy. God's answer: no. Dear God, please let me recover from cancer. God's answer: no. Dear God, please take away this toothache. God's answer: alright, but you're going to be run over by a car. But every bad thing that happens to us, God has a special reason for. God is the good shepherd, we are His flock. And if God is grouchy or busy with more important matters, his beloved mother Mary is always there to intercede for us. I shall now sing the Hail Mary in Latin.

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## **Sister Mary Ignatius Explains it all for You 2**

**Diane**

*By: Christopher Durang*

*SITUATION: A young woman tries to cope with her mother's death, while maintaining sanity with her own life.*

When I was sixteen my mother got breast cancer, which spread. I prayed to god to let her suffering be small, but her suffering seemed to me quite extreme. She was in bad pain for half a year, and then terrible pain for much of a full year. The ulcerations on her body were horrifying to her and to me. Her last few weeks she slipped into a semiconscious state, which allowed her, unfortunately, to wake up for a few minutes at a time and to have a full awareness of her pain and her fear of death. She was able to recognize me, and she would try to cry, but she was unable to; and to speak, but she was unable to. I think she wanted me to get her new doctors; she never really accepted that her disease was going to kill her, and she thought in her panic that her doctors must be incompetent and that new ones could magically cure her. Then, thank goodness, he went into a full coma. A nurse who I knew to be Catholic assured me that everything would be done to keep her alive - a dubious comfort. Happily, the doctor was not Catholic, or if he was, not doctrinaire, and they didn't use extraordinary means to keep her alive; and she finally died after several more weeks in her coma.

Now there are, I'm sure, far worse deaths- terrible burnings, tortures, plague, pestilence, famine; Christ on the cross even, as sister likes to say. But I thought my mother's death was hard enough, and I got confused as to why I had been praying and to whom. I mean, if prayer was really this sort of button you pressed- admit you need the Lord, then He stops the suffering- then why didn't it always work? Of ever work? And when it worked so-called, and our prayers were supposedly answered, wasn't it as likely to be chance as God? God always answers our prayers, you said, He just sometimes says no. I became angry at myself, and by extension at you, for ever having expected anything beyond randomness from the world. And while I was thinking these things, the day that my mother died, I was raped. Now I know that's really too much, one really loses all sympathy for me because I sound like I'm making it up or something. But bad things happen all at once, and this particular day on my return from the hospital I was raped by some maniac who broke into the house. He had a knife and cut me up some. Anyway, I don't want to really go into the experience, but I got really depressed for about

five years. Somehow the utter randomness of things- my mother's suffering, my attack by a lunatic- this randomness seemed intolerable. I blamed myself of course, for letting all of this get to me..... But now, I think it is childish to look for blame, part of the randomness of things is that there is no one to blame; but basically I think everything is your fault Sister.

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## **SLOW DANCE ON THE KILLING GROUND**

by William Hanley

*ROSE*

If you knew me better, you'd see that this is exactly the kind of thing that's likely to happen to me. Getting knocked up, I mean. The point is it was my first time, I was a virgin before that. Wouldn't you know it, I'd get caught? Aside from everything else, I'm not lucky, either. You see, if I was lucky, Harold and I could've succumbed to our silly little passion and that would've been that, the end of it. And New Rochelle, of all places. At least if it'd been in some nice apartment in the Village, say, with the sound coming through the window of traffic and people, the breeze blowing the curtain over the bed, like in the movies. But no. I lost my virginity in the attic of an old house in New Rochelle. Harold's grandmother's house. On a rainy day in spring on the floor of the attic in his grandmothers house, listening to the rain on the roof, breathing the dust of old things...And what comes next but his grandmother who was supposed to be in the city for the day. But instead, she's suddenly standing there, screaming: "Stop that! Stop that this instant!" Needless to say, it was out of the question. Stopping. At that particular moment. I mean, sex is like a flight over the sea, one reaches the point of no return...I guess it sounds funny now, but you know, at the time...it was pretty rotten. Sordid, I mean...it wasn't at all the way it's supposed to be. And Harold, of all people. A girl finds herself in this predicament, this condition, she'd at least like to think the cause of it was some clever, handsome guy with charm and experience, just returned from spending a year in Rome, say, on a Guggenheim fellowship. But Harold. Harold is six foot two, about a hundred and twenty five pounds, tops, and an Economics major at CCNY...That's about the best I'll ever be able to do, I know it. Ever since I found out I was pregnant I've been walking around with a face down to here and my mother kept saying, "What's the matter with you, anyway? I just don't know what's gotten into you lately." So, finally, I told her: a kid named Harold, as a matter of fact. Oh, well, I just keep telling myself: "Remember, Rose, like in the song...Someday my prince will come."

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## **STAGE DOOR**

By Edna Ferber & George S. Kaufman

*Teri*

I feel so low because this show closed after only 4 performances. The idiotic part of it is that I didn\*t feel so terrible after the first minute. I thought, well, Keith\*s coming around after the show, and we\*I go to Smitty\*s and sit there and talk and it won\*t seem so bad. But he never showed up. I don\*t expect Keith to be like other people. I wouldn\*t want him to be. One

of the things that makes him so much fun is that he\*s different. If he forgets an appointment it\*s because he\*s working and doesn\*t notice. Only I wish he had come tonight. I needed him so. Kaye, I\*m frightened. For the first time, I\*m frightened. It\*s three years now since I've been trying to be a professional actress. The first year it didn\*t matter so much. I was so young. Nobody was ever as young as I was. I thought, they just don\*t know. But I\*ll get a good start and show them. I didn\*t mind anything in those days. Not having any money, or quite enough food; and a pair of silk stockings always a major investment. I didn\*t mind because I felt so sure that that wonderful part was going to come along. But it hasn\*t. And suppose it doesn\*t next year? Suppose it never comes? I know I can always go home....and marry some home-town boy—like Louise did. I can\*t just go home and plump myself down on Dad. You know what a country doctor makes! When I was little I never knew how poor we were, because mother made everything seem so glamorous—so much fun. Even if I was sick it was a lot of fun, because then I was allowed to look at her scrapbook. I even used to pretend to be sick, just to look at it—and that took acting, with a doctor for a father. I adored that scrap-book. All those rep-company actors in wooden attitudes—I remember a wonderful picture of mother as Esmeralda. It was the last part she ever played, and she never finished the performance she fainted, right in the middle of the last act. They rang down and somebody said, "Is there a doctor in the house?" And there was. And he married her. Only first she was sick for weeks and weeks. Of course the company had to leave her behind. They thought she\*d catch up with them any week, but she never did. I know now that she missed it every minute of her life. I think if Dad hadn\*t been such a gentle darling, and not so dependent on her, she might have gone off and taken me with her. I\*d have been one of those children brought up in dressing rooms, sleeping in trunk trays, getting my vocabulary from stage-hands. (*As she creams her face.*) But she didn\*t. She lived out the rest of her life right in that little town, but she was stage-struck to the end. There never was any doubt in her mind—I was going to be an actress. It was almost a spiritual thing, like being dedicated to the church.

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## STANTON'S GARAGE

by Joan Ackerman

*Mary*

(*on the phone*) Addie, it\*s Mary, hon, how are you? You haven\*t seen Denny today, have you, 's he been by? No. Well, just got a notion he might have stopped in, pick up his mail. Oh yes, I heard. Spoiled 20,000 gallons, blood got in the milk. I know, I know. Well, that age. Young Harlon here\*d poke the crack of dawn if he could catch it. So, just thought I\*d check. You take care, Addie. (*Hangs up.*) Sourpuss. That woman was weaned on a pickle. (*Looks out window.*) Who is it? Should have known. Trudy Mmskoff, ugly enough to make a train take a dirt road. If my dog was that ugly I\*d shave his ass and make him walk backwards. (*She dials phone while looking at old photos.*) Oh my Lord, will you look at that, Bonnie in her prom dress. Audrey come take a look. Bonnie in her prom dress with her daddy, out front by the old pumps. Look how skinny Steve is. He never did have a butt. (*Into phone.*) Huh? Who\*s this? Jim who? What? Jim! I clear forgot I called you. How\*d you know it was me? (*To Audrey.*) Look at this one here. Then again You haven\*t seen Denny, have you? Mm. He wandered off, been gone all afternoon. Nope. I tried him. Nope. Called him. Called her. Well, if you could ask around, he\*s got me worried. If you track him down, tell him to give a call here. Hey, Jim. (*Lowering her voice.*) You don\*t know Volvos, do you? Silvie here\*s got one won\*t start. '88 240. You know, that was my very first thought, I was thinking might be the brain. Yes, I do. I remember Vic and them lookin\* at that car three days couldn\*t figure out what it needed. Put in a new brain, started right up. Well, thanks for calling. How\*s your arm? Keep it rested, hear? See you at

the game. (*Hangs up.*) For the love of God, there\*s a turtle on the floor. A turtle. On the floor. Now what in your tiny little head brought you here. Nature is just one mystery after another. (*Leans over.*) I\*ll pick him up. (*Picks him up.*) Are you a pet or are you wild? You\*re awful cute. Like an RV, little Winnebago, wherever you park, you\*re home. Care for a saltine? Well now, Harlon can\*t decide which ear to pierce. She says right ear, he says left. She says left ear means he\*s gay, men will think he\*s willin\*. I say if you\*re already walking the planet with a permanent hard-on, giving every man, woman and species you meet a welcome howdy-do, what difference does it make?

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## STAR SPANGLED GIRL

by Neil Simon

SOPHIE

Ah've come to say goodbye. Ah froze a dozen fritters for you and be careful in the kitchen, ah just waxed the floor. My bus is leavin' for Hunnicut in fifteen minutes. Now, Norman, Ah'm not leaven' because of you. Ah don't blame you for the crazy way you been actin' lately. ah understand it now. There are some things in life we just can't control. For no reason at all something strange and mystifyin' hits us and there's nothin' anybody can do about it except just sit and wait and hope it goes away just as fast as it came. Unfortunately ah don't see mine goin' away in the foreseeable future and that's why ah decided ah can't marry Lieutenant Burt Fenneman and that's why ah'm gettin' on the bus to Hunnicut an' ah can't say another word or else ah'll start cryin' all over this room. Andy Hobart! You expect me to stay here with me feelin' the way ah feel and you feelin' the way you don't?...Mr. Hobart, if ah wasn't afraid ah'd miss mah bus, ah'd really tell you somethin'. Well, ah'll tell you anyway. You're right. Ah may be provincial and old-fashioned. Ah may believe in a lot of things like patriotism and the Constitution because that's the way ah was brought up, and that's the way ah feel. The trouble with you is you can't feel. You can't feel, you can't see, you can't hear and oh, boy, you can't smell! All you can do is think. But until you learn to use all those wonderful gadgets that nature has given you, you are only one-fifth of a man. Unfortunately by the time you get them all workin' and realize you are crazy about me, ah will be back home in mah high school gymnasium gettin' in shape for next year's Olympics. If you want mah advice, ah suggest you take those pennies and visit an eye, ear, nose and throat man. And maybe you out to see a dentist, too. Because mah former fiance, not happy with the recent turn of events, is on his way over here to separate your teeth from your face. Did you hear what ah said? There's an eight-foot Marine on his way here to beat you up! I wish ah could stay to see it. Ah'm leavin'! Back to Hunnicut. And startin' tomorrow ah'm gonna swim a mile everyday from now until next summer. Every American has to do what he does best for his country and ah-can-swim! I'm usin' your phone one more time. Gimme Western Union! And what you did to blacken America's good name with your protestin' magazine ah will whitewash with mah backstroke at the Olympics. (*into the phone*) Ah'd like to send a telegram, please. To Mr. Andrew Hobart, 217 Chestnut Hill, San Francisco. ...Dear Mr. Hobart. Whether you like it or not, ah pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America...and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all...Sing that "A Patriot"... and send it collect.

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## STREET CAR NAMED DESIRE

by Tennessee Williams

*Blanche*

I, I, I took the blows in my face and my body! All of those deaths! The long parade to the graveyard! Father, Mother! Margaret, that dreadful way! So big with it, couldn't be put in a coffin! But had to be burned like rubbish! You just came home in time for the funerals, Stella. And funerals are pretty compared to deaths. Funerals are quiet, but deaths- not always. Sometimes their breathing is hoarse, and sometimes it rattles, and sometimes they even cry out to you, "Don't let me go!" Even the old, sometimes, say, "Don't let me go." As if you were able to stop them! But funerals are quiet, with pretty flowers. And, oh, what gorgeous boxes they pack them away in! Unless you were there at the bed when they cried out, "Hold me!" you'd never suspect there was a struggle for breath and bleeding. You didn't dream, but I saw! Saw! Saw! And now you sit here telling me with your eyes that I let the place go! How in hell do you think all that sickness and dying was paid for? Death is expensive, Miss Stella! And old Cousin Jessie's right after Margaret's, hers! Why, the Grim Reaper had put up his tent on our doorstep! ? Stella. Belle Reve was his headquarters! Which of them left us a fortune? Which of them left a cent of insurance even? Only poor Jessie- one hundred to pay for her coffin. That was all, Stella! And I with my pitiful salary at the school. Yes, accuse me! Sit there and stare at me, thinking I let the place go! I let the place go? Where were you! In bed with your- Polack!

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## A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE 2

by Tennessee Williams

*BLANCHE*

I understand what it is to be lonely. I loved someone, too, and the person I loved I lost. He was a boy, just a boy, when I was a very young girl. When I was sixteen, I made the discovery--love. All at once and much, much too completely. It was like you suddenly turned a blinding light on something that had always been half in shadow, that's how it struck the world for me. But I was unlucky. Deluded. There was something different about the boy, a nervousness, a softness, tenderness which wasn't like a man's although he wasn't the least bit effeminate looking-- still--that thing was there...He came to me for help. I didn't know that. I didn't find out anything till after our marriage when we'd run away and come back and all I knew was I'd failed him in some mysterious way and wasn't able to give him the help he needed, but couldn't speak of! He was in the quicksands clutching at me--but I wasn't holding him out, I was slipping in with him! I didn't know that. I didn't know anything except I loved him unendurably but without being able to help him or help myself. Then I found out. In the worst of all possible ways. By suddenly coming into a room that I thought was empty--which wasn't empty, but had two people in it...the boy I married and an older man who had been his friend for years. Afterwards we pretended that nothing had been discovered. Yes, we all drove out to Moon Lake Casino, very drunk and laughing all the way. We danced the Varsouviana! Suddenly, in the middle of the dance, the boy I had married broke away from me and ran out of the Casino. A few moments later--a shot! I ran out, all did--all ran

and gathered around this terrible thing at the edge of the lake! I couldn't get near for the crowding. Then somebody caught my arm.--"Don't go any closer! Come Back! You don't want to see!" See? See what? Then I heard voices say, "Allan! Allan! The Gray boy!" He'd stuck a revolver into his mouth and fired!--so that the back of his head had been blown away! It was because, on the dance floor--unable to stop myself--I'd suddenly said--"I know! I saw! You disgust me!" And then the searchlight which had been turned on the world was turned off again and never for one moment since has there been any light stronger than this kitchen candle.

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## SUMMERTREE

by Ron Cowen

*Mother*

You know, when it comes, you think it\*s going to be a terrible surprise, that you\*ll tear it up or wad it into a little ball, that you\*ll scream or go insane. Or at least cry. But you don\*t. You know it\*s happened before the telegram arrives. Something in your mind heard the clicks of the teletype machine addressing you as "Dear Mr. and Mrs. so-an so," and adding its deepfelt regrets, before you even see the paper. I went out in the back yard and sat down in the grass under the tree. It\*s been years since I\*ve sat in the grass. So I sat there and I thought back to when we had this Irish Setter . her name was Ginger. Her full name was Gingerella of Brian-wood—the only royalty I\*ve ever met. It was funny to be thinking about an old dog at a time like that, but that\*s what I was thinking. I remembered how I used to pretend I was crying because it would upset her. She\*d run over and jump on me—and she was a very big dog—and she\*d whine and lick my face. She really thought I was crying. Then I would burst out laughing and push her away. One day she got sick and I had to take her to the vet. He said she would have to stay there, and to take her upstairs where he had a room full of cages where he kept the dogs. Ginger was so sick she could hardly get up the stairs. I tried to help her, but all my pushing and pulling probably hurt her more. When we got into the room, all the dogs started barking and lumping around. It scared Ginger and she tried to run away. But she could hardly move. So she just cried. I led her into her cage and then I ran down those stairs, so glad to be away from there. I never saw Ginger again. She died, and I guess they tossed her into the incinerator somewhere. I never cried until that day in the back yard. *(Pause.)* And I don\*t even know if I was crying for Ginger . . . or my Son.

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## SYLVIA

by A.R. Gurney

a dog

Hey! I'm looking around. I gotta get used to things. I'm not ready to sit. I'm too nervous to sit. I'm worried about where I sleep. Do I sleep on this couch? *(Reacts to a quick smack)* Ouch. I'm sitting, I'm sitting. You don't have to hit, you know. It most certainly did hurt. You ought to be sorry. O.k. *(Master reads, Sylvia sits looking at him)* I love you. I really do. Even when you hit me, I love you. I think you're God, if you want to know. I want to sit near you. Nearer, my God, to thee. You saved my life. You did. You saved my

goddamn *life*. I never would have survived out there on my own. Oh no, not just anyone would have done the same thing. Someone else might have ignored me. Or shooed me away. Or even turned me in. Not you. You welcomed me with open arms. I really appreciate that. I hardly knew where to turn. I was beginning to panic. I thought my days were numbered. Then there you were. I felt some immediate connection. Didn't you? I feel it now. I know you will try to give me a good home. And I'll try to show my appreciation. (*Hearing something, she begins to bark*) Hey! Hey! Hey! Hey! Hey! Hey! Someone's there! (*Reacting*) This is your wife, Kate? Hello, Kate. I'm just trying to make friends. You don't like me, do you? You don't like dogs. You're prejudiced. I think you're prejudiced against dogs. O.k., fine. No problem. I'll just stay out of your hair. (*Steps onto couch and settles*) Off? Me? You speaking to me? I'm just relaxing. Can't I even relax? Easy! Take it easy! ....Jesus! I've sat on couches before, you know. I've sat on plenty of couches. (*Getting up, easing onto the chair*) Can't I at least sit on a chair? No!?! (*Slumping back onto the floor*) Crap. Piss. What do you mean this is not going to work? The pound??? Hey, I'm sitting, aren't I? I'm sitting on the floor. Look how quickly I sat. O.K. I get the picture. I'll avoid the furniture. I'm not dumb. I don't mind. I'll sleep. I'll chew things. All right, I *won't* chew things. Just show me the rules and I'll follow them, I swear. (*She watches Kate go off*) Dig *her!* She doesn't like me. She makes me nervous. I sense the clock ticking away. It took her two years to say she'd marry you?!? Two *years!*? Jesus, Greg! If you multiply that by seven why that's...um...carry the two...I make that fourteen years, dog time! That's too long, Greg! Can't I do something to speed things up? I'm tired of being just a houseguest around here. I want to feel totally at home. (*She looks at the moon that Greg has pointed out to her*) Yeah. Nice moon.....I suppose you'd like me to sit adown and howl at it? Well, I don't think I can do that, Greg. Sorry. I like to think I've grown beyond that kind of behavior. I think I'll just take my nap.

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## Taken in Marriage

By: Thomas Babe

*RUTH*

*Situation: ANNIE remembers her father as "a lovely man." Andy calls him "a monster." She advises her naive little sister against getting married. RUTH, now a widow, contributes her two cents.*

It was a small point. I may seem the smallest part of a fool, and Annie and Andrea may think worse, but I'm not. I'm shrewd, after my fashion. and I got that way from living with Harry, day in and day out, for low those, and high those, twenty-five years. We merely ran together, into each other, back and forth, for twenty-five years, so that you could not have separated us if you tried, it was not even the distance of a feather. We began in an intimacy of a rare sort, and ended that way, or would've, if I had been able to make it to the hospital before he made his departure from this world. Now, what I am saying will not make much sense, or be of much importance, if you believe that all these marriages that are performed in tunic and on fields or aboard ferries going around Manhattan island, or where they read John Donne and Tod McKuren and make up vows about sharing the housekeeping and bearing analysts' bills mutually... if you believe those ceremonies, as they are still called, are ought more than contracts of employment for a certain period to be terminated at the will of one or the other of the mutual contractor, or by consent, or when it ain't no fun no mo', then I will seem worse than a fool, I will be your village idiot. But there were times when I breathed when he breathed, when he couldn't have been more than about a thousand miles away and he had that pain he got behind his forehead or his knee went out and I would just know it. Just the same way I knew,

that thousand miles away, when he was shackled up with some dear little thing and I'd know. He'd come home and wouldn't even feel it necessary to be ashamed or whistle a lot, I'd know, he'd know I knew, I knew he knew I knew, and we'd have a good laugh anyway. It was, and it is, always, more important to be loyal than anything else in the world because, love, romantic love, fresh lust, I prefer to call it, is transitory, convertible, stenuous, expensive, a little vacuous and evacuating, thrilling and oh so fragile, so unlikely, so unlike anything that feels like a place to put one's head down. He was cruel to me, Harry indifferent, profane mostly.... at the worst, he simply screwed me, without concern, and my body might just as well have been his own hand in the john, pouring over those magazines he kept in the desk that I found when I had to clean up after he passed on so suddenly. But there was, over all, at the beginning always, in glorious bursts, sometimes in sustained long lento times, all we, each of us, could have ever cared for or wanted, so much so that to be bitter about the bad parts is to be, well, I think, downright crappy. *(Pause.)* I want you to remember that, Annie.

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### **TWO FOR THE SEESAW**

**by William Gibson**

*Gittel*

*She is pregnant and her boyfriend does not know she is...she is also at the first stages of a miscarriage.*

All right, Jerry, I'll tell you the truth. I— *(She looks for where to begin.)* About tonight and me getting together with Jake, I—did want to go to Frank Taubman\*s. Only I don\*t fit in with your classy friends. Like your ex wife Tess would. What do you think, I don\*t know? *(She is hugging herself, trying to smile.)* I mean all I am is what I am. Like Wally, he wanted me to get braces on my teeth, I said so face it, I got a couple of buck teeth, what did I keep it, such a secret? I said you got to take me the way I am, I got these teeth. But I\*m not Tess. And she\*s all you been thinking about since the minute we met. Yes. So what\*s Jake, a—piece of penny candy. It\*s like when I was a kid, we used to neck in the vestibule, she\*s inside you and I\*m always in the vestibule! You never gave me a chance. Okay, but then you say "need you." I need you, I *need* you, who has to say everything in black and white? *(She rises to confront him, pressing the keel of her hand into her stomach.)* But if you want I should of just laid down and said jump on me, no, Jerry. No. Cause I knew all the time you had it in the back of your head to—prove something to her—To her. Everything you gave me was to show her, you couldn\*t wait for a goddam *letter* to get to her. So when *you—ask me to—hand myself over on a platter—* *(She has endeavored to be dispassionate, but now it is welling up to a huge accusatory outcry:)* For what? For *what?* What\*ll I *get?* Jake, I pay a penny, get a penny candy, but you, you\*re a—big ten-buck box and all I\*ll get is the cellophane! *You short-change people, Jerry!* *(She hugs herself, tense, waiting till she has hold of herself.)* And that\*s the truth. That\*s what you did *this* time. *(Desperate.)* I\*m not talking about *her* now, that\*s exactly what I\*m talking about! So I tried Jake. Okay, a jerk. So we\*re both flops. Jerry! Don\*t go! The main thing *I* did in Jake\*s was—faint in the john. That\*s when I found I— *(Her voice breaks, the tremor in it is out as a sob.)* I\*m bleeding, Jerry! It\*s why I was so thirsty, I\*m—scared, Jerry, this time I\*m scared to be bleeding—Help me, Jerry! *(Weeping.)* Jerry, don\*t hate my guts. I didn\*t want to trap you—trap you in anything you— I hate my goddam guts, I\*m so ashamed, but don\*t leave- Don\*t leave me, don\*t leave me—

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## **VANITIES**

by Jack Hiefner

Mary

I love that football team. There they are, out there getting killed for the school. Sometimes I think all those people in the stands just want to have a good time. It\*s the band\*s fault. They play at the worst times. They never look to see what we\*re doing. Sometimes they start "The Baby Elephant Walk" right in the middle of our yells. If they play "Moonriver" again tonight I\*ll scream. It puts everyone in a down mood. I-low can you make a touchdown when they\*re playing "Moonriver"? Everybody goes to sleep. Well, there\*s nothing we can do about the band. Just ignore them. They\*re no good anyway. They\*re all creeps. All those girls with glasses and pimples. All those boys with glasses and pimples. Creeps! How many girls in the band have ever been elected to anything in this school? Zero. The girls in the band are the worst. And those majorettes go to the other extreme. I don\*t know why becoming a twirler automatically makes a girl easy. Look at Sarah. I used to like her, but the very minute she became a majorette her reputation went downhill. My mother said if she ever caught me going out for a coke in the same car with Sarah, she\*d ground me. Said that Sarah was trash and her whole family acted like trash and, if I associated with trash, I\*d get what was coming to me. And what makes me furious is that the boys love her. Respect her they don\*t. Love her they do. If Sarah wants to make-out, I wish she'd just do it in the car. Not in the show. Jim was so hot after watching Sarah, that we barely got to to the car before he was all over me. The ideas are already in their heads. Sarah just puts them in their hands. He'll try. They all try. Jim loves me, but ever night it\*s a battle. I just turn to him and say, 'Jim, keep your pecker in your pants.\*\* I just worry about what Jim will try next. I mean, when we started dating, I let him kiss me. Then we went steady and I let him kiss me and touch me lightly.. . on the top only. Then he gave me his football letter jacket to wear. I let him rub up against me, but all clothes on mind you. Now he\*s giving me his football jersey. I guess he can put his hand under my bra. But with every gift, I give in a little more. He\*s got more gifts lined up than I\*ve got parts to give.

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### ***THE WHITE DEVIL***

Had I foreknown my husband's death as you suggest,  
 I would have bespoke my mourning.  
 You shame your wit and judgement to call me cunning.  
 What, is my just defense  
 By him that is my judge called impudence?  
 Let me appeal then from this Christian court the uncivil Tartar.

*[Kneeling]*

Humbly thus,

Thus low, to the most worthy and respected  
Lieger ambassadors, my modesty  
And womanhood I tender; but withal  
So entangled in a cursed accusation  
That my defense, of force, like Perseus  
Must personate masculine virtue to the point.  
Find me but guilty, sever head from body:  
We'll part good friends: I scorn to hold my life  
At yours or any man's entreaty, sir.  
For know that all your strict combined heads,  
Which strike against this mine of diamonds,  
Shall prove but glassen hammers, they shall break;  
These are but feigned shadows of my evils  
Terrify babes, my lord, with painted devils,  
I am past such needles palsy, for your names  
Of Whore and Murd'ress, they proceed from you,  
As if a man should spit against the wind,  
The filth returns in's face.  
Grant I was tempted,  
Temptation to lust proves not the act,  
*Casta est quam nemo rogavit,*  
You read his hot love to me, but you want  
Condemn you me for that the Duke did love me,  
So may you blame some fair and crystal river  
For that some melancholic distracted man  
Hath drowned himself in\*t.  
Sum up my faults I pray, and you shall find  
That beauty and gay clothes, a merry heart,  
And a good stomach to feast, are all,  
All the poor crimes that you can charge me with:  
In faith my lord you might go pistol flies,  
The sport would be more noble.  
But take you your course, it seems you have beggared me first  
And now would fain undo me; I have houses,  
Jewels, and a poor remnant of crusadoes,  
Would those would make you charitable.  
You have one virtue left,  
You will not flatter me.  
If you be my accuser  
Pray cease to be my judge, come from the bench,  
Patience? I must first have vengeance

I fain would know if you have your salvation  
 By patent, that you proceed thus.  
 Yes, you have ravished Justice,  
 Forced her to do your pleasure.  
 Die with these pills in your most cursed maws,  
 Should bring you health, or while you sit o\*th\*bench,  
 Let your own spittle choke you.  
 That the last day of judgement may so find you,  
 And leave you the same devil you were before,  
 Instruct me some good horse-leech to speak treason,  
 For since you cannot take my life for deeds,  
 Take it for words. O woman\*s poor revenge,  
 Which dwells but in the tongue; I will not weep,  
 No I do scorn to call up one poor tear  
 To fawn on your injustice; bear me hence,  
 Unto this house of — what\*s your mitigating title?  
 It shall not be a house of convertites.  
 My mind shall make it honester to me  
 Than the Pope\*s palace, and more peaceable  
 Than thy soul, though thou art a cardinal.  
 Know this, and let it somewhat raise your spite,  
 Through darkness diamonds spread their richest light.

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## **TO BE YOUNG, GIFTED AND BLACK**

Lorraine Hainsberry

### ***Mama***

Evenings were spent mainly on the back porches where screen doors slammed in the darkness with those really very special summertime sounds. And sometimes, when Chicago nights got steamy, we would go out to the park where it was cool and sweet to be on the grass and there was usually the scent of freshly cut lemons or melons in the air. Daddy would lie on his back, as fathers must, and explain about how men thought the stars above us came to be and how far away they were. I never did learn to believe that anything could be as far as that. Especially.....the stars. My mother first took us south to visit her Tennessee birthplace one summer when I was seven or eight. I woke up while we were still driving through some place called Kentucky and my mother was pointing out to the beautiful hills and telling my brothers about how her father had run away and hidden from his master in those very hills when he was a little boy. She said that his mother had wandered among the wooded slopes in the moonlight and left food for him in secret places. They were very beautiful hills and I looked out at them for miles and miles after that, wondering who and what a "master" might be. I remember being startled when I first saw my grandmother rocking away on her porch. All my life I had heard that she was a great beauty-but no one had ever remarked that they meant a half century before! The woman that i met was as wrinkled as a prune and could hardly hear and barely see and always seemed to be thinking of other times. But she could still rock and talk and

even make wonderful cupcakes-which were like cornbread, only sweet. She died the next summer and that is all that I remember about her, except that she was born in slavery and had memories of it it and- they didn't sound anything like- GONE WTH THE WIND!!!

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NOT FROM SCRIPTS

## **AMANDA**

*The death of her mother, the realization of it, her deepest feelings, underpin this speech.*

At first there is this terrible shock, and you're sick and shattered. Then there is this period where you are more or less numb; with people coming by the house and telephoning and bringing in food. It's like you're in this kind of unreal state, half sleeping, half awake. Then there is the preparing for the funeral. You go with your father to pick out the casket. You listen to the undertaker talk to your dad very quietly. About her makeup, her clothing, the flowers. He's sympathetic but also very professional and cold. This is when the realities begin to set in and your mind races and just thinking makes you hurt inside.

Then there's the funeral home. For two afternoons and evenings you're there. People come and say nice things and you nod respectfully and they sign the register and leave. You watch them through the windows as they go off to their cars. You see them talking, laughing, making plans. Already their minds are off of my mother. They've come by, paid their respects, and they're back to living again.

At the cemetery, you see some of them again. Those who had been especially close, the real friends. The sun is hot on my back, and I can feel the perspiration running down my sides. It is so quiet I can hear my heart pounding. The only sound is the wind moving the trees. A few words are said over the casket. I don't remember them because I wasn't listening. I didn't give a damn about the words; I just wanted her back.

Afterwards, we go home and sit in the kitchen. My father, my brothers, and I. We don't say much. And there is so much to say. We just sit there in silence. I feel like bursting. I'm so full of feelings.

The house is like this shadow of what it was when she was alive. But, you know, Mother is still around because she's in my memories. I hear her laughing and calling our names and talking with Aunt Julie on the phone. I hear her footsteps on the porch; I hear her snapping out pillow slips upstairs while humming this little tune. She's gone but she's still here. She's everywhere.

As time passes, the sadness passes, too. Every day you come a little more out of the fog, you know. As the days pass, you get back your laughter and get on with living. But there is still like this emptiness. Maybe there always will be. But slowly you adjust to it. Like they say—life goes on. But she'll always be here, always. Her spirit will never die.

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## AMY'S VIEW

By David Hare

You never saw it. Dominic was funny and gentle. Ambition destroyed him, that's all. Because he thinks that the world of the media matters. he actually thinks that it's real. So it's been harder to talk to him... for years it's been harder to reach him. It's true. So he's gone off with someone who cares about photos in magazines and opinion columns, and all of those dud London things. But that doesn't mean the man was always contemptible. It doesn't mean I shouldn't have been with him at all. it just means... oh, look... the odds were against us. But i happen to hink it was well worth a try. Of course I knew... do you think I'm an idiot? I always sensed: one day this man will trade up. He'll cash me in and he'll get a new model. I always felt it would come. these men, they wait. They wait till they're ready. You make them secure. Then, of course, when you've built the statue... that's when they kick the ladder away. But I did know it. I did it knowingly. It was my choice.

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## ANNIE

*Annie, now living in a foster home, is still afraid that she will be abducted by her father.*

Both of my parents were druggies. They were strung out most of the time. And when they were, they neglected me. Totally. When they were high, they didn\*t give a damn. A lot of the time there was no food in the house. The place was a pit hole. Stinking. Dirty. We lived like pigs. That\*s the way it is with addicts, they only care about one thing—getting their hands on drugs. And they\*ll do anything to get it. Anything. My mother even sold my clothes to get drug money. They were sick people, my parents. Sick as hell.

I would come home from school some days and find my mother and father so stoned they\*d be passed out in the middle of their bed. Then, one day, I come home and find my mom dead on the kitchen floor. My dad was just sitting there, stoned, out of it. I don\*t think he was even aware that she\*d died. I went into shock. When I began to cry, he started slapping me around and going crazy and screaming. He was hysterical and out of control. I ran out the back door and went to my aunt\*s and uncle\*s and stayed there as long as I could. They knew what was going on and tried to protect me and keep me from Dad as long as they could. But eventually I had to go back home.

After Mom was gone, Dad got even heavier into drugs. And he began to abuse me. He\*d beat me for no reason, as if it were my fault he was a junkie. He treated me like hell. So I told my aunt and uncle, and they they told Dad they were going to call the authorities. He came unglued and panicked and kidnapped me because he was afraid they were going to take me away. We drove around the country for almost three weeks, living in cheap motels. It was like this nightmare with

him slapping me around and cursing, and doing drugs all day long. And by now I hated him. I hated my own father.

When we finally came home he told me that if I ever tried to make trouble again he\*d kill me. I was scared to death. God only knows what he\*d do when he was bombed. He wouldn\*t let anyone see me and wouldn\*t let me answer the phone. I lived in constant fear and couldn\*t sleep. After a few weeks of living like this prisoner I just had to break away, had to get out. So I ran off to my aunt\*s and uncle\*s again and talked them into contacting the authorities and telling them what was happening. The authorities put me in my aunt\*s and uncle\*s custody and issued a restraining order against my dad.

I\*m beginning to readjust, finally. I\*m doing okay in school and I\*m into a bunch of activities. But I still don\*t trust adults. Not completely. And why should I? I mean . . . look how they\*ve treated me.

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### **The Arcata Promise**

by David Mercer

*LAURA*

*When Laura is 16 she is left by her American Parents at a school in England, and meets John, an actor in his early thirties. Later, against parental wishes, she lives with him in London. Success, under his assumed named of Theodore Gunge, and excessive drinking, lead to rows, problems and the disintegration of their relationship. The play's title refers to the love pact made in Arcata, USA, which Laura, now aged 20, breaks in her decision to leave Gunge. The scene takes place in Grung's Chelsea flat.*

I came to live with you because I loved you. I stayed with you because I loved you. *(pause)*. I endured you because I couldn't imagine life without you. *(pause)*. I feel battered. Ignored. Belittled. *(pause)*. I didn't care for you because you're a famous actor. You remember talking about that party where we met? Well when you came over and talked to me- I thought I'd never seen a man so haunted. So defensive and uptight. *(Pause)*. I never thought you'd find me attractive. I never thought you'd see me again. *(pause)*. When you asked me to, I said yes for you. Not because I was impressed, or flattered, or anything like that. I almost didn't dare to think you'd have any serious interest in me. *(pause)* But you did. *(pause)* Girls at school used to laugh at me because I said I wouldn't go to bed until it was somebody I loved. Very old-fashioned, or whatever. At my school you were considered freaky if you were still a virgin after sixteen *(Pause)*. And because of you- I was glad. I was happy I'd never been with anyone else. *(Pause)*, I've been happy with you- but to sad as well. Too sad as well. Too humiliated. *(Pause)*. Too hurt. *(Pause)* I never thought it mattered at all your being so much older. Now I can see it does. Not the years. Not the difference in experience. *(pause)*. It's that you'll go on being exactly the same. *(her voice rising)*. And I'm changing.... *(standing)*, I've loved you. I believe you love me. But you've lived and behaved exactly as you wanted- with me like some kind of appendage. *(pause)*. Where have I been? Who did anybody ever think I was? Some of your friends still can't even remember my surname! Others pity me. I can count on one hand the number of items I've ever been asked a question about myself. I image people find me dull and boring. You drink. You talk. You dominate. I'm the one who drives you home. You rant. You rave. You're the evening's entertainment. I'm the one you turn on when we get home. I should think I'm despised. Not because anyone's taken the trouble to find out what I'm like. No. But because I must seem like your bloody shadows. *(Pause)*. I'm not envious. I admire your acting and respect it as much as anybody else does. But I'm not just a servicing arrangement to your needs.

I'm something else. (*Pause*). And I'm going to find out what that is.

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### ***BARBARA***

*Barbara is put off by her mother\*s outrageous dietetic demands.*

My mother has this totally insane attitude about food. She eats like a bird—a hummingbird. For breakfast, she'll have a piece of dry toast and coffee. For lunch, a salad with no dressing. For dinner, a thimble-full of chicken. It\*s like her whole life is a diet, you know. When we go to a restaurant, she pulls out this little booklet that tells you how many calories there are in food, how much fat, how many carbs and stuff. Sitting down to eat with my mother is like sitting down at the table with a scientist. She analyzes everything. And of course this means I have to eat rabbit food, too. The last time we had lunch, she insisted I order a cucumber salad and a tomato stuffed with tuna. Oh yeah, and iced tea. Cucumbers and iced tea. Real appetizing, huh? Puke-ola! This is why I try to avoid eating with her at all costs.

She\*s constantly bugging me about what I eat. "Don\*t eat fat. Don\*t eat meat. Don\*t eat sweets. Don\*t eat processed food." Don\*t is a big word in my mom\*s dietary vocabulary. And I\*m not fat. Hey, I\*m not even overweight. I mean, if I was like this balloon or something, it\*d be different.

She\*s always jumping on my dad for what he eats, too. The poor guy can\*t enjoy a meal without hearing how unhealthy everything he\*s eating is. She gets into all kinds of facts and figures: about how many of the calories you\*re eating are fat; about how pesticides cause cancer; about how meat-packing plants aren\*t sanitary; about these laboratory experiments on rats. She\*s like this walking, talking, food horror picture. Her conversation alone could cause a person to lose weight. I mean, how can you possibly eat when someone\*s sitting talking about rats shriveling up and dying because they don\*t get enough protein? Hey, the thought of rats healthy is gross enough.

Mom used to be overweight. I guess this is the reason she\*s flipped on diet. Because she\*s a former fatty. She\*s a reformed food junkie. Which is okay to a point, all right? But she\*s really taken the whole thing out of sight. To the point where she\*s paranoid about food. I'll bet if you hid a Twinkie in her purse she\*d have a stroke.

I think eating right is sensible and being healthy is important. But like who needs taking it to extremes? It\*s important to enjoy life, too. I mean, hey, we\*re not supposed to put our life in a Ziploc bag, you know. I think common sense is the answer. With food and everything else, it\*s just a matter of balance. Besides, how about the thought of going through life without another cheeseburger?

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## **BETTY**

*Unfortunately, Betty, an average, healthy teenager, is under pressure from overachieving parents.*

Look, I mean I don\*t mean to say I have the intellect of a chicken. What I\*m saying here is that I\*m not Einstein, you know. I\*m like this normal person who is just me, that\*s all. What am I supposed to be here, anyway, this super brain who is supposed to figure out the theory of relativity while juggling chain saws? I mean. . . c\*mon, gimme a break.

It\*s not enough that I carry a "B" average. Nooo... I have to get "A\*s" because my mother and father got "A\*s." All I ever hear is about how they were at the top of their classes in high school and college; how they were National Honor Roll students; how they got scholarships; how they used to sit around and read poetry to each other and listen to Mozart. Can you imagine what would happen if I suggested to Ralph we sit around and rattle off poetry and listen to classical music? He\*d be outta here. And who could blame him?

My dad\*s all pissed because I\*m not on the debating team. He just can\*t get it through his head that I hate public speaking. Every time I have to get up in front of people. I break out in a cold sweat and my hands get clammy and my heart pounds so hard you can hear it in the next block. Dad says debating will help me think on my feet. No way. Debating helps me *faint* on my feet.

My parents are both overachievers. My mom, for example, is head of the local chamber of commerce and the Democratic Party. Plus she\*s on the board at the hospital and is an active fund raiser for the local library. Plus, she takes care of the house, knits, plays a great game of tennis, and can whip up a killer souffle. There isn\*t anything she can\*t do, anything. She could write the phone book on the head of a pin blindfolded if she set her mind to it. And my dad is the president of his company, a scratch golfer, a volunteer fireman, chairman for the United Fund, and is on the planning committee for the city. He reads the *New York Times* from cover to cover every day, knocks off a book before bedtime, and figures out his income tax in his head. Sometimes I think my parents aren\*t human.

And here I am, this lowly "B" student whose idea of an intellectual evening is a pizza with everything, a couple of Classic Cokes, and a few new CDs. I haven\*t got a chance. I\*m doomed. I\*ll never be able to measure up.

You know, sometimes I think I\*m not their daughter, that there must have been a mix-up at the hospital. Somewhere in the country today there is this super-brainy genius of a kid living with parents who are a couple of normal nerds.

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## **BRIANNE**

I think when I was in high school people thought I was pretty cool. It's not like I really cared about what they thought. I mean, yeah, I partied, but I did it because I enjoyed it not because everyone else did. And the people that partied with me, well, they enjoyed it too. We

all did. It was every Saturday for sure, and sometimes during the week a small group of us would get together to party without a big crowd. Now, that was very cool. Just a few of us, ya know, really intimate. None of those hangers on that want to be with people who really have it going on. Yeah, that was the best. Those guys were really my friends. You can't get "small," with everyone, ya know. "Small." Code word in front of the parents. I still use it. I don't know if anyone else does. After we got out of school we kind of went our own ways. We don't do that, ya know, get "small," much anymore. In fact, hardly at all. Okay, most of the people I went to school with are in college now and have jobs and stuff. That's all good for them. So. I don't know what everyone is making such a deal about. They are ready for the "next phase." Big damn deal. What, are they so high and I'm so low because I haven't followed the golden path they have. Well, pardon me all to hell. So, I have a drink, smoke a little bud, maybe take some speed now and then to keep things even. Who am I hurting? And it's not like I am going to do this forever. Just for a while. I mean, come on. And it's not like I do it alone. I met these new people at a party in the valley, they are really cool. This one guy has his own place, kind of like a converted garage or something. So, I go there and hang and it's great. Yeah, okay, some of those people are losers, going nowhere in fast way. But I'm not like them. Getting high, getting stoned, it isn't forever. It's for now. And no, I don't know how long *now* is. But I'm not worried about that...at least not yet. So, you got a problem with the way I am? Funny, I don't remember asking you your opinion.

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### *CINDY*

*Cindy\*s mother is addicted to the Home Shopping Network, a habit Cindy finds extravagant and downright obscene.*

Okay, like here she sits by the hour ordering up this garbage from the Home Shopping Network, okay? A boat-load of crap that she'll toss out in six months. It\*s really a bizarre trip, let me tell you, Darlene. Bizarre! Have you ever caught it? Home Shopping? Hey, it\*s going on night and day. And they advertise all this junk like you won\*t believe. Like last night they\*re hyping these little ceramic dolls that look like the crappy little figurines they have on sale all the time at discount stores. And my mother flips for them. She goes and orders three of them. One looks like Porky Pig in drag. One looks exactly like Norma Anderson. And you know how ugly *she* is! And one looks like this painted-up, puppet-faced little dorkball. But Mom thinks they\*re cute. She\*s got this whole case jammed full of these turkeys, and if you touch one she goes nuts. Like if you broke one you\*d be trashing the Crown Jewels.

She sits in front of the TV all day checking out the trash they sell. Gimmick stuff: Like hair driers that have built-in radios and stuffed animals that are actually handbags. She bought this gross little hippo with a zipper in its back that she carries all the time. I won\*t leave the house with her when she carries it.

Since she found Home Shopping, she\*s become crazed, Darlene. Her mind is wasted, I swear. She\*s become like this Home Shopping robot, or something. Some days I think I\*m part of this crazy Home Shopping sci-fi movie.

I don\*t dare bring her habit up in front of my father. If I do, later she accuses me of ratting on her. Dad told her if she doesn\*t cool it with buying all the crap, he\*s going to cancel all our credit cards. Last month the Master Charge was over two thousand dollars! Two thousand bucks for stuffed-hippo purses and musical plant hangers and genuine imitation-crystal rabbits and gold-plated miniature horseshoes that you use for coasters. It\*s insane. She\*s lost it. Totally lost it. Come on over sometime and watch her while she\*s watching the show. She\*s like on another planet. Gone. Zappo. Here she sits holding the telephone with these weird eyes like some whacked-out zombie. I\*m talking "Twilight Zone" here, Darlene. (*She imitates the "Twilight Zone" theme music.*)

And guess what? This week she\*s Home Shopping for Christmas. Christmas! And here it is only June. She says she wants to get the good stuff before it\*s all gone. "Good stuff." She kidding? As if there is any. God only knows what we\*ll be getting this year. I hate to think about it. I have like this gnawing feeling it\*s going to be a strange Christmas, that I\*m going to open up my gift and there it\*ll be—one of those stupid hippo purses.

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#### ***DARLENE***

*She bemoans the loss of her pet.*

I know you may think this is off the wall, but I\*m really bummed out because my dog died last week. It\*s kind of like I\*m running on empty, you know. It\*s like somebody has pulled a plug in my head and drained all the happiness out.

I had Curly since I was ten years old. He was a neat pet who never barked and went ape or caused us any trouble. He was a nice animal, and I really loved him a lot. If you can understand that. A person can get really attached to their pets, you know. Can get as attached to them as you do to a person.

People who\*ve never had animals around have no concept of the closeness you can develop for them and how you look forward to seeing them every day and how you miss them when you\*re away. You develop like this strong bond between you, this special connection. Like between Curly and me. He\*d be waiting for me every evening when I came home from school, and he\*d hang around when I was doing homework and stuff. And he slept in my room every night. He\*d curl up at the foot of my bed and stay there till morning. When I got cold, I used to slip my feet under him to keep them warm. Since he died, I haven\*t hardly slept at all. There\*s this big empty space now that Curly used to fill.

We got Curly from the pound when he was just a puppy. I picked him out of a litter because he had this large brown spot over one eye. He wasn\*t a thoroughbred, no way. Just a mutt. Who knows how many crossbreeds. "A Heinz 57," my dad used to say. But he was smart and perceptive and always alert and playful. Mutts are often exceptionally intelligent dogs. And he had this great temperament. And he was cool, too. He had this laid-back attitude. But he knew what was happening. You didn\*t put anything over on Curly. He was hip. Like I said, cool. Kind of a Spuds McKenzie type, you know.

One of the neat things about animals is that they aren't demanding. They're just there, always there for you. And they don't ask a lot. Just a little attention every now and then. A kind word. Some playfulness. And there is this special quality to their silence when they're nearby. It's a quietness that allows you to be relaxed in their company without a lot of phony bull. A quality people should develop in their relationships, I think.

Curly had been sick for a long time, and we'd had him to the vet's often. But he wasn't getting any better. The last time we took him in, the vet said that we should put him to sleep, that he was suffering, and that he wasn't going to recover. So we left him there. And I left part of myself there with him, too.

I sure do miss that dog.

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### **It's A Doll's Life**

*Situation: A rag doll, who has been neglected by her owner Sally, reflects on her disappointing life in her nursery. (a doll sits in the middle of a table, with her head down)* Sure, everyone thinks being a doll is fun. *(looks at the audience)*

All of the other toys say, "why wouldn't you want to be a rag doll? Little girls adore you. You would be their favorite toy." Right and what would the other toys at the store say now about my perfect life? All I do all day is sit up on this shelf, collecting dust. It has been a long time since I have been to a tea party. *(looks around the room)* It has been such a long time since I have even left this spot. I used to be Sally's favorite toy. I remember the first day I arrived home from Eaton's department store. My box was wrapped in pretty gold paper, with a big green bow on the front. "Oh Mommy, oh Daddy, I love it. I going to play with her for ever and ever and ever and I am going to love her for ever and ever and ever." Where are you now Sally? Are you off with your collection of Barbies or are you watching television? She doesn't even realize how hard it is for me to watch her play with her other toys. I just sit here, hour after hour, day after day, watching. I'm not alone though. Numerous Care Bears have been stuffed in the closet, her Cabbage Patch Kids collection is over in that corner *(points to corner)*, and we can't forget the Disney Store in the left corner *(looks to the other corner)*. At least I got a shelf.

Please, don't get me wrong, when I first arrived in this nursery, everything was wonderful. That month was the happiest month of my life. Sally would play with me every day. We would have tea parties, we would read books together. *(sigh)* We did everything together. Sally would take me everywhere. I once got to go to show and tell with her. *(pause)* I was always there for her. She could tell me anything, and I wouldn't tell the other toys. But, on that cold November day, her Daddy brought home her first Barbie, and our life together was over. I never even got a name. All of her other dolls have names. I am just referred to as "her" or "dolly". Why didn't she give me a name? Naming a doll is not the hardest thing to do in the world. It only takes a few seconds of thought. Sally will occasionally stop and talk to me. Just last week she picked me up and brushed my hair. *(pause)* But I soon returned to my spot. Is this my destiny? I want to have fun again. I want to play again with a person. I want someone to love me. I don't want to spend my life on a shelf, collecting dust. It doesn't look like I have a choice, does it?

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**ELLEN**

*Ellen feels it time to talk openly with her parents about AIDS.*

Please! This isn't the Dark Ages. This isn't the time of the Inquisition or the Salem Witch Trials. Or maybe it is! Yeah, maybe it damned well is. The way you two go around speaking under your breath in hushed tones about the subject is ridiculous. You think I don't know about AIDS? You think I don't read, don't watch TV? You think I'm some blind and dumb teenager whose head is into nothing but rock 'n' roll? You know what? You remind me of my teachers. They skirt the subject, too. Oh yeah, we have these "informative" discussions. The only problem is—they're not informative. They circle the guts of the issue. It's like this cosmetic treatment, you know. This very careful, eggshell clinical discussion where everyone's afraid to talk plain. You think this is learning? You think this is healthy? You think this is enlightening? Hell, no! It's avoidance!

Like Jerry Raynor, our neighbor. You actually think I believe he died of pneumonia? C\*mon, the man was a homosexual. He had AIDS! The man died because his body was ravaged by the damned disease. Because the poor guy was infected by an active HIV virus. Pneumonia! Pfft! Gimme a break. You and the rest of the neighborhood have your heads so far in the sand it's pitiful. And what did any of you do for the poor man? Nothing? And why? Well, I'll tell you why.

Because of your prejudice, that's why. Because of your fears! Because of your stupid, old-fashioned ideas! So the guy goes and dies without anyone reaching out to him because you were all so afraid that it would taint you all in some crazy way. Or maybe you were afraid you would "catch it!" I would laugh if it wasn't so pitiful.

Sometimes I wonder who the clear thinkers are in this society. Certainly not many of the so-called "adults," that's for damned sure. A person has to be emotionally mature before he can be considered an adult. He has to get hold of some enlightenment. He has to face up to reality.

I get it here, I get it in school, I seem to get it everywhere. It's like some conspiracy against me, my generation. It's no wonder so many young people rebel. When you live with dishonesty for so long you've got to do something!

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**FELICIA**

*Felicia, shaken, tells of the gang-related slaying of a friend.*

Last Saturday, Maria and I went to this party on 5th Street, okay? We hung out at the party for a couple of hours, dancing and having fun and talking to friends. Maria was a good dancer and was real popular. Everybody liked her.

We left the party around ten o'clock or so and started walking back home. After we'd walked about four blocks, this car pulls up and this guy yells out the window. He says, "Hey, we're from the North Side Gang and we're looking for some dude."

I didn't like the looks of these guys, and I told Maria that we should be careful and just keep on walking and not answer them. In this neighborhood, on the streets at night, you never know what's going to happen.

But Maria walks up to the car. She was always like that. She was never afraid or suspicious of people. So she walks up to the car and says, "I don't know you guys. If you were from the north side, I'd know you guys." Then this guy in the back of the car says, "We're from the south side, bitch." Then he pulls up this shotgun and shoots Maria in the arm. It was terrible.

Maria fell down on her knees holding her arm. It looked like her arm was almost torn off from the shotgun and blood was shooting out all over the place. I ran into a yard and up on the front porch of this house. The guys in the car called Maria a slut and laughed at her. I knew she was hurt real bad, but there wasn't anything I could do but try to keep them from shooting me, too. Gang guys don't care who they kill. Maria was crying and holding her arm and begging them not to hurt her. She said, "Please, I didn't do anything. Don't hurt me, please." Then the guy with the shotgun shot her again and she fell back. I heard her call out for her mother. "Mother," she said. "Oh, Mother!" Then she kind of like trembled and died. I still can see it. It was. . . it was awful. I can still see it. I'll never get it out of my mind. Ever.

Maria didn't do anything. All she wanted was to have a life. And now here she is, dead at sixteen. In this neighborhood, on the streets at night, you never know what's going to happen.

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### *JILL*

*Jill thinks Tony is hot but Tony is interested in her best friend, Laura. Here, she relates her dilemma.*

So Laura comes over to me at the dance and says, "Isn't Tony cute?" and I say, "Yeah." Because Tony is the coolest guy around. Then she says, "Do you think I should ask him to dance." And I say, "Sure, why not?" But she says she's too bashful, that I should ask him to dance. And I say, "Hey, why me? You're the one who wants to dance with him." And she says, "Yeah, but you've got all kinds of nerve,, and stuff like this doesn't bother you." And I say, 'But what'll it prove if I dance with him?' And she says, "While you're dancing with him, you can tell him that I think he's cute and ask him to dance the next dance with me." Now I'm thinking that this whole thing is pretty far out, but because I'm Laura's best friend, I ask Tony to dance. Wow, was he ever a good dancer.

Okay. So while we're dancing, I ask him if he'll dance with Laura because Laura thinks he's cute and he says, "Sure." So, after the dance, I go and tell Laura that he'll dance with her, and she is real thrilled like some stupid grade-school dope and gets so red in the face that she looks like a stop-light. So then Tony comes on over and asks Laura to dance, and she says, "No thanks, I don't dance with strangers." And Tony walks away. "No thanks?" I can't believe this. After all this, she turns the guy down like he's a plate of Hamburger Helper. I say "Hey, Laura, what's going on here? Are you crazy? After asking me to dance and go through all this you tell the guy to get lost?" And Laura says, "This way he'll think I'm

hard to get and will be more attracted to me."

And do you know what? She was right. After that, he couldn't stay away from her. He kept bugging her to dance with him all night long. And she kept turning him down. Then, next day, he starts calling her all the time and asking her out. After about two weeks she agrees to go out with him, and they've been going steady ever since.

Tony is really hot. Like I said, he's the coolest guy around. He has this way about him. And you should see the way he dresses. He is always styled out. I'm crazy about him. But so far as he's concerned, forget it. I don't exist. He looks right through me. I might as well be a pane of glass. And besides, what can I do, anyway? I can't make a move on him because Laura's my best friend. Even though she did use me to get to Tony. Sometimes, when I think about it, I get really upset. But then, on the other hand, I have to respect her for her knowledge of the male ego.

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### ***KATE***

*Several years ago, Kate was molested by her neighbor and then, not long after that, was sexually abused by her mother's boyfriend. Her mother, however, refused to believe that either incident ever took place.*

It all started when I was just twelve years old, living with my mother and her boyfriend. I used to be home alone a lot because my mother had to work. Well, one day, this guy, Bob, our neighbor, comes over, okay? He was like this friend of my mom's, and he knew that the key to the house was hidden in the flower-pot near the front door. Anyway, he came in and came up to me while I was watching television. I didn't pay much attention to him because I knew him and was used to him being around. But this particular day, he was acting very strange. He came over and sat next to me on the couch and began running his hand up and down my leg. Then he became bolder, forcing his hand under my jeans and... and.., well, he was touching me, you know. I tried my best to get away from him, but he kept forcing himself on me and pulling at my clothes. And then.., then he exposed himself.

When I told my mother what had happened, she said I was making it up, that Bob was a nice guy and a good neighbor and would never think of doing anything like that. As hard as I tried to convince her she wouldn't believe my story.

The next time it was much worse and involved my mother's boyfriend, who was living with us part of the time. One night,

while my mother was away, he came into my bedroom while I was doing homework and began forcing himself on me. I tried to keep him away, but he was a big man and I didn't have a chance. When I resisted, he began to slap me. I was scared to death. He had this terrible temper. I didn't know what the hell he might do. He tore off my robe and then.., then.., well, I was sexually abused.

when my mother came home, I told her what had happened, and she refused to believe it. She said I must have this problem where I have to make up these far-out, fantastic stories. First about Bob and now about her boyfriend. She called me a lying little slut and a little troublemaker. I knew right then that I couldn't live in my own home anymore. It was too dangerous. I had to get out.

I'm living with my father now. I was in a bunch of foster homes, but I ran away each time to be with my dad. Even though he has a drinking problem, they've finally decided that it's better for me to be with him than to be with strangers. Besides, he treats me good and I feel safe with him. He's a nice man. He may be an alcoholic, but I know he loves me.

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### **Love is a Place**

*EMMA*

They laughed. They all laughed at me! All of my supposed friends laughed at me! I can't believe that I really thought that they were my friends! Jack, they laughed at me when I cried because the cafeteria reminded me of you. That was where we first kissed. Do you remember? Of course you don't remember. You can't remember! You're dead! Why did you have to leave me? I need you. Nobody understands, Jack. They all think that I'm just being melodramatic. They all say that just because we're 15 that it couldn't have been love. But it was love! I loved you then, and I love you now! Why'd you do it? Whatever it was, you could've talked to me about it. We would have worked something out. That note that you left didn't do much to console me. "Dear Emma, I love you, but there are some things that even love can't conquer. I have problems that you couldn't even imagine, and I don't want to get you involved. This has nothing to do with you. Please don't blame yourself. Even if you were here, there's nothing that you could do to stop me. My mind's made up. I know what I have to do. I'll always love you. Love, Jack"Even if you were here there's nothing that you could do to stop me? What do you mean there's nothing that I could've done? I know that if I had been there things would have turned out differently. Jack, my heart is breaking. You made me realize that I was special. You showed me that I do matter, and when you needed me to be there for you, I wasn't there. Everything that happened in my life before I met you is meaningless, as is everything that has happened since your suicide. It makes me so angry that no one thinks that it's possible to be in love just because of our age. Is age really what matters? Are they saying that if soulmates meet before they are 21, then it won't be love? How old do you have to be for love to be real? I don't care what they think about our relationship. It was real. I know it, and you know it, and that's all that matters. I miss everything about you. You can't imagine how difficult it is being here without you. My best friend in the whole world, the one person that I could tell anything to, is gone. Gone forever. I always thought that we would grow up, get married, have kids, become grandparents, and grow old together, but now that'll never happen. You know the saying, you always hurt the ones you love? Well, I see just how true it is now. I know that you loved me despite all of my flaws, yet still you hurt me in the worst way possible. You left. When you were here, I felt like I belonged to the world. Now that you're gone, I'm a lonely soul floating aimlessly throughout the world. You were my guide on the path of life, and without you I'm lost. Jack, I can't deal with this anymore. I know that it's only been about a month, and everyone says that it will get easier, but I know that although that may apply to others in similar situations, it doesn't

apply to me. This will never get any easier. It will only get harder, as the days pass and the realization that you're gone forever sets in on me. I have no one here to help me deal with this. You were the only one who understood me. My love for you was what kept me going, but it's getting harder with everyone saying that it wasn't really love. I know that it was love. That love kept me going, and now, in the end, it's also what's tearing me apart. I suppose that you could say that it's almost like a drug. Love, that is. I was down when we met, and your love helped me to get out of my rut, and up into the clouds. I can't live without your love, so it's now clear what I have to do. Juliet said to Romeo, "and all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay, and follow thee my lord throughout the world". Now it's my turn to follow you throughout the world or after world. I don't care where we are as long as we're together, and the only way that we can be together is in death.

In your note you said that there was nothing that I could do to stop you. Now, there's nothing that you can do to stop me. I'm coming to join you, Jack!

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### MARCIE

*Financial realities are impediments to Marcie\*s going to camp. But she is understanding and supportive.*

It\*s like this: My father has been out of work for almost six months now. They laid him off because things were slow at the factory. They laid off over three thousand people down there. The whole town is suffering because of it.

Up 'til now, we\*ve always had everything we\*ve ever needed. Probably more, I think. We\*ve always lived really well. And my mother has never had to work because my father has always had a good job. Before he was laid off, he supervised a whole group.

The day he was fired was a very unsettling day for all of us. Unsettling most of all, I think, because of the way it affected my father. The whole thing really brought him down. He\*s usually this cheerful, happy-go-lucky type of person who is the last one to complain or be upset by problems. When everybody else is in the dumps, he\*s always the one who cheers them up and gets things back on track, you know. He\*s an optimist. At least he used to be, anyway. Now, I\*m not sure.

It seems that being fired changed him, altered him. He\*s just not what he used to be. Not like before. It\*s like there is this... this something missing in him, you know. Like some vital part. Like this something important was taken right out of him. I guess it\*s his feeling of dignity and self-respect. And then there has to be lots of pressure. You can see it in him.

He\*s been all over town looking for work. He\*s even sent resumes to companies out of town. But so far, nothing. Only offers for stupid jobs that won\*t pay enough to support the family. Some nights when he comes home from interviews and job hunting, he just sits in his chair and doesn\*t speak to anyone. He just sits and looks off into space. Even though he doesn\*t say anything, you can tell he\*s hurting. It\*s really sad.

Last week, Mom took a job at Smith & Webster\*s department store. She\*ll be working in the accounting department. And my brother got this job down at Henderson\*s hardware. We\*re all pitching in. It\*s the least we can do. At a time like this, a family has to pull together.

So this year I won\*t be going to camp. Hey, the way things are, camp is out of the question. Instead, I\*ll be working part-time at McDonald\*s. Who knows, maybe it\*ll be better than goofing off all summer, anyhow. Already just the thought of being able to help out is a lot more uplifting than the thought of sitting around roasting marshmallows for three weeks. Besides, the mosquitoes eat me alive.

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### MARY

*Mary, a teen alcoholic, tells of her problem.*

I\*m an alcoholic. With some kids it\*s drugs. With me it\*s alcohol. Yeah, you heard right, I\*m an alcoholic, a card-carrying member of AA.

Both of my parents are alcoholics. From as far back as I can remember, drinking was a big part of the family scene. Booze was everywhere. They say when you grow up in this kind of environment, you\*re more inclined to be a drinker yourself. And then there\*s the genetic angle. Often it\*s part of the genetic makeup, a kind of alcoholic heritage. Although I can\*t stand around blaming genetics and my parents. Because blame doesn\*t solve anything. Blaming is just a cop-out to avoid looking into yourself, you know. Blame sucks.

But you can only avoid coming to grips with the problem for so long. If you don\*t, you\*ll wind up trashing your life. I almost hit the bottom myself. Even at my age, I was in big-time trouble because alcohol had a hold on me and I was letting it ruin my life. It was as though it had this spell on me, this ... this hold. I was totally into it. It was this strong, overpowering, destructive thing pulling me down further and further every day.

We always had booze around the house. My parents had this well-stocked bar in their rec room where they had these bashes where everybody got smashed. This is where I started drinking. They used to let me have beer because they thought it was cute to see a kid drink. And I liked the way it tasted. Right from the first, I liked the taste of alcohol. And, like I said, they thought it was fun to see me drink. A real joke, huh? Only trouble is, the joke was on me.

Then I started drinking when they weren\*t around. I\*d sneak off to the bar and have a beer or two. Then I started experimenting with the hard stuff. After a while, I couldn\*t be without it. I craved it. Sometimes I\*d wake up in the middle of the night thinking about it and sneak down and pour myself a drink.

Alcohol seemed to make things better. Things I was afraid of seemed to be easier when I was drinking. I\*d drink before

dates and before exams, anytime I felt nervous or unsure. I felt safe whenever I crawled into the bottle. To the point where I was loaded a lot of the time and getting into more and more scrapes— like wrecking cars and waking up in strange places. I was on a slide. I was in serious trouble. I was on my way down. But I pulled out. Thank God I pulled out. I got into AA with my parents. Now we're all sober. Have been for some time.

It sure is neat waking up knowing that you're sober and free.

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## **ROSE**

Excuse me, Ms. Strong. What was all that, no, not Tuesday? I mean I don't always have to go to my Mother's on Tuesdays, no I just had to say, no, not Tuesday, you don't get old Rose as easy as that Jim Beam, you've got to put yourself out for something special, but not too far cos you

can have her Wednesday, I mean, why didn't I just say, Tuesday, fine! Thank you! Fancy you! Or: get lost Beam, back to the Office and play with your paper clips, but no, not Tuesday, sorry Wednesday? Oh, what a girly game. And after all that probably all he wants is a good chat about

records of reading and breakthrough to literacy and here am I getting myself into some... Well...When things seem to be piling up on me a bit too fast, I hop in the car and go and

see my old mate Sally. She lives about half an hour away down the bypass. And there she is, and her tatty old sofa. Been doing that ever since we were at college together; somehow we managed to get each other through all the bad bits and the boring bits, and finally, even, the finals. And then neither of us taught, not then, but right through the late sixties, when Sally was singing her songs with Jake Hardman in the U.S. of A. and I, was having kids...even then whenever we met, it was still O.K. (*flopping.*) Oh, God.

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## **SHARON**

*A young girl tells what it felt like to have been raped and her plans for revenge.*

Alright! Yes. Yes, I hated it! So what? For three months I felt that damned thing inside me. I couldn't stand it. I couldn't go to school. I couldn't leave the Christian Army home. I hated those boys for what they had done to me. I hated my parents and those goddamn missionaries at the home. And, most of all, I hated my baby. Everyday goddamn day I went to chapel and prayed to God for forgiveness for whatever I had done to make him let those boys rape me. At first I prayed for Him to make the baby go away. But then ... then I knew that wouldn't be enough. I wanted to get back at those boys. To hurt them like they had hurt me. I began praying to

God to let me have the baby. To have it be healthy. To have it be alive so I could take it around town, show everyone what had happened to me. Tell everyone how it happened. What it felt like being raped. Name the fathers. Make the town hate them as much as I did. When I ran away, I confronted one of the boys who had raped me and told him what I planned for him and his baby. He begged me not to do it. Pleaded with me to get rid of it. Cut it out. I laughed. I wanted to ruin his life. When he threatened me, I came back to the home. To protect the baby. To keep it safe for me use against them. Then ... I miscarried. I couldn't believe it. God had had me raped then took away my instrument of revenge. The sonofabitch had killed the one thing that could've made ... my life ... acceptable. I cried for days. Then, later, I realized what had really happened. When I saw other babies, other mothers, saw how much they loved them, I wanted to love my baby, too. I wanted my baby ... to love ... not hate. And then I realized that God hadn't taken away my revenge. He had done something worse. He had taken away the one chance I had had to turn something ugly into something beautiful. He had killed innocence and hope. He had kept the evil alive.

*(Beat)* I hate God

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### SHIRLEY

*Shirley can think of nothing worse than vacationing with her family.*

So I tell Mom, I say, "Look, Mom, I'd rather eat a live snake than hang out for two whole weeks with you and Dad and Norman in the middle of some wilderness in Idaho somewhere. Besides, I can't take Norman. I don't care if he's my little brother or not, he's a dork. He's built like this little tank and he's just as destructive. Why can't I stay home? I'm too old for family vacations."

And she says, "You'll have to talk to your father about that." They always cop out like this when they haven't got nerve enough to be honest, to give you bad news themselves. If I would have asked Dad, he would have said, "You'll have to talk to your mother about that." You ever notice how they do that? Pass the buck? A neat trick, huh? So much for parents.

So I go and talk to Dad and tell him that the thought of spending two weeks in the back of our van with Norman makes me puke. Besides, who needs Idaho? Like what the hell does Idaho have to offer, anyhow? Potatoes, right? Hey, summer's short enough without having to spend it in misery in the middle of nowhere in a tent with no toilet.

But, of course, Dad doesn't see it this way. Oh, no. He doesn't understand that family vacations suck for kids my age.

He says, "Idaho is beautiful and peaceful and it'll be like a nice place for the family to get to know each other." Hey, like I don't already know my own family? And besides, while the family's getting to know each other, Larry will be getting to know Susan Jamison because I won't be around to keep an eye on him. Susan Jamison. Sneaky little bitch!

When I try to explain that I'm old enough to stay home alone and that all my friends are here and that backpacking isn't my thing and that Norman is a potential mass murderer, he goes and flies off in all directions. He says, "Listen, Shirley, this is our vacation, and you're going to enjoy it whether you like it or not." Can you believe this? How 'bout this for screwed-

up logic? Parents become major-league airheads when they don't want to listen to reason.

So, I guess I gotta go to Idaho and play like another potato for a couple of weeks. While you guys are all here living like civilized, normal human beings, hanging out at the mall and partying, I'll be walking to the john in the wilderness someplace hand in hand with a grizzly bear. You've got it made, you know that, Sharon? You're lucky your parents are divorced.

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### **Sophistry**

*Robin*

When I was a little girl, I was so confident and certain daydreaming in my suburban Illinois bedroom, all nice and safe and clean and frilly. My parents, who are here right now- wave to the crowd, folks. (*points*) That's them. They used to make me settle fights with my playmates. They'd call them debates, but don't let that fool you. They were fights. This school's administrators recently paid an enormous sum of money to settle. To keep a former professor from taking them to court to challenge a decision they made. This doesn't feel like a fight, or a debate- not really. This feels like compromise. This feels very Hollow. What is this supposed to mean to us, as we're about to graduate from this place, with diplomas from an institution that's telling us to settle? I know that eventually, when understanding runs out, there is a need for judgment, but who is qualified to judge? Who picks the judges? Who decides that it's okay- to settle? Everybody in my hometown was shocked when I chose this place, but hey shouldn't have been. Martha Graham danced here, I used to envision myself B secretly, of course- as the heir apparent to Martha Graham. Here was a woman making exotic shapes- her shapes made more powerful statements than all the tainted rhetoric in the air. If I could only dance all of this Y but Y I can't. I've tried to find some truth during my time here, some wisdom, beyond food and sleep and sec and shower. What's worth giving to? I don't know. I wish I did. I suppose settling can also mean coming to some sort of peace, and I do. Hope we all find some sort of peace in our lives Y all of us. Anybody Y anybody who's ever been in pain. And whether we settle or Y not Y remains to be seen.

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### **Strange Snow**

*By: Steve Metcalfe*

*Situation: Martha Flannagan is a shy high school teacher who spends her Friday Nights at home correcting papers and her Saturday mornings cleaning up beer cans emptied by her brother David, a moody Vietnam vet who makes his living as a trucker. Big-Boned, and formerly fat, Martha still sees herself as a "battleship. With the face of an icebreaker." She has given up on romance... or so she thinks.*

Look, I'm not one of those pieces of fluff you see in men's magazines. Does that make me any less of a woman? It does not. (*Pause.*) And I'm a fool because for some stupid reason I think it does. And so I buy contact lenses and clothes I think I'd have learned at the

start. *(Pause.)* David even had to get me a date for my high school formal. I was on the decorations committee, the tickets committee. I put together the whole thing! Nobody asked me to go. David rounded up his friends and told them that one of them had to take me, or he'd beat them all up. Personally I think they all drew straws. I didn't really know though. Suddenly I was invited, that's all that mattered. I was so happy. Well, it was something that couldn't be kept quiet. David's Blackmail. I heard rumors. I confronted David. He wouldn't admit what he'd done, but I knew. *(pause.)* I got very sick the night of the prom. A twenty-four hour thing. David meant well.

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## THE AUDITION

*This comic monologue is printed here in its entirety, though written for a male actor, by changing a few pronouns, the piece could be adapted for use by an actress.*

My resume. Oh, first I should mention that I could play any of the parts in this play. Any. I could play an ant, I could play Little Red Riding Hood, I could play Hamlet. I've never heard of this play, as a matter of fact. It doesn't matter. I can do opera, I can do commercials, I can sing soprano, I can do my own stunts- I'm that versatile. Leading man, leading lady, gay, ingenue- you name it, I can do it. That's how great I am. I see you looking over my resume. Noticing I've never had a part. It's a real comment on this sick business we're in, isn't it? An actor this good *(he thumps his chest)* and he's blackballed! Why? For refusing to show up at auditions! Auditions are beneath me. I wipe my feet on them. People should be begging me to grace their theatres- producers should be asking me to audition them! But those egomaniacs who should bow and scrape before me - they have forced me to betray my principles and come to this *(said with utter contempt)* audition. So no, no, don't blame me for demeaning myself in this grotesque position... I've waited ten years for them to come crawling... but suffice it to say they were too wrapped up in their own insane... trivium to get the hint. But enough of them. Let's get to the situation at hand. You're sitting there typecasting me as a leading man aren't you? You're thinking that because of my matinee idol glorious good looks, and rich, sensuous, sexy, seductive, fetching, effervescent, tingly and charming voice, I could only play a male lead. No, I tell you, no! Observe! An ant! *(He crawls along the floor in a normal way.)* And now, King Lear! *(He opens his umbrella and pretends, in an awkward mime, to be blown around the stage.)* I needn't mention, of course, that that was the fabulous storm scene, out on the heath. And now, Brutus, impaled on his own sword! *(Closes the umbrella, stabs himself with it in the stomach. Dies, rather flatly.)*

And here's a homicidal lunatic: *(he gets up, picks up the umbrella, waves it threatening forward, like a sword. This part seems real.)* Give me the part or I'll kill you! I'll poke out the vile grape jelly of your eyes with the point of my umbrella! I've been waiting ten years for this! *(Puts the umbrella down.)* OK. All the parts. I should play *all* the parts in you little production. Capiche? Capiche. Note the mastery of the Spanish dialect. I do it all. Now, with that in mind, here's my... *(Abrupt pause)* What do you mean my time's up? I haven't done my monologue yet! *(Beat)* What do you mean, next? Where do *you* get off saying next?! I memorized this thing! I took the subway here! I elbowed my way ahead of dozens of pushy actors and still had to wait a half hour to get in here! I *wanna* do my audition!

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**Unwedded Bevies**  
**Toni**

You told me once you'd listen to me. Always! Whenever I needed to talk to you. The time has come, my Friend. And I am not ashamed in my shamelessness. I am lonely. Yes. I am utterly and absolutely lonely. I feel cold. Terribly, terribly cold. Inside the very fibres of my heart and soul. I told you I wanted to be alone. To stay wedded to my solitude. Aspiring for something great and mighty! Where are those pillars of lofty thoughts now? Those noble dreams? Gone, all gone. Effaced from the very pillar of life. Dissolved into the pain of living.

How did I fail? What did I miss? What was it which I couldn't find? What was that 'something'? Was it 'love' which I missed to share or nurture? No, love is an illusion! Much like the shadow of one's own self. The shadow, trembling with fear, at the very thought of nearness. The closer it gets, the farther it dissolves in to nothingness. Never embracing the Self. Never knowing the Real. Always drifting, always following, always unattainable. Was it happiness which eluded me? No, not that quicksilver absurdity! What do my thoughts yearn for? For some rest, peace, some bliss inconceivable? No, they crave unrest. Always searching for some blind, evanescent Truth. Till they themselves are reduced to the cutting agony of the flesh. Carving fresh wounds of despair. Festering in their cold tombs of grief. Dying in their own inferno of shame and misery.

Why do I hear the mockery of my own thoughts? What are these hungers, passions, deformities of the boy and soul? Is pain the only kernel of reality worth cultivating? Does pain breed joy? Why befriend joys, when joys themselves nurture on pains? Was Past edifying? Could Present teach wisdom? Would Future absolve Ignorance? Forgive me, my friend, this madness, but I must go on, raving like a fool. I have lived, I have loved. I have cried, I have laughed. I have enjoyed, I have suffered. But I have not gained anything worth cherishing. What was that 'something' which I couldn't nurture, couldn't possess.

Now I know! How heedless were my thoughts? How gluttonous my longings? Had I divorced my solitude? Had I agreed to marriage? I would have had my own children. Would have know the bliss of a real home. A wife, a mother, a grandmother? Most of all, a woman, who could look back on life with the promise-comfort of a home and family. Who could hold and cherish the fleeting memories. Who could flick back the pages of life with pride. Not with regrets and empty longings? I had no home, no family. Even that 'something' which I couldn't possess. Most of us deem our past glorious, didn't you tell me that? Holding future close with the promise of hope, your own words? It's only the present that most of us are dissatisfied with. One more of your epigrams! Ages and ages ago. How the memories play mournful tunes? I look at the blasted ruins of my past with horror. But all is quiet now. Death and darkness. I hear Silence. Thank you.

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### **Can't Judge A Book By It's Cover Victoria**

*Situation: Two friends are sitting around doing homework. Victoria (seventeen years old) is reacting to what Veronica (seventeen years old) just said about Julie, a popular girl at school.*

*(both girls are sitting at a table, doing their homework) I feel really sorry for Julie. Do my ears deceive me? Did I just hear Veronica say that she felt sorry for Julie? I know, I know that is what you said. How could you possibly feel sorry for Julie? Wait,*

don't tell me. I want to examine the facts myself. Now, let's see shall we? Julie Donn, moved to town about three, no four years ago from downtown Toronto. She is the exact replica of a Barbie doll - pretty, slim with one of those personalities to die for. Not much in the brains department though. (laughs, sits down) If she was a real Barbie, I would have to say that she would be Malibu Barbie because she is not smart enough to be the pet doctor one. And you can't forget that breathy voice. (mocking her) Oh darling, I forgot all about it. Can I copy your homework and hand it in? (back to regular tone) Please, give me strength. Yeah, I know that what I just said deals with what we just see on the outside. So what is your point? I'm guessing that you want me to dive into that sea of make-up to get to the inner person. Well okay. She is..... (*change of tone*) Wait, why do you feel sorry for the girl who waltzed into town and stole your boyfriend? The same person who is your lab partner but yet the only work that she does in class is file her fingernails. And don't forget the Jell-O incident where she was carrying a bowl over your head and "accidentally" tipped it and you got to walk around all day with green Jell-O in your hair. I know that you have been working at her house on your science project, but obviously you have been spending too much time over with the princess in her little castle. Do I remember what you told me? You mean about her past? The part about her dad getting fired because he was stealing money, which if you ask me does not make sense because they are old money and were loaded to begin with. Or the part about her mom having a few affairs with high up politicians? Or about her brother being a drug addict and her twenty year old sister marrying an eighty year old man? Is that what you mean? Oh. I guess I was a little bit insensitive wasn't I? Okay a lot. I forgot about all of that stuff that she has to deal with, but that is no excuse to be mean to us. Alright, maybe I should be more considerate and consider what she is dealing with before I judge her. Never judge a book by its cover right? Jeez, I hate it when you point out that I am being insensitive or wrong. I am not that mean! But you know who is really mean? A deep dark, I don't want to meet you in a dark abandoned ally kind of mean? Billy. That's right, Billy Vos. Hey, don't give me that look. Oh, I guess I am doing it again right?

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## **DRAW THE LINE**

Look. I can't keep living like that. Going like that. I don't know how you do it. Up at the crack of dawn and just go, go, go ... leave the office at midnight, rush home and fall into the *bed-collapse* into the bed ... it feels like I've just closed my eyes, just shut them, *when-(Makes an alarm sound)-all* of a sudden, the alarm goes off and it's time to start all over again! (*Beat.*) I went to see my Dentist day before yesterday, you know, to have my teeth cleaned. Thanks. Well, I said, to him, I said, Dr. Parker, I have this problem ... my gums are bleeding a lot. And he looked at them and he said, well, you take care of them. They look perfectly healthy to me. And he said, are you under a lot of stress? And I said, no. And he said, are you eating well? And I said, yeah, sure. And he said the human body is an amazing machine. If you don't take care of it, it tries to *talk* to you, to tell you something. So he looked at my gums again and he finally said for me to go on home. But I went back to work. (*Beat.*) Around midnight, I left work and stopped by McDonald's to get a Quarter Pounder on the way home. Like, my evening ritual. They know me so well now they have it on the counter by the time I get my money out. So there I was at 2 a.m. choking down this cold, crappy food which has become the staple of my life ... I'm eating over the bathroom sink, washing the makeup off from under my eyes and it's gotten where I have to put it on so thick just so I can hide all the circles ... and I just started to cry. I'm, like, my life is my job and I hate my job and I hate my life! I cried for hours. I finally went to bed around dawn and unplugged my phone. I slept for 15 hours straight. And when I finally woke up, I called in. And quit. (*Beat.*) You just get to a point where you've got to draw the line somewhere. I wanted my life back.

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## GOING TO EXTREMES

I'm sorry, but I just can't take this anymore. When you first got the idea, it seemed like a, you know, a good idea ... but *now...* (*Beat.*) I'm talking about all this *Investing*, Walter. Saving. Planning for our future. *What* future? I mean it's like, I'm sorry, but I would kind of like to *eat* today, all right? Is that all right with you? Look, maybe that investment guy was right. "Put away everything you can, *while* you can." Maybe he had a *point*. But it's just like with everything, you've run amok with this whole idea and it's snowballed on us and now it's practically impossible to live! We have been eating stale bread and generic bologna for a week! Just *looking* at that enormous pink roll of meat in the refrigerator makes me gag! It looks like a big, fat, sunburned man's arm! Oh, and I'm sure you would've bought the eighteen-pound economy size can of Vienna Sausages if you'd seen them. But I hid them! Hah! I stood right in front of them so you couldn't see them at the checkout stand! (*Beat.*) My God, *listen* to me ... I'm losing my mind. It must be all that walking, walking, walking since you took away my subway money. And the heat. Since we stopped using the air- conditioner in the middle of this friggin' heat wave! Oh, but we are *saving money*, aren't we, Walter? We're tucking those pennies away! We don't go out to the movies anymore, we don't go out to dinner, we don't take public transportation, all we do is go to work and then come home and sit and sweat. But just think of all the money we're saving! Just think of *all the money* that's being invested! Well, what the hell good is saving all this damn money if we don't survive long enough to *use* it! (*Beat.*) Be reasonable, Walter. I mean, you always go to extremes with everything. But this time your going to extremes is driving me over the edge. What do you say we turn the air-conditioner on? Just for a few minutes. I promise you 'll like it. And if you don't ... well, then. I'll just kill you.

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## GOSSIP

I'm tired of this. I am always being blamed as being the one who starts gossip ... but I don't *start* it. I don't! I just kind of ... join *in* with it after it's started to move along. Kind of like, you know how a snowball does, rolling down a big huge slope, and as it gets going it picks up snowflakes and it gets bigger and bigger? Well, I guess you could say I'm just one of those little snowflakes. Those tiny, tiny, itty-bitty little snowflakes. Perfectly harmless ... on my own. But once I get attached to the snowball... (*Beat.*) I'm afraid I'm confusing you, aren't I? Am I confusing you? [don't mean to, it's just-I don't know what comes over me. I try to take a stand against gossip in my everyday life. I do. I hear some awful, awful story about somebody and I try, with all my might, to block it out. I read something shocking in PEOPLE magazine and I turn the page as quickly as I can. I meet people and somebody tells me some dark secret about them and I TRY NOT TO BELIEVE IT! I DO! I REALLY AND TRULY DO! But sometimes it is just so seductive ... Like with you. Janine told me that you used to have this ... you know. This *job*, okay? Yeah, and I didn't *want* to believe her. I tried to ignore her. I tried to not pay any attention to her. Like it didn't matter. But the more I thought about it, I realized ... God, maybe it was, like, my

*duty* to tell other people about it. To inform them. That the guy living in 5A, he used to be a porn star! I mean, I'm sorry the condo board voted to throw you out and everything but shouldn't they know? I mean, it's not *my* fault this happened! It's not like I *started* this or anything. You were the one who made those movies. SADDLE STUDS? Yeah, well, I rented it just to see what you-Hey. Don't you *dare* tell anybody what I just said. 'Cause, god knows, I don't want any gossip going around about *me*.

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## IT'S NOT YOU

I'm sorry. You'll have to forgive me, it's just ... I want you to know, it's not you. (Beat.) What I mean is, I just haven't done this very many times and sometimes I get a little ... well, you know. Loud. Carried away? Excited ... I just start screaming, out of the blue, and I know it must drive whoever I'm with crazy. So I'm giving you your chance. If you don't want to spend the next couple of hours with me, you can say so now. I won't be offended. (Beat.) It's just stress. That's all it is. It's not you. My doctor says I'll get used to it after awhile. "Just keep putting yourself in these kinds of situations," he says. Stressful situations. He says I'll "grow out of it." Like, I really want to do this more than I absolutely have to? 'Cause, you see, the whole time I was growing up, all through high school, college, I never did this. I was a very boring girl! Yes, I know, I know. I'm talking a lot. I do that a lot at first. But once we're-you know, past the-once we're *off* the-yes. Then I will stop jabbering. I promise. Takeoffs and landings really are the worst part for me. Once we're flying, once we're up there straight and level, I'm not so bad then. Plus I always buy about a million magazines to keep myself occ-see my stash under there?-occupied, and I bury myself in them. But if we hit turbulence! Hah! I'm a lost cause! I might grab onto your arm and cut *off* the circulation! (Beat.)--I was just kidding about that. (Beat.) Listen. I can see you're a little ... uncomfortable. So, if you want to move to another seat ... I wouldn't blame you. Like I said, It's not you, I swear, I'm just a basket case, and-(Beat.) What? You want to stay? Oh! Well... I'll try to be extra good then. (Beat. Looks around, pleased *for* a moment, then *anxiety* strikes:) Listen. Are you gonna need your air sick bag? I like to have a couple on hand ... just in case.

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## KILLING OUR LOVE LIFE

It's not *you*. It's not you at *all*. No, it's-I'm sorry. I know, I know, I was really *in the mood* back at *your* place, but I dunno, as soon as we got *here* ... No, no, *that's* not the problem, no, there's plenty of room. No, the radio station *is-it'sfine*. It's just that-look. I guess it's just me, I'm sorry! I can't make love to you when there's a body in the *back of the car!* (Beat.) There! I've *said* it! (*Immediately sorry*.) Oh! Have I hurt your feelings? Oh, Nicky. I didn't mean to. It's just, I have a lot of trouble separating you from your *work*. It's like, when we're at *my* place, or *your* place, or at a nightclub-whatever. You *really* get my motor running. But as soon as I remember *what it is you do* ... the 01' motor just grinds to a halt. No, it's not that this isn't a nice hearse! This is a, a *very nice hearse*. You just have to try and understand how it makes me feel. Riding around with *them* back there alla time. I know, I know, you keep telling me. "You get used to it." But it's three months now and I'm not anywhere *near* used to it. Or, like, when I dropped by your office the other day? I took a long lunch so that we could ...lock your office door and steam up the windows a little. Just because I missed you so much. And when

I show up, you're standing there holding some old man's *pancreas!* I *know* it was in *ajar!* But *still*. You just don't *get* it, do you? You want me to spell it out for you? YOUR JOB IS KILLING OUR LOVE LIFE! And if that isn't already bad enough, to top it all off, you bring me to a drive-in movie? Like, I want to sit here like this in a hearse and watch *Night of the Living Dead?* (*Beat.*) Let me put it bluntly, Nicky. Let me give you some good, solid advice. It's an old cliché, maybe you've heard it: "Two's company, but *three-* (*gestures to {{the back}}*)-*three's* a crowd."

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## HAMLET--ACT TWO SCENE ONE OPHELIA

My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,  
 Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced;  
 No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,  
 Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ankle;  
 Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;  
 And with a look so piteous in purport  
 As if he had been loosed out of hell  
 To speak of horrors,--he comes before me.  
 Mad for my love?

My lord, I do not know;  
 But truly, I do fear it.  
 He took me by the wrist and held me hard;  
 Then goes he to the length of all his arm;  
 And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,  
 He falls to such perusal of my face  
 As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;  
 At last, a little shaking of mine arm  
 And thrice his head thus waving up and down,  
 He raised a sigh so piteous and profound  
 As it did seem to shatter all his bulk  
 And end his being: that done, he lets me go:  
 And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,  
 He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;  
 For out o' doors he went without their helps,  
 And, to the last, bended their light on me.

Have I given him any hard words of late?

No, my good lord, but, as you did command,  
I did repel his fetters and denied  
His access to me.

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## **AS YOU LIKE IT ROSALIND, ACT 3 SCENE 2**

There is a man haunts the forest, that  
abuses our young plants with carving 'Rosalind' on  
their barks; hangs odes upon hawthorns and elegies  
on brambles, all, forsooth, deifying the name of  
Rosalind: if I could meet that fancy-monger I would  
give him some good counsel, for he seems to have the  
quotidian of love upon him.

There is none of my uncle's marks upon you: he  
taught me how to know a man in love; in which cage  
of rushes I am sure you are not prisoner.

A lean cheek, which you have not, a blue eye and  
sunken, which you have not, an unquestionable  
spirit, which you have not, a beard neglected,  
which you have not; but I pardon you for that, for  
simply your having in beard is a younger brother's  
revenue: then your hose should be ungartered, your  
bonnet unbanded, your sleeve unbuttoned, your shoe  
untied and every thing about you demonstrating a  
careless desolation; but you are no such man; you  
are rather point-device in your accoutrements as  
loving yourself than seeming the lover of any other.

You would you could make me believe you love?

Me believe it! you may as soon make her that you  
love believe it; which, I warrant, she is apter to  
do than to confess she does: that is one of the  
points in the which women still give the lie to

their consciences. But, in good sooth, are you he that hangs the verses on the trees, wherein Rosalind is so admired?

But are you so much in love as your rhymes speak?

Love is merely a madness, and, I tell you, deserves as well a dark house and a whip as madmen do: and the reason why they are not so punished and cured is, that the lunacy is so ordinary that the whippers are in love too. Yet I profess curing it by counsel.

I have, one, and in this manner. He was to imagine me his love, his mistress; and I set him every day to woo me: at which time would I, being but a moonish youth, grieve, be effeminate, changeable, longing and liking, proud, fantastical, apish, shallow, inconstant, full of tears, full of smiles, for every passion something and for no passion truly any thing, as boys and women are for the most part cattle of this colour; would now like him, now loathe him; then entertain him, then forswear him; now weep for him, then spit at him; that I drave my suitor from his mad humour of love to a living humour of madness; which was, to forswear the full stream of the world, and to live in a nook merely monastic. And thus I cured him; and this way will I take upon me to wash your liver as clean as a sound sheep's heart, that there shall not be one spot of love in't.

I would cure you, if you would but call me Rosalind and come every day to my cote and woo me.

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## **AS YOU LIKE IT---ACT 5 SCENE 2 ROSALIND #3**

Your brother and my sister no sooner  
met but they looked, no sooner looked but they

loved, no sooner loved but they sighed, no sooner sighed but they asked one another the reason, no sooner knew the reason but they sought the remedy; and in these degrees have they made a pair of stairs to marriage which they will climb incontinent, or else be incontinent before marriage: they are in the very wrath of love and they will together; clubs cannot part them.

Know of me then, for now I speak to some purpose, that I know you are a gentleman of good conceit: I speak not this that you should bear a good opinion of my knowledge, insomuch I say I know you are; neither do I labour for a greater esteem than may in some little measure draw a belief from you, to do yourself good and not to grace me. Believe then, if you please, that I can do strange things: I have, since I was three year old, conversed with a magician, most profound in his art and yet not damnable. If you do love Rosalind so near the heart as your gesture cries it out, when your brother marries Aliena, shall you marry her: I know into what straits of fortune she is driven; and it is not impossible to me, if it appear not inconvenient to you, to set her before your eyes tomorrow human as she is and without any danger.

By my life, I do; which I tender dearly, though I say I am a magician. Therefore, put you in your best array: bid your friends; for if you will be married to-morrow, you shall, and to Rosalind, if you will.

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## **ACT 5 SCENE 4 EPILOGUE ROSALIND**

It is not the fashion to see the lady the epilogue;  
but it is no more unhandsome than to see the lord  
the prologue. If it be true that good wine needs

no bush, 'tis true that a good play needs no epilogue; yet to good wine they do use good bushes, and good plays prove the better by the help of good epilogues. What a case am I in then, that am neither a good epilogue nor cannot insinuate with you in the behalf of a good play! I am not furnished like a beggar, therefore to beg will not become me: my way is to conjure you; and I'll begin with the women. I charge you, O women, for the love you bear to men, to like as much of this play as please you: and I charge you, O men, for the love you bear to women--as I perceive by your simpering, none of you hates them--that between you and the women the play may please. If I were a woman I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me, complexions that liked me and breaths that I defied not: and, I am sure, as many as have good beards or good faces or sweet breaths will, for my kind offer, when I make curtsy, bid me farewell.

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## **AS YOU LIKE IT---ACT 3 SCENE FIVE**

**PHEBE -- #1**

I would not be thy executioner:  
 I fly thee, for I would not injure thee.  
 Thou tell'st me there is murder in mine eye:  
 'Tis pretty, sure, and very probable,  
 That eyes, that are the frail'st and softest things,  
 Who shut their coward gates on atomies,  
 Should be call'd tyrants, butchers, murderers!  
 Now I do frown on thee with all my heart;  
 And if mine eyes can wound, now let them kill thee:  
 Now counterfeit to swoon; why now fall down;  
 Or if thou canst not, O, for shame, for shame,  
 Lie not, to say mine eyes are murderers!  
 Now show the wound mine eye hath made in thee:  
 Scratch thee but with a pin, and there remains  
 Some scar of it; lean but upon a rush,  
 The cicatrice and capable impressure

Thy palm some moment keeps; but now mine eyes,  
Which I have darted at thee, hurt thee not,  
Nor, I am sure, there is no force in eyes  
That can do hurt.

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**AS YOU LIKE IT---ACT 3 SCENE 5**

**PHEBE #2**

Think not I love him, though I ask for him:  
'Tis but a peevish boy; yet he talks well;  
But what care I for words? yet words do well  
When he that speaks them pleases those that hear.  
It is a pretty youth: not very pretty:  
But, sure, he's proud, and yet his pride becomes him:  
He'll make a proper man: the best thing in him  
Is his complexion; and faster than his tongue  
Did make offence his eye did heal it up.  
He is not very tall; yet for his years he's tall:  
His leg is but so so; and yet 'tis well:  
There was a pretty redness in his lip,  
A little riper and more lusty red  
Than that mix'd in his cheek; 'twas just the difference  
Between the constant red and mingled damask.  
There be some women, Silvius, had they mark'd him  
In parcels as I did, would have gone near  
To fall in love with him; but, for my part,  
I love him not nor hate him not; and yet  
I have more cause to hate him than to love him:  
For what had he to do to chide at me?  
He said mine eyes were black and my hair black:  
And, now I am remember'd, scorn'd at me:  
I marvel why I answer'd not again:  
But that's all one; omittance is no quittance.  
I'll write to him a very taunting letter,  
And thou shalt bear it: wilt thou, Silvius?

I'll write it straight;  
The matter's in my head and in my heart:  
I will be bitter with him and passing short.

Go with me, Silvius

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**MERCHANT OF VENICE---ACT 1 SCENE 1  
PORTIA #1**

By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of  
this great world.

If to do were as easy as to know what were good to  
do, chapels had been churches and poor men's  
cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that  
follows his own instructions: I can easier teach  
twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the  
twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may  
devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps  
o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the  
youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the  
cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to  
choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose!' I may  
neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I  
dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed  
by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard,  
Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?

I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou namest  
them, I will describe them; and, according to my  
description, level at my affection.

First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but  
talk of his horse; and he makes it a great  
appropriation to his own good parts, that he can  
shoe him himself. I am much afeard my lady his  
mother played false with a smith.

Then there is the County Palatine.

He doth nothing but frown, as who should say 'If you will not have me, choose:' he hears merry tales and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two!

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## **MERCHANT OF VENICE ACT 3 SCENE 2 PORTIA --2**

I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two  
 Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,  
 I lose your company: therefore forbear awhile.  
 There's something tells me, but it is not love,  
 I would not lose you; and you know yourself,  
 Hate counsels not in such a quality.  
 But lest you should not understand me well,--  
 And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,--  
 I would detain you here some month or two  
 Before you venture for me. I could teach you  
 How to choose right, but I am then forsworn;  
 So will I never be: so may you miss me;  
 But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,  
 That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,  
 They have o'erlook'd me and divided me;  
 One half of me is yours, the other half yours,  
 Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,  
 And so all yours. O, these naughty times  
 Put bars between the owners and their rights!  
 And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so,  
 Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.  
 I speak too long; but 'tis to peize the time,  
 To eke it and to draw it out in length,  
 To stay you from election.

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**MERCHANT OF VENICE---ACT 4 SCENE 1**  
**PORTIA #3**

The quality of mercy is not strain'd,  
 It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
 Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;  
 It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:  
 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes  
 The throned monarch better than his crown;  
 His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,  
 The attribute to awe and majesty,  
 Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;  
 But mercy is above this sceptred sway;  
 It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,  
 It is an attribute to God himself;  
 And earthly power doth then show likest God's  
 When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,  
 Though justice be thy plea, consider this,  
 That, in the course of justice, none of us  
 Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;  
 And that same prayer doth teach us all to render  
 The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much  
 To mitigate the justice of thy plea;  
 Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice  
 Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

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**A MIDSUMMER'S NIGHT DREAM ACT 2 SCENE 1**  
**FAIRY (to Puck)**

Over hill, over dale,  
 Thorough bush, thorough brier,  
 Over park, over pale,  
 Thorough flood, thorough fire,  
 I do wander everywhere,  
 Swifter than the moon's sphere;  
 And I serve the fairy queen,

To dew her orbs upon the green.  
 The cowslips tall her pensioners be:  
 In their gold coats spots you see;  
 Those be rubies, fairy favours,  
 In those freckles live their savours:  
 I must go seek some dewdrops here  
 And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.  
 Farewell, thou lob of spirits; I'll be gone:  
 Our queen and all our elves come here anon.

Either I mistake your shape and making quite,  
 Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite  
 Call'd Robin Goodfellow: are not you he  
 That frights the maidens of the villagery;  
 Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern  
 And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;  
 And sometime make the drink to bear no barm;  
 Misdread night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?  
 Those that Hobgoblin call you and sweet Puck,  
 You do their work, and they shall have good luck:  
 Are not you he?

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## **A MIDSUMMER'S NIGHT DREAM ACT 1 SCENE 1 HELENA #1**

How happy some o'er other some can be!  
 Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.  
 But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;  
 He will not know what all but he do know:  
 And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,  
 So I, admiring of his qualities:  
 Things base and vile, folding no quantity,  
 Love can transpose to form and dignity:  
 Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;  
 And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind:  
 Nor hath Love's mind of any judgement taste;  
 Wings and no eyes figure unheedy haste:  
 And therefore is Love said to be a child,  
 Because in choice he is so oft beguiled.

As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,  
 So the boy Love is perjured every where:  
 For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,  
 He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine;  
 And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,  
 So he dissolved, and showers of oaths did melt.  
 I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:  
 Then to the wood will he to-morrow night  
 Pursue her; and for this intelligence  
 If I have thanks, it is a dear expense:  
 But herein mean I to enrich my pain,  
 To have his sight thither and back again.

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## **A MIDSUMMER'S NIGHT DREAM—ACT 2 SCENE 2 HELENA--2**

O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!  
 The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.  
 Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;  
 For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.  
 How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears:  
 If so, my eyes are oftener wash'd than hers.  
 No, no, I am as ugly as a bear;  
 For beasts that meet me run away for fear:  
 Therefore no marvel though Demetrius  
 Do, as a monster fly my presence thus.  
 What wicked and dissembling glass of mine  
 Made me compare with Hermia's sphery eyne?  
 But who is here? Lysander! on the ground!  
 Dead? or asleep? I see no blood, no wound.  
 Lysander if you live, good sir, awake.

You love me??

Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?  
 When at your hands did I deserve this scorn?  
 Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,  
 That I did never, no, nor never can,

Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,  
But you must flout my insufficiency?  
Good troth, you do me wrong, good sooth, you do,  
In such disdainful manner me to woo.  
But fare you well: perforce I must confess  
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.  
O, that a lady, of one man refused.  
Should of another therefore be abused

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## **A MIDSUMMER'S NIGHT DREAM ACT 3 SCENE 2 HERMIA 1**

Now I but chide; but I should use thee worse,  
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse,  
If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,  
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep,  
And kill me too.

The sun was not so true unto the day  
As he to me: would he have stolen away  
From sleeping Hermia? I'll believe as soon  
This whole earth may be bored and that the moon  
May through the centre creep and so displease  
Her brother's noontide with Antipodes.  
It cannot be but thou hast murder'd him;  
So should a murderer look, so dead, so grim.

What's this to my Lysander? where is he?  
Ah, good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me?

No?!

Out, dog! out, cur! thou drivest me past the bounds  
Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him, then?  
Henceforth be never number'd among men!  
O, once tell true, tell true, even for my sake!  
Durst thou have look'd upon him being awake,  
And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? O brave touch!  
Could not a worm, an adder, do so much?

An adder did it; for with doubler tongue  
Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.

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**A MIDSUMMER'S NIGHT DREAM ACT 3 SCENE 2  
HELENA--3**

You do advance your cunning more and more.  
When truth kills truth, O devilish-holy fray!  
These vows are Hermia's: will you give her o'er?  
Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh:  
Your vows to her and me, put in two scales,  
Will even weigh, and both as light as tales.

O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent  
To set against me for your merriment:  
If you were civil and knew courtesy,  
You would not do me thus much injury.  
Can you not hate me, as I know you do,  
But you must join in souls to mock me too?  
If you were men, as men you are in show,  
You would not use a gentle lady so;  
To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,  
When I am sure you hate me with your hearts.  
You both are rivals, and love Hermia;  
And now both rivals, to mock Helena:  
A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,  
To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes  
With your derision! none of noble sort  
Would so offend a virgin, and extort  
A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.

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**MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING—ACT 2 SCENE 1  
BEATRICE 1**

How tartly that gentleman looks! I never can see  
him but I am heart-burned an hour after.

He were an excellent man that were made just in the  
midway between him and Benedick: the one is too  
like an image and says nothing, and the other too  
like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling.

With a good leg and a good foot, uncle, and money  
enough in his purse, such a man would win any woman  
in the world, if a' could get her good-will.

Just, if God send me no husband; for the which  
blessing I am at him upon my knees every morning and  
evening. Lord, I could not endure a husband with a  
beard on his face: I had rather lie in the woollen.

What should I do with him? dress him in my apparel  
and make him my waiting-gentlewoman? He that hath a  
beard is more than a youth, and he that hath no  
beard is less than a man: and he that is more than  
a youth is not for me, and he that is less than a  
man, I am not for him: therefore, I will even take  
sixpence in earnest of the bear-ward, and lead his  
apes into hell.

And there at the gate will the devil meet  
me, like an old cuckold, with horns on his head, and  
say 'Get you to heaven, Beatrice, get you to  
heaven; here's no place for you maids:' so deliver  
I up my apes, and away to Saint Peter for the  
heavens; he shows me where the bachelors sit, and  
there live we as merry as the day is long.

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**KAREN**

It's not *you*. It's not you at *all*. No, it's-I'm sorry. I know, I know, I was really *in the mood* back at *your* place, but I dunno, as soon as we got *here* ... No, no, *that's* not the problem, no, there's plenty of room. No, the radio station *is-it's fine*. It's just that-look. I guess it's just me, I'm sorry! I can't make love to you when there's a body in the *back of the car!* (*Beat.*) There! I've *said* it! (*Immediately sorry.*) Oh! Have I hurt your feelings? Oh, Nicky. I didn't mean to. It's just, I have a lot of trouble separating you from your *work*. It's like, when we're at *my* place, or *your* place, or at a nightclub-whatever. You

*really* get my motor running. But as soon as I remember *what it is you do* ... the ol' motor just grinds to a halt. No, it's not that this isn't a nice hearse! This is a, a *very nice hearse*. You just have to try and understand how it makes me feel. Riding around with *them* back there all of the time. I know, I know, you keep telling me.. "You get used to it."But it's three months now and I'm not anywhere *near* used to it. Or, like, when I dropped by your office the other day? I took a long lunch so that we could ...lock your office door and steam up the windows a little. Just because I missed you so much. And when I show up, you're standing there holding some old man's *pancreas!* I *know* it was in a *jar!* But *still*. You just don't *get* it, do you? You want me to spell it out for you? YOUR JOB IS KILLING OUR LOVE LIFE! And if that isn't already bad enough, to top it all off, you bring me to a drive-in movie? Like, I want to sit here like this in a hearse and watch *Night of the Living Dead?* (*Beat.*) Let me put it bluntly, Nicky. Let me give you some good, solid advice. It's an old cliché, maybe you've heard it: "Two's company, but *three-* (*gestures to "the back"*)-*three's* a crowd."

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## LOOK AT YOURSELF

I wish I could *shoot* whoever invented crossword puzzles. Because! They're stupid and they're just some dumb way to eat up all your time. Waste time ... kill time. I hate that phrase. "Killing time." It's like, we don't have a lot of it to *start* with and why the hell are people wasting it doing stupid word games and Rubic's cubes and all that crap like that? No. No, I don't mean "people" in general. I mean *you*, Daddy. It's like, you could be out doing volunteer work or, I dunno. *Helping* somebody. Or making a Dream Come True. What about that Hobby Shop you always wanted to open? (*Beat.*) Why not? Well, of *course* it's a lot of work! Anything worthwhile is a lot of work, but you could still do it! You could be behind your own little counter, selling model airplanes to little boys! But instead you just sit in here and "kill time" all day long, day after day. Makes me so mad! What are you *waiting* for? Huh? Are you just going to sit here for the next twenty years and wait around to *die?* And don't start giving me all that crap about how hard it is without Mom here. No. I won't buy that anymore. She's been dead for almost ten years now, Daddy. *Look at your self!* Take a good, long look. You don't have to worry about anything ... you've retired early... you're healthy... you've got enough money, it's not like you have to worry or anything ... don't you want to do anything with the rest of your life? (*Beat.*) No. I guess! *don't* have the right to tell you how to live. But I *do* have the right to care. And I *do* have the right to make you think. So will you think about it, Daddy? Just say you'll think about it.

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## LOVE PILL

There it is again. *That feeling.* (*She clutches her stomach, nauseated, and takes a deep breath.*) That shaky, quaky feeling. It washes all over me every time I *see* him. Every time I *talk* to him. Every time I even *think* of him! When he calls ... when he sends me flowers-oh, hey, did you see them? (*She gestures.*) Aren't they beautiful? And those over *there-* (*Gestures somewhere else.*)--*he* sent me those yesterday, and *those-*(*Gestures to yet another spot.*)--*he* sent me those last Monday! Even though they're dying, I can't bear to throw them out because every time I look at *them--*(*She clutches her stomach.*)- I get all woozy. You know what I mean? Oh, come on, Rhonda, you've been in love more than anybody else

I know! You must've felt this way, lots of times! See, I know I'm in love 'cause I get all weak in the knees and I fill all up inside with butterflies. But, see, that's the problem. I mean, I just love being in love. Don't get me wrong. I love thinking about him. I love talking to him on the phone-you should see last month's phone bill!-But every time I think of him, or every time I talk to him I first get all shaky and then I get weak ... and then I get queasy... and then ... and then ... (*She stifles a gag.*) I have to *barf!* (*Beat.*) I wish they'd invent a pill, y'know? A pill to fix this. A Love Pill. To settle your stomach when you think about, or talk to the Person You Love. (*Clutches her stomach again.*) Oops. Here we go again. I'd better to lie down until the thought of him passes. It's like, I want to tell him, "you make me sick, Charlie." But I have a feeling he'd take it the wrong way!

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## MAGNETIC PERSONALITY

Nobody at the office ever pays any attention to me. When I'm all alone at home on Saturday and Sunday, I think up the most clever and amazing stories to tell and I go in on Monday morning and I tell these stories around the water cooler. But nobody seems to care. Malorie Metzenbaum, now they love *her* stories! She can talk about the most mundane things too, like how she caught a mouse in one of those glue traps or how she unclogged her garbage disposal. And they just hoot and holler. I don't know what it is. I guess she's just got some kind of magnetic personality. One day, Malorie broke her arm and she had to wear a cast for six weeks. And the day she came in with it, everybody made such a fuss and they all signed it and wrote little personal things and oohed and ahed and sent her flowers and took her to lunch. And they even had this little party-thing around the water cooler when her cast came off. So I went up to the roof of my building and I jumped off. Oh, don't worry, it's only three stories and besides, I landed on the grass. I broke a rib, my left arm, cracked my pelvis and fractured both ankles. I came to work in a motorized wheelchair! But nobody made a fuss over me. Nobody signed *my* casts. Ob, it doesn't matter ... I get up every morning and look in the mirror and say, "I love you, I love you, I love you." (*Beat.*) I guess I just don't have a magnetic personality like Marjorie Metzenbaum.

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## MAKING SCENES

Ugh. I think this cream sauce is curdled. Would you try it? I mean, just put a little on your fork and see ... (*Waits to see, then:*) I thought so. *Now* what'm I gonna do? I was *so hungry!* I waited all week to come here and order the Linguini con Pollo and here we are and now the damn cream sauce is curdled! DAMMIT! (*Beat, catches herself.*) Oh! Excuse me! I, I don't know what got into me, I'm so sorry ... (*Beat.*) *What?* What, are you *crazy?* I can't send it back! No, I know, I know I can't eat it, but I can't send it back, either. Because (*She accidentally bites her tongue.*) THIT!!! I BIN MY TON! MY TON! (*Beat.*) THE TIP OF MY TONGUE! I HATE IT WHEN I DO THAT!! (*Beat, looks around:*) Oh, *let 'em* look. They've never seen anybody bite their tongue before? And now we have to go back and blow up all those stupid balloons ... No, I *have* to help. I *have* to. You can't do it all by yourself, John. Not with your asthma. You get all lightheaded and turn blue in the face. No, don't be ridiculous, she's eighty-nine years old, we're going to make sure she sees the damn balloons, she might not *be* here tomorrow! NO! I AM NOT SENDING THE FOOD BACK! BECAUSE!! (*Bolts*

*up out of her seat:)* I HATE *MAKING A SCENE!* ALRIGHT? NOW WILL YOU PLEASE SHUT THE HELL UP AND EAT? WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU COMPLAINING ABOUT, ANYWAY? I SEE *YOUR FOOD* CAME OUT ALL RIGHT AND YOU NEVER EVEN OFFERED *ME* ANY! *(Realizes everyone is watching hersits down, calms herself again.)* Thank you.

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## MIGRAINE

*(Grasping her temples as if in massive pain:)* Oooh. I'm sorry. What did you say? No, no, I'm fine. Really. It's *just-* *(Another wave of pain.)-another* one of these Massive Migraines. My psychiatrist says they're psychosomatic. He told me to "think pleasant thoughts" whenever I got them and they'd go away.. Bastard. Of course *he's* sitting there thinking pleasant thoughts, I'm paying him a hundred dollars an hour! *(Beat.)* I know, I know, I thought they had stopped too. But they started up again last week when we took Pookems to the manicurist. *(Beat.)* Pookems. Our *poodle?* *We thought-* *(Another wave of pain.)-ahh!*-Charles and I thought it was time for another manicure. *(Annoyed:)* Well, of *course* for the dog! Do you mean to tell me you have never taken *your* dog to the manicurist? *(Apparently not.)* Well. I don't know if I can recommend it too highly. *Now.* I mean, nothing horrible had ever happened *before.* But *this* time ... *this time-* *(Another spasm of pain.)-we* got a different dog back. *(Beat.)* I mean what I say! We took Pookems in and the man said "fine, I'll take care of him" and so we came back in an hour to pick him up ... and it wasn't Pookems. It was Some Other Poodle. The man insisted it was Pookems but I know my Pookie-Pookie and this was not him! *(Another wave of pain:)* Well, that little Brazilian bastard has another thing coming if he thinks he can get away with this. We will break him. We will! You'll see. He'll wind up polishing nails back in Taquaritinga if he-what? Taquaritinga. It's a town. A town in, in Brazil, it's *where-* *(Another wave of pain.)* I'm sorry. I can't talk anymore right. now. I think perhaps it would be best if I just sat here ... and thought pleasant thoughts for a moment. *(She begins to think pleasant thoughts.)*

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## MR. UNIVERSE

Bob has always been an exercise fanatic. He'll get up every morning at 4:30 and jog four miles. Then he'll come home and swim twenty-five laps-or is it fifty? Twenty-five times, back and forth-? Whatever. Then he'll sit in his sauna-thing for another twenty minutes and next thing I know he's out the door and off to work. At lunch he goes to the gym for forty-five minutes and God only knows what he does there ... and when he comes home at the end of the day, he rides that damn exercise bike for half an hour! It's like living with Mr. Universe! When we go on vacation someplace, first thing he has to do is find the Health Club. No matter where we are. That year we went to Paris? "Qu est le Club d'Health?" Am I being selfish, Laura? Is it wrong to miss your husband? I just don't like sharing him with every Nautilus machine in town! Besides, I swear, if I have to listen to that exercise bike one more time: "creak, creak, creak" ... *(Shudders at the thought of it.)* It's not like he's suspicious or anything, either. He didn't even *see* it. As much carrot juice as he drinks, you'd think he'd have infra-red eyes. But I guess not. I just stretched that fishing line across the basement steps and tied it off .. *(She motions to a spot about six inches up her calf to illustrate.)* ... and *wham,* down the stairs he went. *(Beat.)* I

know you don't approve, Laura. I know that. But Bob is much more loveable when he needs me. He's much more caring when he's totally dependent. He's much more adorable with a broken hip. Plus he's home and I can spend time with him. I can take care of him. I can show him I love him. The only thing is his bones are starting to heal and he keeps hinting that he misses his exercise! What am I going to break next?

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## MODEL OF GOOD MANNERS

What *is* it with you? Huh? What is this, this obsession with foul language? It's like, every third word out of your mouth is a cuss word. Or a sexual act.. You didn't used to talk like this. I remember growing up in Fort Lauderdale, you were always a model of good behavior. Now every time you open your mouth I feel like I'm trapped in a Hell's Angels Convention or something! Do you think it's "cool?" Do you think I'm impressed? Well, I'm not, Frank. I'm surprised, yes. Disappointed? Maybe. But impressed? No way. I mean, what do you think's gonna happen? You think people will take you more seriously if you say the "F" word every other word? Huh? You think you'll land a great job if you keep playing with your balls all the time? Yes! I've been watching you and you have been playing with them *all night long!* (*Beat.*) I'm sorry. I didn't mean to get ... personal. I think what really made me flip out was when you made that, that ... *gesture* at the waiter. *Mm-hmm.* (*Beat.*) Look. I'm willing to forget what's happened if you will try and do better, all right? It's *only-*(*Checks her watch.*)-*eight-thirty* and we could still have a nice evening. We could still salvage what's left of this date. Okay? Okay. Now. I'm going over there and try to patch things up with the waiter. And *you!* You keep your mouth *shut* while I'm gone! (*Beat*) *Or else!*

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## METICULOUS PERSON

I'll bet you were one of those people who, growing up, you used to own one of those label makers, didn't you? And you put your name on everything you owned. Am I right? Mm-hmm. And when you got your first car, I'll bet you ordered personalized license plates, didn't you? I thought so. 'Cause, you see, let me tell you something: Meticulous People like you have always made me sick. No, you heard me loud and clear: sick. Sick to my stomach. Like, what, you're afraid the rest of us are going to *steal your things*? It's so incredibly paranoid! *But.* In *this* case, I thank God that you, Viola Zimmerman, are a Meticulous Person. I thank God that you are the kind of human being who would put name tags in your clothes .. I thank God that you are the kind of individual... (*Takes out a pair of women's underpants:*) ... who would sew your initials into the waistband of your underpants. (*Reads:*) "V.Z." (*Waves the underpants in the air with a mock carefree attitude:*) These were under my bed. (*Beat.*) I said, "under my bed, darling." And since my initials don't have a "V" or a "Z" in them, and since Jerry has been acting awfully funny lately... and since my next door neighbor's seen your car in my driveway every night for the past two weeks while I was in Wichita helping my sister have a *BABY* (*Beat; calms herself a bit:*) Well. Let's just say you have been caught, Viola. Caught with your initials down. And *this* time ... you're not getting off the hook.

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## MOTHER'S DAY

I ast her, did she want some money or somethin'. She just said no. Shakin' her head like this: (*Demonstrates.*) So pitiful. See, she's alla time comin' around here lately, hangin' around while I'm cookin' or while I'm ironin' Clyde's shirts. She just stands over there like a ghost. Don't hardly say a word. I ast her. I said, you want \$20, child? Tell me. I'm your momma, you can talk to yer momma. But she just stands there, shakin' her head and starin' at the floor. I don't know what's wrong with her. So I ast her, "what, then? You pregnant? 'Cause if you are, I ain't takin' care of no baby while you go out, gallivantin' around." Again, she just stands there, starin' at the floor all quiet-like ... Then that was when I saw it comin'. Like a dam about to break. I could see her mouth start to shake-corner of her lips, right here, start quiverin'-" I don't want no *money*, Momma," she says to me. So quiet and trembly it sounded like a little baby. "What the hell do you want, then?" I ast her. She was shakin' allover. Reachin' up towards me with them long, bony arms. "Don't you be grab bin' me while I'm tryin' to work," I told her. "What is it you *want*?" She falls down on the floor in a little heap, just bawlin'. Screamin' and carryin' on. She never cried like that when she's little, I tell ya. I wouldn't a stood for it. I'd a smacked the crap outta her. I always taught my girls, you gotta be strong in this world. It's a hard world and you gotta be strong. But no matter how many times I told her, no matter how many times I smacked her ... aw, she was *always* weak. So now here she is, full-grown and lyin' on the kitchen floor, cryin' like a baby! (*Beat.*) I never did find out what she wanted. I ast her 'fore she left if she wanted \$20. But she never did answer. She just jumped up, ran out to her car, and drove off. She never even wished me a Happy Mother's Day.

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## MODERN-DAY MANNERS

What did you just *do*? You-Oh, my God! That was the most offensive thing I have ever *seen*! You-ugghh! Curtis! Aren't *yqu embarrassed*? Aren't you ashamed of yourself? Curtis! You *sniffed your armpits*! (*Beat.*) I can't believe it ~.. You didn't even try to disguise it. To hide it. To go into the bathroom and do it. I thought this only happened in bad television shows ... in crude sitcoms ... in B~Movies ... You know, when they show these, these hillbilly rednecks down in Tennessee or something. *That's* when you see people smelling their armpits.! Not *here*~ Not in a nice restaurant like this. With *people* around! All these people! My God, Curtis! Do you realize *how many people* just saw you? (*Beat.*) Yeah, well, I don't *care* that it's hot outside! I don't care if it's 120 degrees out there! This is me! I'm here, I'm *sitting* right across from you! What must they *think* of me? What are they *saying*? That I'm dining with some, some imbecile, some cretin, some primeval man, some *cave man*, some-what? (*Beat.*) What do you mean, it wasn't you? (*Beat.*) I don't understand what you're saying, what are you saying, what do you mean, "it wasn't *you*?" (*Long Pause. Her face slowly registers horror. Then, she sniffs her own armpits*) Well, it's not *me*. (*She freezes, slowly looks around to realize that everyone is now watching her.*) Oh my God what have I *done*? Curtis!

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## ONE MOMENT

He just stared at the ground. Straight down at the ground. We were outside his office, and ... I just couldn't believe it. Of course, you had to have known my Dad to understand how strange that was. I mean, he was the most convivial person I've ever *known-always*, if he was in a crowd someplace, at a party-whatever-he just made *everybody* feel welcome. He always had this sparkle in his eyes, always made it a point to draw you in.. And he was a great father. The best. Whenever I needed him, he always made time for me, no matter how busy he was at the office. He helped me with my homework ... I would never have survived Calculus if it weren't for him! I guess everybody loves their parents. Tries to find the good in them. Well... not *everybody*. But I couldn't believe he wouldn't-he couldn't-look at me. I called to him, I said, "Daddy, it's me!" But he just stared at the ground. Then he went past ... and that's when I saw the handcuffs. His hands behind his back ... the two men on either side. (*Beat.*) Up until that moment, my main image of him was this big, strapping man, smiling from ear to ear all the time. But after that ... all I could see in my mind was this shrunken little fellow staring at the ground. Funny, isn't it? How one moment can completely change how you look at somebody?

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## ONLY KETCHUP

(*Talking urgently to someone who is apparently lying on the floor:.*) Rory? Rory! Are you~? Oh my God! Are you okay? You *fainted*, honey. I'm so sorry ... I was so scared; you almost hit your head on the-God, I am so sorry! ("*He*" *asks about something behind her; she turns and looks.*) Oh. *That?* That's just ketchup, honey. Shhh, no, it's only ketchup. I was trying to--shhh, no, now, it was Edna's idea. I was talking to her and telling her all about how scared you were by the sight of blood. Well, *you* know. It's gotten so bad! You get all queasy when we see operation scenes on television. You about go into a seizure trying to grab the remote from me to change the channel... and then, if you don't change the channel in time, you have to go lie down for a minute Or when your Uncle Willis starts talking about his blood transfusion ... uh-oh! (*Fans his face*) See? You're getting pale just at the mention of it. (*Stops fanning:.*) There. Is that better? So, anyway, I told Edna that I was afraid when I had the baby that you'd be, like-klunk!-passed out on the hospital floor. That you'd never make it through the delivery with me. That as soon as you saw one drop of blood you'd be gone. So she said, maybe I could, you know. Break you in by *degrees*. Get you used to the sight of blood in small doses. So I-what? (*Gestures behind her:.*) It's only ketchup, honey! I thought I'd start out with fake blood and work up to real blood. No, no, I didn't cut myself, I just squirted some ketchup on the-shhhh. Okay, okay, lie back. I'll go get a damp cloth for your forehead. (*Gets up to go, stops, turns to him:.*) But it was *only ketchup*.

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## SENSE OF HUMOR

Ah ... come here. No. Come away from the window. Over here, just step away from the window. (*Looks around*) That's better. (*Then, a secret:.*) Did you ever get the feeling you were being watched? Yeah, well *I* do. *A lot*. I get that feeling all the time. I don't know *who*, exactly. But I can feel eyes burrowing into the back of my head when I'm out ... doing stuff. When

I go outside to get the newspaper in the morning ... when I'm out front watering the rose bushes ... when I go to the Safeway to pick up a carton of milk. *Somebody's watching.* Now, you probably just think I'm paranoid. But there's something about me you don't know: A few years ago, I testified before a grand jury. Oh, yeah. Big, high-level conspiracy case. I'm not at liberty to go into details or anything ... but let's just say when you testify in front of a grand jury about criminal activities ... it sort of makes you uneasy for the rest of your life. You always have to be watching behind you. You always have to have eyes in the back of your head. Because, at any moment, they could come into your house. Right inside your house ... and shoot you in your bed. Knife you in your shower stall. Poison your Pineapple juice. By the way, did you have any of my pineapple juice this morning? Did it taste all right? Good. Of course, sometimes their poisons aren't fast-acting. You could drop dead in twelve or fourteen hours ... and Carl? Carl. *(She breaks out laughing:)* You must be the most gullible son of a bitch I've ever known, because I just made all of this up. You said~! You said I didn't have a sense of humor~ *(Another wave of laughter, ' then:)--I just wanted to prove to you that I do!*

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## SEDUCTIVE

What was *that*? *Seductive*? *That* was supposed to be seductive? No. *(Beat.)* Look, Megan, let's face it: you have a little bit of n-ouble projecting seductive. But don't worry; I am going to *teach* you how to be seductive. It all comes from knowing that you are the one in conn-ol; not *him*. If you can establish that you are in conn-ol, then he will fall allover himself to impress you. Trust me. I *know*. Now. What is it that projects self-conn-ol? Think about it. Your *eyes*, Megan! Let's say a guy comes up to you and inn-oduces himself-they *will*, Megan, I promise you they will, it's a *dance* and you're gonna be the prettiest one there! Shuttup and listen, will you? Okay. Now. He comes up, he says, "Hi, I'm Greg"-or, whatever. Now. What do *you* do? There. *That*. What you just did. No, now that is what you should definitely *not* do. Turn all into yourself and look down. Don't play shy. Men don't like it when you play shy. That may have worked for Rhett Butler but not in real life. No, no, they may *say* they like it, but believe me, I know. You want to be in control. So what do you do? You look right at 'em. Right in the eyes. Nail 'em with a strong, steady look. Like this: *(Sure enough, she projects a confident, direct, and sexy look.)* See, if you play shy, they'll think they can walk allover you. But if you nail 'em right from the start *(The ((look" again.)* ... you'll have 'em eating out of the palm of your hand. Trust me, Megan. I know I haven't been, like, the greatest big sister in the world ... but whenever you need good advice about *men-I'm* the one to come to.

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## THE GUEST

I've decided to give name to my enemy, my guest. And why not? It has, after all, basically moved in, unpacked its poisonous bags, and completely made itself welcome. Yes, it's made itself very welcome within my walls. And once you realize that a guest isn't going to go away, you start looking for a way to communicate with it... a name to call it.

In the proper ways of the social world, a guest calls first, secures its welcome with you. Then, upon ensuring that welcome, shows up on your doorstep with flowers, a card, a gift of some sort that says they thank you for your hospitality and which makes you smile as you take it into your arms. And a guest, a polite guest, knows when to take their leave. They don't stay past their welcome, and they certainly do

not commandeer your home, the place where you live, have lived, where you exist.

My guest did not bother with any of those polite dance steps. My guest showed up totally unexpected, unprepared for, undreamt of, unthought of, unwelcome. My guest offered no flowers, no cards, no gifts that softened the blow of its arrival. It did, however, bring, if not gifts, repercussions. Ends that in no way justified its means. And means that in no way justified its ends. In my naiveté, I saw no reason to call my guest, my enemy, by any name. I honestly believed that it would be gone soon, on its way to another vulnerable host. I was wrong.

The constant exposure to my guest has resulted in disastrous conditions, not the smallest of which is the degradation of my very soul. The very things I've always put my faith in have been so cruelly exposed to be mirages... wishful thoughts that soon turned into desperate clutches at what small threads of belief I could find lying beneath my feet. Opinions I had of myself, ripped away. Faith I had in my own goodness, laid bare, shown to be a fraud.

My guest, my enemy, has made me a prisoner in my own skin. A victim of my own heart. A target of all the poisonous darts thrown by my own thoughts. I've been trapped in here for quite some time. The walls around me bear the scratches of my own fingertips, scored back when I had the energy to attempt escape. I'm too tired, now. It looks like I may be here to stay, so why not be on a first name basis with my friend who has made all of this, and much more, possible?

After so long of thinking along a certain path, it becomes nearly impossible to stray from that path, to think any differently. After so long of feeling a certain way, every day, every night, while conscious and while dreaming, you become unable to conceive of feeling any other way. After seeing one color for so long, you learn to forget that any other color exists. After hurting for so long, you begin to believe that you're alive only so long as you hurt; bleeding is your proof of life. I've bled all over the place. And blood does stain, you know. Sometimes, no matter how hard you scrub, those stains remain firmly in place. Maybe fainter, but still there. A piece of you to remind you of all the pieces of you that you've lost.

Spending time with a good guest, a welcome guest, will change you for the better. Laughter from the heart, conversation that means something to you, experiences that you can take away with you and hold onto forever, a slight shift in your outlook on life that makes a few of your burdens seem just a bit lighter. You're always a little sad to see them leave. Spending time with an unwanted guest will change you as well. Subtly, against your will, you see changes: in the visions you have of your world; they become cloudy, foggy, blurry. Your colors change. They become darker, heavier, denser. Your songs change. You find you only want the music that opens the door to your pain and showcases your destruction. The songs that used to bring in the joy feel so foreign now, so fraudulent. You become self-destructive. The pain you inflict on your outer self is only a small reflection on the pain that you struggle beneath inside. In fact, most times, the physical pain feels so much better. Better than what, one may wonder. Better than anything else you've been feeling. Since my guest moved in, no part of me has gone unbattered. I'm dented, cracked, broken, weakened, darkened, saddened. My ups and downs have smoothed out into a level line of downs. The scars have thickened while the skin has thinned. My face has changed, bewilderment now become a permanent shadow in my eyes. I wasn't looking for this guest, I wasn't hoping for it and I wasn't expecting it and, thus, I was in no way prepared for it. Total vulnerability... I don't see how it can ever be a good thing. Apparently my guest was looking for me, though. And if not expecting me, was at least good and ready for me when I stumbled blindly onto the stage. I've heard that one can smell a fool approaching from miles away.

So... let's make things at least proper, socially correct. My guest, my enemy, my destruction, my weakness, after all knows me by name, by heart. It knows exactly what to call me. I'm claiming that right for myself as well now.

I don't really have to commit a great deal of thought on the matter. The answer has been niggling around on the edges of my thoughts for some time now. A name for the annihilation of my faith in myself, in others; a name for the most intense disillusionment I've ever been thrust into. I think I'll just name it... you

**back to top****Teach Me How to Cry**

By Patricia Joudry

MELINDA

It's cloudy. It's going to rain. Do you like rain? I love it. I love it better than anything in the world. I like to be out in it. When it rains in the night, I get up and sit looking at it, and want to go out in the rain. (pause) Will you be going away? You will, won't you? (No answer. She goes front and looks down) The cliff is steep. I look up at it sometimes when I'm walking home from school. If a person fell down that cliff, they'd be killed. Or if they were pushed. Stop talking to me. You talk and talk and I don't understand. Go on then! As far away as you want! I don't know why we came to this terrible place. I hate it here. There aren't any flowers-nothing. There used to be music here. It was springtime, like now, only people used to come here. They were in love, and they listened to the music. A band played. They were sad. I seem to know it. I seem to hear the music. It makes me want to cry. No, I never cry. I'm cold-it's getting cold. It's like crying. Like the sky crying. What? My mother isn't insane. That's-a-*terrible*-thing to say. There isn't anything the matter with her! She's-she acts perfectly fine. She's just young. (pleading) There's nothing wrong with being young! My mother isn't old! My mother is never tired! My mother looks after me. She's always there-for me to go home to-and we talk. I can tell her about things-I can ask her things too! Anything! Anything at all! She helps me to understand. She knows about me-(slight pause) When you want to know something, you ask your mother. When you're lonely, you go to your mother and she explains things and you're not lonely anymore. When you don't understand-when you're frightened in the night-when you're hurt-your mother makes things better. She puts her arms around you, and you can lean on her. You can lean on her. (she is looking front) No, I'm not crying. It's the rain. They dry by themselves.

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*Ima is a very enthusiastic weather girl who is explaining the temperature with much excitement. She's very into her job and kind of silly.*

Good afternoon. This is Ima Cutey , your Television Weather reporter, and I hope it's a wonderful for you wherever you may be-- Now first, I've had several requests from you viewers, wanting to know how it's possible to predict the weather with such uncanny accuracy- you'd like to know just how it's done. Well, actually, there's nothing so very mysterious about it, and I think I can explain it to you in a few simple words. (*Picks up the pointer and points it to the blackboard*) Now, here we have a typical weather map. You see these cute little squibbles up here? Well, that's the high front. And when they get together right here and start waltzing around like this- aren't they sweet?- well, that's what gives us our weather. See? Isn't that simple so far? Now, when the high front dominates the low, that's good. But when the low front dominates the high – that's nasty! That's when we get rain and sleet and snow and-*ooohh*, I just hate those lows! And then of course, you can have a low low, a high high, and a high low and game-Oh, pardon me! I was thinking of something else- Well now, just for an example, I'm going to demonstrate to you exactly how the weather people make their predictions. Now, here's a high-pressure front; this little fellow was born *waay* up there in Canada and he's coming down. And here's a

low-pressure front; he's coming up from the Gulf Coast-- (*giggles*) Silly thing- doesn't know when he's well off! Well, high and low keep advancing on each other, slowly, but surely, and when they get together- look out! Something's going to happen. One of them has to win- will it be high, will it be low? Well, we'll soon know. Meantime, we mustn't forget the other factors that have a bearing on our weather. This is a cumulous cloud, and this is a cirrus cloud, and this is a—I'm not sure looks like something my Auntie Minnie doddles when she's talking on the telephone. Here they come, closer, closer—Get ready now—get all set, they're about to crash—(*rapidly*) There they go! High's down! Low's up! High's low! Low's high! High's lower—oh, the poor thing! Low's higher—still higher—it looks like a walk;l it looks like high hasn't got a—No, wait a minute, wait a minute! Here comes high again—he's not licked yet, folks! He's coming up, up , he's slowly gaining on low—Will he make it? Higher—higher—Can he do it? (*shrieking in her excitement*) Yes, yes! He did it folks he did it! High wins—It's high by a whisker and we'll have a wonderful day! There! You see how simple it really is to predict the weather? And now, to conclude this educational session, I'll give you today's forecast: Much warmer, with bright sunshine and gentle, variable winds. Isn't that wonderful, folks? We're going to have a really beautiful day. Tune in tomorrow, folks, for more scientific and accurate information about the weather. `Bye now!

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## **A COUPLE OF WHITE CHICKS SITTING AROUND TALKING**

Hannah Mae

Saw you mowing your lawn last night. Immediately I became intrigued. I love physical activity, but Carl Joe doesn't permit me. Then you were done. The light goes on in your TV room. You sit down, but you don't turn it on. you just sit there looking at the blank screen. "Goddang," says me to myself, "this is one Manchester honey who's different. must be some kind of unique thoughts filling up her head. Boy, am I excited. when i get excited, i have trouble breathing. It's a common occurrence with people of passion. Finally your light goes out. I don't go upstairs to Carl Joe, no ma'am. I sleep right there on the couch near the window. when i wake up, Carl Joe's already on the train to work, and Goddang if my smile wasn't better then ever. that's when i knew that little ole me had to come knock at your door and say "Hi!" Hi!

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## **Criminal Hearts**

By: William Mastrosimone

Girl Monologue 1: Ata:

(*Out of sleep*) What? Hello? (*Silence*) Oh, my God. Who's in here? Somebody's in here. Oh, my God. Don't hurt me. Don't kill me. I have eighty dollars, but I don't know where my purse is. I could write you a check. Tell me your name, and I'll write you a check. (*Silence*) I have jewelry, but its dumb stuff. I was robbed last year, they got the jewelry. You can have my jewelry, though. I'll give you my jewelry and eighty dollars. (*Silence*) Listen, I'm frightened, I'm suppressing a scream here. Oh, my God. Oh, my God. You are in here. Listen you cant hurt me, I've, I've got a gun. I do. I have a gun. A big gun. My husband gave it to me it's a thirty-seven. A police thirty-seven. (*Silence*) Don't hurt me I have herpes. (*Silence*) I cant turn on the lights, I have a problem. I freeze. I freeze with fear. No, I'm serious I do. All my life. My nervous system shuts down. It's called kinetic hysteria. I'm in therapy. Don't shoot, don't shoot I'll tell you where the lights are!! If you could see how I'm shaking, and I'm clammy, I'm very clammy. The switch, its to the left of the door. The

front door. Ok, ok, if you facing the bed... wait... where exactly are you? Ok, on the clock, if you facing the twelve, the door to the living room would be at 8:30. No, I'm really serious, just keep going. Its about umm eight feet or so. Maybe ten. Oh, God, please don't hurt me.

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## **LEARNING TO DRIVE**

*A student, over sixteen, and a teacher, a driving instructor of any age.*

I pretended that I was all right. That I didn't mind having to go through this. That this hideous feeling of incompetence didn't bother me. I tried to appear eager, and pleased to be gaining a new and useful skill. There's a good reason why most people learn to drive when they're sixteen. When you're sixteen you don't know you can die. If you're much older than that, not only do you know you're going to die, you also know that this is probably where. Lesson three. I approached the third lesson confidently. Nothing much to this driving thing, really. I am a smart, competent person. Lots of people who are much more stupid than me can drive; I can certainly learn to drive. I was feeling cocky and expansive. My teacher and I chatted. (*Lights up on TEACHER.*) Do you like teaching? I don't know. Out of the corner of my eye I could see the teacher shaking his head. What had I done? I suppose this was when it came home to me that what I had to learn was potentially deadly, and I had better pay attention. For the next lesson, I decided that my problem was that I was too tense and if I could just relax the whole thing would come naturally. I made stupid jokes and counted to three in a different language at each stop sign. I blathered on about the psychology of learning. I realize now that I was, of course, trying to sound smart because he knew how to drive and I didn't. (*To TEACHER.*) You know, I think the problem with driving is that all of a sudden you're, like, two thousand pounds heavier, and what I think you have to do is you have to sort of re-learn the boundaries of where you end, you know? The powers that be have told that you you can go ahead. You have the required skills. Freedom! And you realize with painful clarity that you are alone, you are in control of a powerful machine and you do not know ho to drive. The powers that be know nothing. There is only one brake and you're the only one that can use it. You must make all the decisions. Is it now safe to make this left-hand turn? There is no one to remind you able speeding and its dire consequences. No sign on the top of the car that says: "New at this. Thank you for getting of the way." And there, suddenly, you are. This is lesson six. Time passes and I'm not dead yet. Although driving in traffic still causes a certain amount of indigestion, what I now love is to take my little car very late at night or early in the morning and just drive when no one knows I'm gone. I wonder if other people do this? What I do not like is driving with passengers in the car.

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## **The Audition is Over**

By John Kirkpatrick

*Emily is the interviewer. Nancy is the actress trying to get her big break. Marjorie is Nancy's drama teacher/ stage mom. Florence is Nancy's real mom. Florence wants her daughter to have nothing to do with the acting world. She'd rather see Nancy marry into a nice family and one day have children. Marjorie is basically trying to*

*live her long lost dream of becoming an actress through her student, Nancy. And Emily is caught in the middle of things, as usual.*

### **Emily:**

The Audition is over. (Trying to explain) Sit down, my dear. I'm going to talk to this girl. Whether the rest you (Florence and Marjorie) listen up is up to you. Frankly I don't care. (Turns attention to Nancy) I'm sorry to do such a cruel thing to you, but I hope my deliberate cruelty may make you see the more *subtle* cruelty—of other people. Your mother—and Marjorie. I don't imagine either of them *means* to be cruel. I'm sure they both love you—in their way. But they both want you—for themselves. Your mother wants you to lead the kind of life *she* led—she wants to live her life over again—in you. (To Florence) Because quite frankly, Mrs. Russell, I don't think your life is the *kind* of life that ought to be repeated. Just bearing a child doesn't make anyone a "mother." You have to earn the title. And now you want to "collect"! And on *you* terms! The terms *you* want, without making any allowance for what *she* might want. Nobody knows what's good for her! Neither you nor anyone else. Unless you're a fortune teller. It's time to let go. Florence, I don't want Nancy to go to New York. Certainly not now. And certainly not with Marjorie. (Marjorie glares at Emily. To Marjorie) It's rather simple, I think. Just as Florence wants the girl to have the life she had—you want her to have the life you didn't have. But it's still vicarious. You want to live again through *her*—I—I'm deeply sorry for you, Marge—but it can't be done. And after all, it's Nancy who—I—I just don't think it's right, Marge, for one human being to completely absorb another in the way you intend. You don't mean to, but you couldn't help it. You'd instruct her—and watch her—and guard her—and nurture her—until her while personality was merged into yours. All your thwarted ambition—the frustration of 20 years—would be concentrated on her. She'd never be *free*! That's morally wrong—and it's artistically wrong! This—this "spark" you say she has—you wouldn't kindle it. Oh, you think you would. But you wouldn't. You'd smother it. A flame needs air! Not just fanning! She'd never attain her own individuality. Directors—producers—many of them are very clever, Marge—cleverer even than you know. They'd soon spot it for what it was—something second-hand. (To Nancy) Nancy, my dear. What do *you* want to do? Stay home—go to New York—or what? (Nancy shrugs) And how could you know? With two people—using you as a sort of—battleground. Well, this is my decree: Get away from both of them! You should be on your own. In a year's time, you'll know what to do! You won't have to ask them—or me—or anyone!

You'll *know*!

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### **Rashomon**

By Fay Kanin

*A mother trying to put on airs of elegance for the judge.*

...Yes, your Excellency. This is my daughter, Kinume- my only daughter- my poor child who stares at me with vacant eyes – (Nodding resignedly) I can see it in you face – you're surprised to see a beautiful lotus risen from such a muddy pond. The Goddess of Fertility was good to me. Seven years I prayed to her, seven childless years. And in the eight year, in the month of cherry flowers – Kinume was born. Like a cherry flower herself, tiny and delicate and fragrant in my arms. (Proudly) And I always kept her so. Not like the other children in their common place robes, but in a long-sleeved, many-colored dress of rare silk, her hair caught up with a tortoise comb. Each morning she went to the writing school – never stumbling or dirtying her dainty hands – carrying her copybooks with such grace all eyes turned to watch – (Brought back abruptly by the MAGISTRATE, she bows) ... Forgive me, Your Excellency. But, seeing my Daughter again, I – (She nods) ... Yes, it is so. The dead man I looked upon was her husband. His name was Takehiko. He was a samurai in the town of Kofu – a very noble man, very rich. In the funeral procession, I will carry a cage of birds and set them free to remind everyone of his mercy and kindness. I'm sure he did nothing to bring such a horrible death on himself. (Shaking her head) Horrible! I hope you'll bring the villain who murdered him to justice. These bandits who roam our lands and prey upon us like

wild beasts – they should be dealt with like wild beasts! (Listening) ... When, Your Excellency? Four years ago they were married. It was a big wedding – the joining of two fine families. (Confidently) You have only to look at her to understand that my daughter was much sought-after. She had many offers, all of very high rank. But Takehiko was the most eager-and the most worthy. Even so, she was very proud – I had to persuade her to marry him

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## **The Necklace**

By Guy de Maupassant

Mathilde

*Mathilde is a young woman who is unaware of the generosity of others. History: She borrowed a necklace from her friend Jeanne, and lost it. She replaces it and spends ten years trying to pay back her debt. She starts off talking to her husband Henri, and then changes to her friend Jeanne.*

Sixteen thousand francs! The bank has closed the account. The necklace is finally paid for! The bank has the money and Jeanne Forestier has had the necklace for ten years... and we have nothing. Celebrate?! Wine? You're a fool, Henri. You have a short memory, Henri. You worked as hard as I did. Look at you! Wrinkles in your face... at forty... like an old man! Old! Old! That's what you are! I'm old, too. And you ask me to celebrate. Oh, drink your wine if it gives you any satisfaction. But I'm going to celebrate, too... in my own way. I've arranged for Jeanne Forestier to come here. You think she won't come? She'll come. She'll come because of curiosity. Please go to the door, Henri. Don't change your coat. Let her see us as we are. All I ever wanted Jeanne had. (*Off on a tangent*) Drawing rooms filled with romantic, intelligent men and women, authors, actresses, statesmen, handsome men, and beautiful women, clothes- furs, exquisite gowns, jewelry. How I love jewelry. (*Back to reality*) Now- this dingy apartment. Sitting here all day--- (*Jeanne enters*) Jeanne, I asked you to come here so that I could explain certain things to you. (*Angry and shouting*) No Henri, I want Madam Jeanne Forestier to know what we've been through. Ten years of it! Ten years I worked in cafes, and Henri did the work of two men! I have been working- in cafes and office buildings and bistros you would never put your foot in. Let me finish!... We discharged our maid Emilie because we couldn't afford to keep her. We sold the few good pieces of furniture Henri inherited from his mother. Henri worked extra time keeping books for a grocer in the evenings and then he would come home and copy pages of manuscript for a publisher. You will never know the shame we went through. And I (*voice breaks*)... I cooked, and did the laundry; I visited the markets before dawn and bargained for what we would eat that day. And all the time I was thinking of that ball at the Ministry when I wore my new gown and your diamond necklace. The necklace! Your beautiful diamond necklace... I lost it! I lost it, I tell you. Somewhere between the Ministry and here. It slipped from my neck. You remember you said you had the clasp fixed. But it wasn't. I couldn't have been! We brought back another just like it! And for ten years we've been paying for it. A thousand francs here and a thousand there. Henri mortgaged his life for ten years with t a bank loan. And look at me! The next time you see yourself in the mirror, think of me. No, don't touch me. It's over now. Everything's over. We've paid back our debts and you have your necklace. Pride is all I've ever had. What good would have telling you about it done? It wouldn't have brought back the necklace. What? It wasn't worth... thirty thousand? What!? Five hundred francs at the most?

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## The White Liars by Peter Shaffer

Sophie

*Sophie is a fortune teller who needs money, but really wants to help a customer, Frank, get his girlfriend back from a friend, Tom, who stole her heart. Normally, fortune telling starts at 2 pounds to five pounds (if lucky), but Frank gave Sophie information about Tom's life to make Tom believe Sophie is a real fortune teller to scare him away. She is playing Frank, she really is not a baroness and did not do all the things she said she has done.*

Mister, I know I don't look so prosperous here in this filthy little room, but who do you think I am? Some silly gypsy bitch in a caravan, you can buy for five pounds? (*With grandeur.*) I practice here in this hideous town an art as old, as sacred as medicine. Look at this! (*She shoots out her hand.*) This hand has held the hand of a royal duchess in intimate spiritual communion. It has held the hand of a Prince of the Orthodox Church, who said to me, *bowing* to me, "Baroness, you are not just a fortune teller: you have the divine gift!" All right, I have—what is it?—"come down" in the world! Come down to Grinmouth! Down to pizza stalls and grease in the air! Dodge them cars and pop guns and all the fun in the fairground! Every day now—if I see anybody at all—my *noble* clients are people like old potatoes wearing paper hats saying "Kiss Me!" Whispering old spinsters, smelling of camphor—old red men with gin in their eyes, begging me to predict just one football pool to make them rich for life! *Rubbish people*, all of them, *killing* me to death with their middle-class dreams! But one thing, mister, I may despise them—but *I never cheat them. Lemberg never lies!* (*A pause. Sophie glares at him.*) That's all right. Go now, please. (*Sophie sits staring after him, clasping her hands together in anxiety.*) (*Sotto voce*) Five pounds! Five pounds, five whole pounds...! (*Calling out*) One moment please! (*A slight pause.*) I misjudged you, mister. I thought you were like him. No sensitivity or gentleness about you. But I was wrong... (*she rises.*) I see after all you have a faithful nature. I have come to believe that faithfulness in love is like real music—one of the marvels of the past. It is good to find it still exists. Look, there he is: coming back! (*Grimly*) Look at him. *Ja*: I see it now. A Taker. Arrogant Taker!...You're kind about him, because you are a kind man. "Disarming," you call him. Well, mister, he doesn't disarm me! I see what he is. I see them every day, the new savages! I watch them on this pier, whistling up and down with their stupid fuzzy hair, stumbling along in their stupid high shoes, sequins on their shoulders, pretending to be amusing and eccentric—but really, underneath, just thugs! Working-class thugs! They think they own the world. *Ja*, and we let them think it. *We*-you and I-are the foolish ones, the romantics, the *square* ones as they see us. Well, for once one of *them* is going to get it! A Taker gets it from a Giver! (*Briskly*) I'll help you, mister! I'll keep your girl safe for you. I'll frighten the sequins right off this monster of yours! Give me the envelope. (*Stretching hand out to get it*) quick, quick, quick, quick! (*Get the envelope*) It will cost you ten pounds.

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## NOTHING BUT NONSENSE #2

Elihu

*This monologue is really a part of a small scene. Elihu is an announcer who's talking about the soap opera "New Day A-Dawning." He also does the commercial promoting the (Bunkum Beauty Soap) company's new soap.*

New Day-A-Dawning! Yes, girls, this is your announcer, Elihu Guck, speaking for the Bunkum Soap Company and bringing you another episode in your favorite daytime drama, New Day A-Dawning. Just a simple little story about simple little people, but oh, so real and true to life, it brings a lump to your throat and a tear to our eye. Ready for a real good cry, girls? Got plenty of dry handkerchiefs ready, h'mmm? Well, in a minute, we'll see what's happening today in the

simple little home of that simple little family, the Hossenfeffers, but first a word from our sponsors—Girls how, did your complexion look this morning? Come on, be honest now: did it remind you of a piece of bacon you forgot to take off the stove, h'mm? was it as greasy as an eel dipped in a bucket of lard? And do you want to be beautiful, h'mm? Do you want to look more radiant than Elizabeth Taylor, more glamorous than Marlene Dietrich, more desirable than Jayne Mansfield, h'mm? Well, its really very simple, girls. All you have to do is wash with Bunkum Beauty Soap. Isn't that simple, h'mm? You wash anyway, don't you? (sharply) Don't you? Of course you do! Well, just wash a few times with Bunkum Beauty Soap, and you'll be so lovely, you'll have your husband in a lather. Listen to what one girls writes us: "Dear Bunkum Soap Company. I used to be the ugliest girl on the block, but after washing with Bunkum Beauty Soap for only one week everyone says I look exactly like Marilyn Monroe. Signed, Marilyn Monroe." There you are girls, if she can do it, you can do it too. And next time you're shopping for soap, buy a few thousand bars of Bunkum, because remember our slogan girls: "If you want to know what makes you beautiful—it's Bunkum!" —And now, let's look in and see what's happening at the Hossenfeffers this afternoon—Let's watch Mary Hossenfeffer as she goes about her everyday chores, a simple little family. And here comes John Hossenfeffer, the man of the house, home from his job at the pickle works. John, working hard to keep his simple little family well provided for. Patient, high-minded John—And so the hours roll peacefully by in the simple little home of the Hossenfeffers, one amusing little incident following another. And so we take our leave of the Hossenfeffers until tomorrow at this same time, when Bunkum Beauty Soap will bring you another episode of New Day A-Dawning, the simple true to life story about simple people—and I ask you, could any people be simpler than the Hossenfeffer, h'mm? See you tomorrow, girls

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## **Criminal Hearts #2**

*Scenario: Ata has just been robbed, and inquires for help from a neighbor (Mrs.Carnahan). Ironically Ata befriends the robber (Bo) when she discovers the robber to be female. In the monologue selection, Ata is covering-up for Bo so she won't be discovered as the troublemaker.*

I'm alright, Mrs. Carnahan. Really, I'm all right. I'm not in any danger, no danger of any kind. I'm not harmed or threatened or in trouble. But, the thing is, Mrs. Carnahan, I'm not going to open the door because there's no need and the other reason is...I'm with a lover, Mrs. Carnahan, a lover, a beautiful man who makes my life worth living, who gives meaning to my existence and the thing is, you see, that we are without clothes, that's the thing, we are scented and oiled and pomaded and fresh from the act of love, and so to open the door would be a betrayal for us and an embarrassment for you and then we would feel judged, you see, and the spell, the spell would be broken, because having lived the life you have, you know how fragile these things are. And after our pleasantries, after you were satisfied with my condition and had gone back to your rooms, my lover, the spell broken, would dress and kiss me somewhat impersonally and close the door behind him with the faintest click, Mrs. Carnahan, and I would be alone, at a time when being alone falls...well, falls very worrisome because other things that gives meaning... well, they get harder and harder to come by, don't they, Mrs. Carnahan? So I won't be opening the door, Mrs. Carnahan, because I don't want to end up alone in here, I really don't, I really don't....Hello? Mrs. Carnahan?

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## “Triplet”

by Kitty Johnson  
The Bride

*This thirty some year old woman is having a melt down on her wedding day. She has a hard time excepting her choices as reality, and finds herself speaking with two other characters; herself at 13, and 21. This woman is a romantic, yet she knows what reality is.*

The present isn't right, and I can't find something borrowed, and I talk to dolls. There's a law someplace that says if you talk to dolls you're not ready to get married. I want to do it. Really. We could go on those long hauls together and I could sketch while he was driving and he could play his guitar while I was driving—How can I ever become a famous artist if I'm tied down like that?... Did I ever tell you where Eliot and I met? I met Eliot in Paris. Did I ever tell you what he did once? He learned how to open a pack of matches with one hand and strike the match with his thumb without even taking it out of the folder. In case he got an arm shot off in Viet Nam. (Beat as she realizes who she is talking about.) No. That was Bobby. Bobby did that. I had it all written down in the book. He was going to be famous, too. We were both going to be famous and live in Paris and have these two kids—first a boy and then a girl—and a maid to wash the dishes. I wish I could change the pages in the book... but I can't. (Again, the horn honks outside) Do me a favor. Go tell Bobby—I mean Eliot—go tell Eliot I can't get married today, he'll understand. I'm just not ready. What about my career? Well, what's left of it any way. I was the most gifted abstractionist they'd seen in centuries and here I am, back in Blanchester, teaching again. The only thing I change more that jobs is lovers.

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## “She Was Lost, And Is Found” By Richard Hensley

*This monologue is about 2 parents losing their daughter because she ran away from home. Now she's returning back home and her 2 parents are trying to figure out why she ran away couple years ago. This character is the mom, Ellen, talking to her husband named Dan.*

Why did she run away from us Dan? I know we tortured ourselves with that question but there doesn't seem to be an answer. I know there's no use of asking because Janie's coming home but still. Will it be over? This isn't a fairy tale, Dan, or a TV show where everything works out before the last commercial. We haven't exactly live “happily ever after” since our marriage, and I just don't think we can look for a “happily ever after” ending to this part of our life either. (*pulls away from Dan*) I want to think everything will be just the same. I want it desperately, but I just can't believe it. Things will never be the same. Everyday praying and hoping for our daughter to come home and now she's on her way. Our prayers have finally been answered. I know a lot of time has passed and she obviously changed. Even if she's our daughter, it's as though a stranger is coming home tonight. We have to somehow build a whole new relationship. I'm frightened, Dan, as frightened as I've ever been in my life. Have you ever wondered if things would have been different if we had stayed home? In our hometown. I'm not blaming you entirely. It was our choice together. But, we've moved nine times in the 22 years we've been married. Our girls have lived in seven different states. They haven't known what it was like to settle in one

place, to make lasting friends. Sue has always coped well. But I've thought a lot about Janie since she left. Janie was quieter. She never really talked to me about how she felt. She didn't make friends as quickly as Sue. You should have asked the girls about the moves, Dan. Janie never seemed to adjust here. If she made any friends, we didn't know them. Janie was quiet. She wouldn't open up. She didn't share her feelings – atleast not with us. But I knew something was wrong. You've been too busy to care about emotional well being of your family. I'm not trying to blame you completely. I share the guilt. But, Dan, something we did drove our younger daughter from her home, and I think we need to look for the reasons. One undeniable point is that you have been married to your company for over 20 years. The company had much more of Dan Clark's attention than his wife or daughters. I should've said something. For 20 years you've left home before the girls were awake, and you've returned most evenings after they were asleep. You carried work home to do on weekends, and if you weren't locked in your den working, you were on the golf course or tennis courts with business contacts. The daughter coming here tonight may seem like a stranger to you, Dan, but she was a stranger to you before she left.

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### **The Foreigner by Larry Shue**

Catherine:

*Small talking with Charlie, then gets into her personal life and how she really feels. She feels free to open up to him because she believes he does not speak English*

Uh-huh! mind if I sit down here? I am not going up to that yellow room again. Damn picture on the wall of some dogs playin' poker. Have a seat, what you lookin' at? People in your country bend in the middle? Have a seat. (gesturing towards the chair) That's it. Oh, yeah. We're not supposed to talk to you, I know. You don't care. What do you care. You starin' at me for? Make me feel like a T.V set.(picks up a newspaper)You want the picture section? No? suit yourself. What do we--? Aww- looky here. Somebody's gone out and torched the Klan headquarters, can you beat that? Up in Atlanta. Yes, sir. Burned the place down. That's a switch. Some old boys aren't too pleased right now, you can bet on that. Watch out for them, mister, those Klan boys. They'll get you. You're not a hundred per cent American white Christian, you're liable to find yourself some fine mornin' floppin' around in some Safeway dumpster, minus a few little things. Debutante ball! Well-look at the little debutantes! Aren't they pretty? Comin' out. The catch is, girls, you don't get to go back in. My, my.(really into turning pages in the newspaper) What the hell am I doin?... Shoot. 'Scuse me. I don't ever do this. I am a bit weary this morning.(clears throat) I just get sorat-uh-a little sick and tired of thing, from time to time. I'll stop jabirin.Ohh, boy. You ever knowen anybody that was just so good, that you just feel vile, most of the time? Yeah. David. aaa David is so sweet, and does for people, and I so patient. Some people are meant to be a waste of food, doing mindless bullcrap, and I think I'm one of 'em. I'm good at it.

A year from now I'll be a mother, own this house? I mean-whew! I mean, hold the damn phone a minute. Your asking me how this happened? Ohh Charlie, Charlie I don't know!!! Things just happened to fast, and I wish they wouldn't. but they do!! You got some nice eyes you know that? Aww

your probably really nice. Wow you're a really good listener. Come on say Thank you.

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### **A Tantalizing**

By William Mastrosimone

Dafne:

Sir? (pause) Sir? (sitting on piano stool) My father froze to death out in the street. He suffered a stroke some months before and it left him no so responsible for himself. If you took an eye off of him, he'd wander out. You'd find him out on the street asking strangers for picket change, or stealing apples at the corner mart, or looking through a garbage can. It was quite embarrassing for the familiar. Such a comedown for him, from what he was before. (pause) Dad was a restorer. A historian with a hammer. When I was younger he would take me sometimes. I'd hang onto his long scarf and walk in the wake of his pipe smoke. Cherry blend. Funny: I can catch a wiff of that now and suddenly he'd there. He'd take me to a cold ramshackle house where hinges screech and a rat would run for cover, where the roof leaked and the stairs buckled and floors warped, some landmark building. And grave men would be waiting there, and they'd make a big fuss over me, and asked Dad if he would restore this disaster back to the original condition. And Dad would puff on his pipe and give a hard look. His eyes could see under decades of abuse and neglect; strip away and sandpaper the dereliction down to the run in the grain of the wood. And he'd sat, "Yup," and then do more than he promised. (pause) It was lunchtime when a police officer saw a passerby tripping over what he thought was a vagrant on the sidewalk. He nudged the vagrant with his billyclub. (pause) They say freezing is the kindest death. First you tremble, then you get numb, then you curl up like a baby in a crib, and sleep.

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**Jake's Women**  
**Karen**  
**By Neil Simon**

*Karen- the sister of Jake, who has problems with his wife. Jake is a writer and Karen is in his mind. There is a history of divorce in the family so Jake turns to her for help and advice which brings her feelings of loneliness in her love life to the surface.*

What? I'm here. Stop yelling. You have to think of me now? I was watching "The Godfather I, II, and III"...If he makes 4,5 and 6 forget it, I need I need a life...What's wrong Jake? Is Maggie here? Do you want me to speak to her? Where is she? I'll talk to her. Oh. I'm in your head. I never know how that works. When I'm here I can talk to you. But when someone *else* is here, I can't talk to *them*. It's very confusing Jake. I feel like I'm in a Woody Allen movie. I'm irritating you now aren't I. Don't write me Jake. Let me be me. You have such a distorted picture of me these days. Where did you find this dress I'm wearing? This dress is not me. Bette Midler does a concert in a dress like this. It's ok. You need advice? Well of course I *want* to hear. I care about you. You're my brother, I love you...See that's a good speech. That's a good speech. That's how I should talk. Giving, caring, nurturing. Make a note of that. So what is Jake? Tell me what's wrong. (*Beat*) Don't tell me. Oh my God, no. You think Maggie's going to leave you? Alright, don't jump to conclusions...don't try to guess what's going on in someone else's mind. I used to worry that Harry was going to leave me too. I know he did, but only because I kept saying, "You're going to leave me one day I know it." It drove him crazy...Besides, we had big problems. I'm such a bad judge of character. I'm so depressed. Is there something wrong with our family Jake? Mom got divorced. Pop got divorced. I got divorced. Now you're getting divorced. Oh Jake, Jake. You're so dependent on women. I've always known that. I wish I could hold you right now. I want to grab you in my arms and the way Momma did and make you feel wonderful and safe and loved. I'm sorry Julie died. I'm sorry Maggie is so unhappy. But you have me, Jake. You can count on me...This is another good speech. Give me more lines like this. This is a woman you could like. (*Beat*) If everyone likes me, why can't I make a marriage work? Don't end up alone like me Jake. I live in the movies, night after night, and you can't be happy living in a popcorn world....No! See that's crappy dialogue. You'll look for a man for me. Well find him then, don't think of him. I don't want a man that dresses worse than me.

**back to top****FINAL DRESS REHEARSAL**

By Jack Frakes  
DIRECTOR

*The director is loud, frustrated, the distraught type, trying to be orderly and businesslike and tries to keep everything going smoothly, but the lights are lagging, stage crew and cast members arrive late, and the sassy stage crew is noisy. The degree of humor of what goes wrong is largely dependent on the director's reactions to the frustrations.*

All right! All right! Let's get this show on the road! Let's get started! Hey, stage manager, let's turn on some lights! (*lights off*) Now quit that! I said I want light, stage manager, liiiights! (*lights on*) There! That's better! All right, Stage Manager, nobody likes a smart aleck! We've got to get this rehearsal started. Hear me, Stage Manager? Or are you hiding from me again? Stage Manager, we're in a hurry! Where is my stage manager!! Oh. Now look!-We're running late and this is the final dress rehearsal. Turn on some more lights. Now get the cast on stage for roll call. All ready for roll call. We'll start with the technical crew. Stage Manager? Is all your crew here? Good...good. Prompter? Prompter! I'm calling roll. No one ever talks while I'm calling roll. Sound effects girl? Wardrobe and Props girl? Oh okay, Make-up Girl? All right, now for the cast members. The Stepmother? What's wrong with your nose? It looks terrible! You look like a big silly bird. Moving on...Younger Sister? Godmother? Fairy Godmother! What is wrong with your dress?! It looks horrid! No Fairy Godmother would ever look like *that*. And, Fairy Godmother, adjust your crown-it looks silly. Okay, good! (*Like a football coach*) All right, cast. This is it. This is the final dress rehearsal. It's important that you concentrate and stay in character. Keep the show moving at all costs. Remember, I'll be out front watching. Watching every move you make. Pulling and rooting for you all the way down the line. Tonight's the night-the final dress rehearsal. So give it the old stuff! The old oompa! (*With gesture*) All right-places!

**back to top****Teach me how to Cry #2**

by Patricia Joudry

*Melinda: Melinda wants her mom to be there for her, the way she is there for her mother, but her mother can't comprehend that well*

I am not different mom. I used to think that, now I am just the same. What do you mean you don't understand. You don't have to understand. I didn't know I could be happy. No, I never have been. But now I'm happy all of the day and in the night too when I'm asleep. Isn't it strange that I'm not even afraid it'll go away. It couldn't go away. It couldn't, could it, Mother? All you have to do is say good evening. And if they say anything else to you, like questions, then I'll answer for you. They'll just think you're shy. Oh, mother, I love you so much. Oh.. Oh, come one DON'T be frightened. I don't want you to be frightened, because we don't have to be. oh, can't you understand? Then try maam' You never even try! You only give up all the time and lean on me and lean on me and make me tired. Mother, I am not angry I just cant always handle you leaning on me, I need you sometimes

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## Come Blow Your Horn

**Connie** – *has been dating Alan, a man who is afraid of commitment and dating another girl at the same time. In this scene, Alan is about to go out to meet his other lady when Connie stops him from going out to talk about their future plans.*

You've got a business appointment. At seven o'clock? Oh, Alan, I'm a big girl. You've got a date. You know, something just occurred to me. A few minutes ago I couldn't understand why you were fighting so hard to keep me in show business. It's suddenly very clear. It's not *my* career you're worried about. It's *yours*! Your career as a LOVER. That's why you want me to stay out on the road. Your only crazy about me when I'm here but the minute I leave...substitution. Oh, it's beautiful. A bachelor's dream. The two-platoon system. You'll never grow stale, Alan. Or bored. Not as long as you keep rotating the crops every two weeks. I'll bet you've got a regular schedule. A time table with arrivals and departures. Love on a shuttle. For some strange reason I thought you felt the same as I did. I thought we'd get married. I mean, the past six months were wonderful...(beat) and you'd hate to see it END?!? Getting married is the end? Fine, All right then...Alan, let's have the truth. Either you've said to yourself "I'm going to marry this girl," or "I'm going to have an affair with her." All I ask is that you let me in on your decision. If marriage is out just say so. I won't run. I'll stay and fight for my honor the way a girl who's been properly brought up should. And I can truthfully tell you I'll lose the battle before long, because, damn it, I'm in love with you. But if you're really in love with me, you've got to tell me and be prepared to back it up with the rest of your life. Well which is it going to be, Alan? Do we march down the aisle or into the bedroom? Just say what you really feel. (beat) It's not a game...It's just being honest with each other, Alan. That's what you're afraid of. You won't even be honest with yourself. And I didn't say you *had* to love me. I just want to know if you do.

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## BEDROOM FARCE

By: Alan Ayckbourn  
Susannah

*Susannah is talking to herself in the mirror of her friend's house doing her "exercises." After she is finished saying them, her friend, Kate, enters and Susannah pours out her heart to her.*

I am confident in myself. I have confidence in myself. I am not unattractive. I am attractive. People still find me attractive. I am not afraid of people. People are not frightening. There is nothing to be frightened of. Oh, sorry. I was just doing my exercises. I do them whenever I'm alone. Or when I feel alone. They help. Trevor's here, I suppose? He hasn't said hello to me, I notice. No doubt he's better things to occupy him. I see that woman's here. Whatever her name is. Jan. Her husband's sick in bed? How lucky for her. Kate, tell me something. Do you and Malcolm still have—how are you and Malcolm? You can be honest, you know. I don't know if you know it but things for Trevor and I have gone totally wrong. I'm sure everyone's heard. We're neither of us very good at—conventional cover-ups. Is it still exciting for you? God, Trevor used to excite me. I was so excited by that man. Do you know what it feels like to be really excited? When we weren't actually physically here in the bed—you know, making love—I felt empty—utterly incomplete. And now. Now, it's a desert. We hardly touch, you know. I think I actually revolt him. Suddenly I've lost all my identity. Some mornings, "who am I," I say. "Who

am I?" And I don't know. I terrify myself. (pause) I saw this girl in the street the other day—about my age—a little bit younger. Do you know, I felt aroused by her. Attracted. Isn't that terrifying? Not that the feeling in its is terrifying. I don't believe the feeling in itself is wrong but what it means is that all the things I used to think I knew about myself I no longer know. I suppose you're beautifully complicated, Kate. I'm sorry for keeping you. Could I just stay here a bit longer? Thanks. I'll pluck up courage in a minute. I'm sorry, I'm being absolutely useless. See you in a minute. (after a few moments, looking back at the mirror, more confidently than before) I am confident in myself. I have confidence in myself. I am not unattractive. I am attractive. People still find me attractive. I am not afraid of people. People are not frightening. There is nothing to be frightened of. (nods assuredly)

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## **“Nine People Dancing to Good Country Music” #2**

by Lee Blessing

EVE

*Eve is an older woman who has been “happily” married for years with one kid. She just recently has left her child and husband, and moved to Texas with a stranger to buy a bar. She is visited by her niece who she has not spoken to in six months.*

I had something with him alright. Maybe that was marriage, who knows? (Pause) Oh Robert. I can't believe it sometimes when I think of the things he used to make me do. They were deadly things. Honey, your “uncle Robert” is a deadly human being. Deadly dull. Robert is a terminally boring man. That's nothing to laugh about. In fact, he's the most boring man possible: he's a professor of Latvian. And when you're a professor of Latvian, there's only eight other people in the whole world who care. I discovered I wasn't one of 'em, and I knew I was in trouble right then. “Cause he kept trying to make me one, kept demanding that I care who the kings—or whatever they were—of ancient Latvia were. And the more I said, “No baby, I am not interested to learn about the Hanseatic League,” the angrier he'd get. And you know, the angrier he got the cooler and more logical he'd be. That's when it really got dangerous. “Cause then he'd prove to me, literally prove, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that I could not go through another day without becoming a dedicated scholar of Baltic Studies. So, after a few hours of listening to him, I would numbly nod my head, pick up some learned paper by a colleague of his—one of the eight—and study it like a little schoolgirl with her homework assignment before bed. And he would just sit there beaming at me. The next morning I always woke up knowing the coordinates of Riga and wondering how to kill my husband. (Pauses) Well I knew that wasn't a healthy situation. And about that time I met Jim, while changing planes—the luckiest connection of my life—and he took one look at me and knew just what to say. “I got a bar in Houston. Interested?” and I was.

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## **Dog Eat Dog**

By Mary Gallagher

Edith

*Character description: she is a very strong person emotionally. She has a strong will also*

I understand. If it comes right down to it, I'm going to save myself, and Fred. And that time is coming fast. Fred's creditors took everything but the bathroom fixtures. We've got a twelve-room house without a stick of furniture. We live in

two rooms and we sleep in sleeping bags. And winters coming, and there's not a hope in hell of buying fuel! I'm scared. But more than that, I'm mad! And by God, I am going to make it through this goddamn mess! And I can do it, too! I wasn't always loaded. I was broke, for years. I'm good at being broke. And I'll save Fred, too, if he just stays out from underfoot. But I can't save anybody else, and I'm not fool enough to try! (Pause. Marina, discourage, prepares to go as Fred enters with fishing gear) I am a realist! The whole premise of this neighborhood is that we all have money, so we'll never have to ask each other for a goddamn thing! Now suddenly everyone needs everything, and the doors are closed! And they'll stay that way! Just don't break you hearts over it, that's all!

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### **Seascape with Sharks and Dancer #2**

*She wants to have an abortion because she's scared to get attach to him and hurt him like she has killed everything she has touched or loved in the past.*

Listen, Dumbass. She said she went to this very nice doctor and it wasn't hardly any trouble at all and then it was all over and it's the easiest thing in the world and if she could do it so easy, I don't see why I can't. It isn't like it's against the law or anything. It isn't like there's anything wrong with it, and it hardly takes any time at all---what do you mean, NO? Just who the HELL do you think you ARE, anyway? It's my baby and don't call it a baby it isn't a baby it isn't anything yet and you can't stop me. I have an appointment this afternoon. It's all perfectly safe and legal. I should have never told you at all. Men get so hysterical. Stop calling it a child. It isn't a child. It isn't a child. It isn't anything. You can't murder somebody that doesn't exist. God, you're so stupid. People do it all the time. I don't believe I'm having this conversation. You've never seen it. If I hadn't told you, you'd never have known it existed. It probably looks like a fish or something now. You'll forget all about it in a couple of days and be dammed happy you didn't have to spend the rest of your life worried about it. Some slimey little amphibian I don't even know is crawling around in my stomach and I don't have any right? It's like a potato, for instance. You don't think of a sack of potatoes as being alive, do you? But they sit around in the cupboard and then after a while they start to sprout and there's things growing out of them and all, but it isn't like you wouldn't give a name or take it to the park in a stroller or anything. It might be growing, really, it's just that part of it is turning into something else. And that's all this thing inside me is doing. It's growing, sort of, but it isn't alive, it's just a part of me that got hooked up with a part of you and started turning into something else. It'll be like having a wart removed. That's what it's like.

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### **Come Back, Little Sheba**

By William Inge

Act one Scene 1

*Lola is married to her husband who gave up being a chiropractor and has alcoholic binges. In this scene, she is telling the story of her husband to a random postman and going on about his alcoholic problems.*

You postmen have things pretty nice, don't you? I hear you get nice pensions after you have been working for the government twenty years. I think that's dandy. It's a good job, to. You may get tired but I think its good for a man to be healthy. My husband, he's a doctor, a chiropractor; he has to stay inside his office all day long. The only exercise he gets is rubbin' people's backbones. It makes his hands strong. He's got the strongest hands you ever did see. But he's got a poor digestion. I keep tellin' him he oughta get some fresh air once in a while and some exercise.

You know what? My husband is an alcoholics anonymous. He doesn't care if I tell you that, cause he's proud of it. He hasn't touched a drop in almost a year. All that time we've had a quart of whiskey in the pantry for company and he hasn't even gone near it. Doesn't even want to. You know, alcoholics can't drink like ordinary people; they're allergic to it. It affects the different. They get started drinking and they can't stop.

Liquor transforms them. You should have seen the Doc before he gave it up. He lost all his patients wouldn't even go to the office; just wanted to stay drunk all day long and he'd come home at night and... You don't ever drink, do you? Well, I guess that stuff doesn't do any of us any good. Say, you got any kids? Well we don't have any kids, and we got this toy in a box of breakfast food. Why don't you take it home to them? Well goodbye, Mr. Postman.

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## **A Coupla White Chicks Sitting Around Talking 2**

Last minute cancellations. I couldn't squeeze you in even if i wanted to. Every free minute not spent with friends and/or the less fortunate is filled with reading. I love books. I belong to three different book-of-the-month clubs. I subscribe to two psychological journals. I'm voracious. I never stop. I live a life of the mind. I am not like the rest of the women on Charlemagne Lane. I'm totally happy by myself. I love to be alone. Privacy is my middle name. Come around tomorrow and see if I am even here. If you wonder why i cut the grass so late at night, that's how busy I am! You're Hannah Mae and I'm Maude. Let's keep it right there. No more "Sugar Honey Child," or any of that Southern stuff, O.K.? Also, I want you to stop spying on me. I don't ned any extra eyes looking right now. Say, 'Good-bye, Maude. I've worn out my welcome and I must learn to mind my own business.'

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## **Getting Out**

Arleie

*Arleie is a woman in her late twenties, and has just served an eight year prison sentence. She is very strong and likes to speak her mind.*

No, I don't have to shut up, neither. You already got me in seg-re-ga-tion, what else you gonna do? I got all day to sleep, while everybody else is out bustin ass in the laundry. Hey I know.you ain't goota go do no dorm count, I'll just tell you an you jus sit. Huh? You preciate that? Ease them corns you been moanin about. Ok, write this down. Startin down by the john on the back side, we got Mary Alice. Sleeps with her pillow stuffed in her mouth. Says her mom says it'd keep her from grindin down her teeth or something. She be suckin that pillow like she getting paid for it. Then it's Doris eatin pork rinds. Thinks somebody gonna grab em outta her mouth if she

eats em during the day. Doris ain't dumb. She fat, but she ain't dumb. Hey! You notice how many girls is fat here? Then it be Ghonda, snoring, Marevene, wheezing and Suzanne, coughin. Then Clara and Ellie be still whisperin. Family crap, who's getting outta line, which girls is gittin a new work 'signment, an who kin git extra desserts an for how much. Them's the two really run the place. My bed right next to Ellie, for sure it's got some of her crap hid in it by now. Crackers or some crap gonna leak out all over my sheets. Last time I found a goddamn grilled cheese in my pillow. Even had two of them little warty pickles. Christ! Ok Linda and Lucille. The be real quiet, but the ain't sleepin. Prayin, that's them. Linda be sayin them Hell Mary's till you kin just about scream. And Lucille, she tol me once she didn't believe in no God, jus some stupid spirits whooshin around everywhere makin people do stuff. Now.I'd like to go to the other side.cuz I have been listening to you for the last three hours. Your husband's getting laid off and you lettuce is getting eat by rabbits. Crap City. You shut up! Whatdda I care if I wake everybody up? I want the nurse.I'm getting sick in here.an there's bugs in here!!

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### **Don't Look Down**

Adele

*Adele is in her late sixties. She is a possessive woman and can turn hysteria on or off at will. She is full bosomed, and has a motherly appearance.*

You see what I'm doing? Watch. If you're not inside by the time I count to three I'm jumping and that's all there is to it. You hear? One. two. That bitch! That dirty rotten bitch! What do you mean who, you know who. Lily Cooper. That's who. For thirty five years she bled us dry. But I paid. I paid happily, with no questions asked. And for what? Her silence. I was afraid of what you might do if she opened her big mouth. She opened it and you did it. How they warned us, your father and me. The pediatrician. My mother. His mother. The neighbors. the doctor who arranged the adoption. But no, you had to grow up our own flesh and blood. I hope you never know what it is to live in fear for thirty five years. Ugh! Lily Cooper! That vampire! She sucked the blood from our veins drop by drop warning us again and again if the checks don't come through she'd tell you the truth. The truth that I'm not your mother.she is. How I fought to keep you from finding out. When I could pay, I paid. But when the ulcer operation cleaned me out, she had no use for me anymore. She said she'd talk and she did. And no Silvia didn't know you were a bastard, it was just a good guess. And still you ask why I didn't tell you this years ago? I don't understand how you could ask such a question. It wasn't wrong of me not to tell you. I mean, its hard to think about a child's rights when he is sucking at your breasts..Alright, alright. on a bottle. But either way, you were just as loved mine or not. And for the last time, you're not a bastard. She is the bastard, the dirty rotten bitch.

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### **Impromptu**

By Tad Mosel  
Winifred

*Winifred is a character actress and she has been put onstage with three other actors to a do an impromtu play and they are not able to leave the stage until the stage manger lowers the house lights and feels their play is over.*

Am I that cruel Tony? I never intended to be cruel. I feel very kindly to most things. But I'm ashamed of it, so it doesn't come out that

way. There  
 is something humiliating about letting yourself go. I didn't mean that stuff I said about you not being good enough to play my son Tony. I  
 think you can  
 play my son. And you leave him alone Ernest! He's trying as hard as he knows how! And I think he's doing a fine performance! And he's  
 not hopeless. You're always so impatient. And he hasn't had as much experience as you've had. You always want to blunder in and  
 take charge of everything! You cast him in the part now, give him a chance! Did you hear me, Tony? I was defending you. I have  
 never defended anyone before in my life. Now look what you've made him do Ernest, you've made him leave. (*Angrily.*) who are you  
 today Ernest? I said, who are you today? Yes, I know who you are! But do you? Sitting smugly back and talking about "poor Tony?" He's  
 the only one of us who made a go of this play. What do I mean? Oh, Ernest! Do you really want me to tell you? Shall I say it? Shall I put  
 it into words just what you are today? You are  
 the kind of person who always believes in their own abilities and how they are sure to give you success, that they placed you just a  
 notch above other  
 people. You were sure you could cope with any situation, any circumstances and act with precision and wisdom. That is all your life has  
 been built  
 upon, isn't it? But my opinion isn't what matter is it. Just as long as the audiences like you. That's all that matters isn't it? Their approval. And  
 this is our play. An improvisation. We have done everything that is expected of us. Are you still worrying about the audience Ernest?  
 Don't you see? They 're no different from us Except when the curtain falls and the house lights come up, they'll have to go on - improvising.

## **PSYCHE**

by Moliere  
 Psyche

Princes, you both display to my eyes a choice so precious and dazzling that it would satisfy the proudest heart. But your passion,  
 your friendship, your supreme virtue, all increase the value of your vows of fidelity, and make it a merit that I should oppose myself to  
 what you ask of me. I must not listen to my heart only before engaging in such a union, but my hand must await my father's decision before  
 it can dispose of itself, and my sisters have rights superior to mine. But if I were referred absolutely to my own wishes, you might both  
 have too great a share in them, and my entire esteem be so evenly balanced between you that I should not be able to decide in favour  
 of either. I would indeed respond with most affectionate interest to the ardour of your suit, but amid so much merit two hearts are too  
 much for me, one heart too little for you. The accomplishment of my dearest wishes would be to me a burden were it granted to me by  
 your love. Yes, Princes, I should greatly prefer you to all those whose love will follow yours, but I could never have the heart to prefer one  
 of you to the other. My tenderness would be too great a sacrifice to the one whom I might choose, and I should think myself  
 barbarously unjust to inflict so great a wrong upon the other. Indeed, you both possess such greatness of soul that it would be wrong to  
 make either of you miserable, and you must seek in love the means of being both happy. If your hearts honour me enough to give me  
 the right of disposing of them, I have two sisters well fitted to please, who might make your destinies happy, and whom friendship endears  
 to me enough for me to wish that you should be their husbands.

## **THE MISER**

by Moliere  
 FROSIN

Who needs a dowry?! Why, this girl will bring you more than twelve thousand francs a year! To begin with, she has been nursed and brought up with the strictest notions of frugality. She is a girl accustomed to live upon salad, milk, cheese, and apples, and who consequently will require neither a well served up table, nor any rich broth, nor your everlasting peeled barley; none, in short, of all those delicacies that another woman would want. This is no small matter, and may well amount to three thousand francs yearly. Besides this, she only cares for simplicity and neatness; she will have none of those splendid dresses and rich jewels, none of that sumptuous furniture in which girls like her indulge so extravagantly; and this item is worth more than four thousand francs per annum. Lastly, she has the deepest aversion to gambling; and this is not very common nowadays among women. Why, I know of one in our neighborhood who lost at least twenty thousand francs this year. But let us reckon only a fourth of that sum. Five thousand francs a year at play and four thousand in clothes and jewels make nine thousand; and three thousand francs which we count for food, does it not make you twelve thousand francs?

## **CLEOPATRA**

### *On suicide*

Any minute now I'll put my hand in that basket of figs and take out the asp. I mean after all, there's nothing else to do. And what the hell, I've done everything.

I don't mind dying. Especially now that I'm pushing forty. It's better this way. I guess, as I've failed to fascinate Octavian, maybe I'm not all that beautiful as I used to be. (Though I can't see it, to me I still look great.) Well, I'm just as well of dead before things get any worse. What if my eyes got puffy?

They say that death by the bite of an asp is very quick and painless. The only thing is, I just can't bear the thought of sticking my hand in that basket and touching a snake. I'm not even crazy about handling figs. I know, no matter what anyone says that snakes are all cold and slimy. Oh, ick! I wonder if I could pick it up with a handkerchief? I wish there were some other way to die. I wish someone would poison me, or bash my head in, or maybe I could get TB or something like that and die gracefully, going out with a pathetic little cough and clutching one perfect lotus blossom. No, that's not good. It isn't stylish.

If they had legs and fur, I wouldn't mind so much. I wonder if it's true that if you grab them by the neck they straighten out? Well, I'm never going to find out. I'm just going to grab without looking and whatever I grab. And it will probably be a fig and it'll squash and I'll die. Whatever made me have it hidden in a basket of figs? Nuts maybe, or Seckel pears, or green apples...anything but figs. I wonder if an asp squishes.

I wish I could put it to my foot or my ankle (my beautiful, long, aristocratic high-arched foot, or my lovely slender ankle.) but they say the poison only works fast and painlessly if you get it near your heart. I hope asp poison doesn't disfigure you in any way. I'd hate to think I was going to swell up or turn blue afterwards. Here goes. Oh, why do there have to be figs in there? I'll never get through this day alive. Damn! I wish it could be a knife or a sword with a nice dry handle. Well, that simply isn't chic. It's done with an asp. Suppose he doesn't like biting. What am I supposed to do then? Jus sit there looking at him till he decides? I hope he doesn't look at me. I'm the one that should be hooded. Well, I'll die either way. If I don't die of asp poison, I'll die of fright. This is just not my day.

## **VOICES**

### **Kate**

I grew up and crossed all kinds of streets alone, much to the chagrin of my father. I was not the two-faced type, never have been, he had to listen to the details of each of my escapades. I moved to France when I was twenty. One month I mailed him a pamphlet then in currency on the subject of Free Love. I said, with all seriousness, I agreed with the author of the piece though what my father did not know was I was still a virgin, then. He was in a

rage and wired me to come back immediately. I refused. It was a matter of principle, you see. I told him that I was the Captain of my ship and this was *my* life I wrote to him. He wired back a terse and shocking message; "Your life, You Pay." The first big shock in my as yet too innocent life: When I went to the bank in Paris I found I'd been cut off. The rent was due. I had no place to go. That morning or what was morning for merely, I suppose was afternoon for everybody else I packed all my belongings in four bags, gave one of my last francs to the grocer's son around the corner and we walked to the railroad station at Montparnesse, where I locked my bags in a cabinet. And there I was in the streets with only a key and my wits and something else I found had inestimable value. Men.

## VOICES

Grace

I stand here and try to remember myself as a girl. Who was I before I met William? Before Andy and then Jessica and then Kathy and then Dan was born. I was not very old. I finished a year and a half of college, a year and a half of reading Shakespeare and learning the names of English kings. I had wanted to be a lawyer. I loved Rosalind Russell, the actress from the 1940's who wore shoulder pads rushing about cities, her eyes wide open, her tongue jabbing, arguing law cases,, reporting murder stories, and even being-a mayor. Though in that movie she retired into marriage and that's what I did though I had a lover first and thought myself old and jaded. He had been my Classics professor; he was, of course, married.. We dined in plush restaurants red walls around us chandeliers above us. We drove to the country where we lay in fields and he read me poetry by Pindar and medieval lyrics. He taught me to drink wine; we ate a fish course and a meat course. He laughed at everything I said until I thought myself a great wit. He had a deep voice graying hair and dressed like the dethroned duke of England. Next to him all the younger men with hair greased down so that their ears stuck out and worried looks and voices on the edge of loudness spattering out their life plans as if they were declarations of state seemed idiots. But then I found myself one day exactly no where. I had thought I was pregnant and my professor in one day found a proper Doctor in New York bought a plane ticket, gave me \$500 in cash and said, "Goodbye," he could hurt me no longer. In New York I found I wasn't pregnant. So I stayed. I never went back to the university, and feared my hometown would be too small. When I wrote my parents said I must come home or go to work. I was proud. It's funny how often women of my age look back and say those words, I *was* proud.

## THE SEAGULL by Anton Chekov

Nina

Why do you say that you kissed the earth on which I walked? I ought to be killed. I am so tired! I if could rest...if I could rest! I am a sea-gull...no, that's not it. I am an actress. Oh, well!! (Hearing Madame Arkadin and Trigorin laughing, she listens, then goes to door and ) He is here, too... Oh, well...it doesn't matter...no.. He did not believe in the stage, he

always laughed at my dreams and little by little I left off believing in it too, and lost heart...and then I was fretted by love and jealousy, and continually anxious over my little one...I grew petty and trivial, I acted stupidly...I did not know what to do with my arms, I did not know how to stand on the stage, I could not control my voice. You can't understand what it feels like when one knows one is acting disgracefully. I am a sea-gull. No, that's not it..Do you remember you shot a sea-gull? A man came by chance, saw it an, just to pass the time, destroyed it...A subject for a short story...that's not it, though. (rubs her forehead) What was I saying?...I am talking of the stage. Now I am not like that. I am a real actress, I act with enjoyment, with enthusiasm, I am intoxicated when I am on the stage and feel that I am splendid. And since I have been here, I keep walking about and thinking, thinking and feeling that my soul is getting stronger.Every day now I know, I understand Kostya, that in our work-in acting or writing- what matters is not fame, not glory, not what I dreamed of, but knowing how to be patient. To bear one's cross and have faith. I have faith and it all doesn't hurt so much, and when I think of my vocation I am not afraid of life. 'sh-sh. ...I am going. Goodbye. When I become a great actress, come and look at me.

### Betrayal

*Tina is angry with her boyfriend, or should I say ex-boyfriend. Her anger and humiliation is so intense that her eyes begin to glaze, but proudly holds back the tears as she gives him a peace of her mind.*

Tina: What do you thing you're doing?! I mean as if it wasn't bad enough you asked Ginny out on a date behind my back, but I had to find out about it, from Shannon, who couldn't wait to throw it in my face. I was so humiliated, I could have died! I thought we were supposed to be going out...isn't that what you told me Monday? What ever happened too, "Tina, you're different from other girls," or, "I feel like I can tell you anything", or, "I knew you were special the first time I saw you"? Were you just playing me? What do you want from me? (Pause) No! You know what? I don't even care...this whole thing was just a pathetic lie to satisfy your ego, wasn't it?...I mean you didn't even have the decency to break it off before you jumped into something else. I can't believe I fell for the whole honesty routine...Just leave, I can't even look at you, you make me sick (Pause) Please, just leave!...O.K... I admit it, you got me, so take your little trophy, add me to your collection and get out of my life!

### THE OUTCAST

Teenage girl is chatting with her friend on the phone making fun of a school outcast just before tragedy strikes.(Dramatic)

Did you see what Susan Benning was wearing last week? How Gothic can you get? (pause) Well, try being her neighbor! Last Saturday she came by my house to ask if I wanted to see some new exhibit called " the Forgotten History Of Pilgrims" (pause) I know! Snore City! (pause) Of course I told her no! I can't risk my reputation by hanging out with that nut! I mean...she's nice and all but sometimes you have to draw a line (pause) Augh, hang on! Call waiting. (presses a button on the phone and puts it back to her ear) Hello? (pause) Oh... Hi,Mrs. Benning (pause). No, my mom isn't here can I take a mess (pause) What? (in shock) SS..Susan what? (trying to register what she has been told) Calm down, Mrs. Benning! What happened? (pause) Was she in an accident? (pause) (shock) SSS..SSuicide? Oh my god. (pause) Um, yeah. I'll tell my mom... bye. (presses a button on the phone and holds it to her ear) (talks softly on the verge of tears) Mindy? I..aa..have to call you back. (pause) I don't want to talk about it (pause) (sudden anger) I said I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT!! (hangs up phone).

## Delinquent

by Emily Picha

*(A mother walks onstage, obviously frustrated and confused. She sits down in a chair and attempts to read, but this fails. While holding her book, she utters things about her daughter, Dana.)*

Teenagers these days! Don't they understand that it's not safe to be out till 4 o'clock in the morning? Why I could... (pauses) I hate to sound like an old grumpy woman, but I guess that's what I am. My so-called daughter walked into my house at 4 o'clock last night. She said she forgot the time. Forgot the time? What kind of idiot can't tell when the sun is breaking and you've been out for ten hours with that.. that Jeremy kid. Hoodlum. *(Tries to read again.)* AGCHH!!! I can't believe this! I can't even hold my eyes on a godforsaken book! The nerve of that child. Making me worried sick! I can't believe this. I really can't. When we were kids, we would never dare do a thing like that to hurt our parents! They did too much for us. We had respect, I'll tell you! Lot's of it! And what did I do to deserve a delinquent child? I've worked for her all my life! Changing diapers, teaching her manners, driving her everywhere, and look what she turns around and does? Decieves me! When is it going to end? It wasn't just this. Last week she lied to me, said she was going over to a girlfriend's to study. HA! I knew it all along. She snuck off to the beach with that Jeremy kid. Hoodlum. And she did god knows what there! Then she comes home with these big bloodshot eyes. My baby! Stoned! Oh and then last month, oh last month! Her counselor calls me up and tells me to come down to the school. Little Miss Juvenile Delinquent brought cigarettes to school! And she was smoking them in the bathroom! Kids these days! It's crazy, I tell ya, what I hear on the news. And now! My daughter is becoming one of them hoodlums! Walkin' around town with those baggy pants and revealing tanktops and BLUE HAIR! She looks like a smurf! Skater smurf! HA! Kids these days! We weren't like that when I was a kid. No siree! We were good, with lots of respect for our elders! I tell ya.. *(Goes back to reading)*

## Ashley

I knew I shouldn't have done it. It was a mistake from the beginning. But it was the Christmas dance and I just broke up with Chad and I had this awesome formal and...well...I couldn't think of anything worse than staying home. And Doris, my best friend, like, her brothers best friend was in town and didn't have a date, so...so why not, okay? I mean, Who wants to be sitting around with their mom and dad watching sitcoms when everybody else is out partying?

If I do say so myself I was totally cool. I had this cute formal with spaghetti straps that was very sophisticated, and shoes right out of vogue. I was happening. Then Cliff shows up; did he ever, like when I opened the door; here I'm staring into this guy's belt, okay! This is how tall he was. He wasn't bad looking, I guess. I really couldn't tell I was too short to see his face. We get to the dance and everything stops when we walk in the door. Bang! Like the whole room freezes and everybody turns to look at the freaky couple of the year. Mini Mouse and Big Bird. It was totally embarrassing! I looked daggers at Doris she could have at least clued me. I was going out with the Washington Monument. Now for the worst part: when we started to slow dance, I reached up for Cliff's shoulders and I hear something rip-; like both of my spaghetti straps had broken. I looked down just in time to keep my dress from falling off my boobs. It was totally mortifying! People laughed, even the dorks in the cheesy band cracked up. But then Cliff, who is towering over everybody, spins around and says: "I don't know you people, I'm just here for the holidays, but I'm glad I don't because anybody who embarrasses people and makes them feel small is an ultimate creep, anybody got a problem with that?" Wow! You could have heard paint dry. Nobody moved. Then he says, " c'mon Ashley we're outta here." ON the way home, we stopped off for pasta at mama Gina's, where Cliff did all the ordering. Nobody has ever done this before. And we talked and, talked and I discovered he was really a neat person- supper intelligent and mannerly.

And all of a sudden, him being a giant didn't matter anymore, and the fact that I'd been totally mortified didn't even enter my mind. He's staying over for New Years and we're going to the big dance together.

This time, my dress will be sleeveless.

### **The Picture of Perfection Carla**

*(This is actually from an original play. Carla is a "perfect" 14-yr.-old, always the best at what she does. But that's never good enough for her parents. She feels the need to always be better than everyone. She's even resorted to taking speed to keep herself awake for the frequent all-nighters she has to pull in order to study. In this monologue, she vents to her teddy bear about the pressures of always having to be the best.)*

Someone once told me that you can't hide what you are. And no matter how hard you try, people can always just see right through you. At least the smart ones can. And I'm a failure. A complete and utter failure. God, I swear there's something terminally wrong with me. I got a B. And that's it. I'm done. I've never been the best. But everyone thought I was. "Oh, look at Carla, she's so smart! She can get straight A's without even trying." Ha! If you call studying for twelve hours a day not trying, then I guess they're right. And I studied for this test, too. I really did! But do they believe that? No. All they see is the letter "B" sprawled across the top of the page, and suddenly they can't even find the words to express their anger. They know I'm a failure. They know it's what I've always been. And it hurts them. My parents. It really hurts them to remember how truly flawed their daughter is. How stupid she is. I hate this. I hate causing them pain. I mean, they've been so good to me. But it wasn't my fault. Why can't they understand that? Why doesn't anyone understand what I go through everyday, trying to maintain my perfection. It isn't easy, you know. There's a lot more to it than people think. You have to be three steps ahead of everyone else. That's the only way to assure that you're the winner. *(she suddenly breaks down)* I win! I'm the best! Me, me, me! I win, I win, I win! No one can beat me! No one! I win! I always win! *(she regains her composure)* I have to be the best. Because that's who I am. Carla Peters, the best. And without that, I have no identity. I'm just no one. And I don't know if I could handle being no one. I better get studying, so I don't fail again. Now then, where the hell are my pills?

### **CHICAGO**

Roxy Hart

You know, I always wanted to have my name on the papers. Before I met Amos, I used to date this wealthy dude, ugly bootlegger. He used to take me out and

show me off. Ugly guys like to do that. Once it said in the paper, gangland alcopaly seen a shade Vito with cute blonde. That was me. You know all my life, I wanted to have my own act. But, no... Always no, they always turned me down. One big world-full of no. And then Amos came along. Save sweet Amos. Who never says no. I'm sorry, I've never done this before. But you know, it's such a special night. And you are such a great audience! And I really feel like I can talk to you, you know? So forget what you read in the papers. And forget what you heard on the radio. Because...because I'm gonna tell you the truth. Not that the truth really matters. But

I'm gonna tell you anyway. In the bed apartment, Amos was... zero. I mean, when he made love to me, it was like... was he fixing a carburetor or something. ... Anyway, I started fooling around. And I then I started screwing around. Which is fooling around without dinner. Then I met Fred Casely. He said he could get me into Vaudville. But that didn't quite work out like I planned. I guess it didn't really work out to Fred either. So I gave up the whole Vaudville idea. If you can figure after all these years, opportunities just pass you by. And now, once this Flynn guy gets me off and with

all these publicity, I got me a world full of yes!

## **DANCING WITH THE DEVIL**

I like to dance, to feel air inside my body. I think that dancing will save me from pain. The music will earth me and the beat will bring me to the ground. I go dancing in gay bars with funny names. I take great pleasure being a girl in a boy bar, enjoying the fact that no one will try to pick me up. My life is safe. I play outrageous, but my life is safe. I have made it that way. Just enough outrage and lots of safety nets. I live in an old apartment building in Soho, where the artists are, across the hall from a Mafia widow and next door to an idiot with a loud dog. I listen to the dog howl whenever he is alone. The sound of this drives me crazy, and I complain about it but the owner does not listen. On the first day of the new year, I write down a list of my dreams and goals. I have many dreams-the foremost of which is this: "I want to be transformed." I write it down, "I want to be transformed," because that is what I want. I look for my transformation anywhere I can. I look for it in the eyes of other people, but do not see it there. I look for it in the mountains of New Mexico, in the water of the hot springs, in the air of New York City and in the words that come to me while I dream. I dream that I am leaving an old city and moving to a new one and going to film school and leaving my mother. It is June, and I am twenty-four, and I am about to be transformed

### **Ditched**

by Emily Picha

(Silvia is in her mid teens and has yet to have a boyfriend. She is going through what many of us go through when our friends first start getting boyfriends and we are left in the dust.)

Great. Carrie is at her boyfriend's house again. I called her last night and she said she could do something today. I swear, if she ditches me one more time I am not going to call her anymore to hang out.

It's funny. As soon as she met Craig she abandoned all of us. She said that we were still really important to her, but she ditched us without even saying a word. That's spineless. I thought that we were really good friends because we hung out so much when we were both single. We talked about our lives in such detail, and it was so nice having someone to complain to. But look at me now, without anyone to talk to but her busy signals when she's talking to her oh so wonderful boyfriend of two months.

So I guess I'm jealous. I guess that no one really needed to tell me that. But I'm not jealous for her, I just want someone to talk to. My life isn't easy right now. It's very stressful with school and all, and it's hard meeting new people at school because everyone is already settled in their social groups. But not me. Sometimes I feel like I'm the only person who has problems with meeting people. I can be such a dedicated friend though, most people never figure that out. I care so much about people once they get to know me and they break my mask. Everyone wears masks at school. We wear them for protection. Carrie doesn't need that anymore because she found someone who would always be there to protect her. I hope someday she learns how to balance out friends and boyfriends. For now, I'll just have to wait.

Laundry & Bourbon #2  
by James McClure  
HATTIE #2

Today I went through living hell. I went shopping with my children. Disastrous. When my kids hit a department store they go berserk. I think it activates something in their glands. We hadn't been in J.C. Penney's five minutes before they scattered in all direction. Now you take my little Cheryl. She's a sweet little thing but bless her heart she's a thief. It's time I faced facts, 'Lizabeth. My daughter is a kleptomaniac. As soon as we got into that store, she started stuffing her pockets. Stuffing her clothing. She ran away from me and ten minutes later I saw her. I barely recognized my only daughter. She looked like a beach ball with legs. Telling her to put it back is no good. Thieving is in her blood. She gets it from Vernon Jr. Now he was in the hardware department chasing his brother with a hammer. And all little Roger was doing was screaming. Somehow Vernon Jr. broke a solid steel J.C. Penney hammer. When it comes to destruction, Vernon Jr. is a genius. But I tell you, it's the last time I go shopping with those kids. I took the little darlings over to Vern's mother's place. She has a nice big house. They ought to have it leveled in about an hour or so.

Laundry & Bourbon #3  
by James McClure  
ELIZABETH

I remember the first day Roy drove into town in that car. He'd worked three years, summers and winters, for the down payment. He drove right through the center of town. It was bright pink. I remember I was coming out of the drug store with an ice cream cone. The sun off the hood was blinding. Couldn't even see the car. Then it passed in to one shadow and I saw it. For the first time. It was beautiful, and Roy hardly knew me then but he waved at me, and I dropped my vanilla cone right there on the pavement. And I knew...he was the one. Remember drive-ins? Roy and I, we'd drive around and around and then go make out. God, I want them back. I wished tonight was ten years ago. And Roy was coming to pick me up in that pink Thunderbird. I wished I could buy back some of the nights of summer I had in that car. When everything was cool and free and driving along the highway away from his stupid town. With the wind coming at you and the stars all the way to the horizon, like diamonds that went all the way to dawn. Then driving off the road somewhere. By a lake maybe. Anywhere. Being off from town with the boy you loved better than anything ever in your whole life. I'd never really felt with my body before Roy. Suddenly it was like every pore of my skin was being opened like in a rain storm, feeling and holding everything you possibly wanted righter there in your arms. What I wouldn't give to have those nights again. Just one night when the back seat of that Thunderbird was sweeter than all the beds in the world.

Plaza Suite  
by Neil Simon  
NORMA

*(Norma's husband, Roy, is out on the ledge trying to get their daughter to come out of the bathroom and get married. The phone call is to the groom's father)*

(Bemoaning her fate.) He'll kill himself. He'll fall and kill himself, that's the way my luck's been going all day.  
(She staggers away from the window and leans on the bureau.) I'm not going to look. I'll just wait until I hear

a scream. (The TELEPHONE rings and Norma screams in fright.) Agggghh!! . . . I thought it was him . . . (She crosses to the phone by the bed. The TELEPHONE rights again.) Oh, God, what am I going to say? (she picks it up.) Hello? . . . Oh, Mr. Eisler. Yes, we're coming. . . My husband's getting Mimsey now. . . We'll be right down. Have some more hors d'oeuvres. . . Oh, thank you. It certainly is the happiest day of my life. (She hangs up.) No, I'm going to tell him I've got a husband dangling over Fifty-ninth Street. (As she crosses back to the opened window, a sudden torrent of RAIN begins to fall. As she gets to the window and sees it.) I knew it! I knew it! It had to happen. . . (She gets closer to the window and tries to look out.) Are you all right Roy? . . . Roy? (There's no answer.) He's not all right, he fell. (She staggers into the bedroom.) He fell, he fell, he fell, he fell . . . He's dead, I know it. (She collapses onto the armchair.) He's laying there in a puddle in front of Trader Vic's . . . I'm passing out. This time I'm really passing out! (And she passes out on the chair, legs and arms spread-eagled. The DOORBELL rings, she jumps right up.) I'm coming! I'm coming! Help me, whoever you are, help me! (She rushes through bedroom into living room and to the front door.) Oh, Please somebody help me, please!

Plaza Suite #2  
by Neil Simon  
NORMA

*(Norma is on the phone, her daughter is in the bathroom, refusing to come out and get married)*

Hello? . . . Hello, operator? . . . Can I have the Blue Room please, . . . The Blue Room . . . Is there a Pink Room? . . . I want the Hubley-Eisler wedding . . . The Green Room, that's it. Thank you . . . Could you please hurry, operator it's an emergency . . . *(She looks over at the bathroom nervously. She paces back and forth.)* Hello? . . . Who's this? . . . Mr. Eisler . . . It's Norma Hubley . . . No, everything's fine . . . Yes, we're coming right down . . . *(she is smiling and trying to act as pleasant and as calm as possible.)* Yes, you're right, it certainly is the big day . . . Mr. Eisler, is my husband there? . . . would you please? . . . Oh! Well, I'd like to wish you the very best of luck too . . . Borden's a wonderful boy . . . Well, they're both wonderful kids . . . No, no. She's as calm as a cucumber . . . That's the younger generation, I guess . . . Yes, everything seems to be going along beautifully . . . Absolutely beautifully . . . Oh, thank you. *(Her husband has obviously just come on the other end because the expression on her face changes violently and she screams a raping whisper filled with doom. Sitting on the bed.)* Roy? You'd better get up here right away, we're in big trouble . . . Don't ask questions, just get up here . . . I hope you're not drunk because I can't handle this alone . . . Don't say anything. Just smile and walk leisurely out the door . . . and then get the hell up here as fast as you can. *(She hangs up, putting the phone back on night table. She crosses to the bathroom and then puts her head up against the door. Aloud through bathroom door.)* All right, Mimsey, your father's on his way up. Now, I want you to come out of that bathroom and get married. *(There is no answer.)* Do you hear me? . . . I've has enough of this nonsense . . . Unlock that door! *(That's about the end of her authority. She wilts and almost pleads.)* Mimsey, darling, please come downstairs and get married, you know your father's temper . . . I know what you're going through now, sweetheart, you're just nervous . . . Everyone goes through that on their wedding day . . . It's going to be all right, darling. You love Borden and he loves you. You're both going to have a wonderful future. So please come

out of the bathroom! *(She listens, there is no answer.)* Mimsey, if you don't care about your life, think about mine. Your father'll kill me. *(The from DOORBELL rings. Norma looks off nervously and moves to the other side of the bed.)* Oh, God, he's here! . . . Mimsey! Mimsey, please spare me this . . . If you want, I'll have it annulled next week, but please come out and get married! *(There is no answer from the bathroom but the front DOORBELL rings impatiently.)* All right, I'm letting your father in. And heaven help the three of us!

HAIKU  
Nell

John said you were too beautiful to live. It was true. You and Bebe together, you were like china dolls. Delicate, perfect. And then...that day I saw you through the window. Billie was one the swing set, and you were there. Outside. She was in red, and you had on that blue jumpsuit, the corduroy one with the zipper. The ball lay beside you. And that momma doll that winked. You were so quiet. You'd stared before, of course, when something fascinated you, as all children do when they...as all children do. But this time, you were...different. I called for you to come inside. Lulu, come inside and have some lunch! But you didn't hear me. Bebe, bring Lulu and come inside! I went out then. I had to get down on my knees beside you. I touched your hair and then your face. I held up that momma doll, but you stared through it in a way that... Funny, I don't remember being afraid. I remember the look on your sister's face...Do you know, I used to cry when school ended? It's true! I used to cry on the last day of every school year. My mother thought I was crazy. I'd come dragging my book bag over the fields, my face all wet. And my momma! Nellie, she'd say...you're the strangest girl I ever did see!...Tell you about John? All right then. John was tall and thin like Ichabod Crane, only not so scared. He wasn't scared of anything, not John. He had a big, strong jaw and a tuft of yellow hair that stood up on his head, as yellow as Mr. Turner's daffodils

HELLO, RICK

Hello, Rick, can you hear me? I'm calling from the bus. It's just past 5 o'clock now and so crowded I can hardly talk.

Anyway, I'll be home in less than 15 minutes.

...What's that? Rick, this isn't a good connection. I'll speak a little louder. Is that better? Gee, everyone's looking at me. It's like they never saw anyone using a mobile on public transport.

Listen, Rick, I need to tell you something... Well, serious enough. I just had a run-in at the dentist, no, not with the dentist himself, but with his old bag of an assistant. He had begun drilling one of my front upper teeth. Seconds later, this stupid assistant of his put the sucker so far down my throat I gagged. I jumped up from the horizontal position I was lying in so I could spit out, but my back muscles weren't up to such a sudden sit-up. I think I dislocated my vertebrae or disc, I'm not sure which. So now, not only is my mouth swollen, but my back is out of whack!

Rick, can you hear me? Okay then, so I grabbed the sucker from the dental assistant and tried to shove it into her own fat face. The dentist pulled us apart, no easy task, let me tell you! I told the dentist where to go and left. Can you imagine? I go to the dentist with a bad tooth and leave with a worse back!

One second, Rick, there's a little twerp sitting next to me who's bothering me. Can you hear him? He's telling me to shut up or speak softer. One second while I talk to him. "Hey dickhead, it's a free country and I'll talk as loud as I want. I'm paying the bill for this mobile and I also paid for the ticket to get on this bus, so bog off!"

Back to that crazy dental assistant, Rick, do you think I can sue for medical malpractice? Or is it called negligence?

Whatever the term is, I want compensation! My back is killing me!

Hold on a minute... "Listen, mate, can't you hear I'm having a personal conversation? I'll talk to my husband as long as I want to!"

Oh, another thing, Rick, did they come in to fix the radiators? ... No? That's no excuse. I'm going to phone them right now and give them a piece of my mind! They were supposed to do it last...

Oh, my God, Rick, the guy who told me to shut up is threatening me! He just said he's going to ram the bloody mobile down my throat! Rick, call the police! Conductor, help! A-a-g-g-h-h!

Never Been Kissed- movie  
Josie Gellar

Let me tell you something. I don't care about being the prom queen. I am twenty five years old. I'm here as an undercover reporter for the Sun Times for God's sake and I've been beating my brains out trying to impress you. I want to tell you something. You people- Guy, Gibby, the rest of you who have been keeping the geeks down through the ages. You will spend your lives trying to figure out ways to keep others down, because it makes you feel more important. And you will miss out on so much. Why her, huh? What did she ever do to you? Let me tell you something about this girl. She is unbelievable. I was new here, and she befriended me- no questions asked. But you people, you were my friends only after my brother, Rob... posed as a student and told you to like me. But y'know--I have to thank you. I got to go to an amazing prom. I got to be prom queen. I got to be cool. It felt good. But not as good as being myself. And to all of you--there's a big world out there. Bigger than prom. Bigger than high school. When you get there, it won't matter if you were prom queen or the quarterback or the biggest nerd in school. What matters is that you don't regret who you were, who you are--What if Steven Spielberg had quit the audio/visual club because it wasn't "cool"? What if Rosie O'Donnell had stopped cracking jokes because someone told her they were stupid? What if Michael Jordan never went back to basketball after he got cut from his high school team? In this room right now, there could be a future Nobel Prize winner, a Supreme Court Justice, an amazing Mom. Find out who you are and don't be afraid of it.

Lily Dale  
by Horton Foote

Oh, Brother. Brother! I'm sorry! Oh, dear Brother! I'm so sorry! I didn't mean a word of those terrible things I said. Not a one. I don't know what gets into me. I have a terrible disposition, Brother, a terrible disposition. It's the Robedaux coming out of me. Forgive me, please, please forgive me. *(She and Horace are crying)* I loved Papa. Believe me, I did. Just as much as you did. I loved him, but it hurts me so to talk about

him, Brother. And it scares me, too. You don't know how it scares me. I wake sometimes in the night, and I think I can hear Papa coughing and struggling to breathe like he used to. and I didn't mean that about you leaving, Brother. I'm glad you're here and I want you to stay until you're all well and strong again. Because you're the only brother I have and sometimes at night, I see you dead and in your coffin and I cry in my dreams like my heart will break. I am really crying because my crying wakes me up and I say to myself, "Brother is alive and not dead at all, that's just a dream," but still I feel so miserable, I just lie there sobbing, like my heart will break. And sometimes Mama hears me and comes in and says, "Why are you crying, Lily Dale?" And I say, "Because I dreamt again that Brother was dead and had gone to heaven and left us." (*She holds him tighter.*) You're all the family I have, Brother, you and Mama. And we must never leave each other. Promise me you'll never leave me and promise me you'll forgive me. Promise me, promise me.

A Delicate Balance  
by Edward Albee  
CLAIRE

Well, I had an adventure today. Went into town, thought I'd shake 'em up a little, so I tried to find me a topless bathing suit. Yes, I did. I went into what's-their-names', and I went straight up to the swim-wear, as they call it, department and I got me an eighteen-nineties schoolteacher type, who wondered what she could do for me. And I felt like telling her, "Not much, sweetheart"....But I said, "Hello, there, I'm in the market for a topless swimsuit." "A what, Miss?" she said, which I didn't know whether to take as a compliment or not. "A topless swimsuit," I said. "I don't know what you mean," she said after a beat. "Oh, certainly you do," I said, "no top, stops at the waist, latest thing, lots of freedom." "Oh yes," she said, looking at me like she was seeing the local madam for the first time, "those." Then a real sniff. "I'm afraid we don't carry...those." "Well, in that case," I told her, "do you have any separates?" "Those we carry," she said, "those we do." And she started going under the counter, and I said, "I'll just buy the bottoms of one of those." She came up from under the counter, adjusted her spectacles and said, "What did you say?" I said, "I said, 'I'll buy the bottom of one of those'." She thought for a minute, and then she said, with ice in her voice, "And what will we do with the tops?" "Well," I said, "Why don't you save 'em? Maybe bottomless swimsuits 'll be in next year." Then the poor sweet thing gave me a look I couldn't tell was either a D-minus, or she was going to send me home with a letter to my mother, and she said, sort of far away, "I think you need the manager." And off she walked.

They Shoot Fat Women, Don't They?  
from *Designing Women* written by Linda Bloodworth-Thomason  
Suzanne

It's just human nature. People love to see beautiful women get old or fat. All my life I've had to fight my weight, and I admit, food has been my security blanket. But also, I just gain weight more easily than some people, like you...(spots woman in audience) you've always had that tiny waist and those skinny little legs. But I can't be that, and people have always tried to make me be that. The point is it's different for women, especially beautiful women. Just look at Elizabeth Taylor. I bet I've seen National Velvet maybe twenty times, and if she never did anything else in her life, what a contribution that was. But all of a sudden because she got fat, it was like she no longer had the right to live in this country. That's how I feel right now. Drugs, alcohol, cancer whatever your problems, people are sympathetic unless you're fat, and then you're supposed to be ashamed. I mean, everything is set up to tell you that; magazine covers, clothes. 'If you're not thin, you're not neat, and that's it.' And if looks are all you've ever had...? Well, this is quite a surprise. I guess maybe I deserve this award for the Person-Most-Changed, but not for the reason you think. Last night I got my feelings hurt because I came to this reunion thinking I

was beautiful, and what I found out was that I'm fat at least you think I am. But that isn't the biggest change in me. The biggest change is that the old Suzanne wouldn't have shown up here tonight. She would've just gotten thin before the next reunion and then she would have gotten even. But I'm a little older, and I hope a little wiser than that person used to be. A lot of things have happened to me. A lot of things have happened to all of us. Sandy Smothers was killed the night before we graduated. Diane Mitchell's got two sets of twins, and Gayland Chadwick's working in the White House. We had a lot of dreams together, and there's no point in pretending; some of mine came true, and some didn't. I met a little boy from Africa tonight whose family died of starvation, and I realized that I spent the whole day at home worrying about the fact that I had too much to eat. I'm not sure the old Suzanne would have appreciated the absurdity of that, but this one does. Some of you men wanted to know about my bra size, but I'd rather talk about my heart because it's a little bigger than it used to be. The old Suzanne wouldn't have forgiven you for the things that you said, but this one will. Because when I look around this room tonight, I don't see receding hairlines and the beginnings of pot-bellies and crow's feet I just see all the beautiful faces of old girlfriends and sweet young boys who used to stand on my front porch and try to kiss me goodnight. And you can remember me any way you'd like, but that's how I'll always remember you. And so I thank you for giving me this award for the Person-Most-Changed, however you intended it. I'm gonna treasure it because, #1 I love trophies and #2 I earned it.

ALEXIS  
(drama)

I hate it when they all come running to me when they need someone to listen to them whine. I guess they just carelessly suspect that I'm immune to sadness and depression. What they don't see is that I'm just like them. To them, I'm this pillar of happiness that's always standing up proudly. To them, I've got no troubles in my daily life-- it's all just flowers and sunshine. They don't stop to consider that maybe all this depression surrounding me gets me down once in a while.

But, no, they've got their own problems to deal with first. So, they come to me. They want to hear me say that everything will be okay in the end, and that things really aren't as bad as they seem to be. I need to listen to them ramble on about their crushes not liking them and their boyfriends not spending every minute of every hour of every day with them.

Maybe... it's my fault. I put on this front like I'm always so happy and cheery, so they naturally come to the happiest person they can find within a mile radius. Maybe they're hoping a little bit of my happiness will be passed onto them. Maybe they think that they'll be happier if they're like me.

Oh, God. Stop me. I'm going on an ego trip again.

But they wouldn't want this happiness spared onto them-- if you can even call it happiness. I can barely handle it anymore. People say that I'd make a good psychologist, and maybe they're right. But if it means dealing with all of this everyday, I don't think I would. I don't think I could! I--

I've really got to stop saying "I" so much.

## PHONE CRAZY

*(The phone rings and she picks up)* Hello? Oh hey Lisa! What's up? So, are you going to the dance this Friday? What, you're not going? Why not? Who cares if you don't have a date? You have 2 days till Friday! Oh, hang on Lisa, I have another call coming in. *(Push button on phone)* Mera here, talk to me. Brad, hey! How you doin'? What? You like Lisa! Ohmigosh this is so cool! Uh, no, I haven't herd from Lisa in a while. Oh, uh, Brad? Hang on. Uh, I, I think I, um, smell smoke! *(Push button on phone)* Lisa? Eek! You'll never guess who that was! Brad! Yeah! He says he likes you! This is so awesome! Hang on, kay? *(Push button on phone)* Brad? Still there? Oh the smoke... uh musta been my imagination. Anyways... Yeah, sure. I'll ask Lisa if she likes you next time I talk to her! So, are you going to the dance? Oh! That will be great! No! I promise every thing you've said will never leave this conversation! But hang on one sec; my dog's lifting its leg! *(Push button on phone)* Lisa? Ohmigosh Brad just said he's going to ask you to the dance! Yeah, this so cool cause Brad is a total hottie! Hold that thought. *(Push button on phone)* Brad? Oh, yeah. The dog! Uh, I pushed him outside just in time! *(Laugh nervously)* Yeah. But anyways, I'm sure she will defiantly say YES! Oh, really, that so sweet! Uh, Brad, can you hang on for a few; my last beverage is going right through me! *(Push button on phone)* Lisa? Anyways, yeah, he says you are the prettiest girl at school! . I know that is like sooo sweet! Oh great, someone's calling in on the third line hang on! *(Push button on phone)* Summers residence. . Oh, Grandma! How are you sweetie? . Oh that's great! I've been doing fine. And school is going steady! But I'm kind of busy right know, Grandma, so can I call you back in a few? . Okay, I love you Grandma! Bye! *(Push button on phone)* Uh Brad I got ta go! See you at school tomorrow! *(Push button on phone)* That was my Grandma. But who cares? Lets get back to Brad! He is such a babe! You are so luck Lisa! If he wasn't so for you, he would be the perfect guy! Oh and when he asks you to the dance, act surprised cause I told him you would never know a thing that we talked about.. *(Giggle)* This is so awesome! Oh! What are you going to wear? Maybe I can come over and help you pick out the perfect out fit! . Lisa? . Oh! *(Laugh nervously)* Wait, this is Brad! BRAD! Ohmigosh! Yeah I don't think she suspects a thing! But don't be surprised if she says YES! I uh . . . I Gotta go! *(Push button on phone)* OOOPPS!!

The Divorce"  
drama

*Jamie's parents are getting separated..*

**Jamie:** (sits in disbelief after hearing the news her parents divorce) What? (pause) What do you mean you're getting a divorce? No, (pause) no this can't be happening to me. (shaking her head.) Can't the two of you work things out? I mean how bad could it possibly be? (beat) (truning to her mother ) It's you right? it's your fault it always is. You're always riding Daddy, nagging him. I hear you. Maybe if you weren't such a nag then he wouldn't be leaving. (beat) Why shouldn't I, Daddy? She should know the truth. If she weren't always on your case then we wouldn't be having this conversation! (beat) I can't believe you're doing this to me! (jumps out of chair in anger) Do you know how embarrassing this is going to be for me at school? Everyone thinks we're happy. I'm always telling people how in love you two are and how I want to have that same kinda love. (pause) What am I going to do? I mean really? I'm going to have to change schools. All of my friends' parents are still married you know. (pauses as the enevitable sets in and begins to sob) Please tell me what's going on, Daddy. Tell me why you're leaving. Tell me what's wrong. (The father attempts to hug Jamie but she pulls away) No--no don't touch

me. Don't touch me! How could you do this to me? Huh? How could you? I don't want you to touch me. I don't want to be comforted, Dad. Wait! (openly crying now and begging) Please don't go, Daddy. I promise I'll do better. I'll go easy on the shopping. I won't bug you about the silly stuff. I'll do the chores without tripping out...I'll do anything. Mom, why is he leaving? (beat) No--no I don't want to hear that okay? There is no such thing as "making it work out for all of us" okay. There is no such thing. Stop trying to lie to me I'm not a child! This is the worse possible thing that could happen and I will never...NEVER forgive either one of you ever again! (storms out of the room).

### EMILY

I remember when I was five, sitting in my fathers lap and holding on to my mother's hand, listening to the church sermon. I don't think a smile ever came off of my face then. I was so happy. *(pause)* I would give anything to go back to when I was five. The innocence, the pure joy in everything. I loved everything, and people would love me for just being cute. No one really cared what I did, as long as I stayed cute. I loved it. I was cute, so everybody loved me. *(pause, Remembering with a smile)* I always wore one little spurt of hair on the side of my head. My dad called it the whup. *(Laughing)* I don't know why. I think because it went, *(gesturing with her hand)* whup. *(Laugh)* We always made silly little jokes like that. Silly little things to keep us laughing. *(Laugh)* I haven't said "silly" since, *(pause)* I don't remember. *(pause)* When was the last time I even laughed? *(Pause)* I used to laugh all of the time. My dad would always do things to make me laugh. He told me it was in his "Dad description." He had to make me laugh or he would be fired. So I laughed non-stop at every single thing he said. Every "pull my finger", and stupid face. In my mind, he was absolutely hilarious. I thought he would disappear if I ever stopped laughing. *(pause)* and, in a way, it was my way to show him that I loved him. It was my sign. *(Pause, head down)* But- but, I don't think he understood what was happening when I got older. I stopped laughing, and he didn't know why. But he kept on trying. He kept on trying to make jokes. But "pull my finger" just wasn't hilarious anymore. *(pause)* I heard myself saying, "That's stupid," more and more. *(pause)* He never showed it, but I think I hurt him. Without the constant laughing, we had nothing anymore. We almost completely stopped talking to each other. What could we say? I was a stubborn teenager; I couldn't make it seem that I was remotely interested in anything. *(pause)* And- it really hurt him. He thought that he had completely lost me. I guess he felt that he had failed. He was failing on his "dad description," he would soon be fired, or disappear. He was losing his daughter. He must have been terrified. *(long pause, thinking)* I- I never thought of that before. He must have been terrified. *(pause)* I was a teenager, I am still... I couldn't- *(pause, ashamed)* He's my daddy. *(pause)* He never failed... I did...I'm sorry Daddy..

Hallmark Holiday  
by Emily Picha

Here we go again, Valentine's Day. The Hallmark holiday, the diamond dealer's wet dream, kitschy jewelry from upscale department stores, red tea cozies, satin sheets (singing) These are a few of my favorite things! These are a few of my favorite THINGS! *(flinging purse against chairs, table)* THESE ARE A FEW--*(slumps onto chair, knock kneed, head back)* Last year I made a pact with myself that someone would find me before the next Valentine's day. I imagined that I would be one half of that couple staring into each other's eyes at the French restaurant. Hell, I even bought satin sheets at 50% off the normal price. No option for returning. It was just me in purgatory with my red sheets until he found me. It was taking a while, four months into the waiting I decided I needed to lose

some weight, freshen up my looks. So I power-walked through my neighborhood every day, a mile, two miles. One day I started even running for part of it until I cramped up so bad that I was bent over in a gutter, swearing and choking on my own liver or something. And that's when I thought, okay, I've gone my fifty percent, now he's got to come his. So I went home and I just went about my life. Did the daily grind. Watched a LOT of recorded Oprah, so I could fast forward through the damn commercials. I even got into an Oprah Book Club. I read some really good books there, and I met some people, but they were mostly older married women who wanted to save their souls with Oprah's sweet inspiration. Gag. Save us, Oprah! We are all bored out of our minds, Oprah! I am suffering from post childbearing pre-apocalypse anxiety disorder with a dash of Pre-menopausal hot flashes. Oh, the combinations! Thank God I'm not THERE yet. I'm just flailing around waiting for my man. He's out there. I know it. You know, the books in Oprah's club usually cost 15-20% less than their non-Oprah book club counterparts. It's just mass marketing. Just like Hallmark cards. Just like Valentine's Day. Hmmph

Catholic Schoolgirls #2  
by Casey Kurti  
ELIZABETH  
"A Tour Of The Church"

*(Elizabeth is a second grade student at a catholic school. She hasbeen elected to give a tour of the church to a group of kindergarten students.)*

Okay, everybody. This ... is church. This is God's house. If you ever want to talk to Him, you just come in here and sit in one of those long chairs and start talking. But not too loud. Or else you might wake up one of those statues. And they are praying to Jesus. *(Bows head)* Oh! I forgot to tell you. Whenever you hear the name Jesus *(Bows head)* you have to bow your head or else you have a sin on your soul. Now, over there is the statue of Jesus' *(bows head)* mother. Her name is the Blessed Virgin Mary. She is not as important as Jesus *(bows head)* so you don't have to bow your head when you hear her name. Over there is the statue of Jesus' *(bows head)* father. Hey, *(points at small child)* you didn't bow your head. Don't do that cause you'll get a black spot on your soul and you go straight to hell. Now, in hell it is really hot and you sweat a lot. And these little devils come and they bite you all over the place. But if you're really good, you get to go to heaven. Now, in heaven they have this big refrigerator full of lots of stuff to eat! Like ice cream, and chocolate and donuts and it never runs out. But the best part about heaven would have to be that you can talk to anybody you want to. Let's just say that I wanted to talk to... *(thinks real hard)* Cleopatra! Well, then I would go up to one of the Saints and I would get a permission slip and I would fill it out. Then I would hand it to Jesus *(bows head)*. Hey! *(Looks at small child again)* You didn't bow your head! Okay, I warned you. And then, I would fly across heaven, cause when you get in they give you wings, and I would have a nice chat with Cleopatra. I just hope everyone I like get accepted into heaven, or else I won't ever see them again. One more thing, if you ever ask Jesus *(bows head)* a question and he answers you, make sure you write down the answer really quick, so you don't mess it up. Because, if you mess up an answer from Him, it could get you in real trouble.

**REAL**

(this dramatic monologue is not from a play)

Most people think I'm weird because I volunteer down at the local homeless shelter. "Why do you want to be around those low-lives"? It's just that one day, I was walking around feeling really sorry for myself because my mother wouldn't let me pierce my nose--everyone else was getting it done. Anyway, I walked by this wooded area that was really, really littered. Suddenly, this guy sits up from beneath all these cardboard boxes. I'd never seen anybody so dirty. Beard down to here. Hair down to here. It was his eyes though. When I looked into them, it was like the whole of existence just disappeared...except for his eyes. It was like I was seeing myself--but he wasn't me--but he was me. I just took off running as fast as I could. I didn't want to feel what I was feeling. Finally, something made me stop. I couldn't just do nothing. So, I bought him a pepperoni pizza, went back and just plopped it there in front of him like he was going to bite me or something. He said "Thanks, sister", and smiled. I said "you're welcome", and really meant it. Then I walked home--the long way. I needed to think. Up to that point, my whole life was a sham. For the longest time I pretended to be someone I wasn't--so other fake people would accept me. I finally saw someone for the first time...me. So, that's why I work at the shelter. There, I feel real.

## **CONFUSED TEEN**

### **\*Humorous\***

*Both Angie and Harmony are in their early teens. Angie's going through some physical changes, inside and out, and like any other good teenager, can't associate these changes with life's little obstacles.*

Angie: What's going on Harmony? I don't get it, why is it when you become a teenager everything gets so confusing? I mean, what are they doing, spiking the make-up? Is there some unwritten law that when you become a teenager you move into the realm of insanity? If I remember correctly, that's about the time everything started getting nutty. Think about it... I'm supposed to wash my face BEFORE I exercise to prevent build-up. No, I'm supposed to wash my face AFTER I exercise to prevent break-outs. I'm NOT SUPPOSED to eat chocolate because it causes pimples. Wait, I'm SUPPOSED to eat chocolate before I take a test, because it's great, "brain food." I'm SUPPOSED to have lots of foods that are rich in iron to help my circulation. Hold on, now, I'm NOT SUPPOSED to have a lot of iron because it prevents my body from absorbing calcium properly. Wow, if I can survive being a confused teenager, I think I can pretty much survive anything! (Change of heart) Let's get out of here, I'm hungry!

OH DAD, POOR DAD, SOMEONE' S HUNG YOU IN THE CLOSET AND I FEEL SO SAD

Would you like to see my husband? He's inside in the closet. I had him stuffed. Wonderful taxidermist I know. H'm? What do you say, Commodore? Wanna peek? He's my very favorite trophy. I take him with me wherever I go.

Life, my dear Commodore, is never funny. It's grim! It's there every morning breathing in your face the moment you open your red baggy eyes. Life, Mr. Roseabove, is a husband hanging from a hook in the closet. Open the door too quickly and your whole day's shot to hell. But open the door just a little ways, sneak your hand in, pull out your dress and your day is made. Yet he's still there and waiting--and sooner or later the mothballs are gone and you have to clean house. Oh, it's a bad day, Commodore, when you have to stare Life in

the face, and you find he doesn't smile at all: just hangs there--with his tongue sticking out. I hope you find this funny. I was hoping it would give you a laugh. Why must we only respect the dead? Why not the living, too? I killed him, of course. Champagne? To your continued good health. Ah, the waltz, monsieur. Listen. The waltz. The Dance of Lovers. Beautiful, don't you think? Now you don't really want to leave--do you, Commodore? After all, the night is still so young--and you haven't even seen my husband yet. Besides, there's a little story I still must tell you. A bedtime story. A fairy tale full of handsome princes and enchanted maidens; full of love and joy and music; tenderness and charm. It's my very favorite story, you see. And I never leave a place without telling it to at least one person. So please, commodore, won't you stay?...Good. I knew you'd see it my way. It would have been such a shame if you'd had to leave. For you see, Commodore, we are, in a way, united. We share something in common--you and I. We share desire. For you desire me, with love in your heart. While I, my dear Commodore, desire your heart.

Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants  
Screenplay by: Delia Ephron

*Hello?* Dad, it's Carmen. I just... I want... No, Dad, you don't know. That's just it, you've never known... because I've never been able to tell you.

That I'm angry with you, Dad. This entire thing. About you, and Lydia and the kids. Yeah, you should've warned me, but it's more than that.

It's the fact that you've found yourself this new family... and I feel like some outsider who doesn't even belong to you anymore.

It's like you traded me and Mom in for something that you thought was better...and I wanna know why. Are you ashamed of me? Are you embarrassed? Just tell me, Dad, what did I do wrong? Why did you leave? Why did you have to go? And then tell me that we were gonna be closer? But that never happened. Dad, why does Paul visit his alcoholic dad every month...but you only visit me twice a year? And I know... You just seem so happy about being Paul and Krista's dad... but you never even had the time to be mine.

I wish sorry were enough, Dad.

Wrong and Ready  
by Greta Zehner

Oh, my gosh. I think I've just come up with the best theory. Teenage life sucks. That's it. I mean, once you hit 13, your life just goes (rocket). All the adults are like "I loved being a teenager!" Ha, sure. Well, I'm sorry but this isn't "Sunshine 70's" anymore. They're just trying to make us feel better. And the little kids are like "I can't wait to be a teenager! It would be so fun much to be older!" Haha, no you don't. No, you really don't.

Okay, first of all, you're in Middle School when it all starts to happen. For some weird reason, it seems like when you're a teenager, all your friends start to turn on you. I mean, at first they're like "Hey, best friend!" and you know, you do the regular things like hang out and

stuff. And then once you leave, they go around gossiping "Oh, my gosh, did you know that Gretchen made out with Justin at movies... oh yeah, it was definitely tongue," (what expression) I don't even know a Justin! Then, there's puberty. Actually, I'm not even gonna get into that. And then there's high school, the black-hole of all teenage life. Once you get there, everything starts to fall apart. First, everyone expects you to be this pencil thin stick or you're considered "fat", but when you are that thin, they just go spreading around that your anorexic! And all through high school, it's nothing but college this or college that, and the college-councilors are not much help about it. They're like "You fail! You lose! You fail at life! You better memorize the phrase 'You want fries with that?!' Grrr! I hate them! I wish they'd die!!!! (Sigh) Where was I? Oh yeah, life sucking. You know what, I'm tired of complaining. So, I just say two things to say: Adults, you're wrong, and kids, get ready.

## NUTS by Tom Topor

When I was a little girl, I used to say to her, I love you to the moon and down again, and around the world and back again; and she used to say to me, I love you to the sun and down again, and around the stars and back again. Do you remember, Mama? And I used to think, wow, I love Mama and Mama loves me, and what can go wrong? What went wrong, Mama? I love you and you love me, and what went wrong? You see, I know she loves me, and I know I love her, and- so what? So what? She's over there, and I'm over here, and she hates me because of things I've done to her, and I hate her because of things she's done to me. You stand up there asking, do you love you daughter, and they say "yes", and you think you've asked something real, and they think they've said something real. You think because you throw the word love around like a frisbee that we're all going to get warm and runny. No. Something happens to some people. They love you so much, they stop noticing you're there, because they're so busy loving you. They love you so much, their love is a gun, and they fire it straight into your head. They love you so much you go right into the hospital. Yes, I know my mother loves me. Mama, I know you love me. And I know the one thing you learn when you grow up is that love is not enough. It's too much, and it's not enough.

## OH DAD, POOR DAD, SOMEONE'S HUNG YOU IN THE CLOSET AND I FEEL SO SAD

Would you like to see my husband? He's inside in the closet. I had him stuffed. Wonderful taxidermist I know. H'm? What do you say, Commodore? Wanna peek? He's my very favorite trophy. I take him with me wherever I go. Life, my dear Commodore, is never funny. It's grim! It's there every morning breathing in your face the moment you open your red baggy eyes. Life, Mr. Roseabove, is a husband hanging from a hook in the closet. Open the door too quickly and your whole day's shot to hell. But open the door just a little ways, sneak your hand in, pull out your dress and your day is made. Yet he's still there and waiting--and sooner or later the mothballs are gone and you have to clean house. Oh, it's a bad day, Commodore, when you have to stare Life in the face, and you find he doesn't smile at all: just hangs there--with his tongue sticking out. I hope you find this funny. I was hoping it would give you a laugh. Why must we only respect the dead? Why not the living, too? I killed him, of course. Champagne? To your continued good health. Ah, the waltz, monsieur. Listen. The waltz. The Dance of Lovers. Beautiful, don't you think? Now you don't really want to leave--do you, Commodore? After all, the night is still so young--and you haven't even seen my husband yet. Besides, there's a little story I still must tell you. A bedtime story. A fairy tale full of handsome princes and enchanted maidens; full of love and joy and music; tenderness and charm. It's my very favorite story, you see. And I never leave a place without telling it to at least one person. So please, commodore, won't you stay?...Good. I knew you'd see it my way. It would have been such a shame if you'd had

to leave. For you see, Commodore, we are, in a way, united. We share something in common--you and I. We share desire. For you desire me, with love in your heart. While I, my dear Commodore, desire your heart.

## BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE

I can't talk about him. No, I will talk about him. Every once in a while it's good to do something you don't want to do, it cleanses the insides. He was terribly sweet, and groovy looking, but kind of adolescent, ya know what I mean? Girls mature faster than boys, boys are neater, but girls mature faster. When we met, it was like fireworks! It was a marvelous kind of passion that made every day seem like the 4th of July! Anyways.. the next thing I know, there we are, standing in front of the Justice of the Peace, getting married!? Its only been like two or three months and we're getting married?! I'm not even out of high school! I've got two big exams tomorrow and they were on my mind too.. and then I hear the words, "Do you Jack, take Jill, to be your lawful wedded wife?" UGH!!! Can you imagine going through life as "Jack and Jill" ?! Then I hear, "Until death do us part." And all of the sudden, its not even a wedding anymore, more like a funeral service! And there I am being buried alive!... Under Jack Benson! I wanted to scream, go running out into the night! But I couldn't.. It was 10 o'clock in the morning and well, you can't go running out into 10 o'clock in the morning. So instead, I passed out. If only I'd fainted, before I said "I do."

## THE FIRST DAY

by Mary Krell-Oishi

Just breathe. Really, it isn't that hard. I do it everyday. Just in and out. *(s/he breathes deeply, realizes it is loud, looks quickly around)* Oh, good grief! Is everyone listening to me breathe? *(S/he scans the room)* Settle yourself. It's only school. I've been going to school since I was a kid. I was a big deal in elementary school. Popular! Everybody loved me. *(s/he smiles at someone across the room who has clearly looked away.)* What's his problem? *(glances at reflection in the window)* A zit! He saw that zit on my nose! I've never had a zit before in my life. It was only a small bump last night. Now look at it. The first day of school and my nose precedes me into the building by a foot because of this zit. Everyone is looking at me. I'll be known as the Human Zit for the rest of my school career. I should just go find my first class and hide out with the teacher. Those will probably be my new best friends. Teachers. Where's my schedule? I put it somewhere. *(panic begins to set in)* What if I can't find it? What do I do? Ask someone? Who? I don't see anyone I know. This school is so big. I hate this school. I want to go back to sixth grade. I knew who I was there. Here I'll be the big loser who can't find my class and hangs out with teachers. The Human Zit Loser who eats lunch in the library. Alone. There's got to be somebody here I know...*(Recognizes a friendly face, calls out)* Chris? Hey! Over here. Chris! Yeah, Middle School! Totally ready. Hey, meet me for lunch? Yeah? Cool. *(waves goodbye)* Cool. *(confidence begins to build)* Now, where's my first period class? *(heads off to find the new world)*

## Conspiracy Theory

Never ride with a stranger. Good. Why shouldn't you ride with a stranger? Julie? Very good, he might not be such a nice guy. A stranger might offer you candy... But then take you and put you in a box full of snakes... You just never know. Now the second thing: Always wear your seatbelt. Now why do we always want to wear our seatbelts? Mikey? Right... If you are in a car accident you could get hurt. You might go through the windshield and get run over by an ice cream truck. You just never know. Now this is the last and most important thing to remember. The governments of the world are involved in a multinational conspiracy with an alien race from the planet Zeon; the ultimate goal of this alliance being the total domination and conversion of every man, woman, and child on this planet into hosts for a future alien race that will use all mankind like cattle for food. Now are there any questions? Sarah? What is a multinational conspiracy? Well that's when all the governments of the world get together to keep secrets from the people. The aliens are already among us... Remember how Miss Graham, your principal, told you that little Johnny White had to move away? Miss Graham is part of the conspiracy. What really happened is that the aliens took over Johnny's Mommy and Daddy; they in turn changed into alien monsters with huge teeth and giant claws. The Mommy monster alien was under the bed and the Daddy monster was in the closet. Little Johnny didn't even know what hit him. The monsters came out and started to tear that little boy to shreds. He screamed and screamed... After they were done, they made a milkshake with his brain. Now are there any more questions? Oh don't cry. Mikey? You're going to tell on me? To who? Miss Graham? She's part of the conspiracy. She's an alien dressed up to look like a principal. Go ahead and tell her... I wouldn't want to be in a room alone with her. She might suck your brain right out your ear. Now... You wouldn't want that would you? Any other questions? Very good. That was excellent for first graders! Okay, now tomorrow we are going to talk about the letter "A", how to wash your hands correctly, and how to make a tinfoil hat that will keep the alien species from reading your mind. Have a good afternoon children and don't forget what we talked about today!

### The Driver's Test is a Piece of Cake

My brother said there's nothing to it; the driver's test is a piece of cake. That's easy for him to say. He got his license three years ago. I didn't expect to be quite this nervous. I took Driver's Training; I even got an A. I studied the manual and passed the written test and got my permit. I've been creating reasons to drive for six months, to get lots of practice. So why should I be nervous, just because I'm going to take the driving test? If I flunk it, I can always take it over. Oh, Lord, if I flunk it, I'll die. Everyone knows I'm taking the test today. I don't think I could stand it if I flunked. I just hope I don't throw up in the middle of it. I shouldn't have eaten anything for breakfast. If I get sick in the middle of the driving test, I'll flunk for sure. Here comes the examiner. What a mean-looking man. He won't even smile at me. I'll bet he marks me down for every little thing. He probably has a prejudice against teenage drivers. Well, here goes. Start the engine. What if it doesn't start? What if I flood it? I'll fail the test before I even get out of the parking lot. There. There, it started. All right now. Look in the mirror before I back up. Shift into forward. Turn on the signal. Why is he looking at me like that? Did I do something wrong already? What is he writing on that paper? I *am* going to throw up; I can feel it coming. Oh, good, a break in the traffic. I can finally go. All right. It shouldn't be too bad now, just driving down the street. Around the block. Signal, look both ways, turn into the back side of the parking lot. Oh, no! I have to parallel park between those two red markers. But they're so short. When I practiced parallel parking, it was between two cars. You can see cars; you can't see those little markers. I wonder if he'd let me skip this part if I swear that for the rest of my life I'll drive around until I find a parking place on the corner. Probably not. Probably, he'd say...oh, Lord, I hit one of the markers. Oh, I wish I could die. Now I have to start all over again. I hit it but I didn't knock it over, so I get

a second chance. Around the block, signal, look both ways, stay in the proper lane. I'm sweating. I can feel it running down my arms. I'm going to ruin my good sweater just because of those stupid red markers. There! I did it! I parked and I didn't hit either one of them. I got *out* of the space without hitting them, too. Back to the starting gate and stop the engine. That's it. My driver's test is over. He's handing me the paper. Eighty-four. I got eighty-four! I passed! I get my license. Well, that wasn't so bad, after all. I'll tell my friends that my brother was right. Taking the driver's test is nothing. A piece of cake.