



Audition Piece Suggestion Guide 2022

Female & Male Roles Within Shakespearian & Contemporary Plays



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Overview

At Sydney Theatre School we aim to ensure that you will enjoy all aspects of the auditioning process. We look forward to your audition and have outlined the following guidelines, suggestions and requirements to help you prepare for your application with us.

This guide provides monologue and performance suggestions for both Female and Male parts that allow potential students to gauge the standard of audition required for placement within a course at the School.

Courses Requiring an Audition

We invite you to perform a monologue from a contemporary play (i.e. written after 1950) OR a monologue from a Shakespeare play. The following courses at the Sydney Theatre School require an audition:

Course	Audition Format	Length	Interview
Diploma of Theatre and Screen (Acting)	1 X Monologue	Up to 3 Minutes	Yes

Audition Dates

Auditions dates are regularly posted on the Schools website located at www.sydneytheatreschool.com. Our 2022 auditions have commenced and will continue until all placement offers have been filled. Please contact the School directly if you are unsure of audition dates and times.

Our Recommendations

- You may choose to perform any piece you wish (including Shakespeare or a self-devised piece) however we recommend that you choose a monologue from an existing play contained within this guide.
- Select a monologue that matches your age & gender, as well as one that does not require a change of accent. Please note that some pieces may contain offensive language. Where under normal circumstances we do not condone the use of unnecessary offensive language throughout the school, it is our responsibility to preserve the original content of each piece, as well as the playwrights' desired delivery and standard of language contained.
- Wear loose clothing and comfortable shoes to enable you to move freely during your performance. We do not require you to be in character costume nor use any props within your audition unless they are absolutely necessary.
- We recommend that you complete a vocal and physical warm-up before the audition to ensure you are limber and are able to project your voice effectively.



Female Monologues



VIOLA - TWELFTH NIGHT by William Shakespeare

I left no ring with her: what means this lady?
Fortune forbid my outside have not charm'd her!
She made good view of me, indeed so much,
That me thought her eyes had lost her tongue,
For she did speak in starts distractedly.
She loves me, sure; the cunning of her passion
Invites me in this churlish messenger.
None of my lord's ring? Why, he sent her none.
I am the man: if it be so, as 'tis,
Poor lady, she were better love a dream.
Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness,
Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.
How easy is it for the proper false
In women's waxen hearts to set their forms!
Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we,
For such as we are made of, such we be.
How will this fadge? My master loves her dearly,
And I, poor monster, fond as much on him,
And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me:
What will become of this? As I am man,
My state is desperate for my master's love:
As I am woman (now alas the day!)
What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe?
O time, thou must untangle this, not I,
It is too hard a knot for me t'untie.



JULIET - ROMEO AND JULIET by William Shakespeare

Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
Towards Phoebus' lodging! such a waggoner
As Phaeton would whip you to the West
And bring in cloudy night immediately.
Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night,
That runaways' eyes may wink, and Romeo
Leap to these arms, untalked of and unseen.
Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
By their own beauties; or, if love be blind,
It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,
Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,
And learn me how to lose a winning match,
Played for a pair of stainless maidenhoods.
Hood my unmanned blood, bating in my cheeks,
With thy black mantle till strange love grown bold,
Think true love acted simple modesty.
Come, night. Come, Romeo. Come, thou day in night;
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.
Come, gentle night. Come, loving black-brow'd night.
Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night
And pay no worship to the garish sun.
O I have bought the mansion of a love,
But not possessed it; and though I am sold,
Not yet enjoyed. So tedious is this day
As is the night before some festival
To an impatient child that hath new robes,
And may not wear them. O here comes my nurse.



HERMIONE - THE WINTER'S TALE by William Shakespeare

Sir, spare your threats:

The bug which you would fright me with, I seek.

To me can life be no commodity;

The crown and comfort of my life, your favour,

I do give lost, for I do feel it gone,

But know not how it went. My second joy,

And first-fruits of my body, from his presence

I am barr'd, like one infectious. My third comfort,

(Starr'd most unluckily) is from my breast

(The innocent milk in its most innocent mouth)

Hal'd out to murder; myself on every post

Proclaim'd a strumpet, with immodest hatred

The child-bed privilege denied, which 'longs

To women of all fashion; lastly, hurried

Here, to this place, i'th'open air, before

I have got strength of limit. Now, my liege,

Tell me what blessings I have here alive

That I should fear to die? Therefore proceed.

But yet hear this: mistake me not: no life,

I prize it not a straw, but for mine honour,

Which I would free: if I shall be condemn'd

Upon surmises, all proofs sleeping else

But what your jealousies awake, I tell you

'Tis rigour and not law. Your honours all,

I do refer me to the Oracle: Apollo be my judge!



ROSALIND - AS YOU LIKE IT by William Shakespeare

And why I pray you? Who might be your mother,
That you insult, exult, and all at once,
Over the wretched? What though you have no beauty -
As by my faith I see no more in you
Than without a candle may go dark to bed -
Must you be therefore proud and pitiless?
Why what means this? Why do you look on me?
I see no more in you than in the ordinary
Of nature's sale-work. 'Od's my little life,
I think she means to tangle my eyes too!
No faith proud mistress, hope not after it.
'Tis not your inky brows, your black silk hair,
Your bugle eyeballs, nor your cheek of cream
That can entame my spirits to your worship.
You foolish shepherd, wherefore do you follow her
Like foggy South puffing with wind and rain?
You are a thousand times a properer man
Than she a woman. 'Tis such fools as you
That makes the world full of ill-favour'd children.
'Tis not her glass but you that flatters her,
And out of you she sees herself more proper
Than any of her lineaments can show her.
But mistress, know yourself. Down on your knees
And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love;
For I must tell you friendly in your ear,
Sell when you can, you are not for all markets.
Cry the man mercy, love him, take his offer;
Foul is most foul, being foul to be a scoffer.



HELENA - A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM by William Shakespeare

Lo, she is one of this confederacy!
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three
To fashion this false sport in spite of me.
Injurious Hermia, most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspir'd, have you with these contriv'd,
To bait me with this foul derision?
Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,
The sister's vows, the hours that we have spent
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us - O, is all forgot?
All school-days' 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 on one song, both in one key,
As if our hands, our sides, voices and minds,
Had been incorporate. So we grew together,
Like a double cherry, seeming parted,
But yet an union in partition,
Two lovely berries moulded on the one stem;
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,
Due to the one, and crowned with one crest.
And will you join with men in scorning your poor friend?
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly;
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it,
Thou I alone do feel the injury.



BEATRICE - MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING by William Shakespeare

Kill Claudio!

(Beatrice)

You kill me to deny it. Farewell. I am gone, though I am here: there is no love in you: nay, I pray you, let me go. In faith, I will go. You dare easier be friends with me than fight with my enemy. Is Claudio not approved in the height a villain, that hath slandered, scorned, dishonoured my kinswoman? O that I were a man! What, bear her in hand until they come to take hands; and then, with public accusation, uncovered slander, unmitigated rancour, - O, God that I were a man! I would eat his heart in the market-place. Talk with a man out at window! A proper saying! Sweet Hero! She is wronged, she is slandered, she is undone. Princes and counties! Surely, a princely testimony, a goodly count, Count Comfect; a sweet gallant surely! O that I were a man for his sake! Or that I had any friend would be a man for my sake! But manhood is melted into courtesies, valour into compliment, and men are only turned into tongue, and trim ones too he is now as valiant as Hercules that only tells a lie and swears it. I cannot be a man with wishing, therefore I will die a woman with grieving.



JULIA - THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA by William Shakespeare

This babble shall not henceforth trouble me.
Here is a coil with protestation.

(She tears the letter)

Go, get you gone; and let the papers lie.
You would be fing'ring them, to anger me.

(Gathering up the pieces of the letter)

Nay, would I were so anger'd with the same!
O hateful hands, to tear such loving words;
Injurious wasps, to feed on such sweet honey,
And kill the bees that yield it, with your stings!
I'll kiss each several paper, for amends.
Look, here is writ 'kind Julia': unkind Julia!
As in revenge for thy ingratitude,
I'll throw thy name against the bruising stones,
Trampling contemptuously on thy disdain.
And here is writ 'love-wounded Proteus'.
Poor wounded name: my bosom, as a bed,
Shall lodge thee till thy wound be thoroughly heal'd;
And thus I search it with a sovereign kiss.
But twice, or thrice, was 'Proteus' written down:
Be calm, good wind, blow not a word away,
Till I have found each letter, in the letter,
Except mine own name: that some whirlwind bear
Unto a ragged, fearful, hanging rock,
And throw it thence into the raging sea.
Lo, here in one line is his name twice writ:
'Poor forlorn Proteus'; 'passionate Proteus'.
'To the sweet Julia'; that I'll tear away.
And yet I will not, sit so prettily
He couples it to his complaining names.
Thus will I fold them, one upon another:
Now kiss, embrace, contend, do what you will.



IRENA - THREE SISTERS by Anton Chekhov

Tell me, why is it I'm so happy today? As if I were sailing, with the wide, blue sky above me, and great white birds soaring in the wind. Why is it? Why? I woke up this morning, I got up, I washed - and suddenly I felt everything in this world was clear to me - I felt I knew how life had to be lived. Dear Ivan Romanich, I can see it all. A human being has to labour, whoever he happens to be, he has to toil in the sweat of his face; that's the only way he can find the sense and purpose of his life, his happiness, his delight. How fine to be a working man who rises at first light and breaks stones on the road, or a shepherd, or a teacher, or an engine driver on the railway... Lord, never mind being human even - better to be an ox, better to be a simple horse, just so long as you work - anything rather than a young lady who rises at noon, then drinks her coffee in bed, then takes two hours to dress... that's terrible!

In hot weather sometimes you long to drink the way I began longing to work. And if I don't start getting up early and working, then shut your heart against me, Ivan Romanich.



ANNA PETROVNA - WILD HONEY by Anton Chekhov

How can you say that? How can you lie to me, on such a night as this, beneath such a sky? Tell your lies in autumn, if you must, in the gloom and the mud, but not now, not here. You're being watched! Look up, you absurd man! A thousand eyes, all shining with indignation! You must be good and true, just as all this is good and true. Don't break this silence with your little words! There's no man in the world I could ever love as I love you. There's no woman in the world you could ever love as you love me. Let's take that love; and all the rest, that so torments you – we'll leave that to others to worry about. Are you really such a terrible Don Juan? You look so handsome in the moonlight! Such a solemn face! It's a woman who's come to call, not a wild animal! All right – if you really hate it all so much I'll go away again. Is that what you want? I'll go away, and everything will be just as it was before. Yes...? (*She laughs*) Idiot! Take it! Snatch it! Seize it! What more do you want? Smoke it to the end, like a cigarette – pinch it out – tread it under your heel. Be human! You funny creature! A woman loves you – a woman you love – fine summer weather. What could be simpler than that? You don't realise how hard life is for me. And yet life is what I long for. Everything is alive, nothing is ever still. We're surrounded by life. We must live, too, Misha! Leave all the problems for tomorrow. Tonight, on this night of nights, we'll simply live!



CAVALE - COWBOY MOUTH by Sam Shepard

You're so neat. You're such a neat guy. I wish I woulda known you when I was little. Not real little. But at the age when you start finding out stuff. When I was cracking rocks apart and looking at their sparkles inside. When I first put my finger inside me and felt wonderment. I would've took you to this real neat hideout I had where I made a waterfall with tires and shit, and my own hut. We could've taken all our clothes off, and I'd look at your dinger, and you could show me how far you could piss. I bet you would've protected me. People were always giving me shit. Ya know what? Once I was in a play. I was real glad I was in a play 'cause I thought they were just for pretty people, and I had my dumb eyepatch and those metal plate shoes to correct my duck foot. It was The Ugly Duckling, and I really dug that 'cause of the happy ending and shit. And I got to be the ugly duckling and I had to wear some old tattered black cloth and get shit flung at me, but I didn't mind 'cause at the end I'd be that pretty swan and all. But you know what they did, Slim? At the end of the play I had to kneel on the stage and cover my head with a black shawl and this real pretty blonde-haired girl dressed in a white ballet dress rose up behind me as the swan. It was really shitty, man. I never got to be the fucking swan. I paid all the dues and up rose ballerina Cathy like the North Star. And afterwards all the parents could talk about was how pretty she looked. Boy, I ran to my hideout and cried and cried. The lousy fucks. I wish you were around then. I bet you would've protected me.



PATSY - LITTLE MURDERS by Jules Feiffer

Honey, I don't want to hurt you. I want to change you. I want to make you see that there is some value in life, that there is some beauty, some tenderness, some things worth reacting to. Some things worth feeling. But you've got to take some chances some time! What do you want out of life? Just survival? It's not enough! Its not, not, not enough! I am not going to have a surviving marriage. I'm going to have a flourishing marriage! I'm a woman! Or, by Jesus, it's about time I became one. I want a family! Oh, Christ, Alfred, this is my wedding day. I want – want to be married to a big, strong, protective, vital, virile, self-assured man. Who I can protect and Take care of. Alfred, honey, you're the first man I've ever gone to bed with where I didn't feel he was a lot more likely to get pregnant than I was. You owe me something! I've invested everything I believe in you. You've got to let me mould you. Please let me mould you. You've got me whining, begging and crying. I've never behaved like this in my life. Will you look at this? That's a tear. I never cried in my life.



GRUSHA - THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE by Bertolt Brecht

Even if it was thirty, I'd tell you what I think of your justice, you drunken onion!

(Incoherently)

How dare you talk to me like the cracked Isaiah on the church window? As if you were somebody? For you weren't born to this. You weren't born to rap your own mother on the knuckles if she swipes a little bowl of salt someplace. Aren't you ashamed of yourself when you see how I tremble before you? You're made yourself their servant so no one will take their houses from them – houses they had stolen! Since when have houses belonged to the bedbugs? But you're on the watch, or they couldn't drag our men into their wars! You bribetaker! I've no respect for you. No more than for a thief or a bandit with a knife! You can do what you want. You can take the child away from me, a hundred against one, but I tell you one thing: only extortioners should be chosen for a profession like yours, and men who rape children! As punishment! Yes, let them sit in judgement on their fellow creatures. It is worse than to hang from the gallows.



BARBARA - EUROPE by Michael Gow

I only have two more performances of this for a few months. Then the chorus in Medea. I hate that too. The girl in the lead can't act. She starts to weep the very second her foot touches the stage. We all cower in the shadows pretending to mourn the children. All these old plays. We do them over and over. We do them this way, we do them that way, we dress them up, we strip them bare, we expose them, we conceal them, we reinforce them, we deny them. And the new plays are just shadows of the old ones. Over and over. Oh, God, why bother doing this? Theatre! It's torture. If only the public knew. If only they would learn something from it. We could go on to something new. But back we go to the next way of doing the same old thing, the new interpretation of the same ancient meaning. One night I will give a new interpretation. Sing a song, tell a joke, maybe a story; yes, a true story: avoid the catastrophe completely; no plots, no mysteries, no betrayals. Of course, that would do my career no good at all. Because I can do it all so well.



CAROL - OLEANNA by David Mamet

Professor, I came here as a favour. At your personal request. Perhaps I should not have done so. But I did. On my behalf, and on behalf of my group. And you speak of the tenure committee, one of whose members is a woman, as you know. And though you might call it Good Fun, or An Historical Phrase, or An Oversight, or All of the Above, to refer to the committee as Good Men and True, it is a demeaning remark. It is a sexist remark, and to overlook it is to countenance continuation of that method of thought. You love the Power. I'm sorry. You feel yourself empowered ... you say so yourself. To strut. To posture. To "perform." To call me in here..." Eh? You say that higher education is a joke. And treat it as such, you treat it as such. And confess to a taste to play the Patriarch in your class. To grant this. To deny that. To embrace your students. And you think it's charming to "question" in yourself this taste to mock and destroy. But you should question it. Professor. And you pick those things which you feel advance you: publication, tenure, and the steps to get them you call "harmless rituals." And you perform those steps. Although you say it is hypocrisy. But to the aspirations of your students. Of hardworking students, who come here, who slave to come here – you have no idea what it cost me to come to this school – you mock us. You call education "hazing" and from your so-protected, so-elitist seat you hold our confusion as a joke, and hopes and efforts with it. Then you sit there and say "what have I done?" And ask me to understand that you have aspirations too. But I tell you. I tell you. That you are vile. And that you are exploitative. And if you possess one ounce of that inner honesty you describe in your book, you can look in yourself and see those things that I see. And you can find revulsion equal to my own. Good Day.

(She prepares to leave the room)



RHONDA - WHO'S AFRAID OF THE WORKING CLASS? by
Christos Tsiolkas, Patricia Cornelius, Melissa Reeves and Andrew Bovell

Carol says, "Problem with you, Rhonda, problem with you is that you're just too fertile. You just got to look at a man and you're up the duff." And we laughed but she's right, she's fucking right. Woman from Welfare says, "it must be hard. Must be hard for you, Rhonda, with all those kids. Looking after them, it must be hard". And I say "No. it's not hard." Though it is. I know it and she knows it. But I'm not going to give her the satisfaction. So I say, "No. Those kids, those kids are my blessings. Every one of them a blessing. You understand. A blessing" though it is ... hard. But it's like Carol says I only got to look at a man. Anyway, I'm down the pub playing the bandits when Carol, she's my neighbour, life in the flat next door, Carol comes in and says, "Cops were over your place earlier". And I said, "Oh yeah, what do they want this time? If it's Nathan, you can tell 'em he's not there. Tell 'em he's pissed off." Without a word mind you and with the rent. Bastard. And I'm not taking him back, not this time. No fucking way. Better off alone. Well, that's what Carol says. But she doesn't get it, Family Services don't get it, but it's how I am. It's my life and I like having a man around. So I've had a few. They don't stick around. Anyway, Carol says it's not Nathan they're after, it's about your kids. And so I know there's trouble. Stacey's probably been picked up shoplifting or something. Doesn't bother me 'cause I taught 'em how. So I go down to the station and they know me there. And I say, "Where are they? I want to see my kids." You can't see them", and I look at him and I say, "I'm their mother and I can see them whenever I bloody well like". And then he says it. Just a couple of words, he says it: "There's been an accident".

(Pause)

"What accident?" "A fire. There's been a fire. In a Brotherhood bin. A candle. The clothes. I'm sorry".

(Pause)

The man in the suit, he says, "They didn't suffer, the smoke, it would have... "

(She holds up her hand as if to motion him to stop talking)

And I say, "They suffered. You don't know how much".



HEAVENLY - SWEET BIRD OF YOUTH by Tennessee Williams

Don't give me your "Voice of God" speech, Papa, there was a time when you could have saved me, by letting me marry a boy that was still young and clean, but instead you drove him away, drove him out of St. Cloud. And when he came back, you took me out of St. Cloud, and tried to force me to marry a fifty-year-old money bag that you wanted something out of - and then another, another, all of them ones you wanted something out of. I'd gone, so Chance went away. Tried to compete, make him big as these big shots you wanted to use me for a bond with. He went. He tried. The right doors wouldn't open, and so he went in the wrong ones, and - Papa, you married for love, why wouldn't you let me do it, while I was alive, inside, and the boy was still clean, still decent? You married for love, but you wouldn't let me do it, and even though you'd done it, you broke Mama's heart. Miss Lucy was your mistress long before Mama died. And Mama was just in front of you.

(Pause)

Can I go in now, Papa? Can I go in now, Papa? I'm sorry my operation has brought this embarrassment on you, but can you imagine it, Papa? I felt worse than embarrassed when I found out that Dr George Scudder's knife had cut the youth out of my body, made me a childless woman. Dry, cold, empty, like an old woman. I feel as if I ought to rattle like a dead dried-up vine when the Gulf Wind blows, but, Papa - I won't embarrass you any more.



CRESSY - RADIANCE by Louis Nowra

You were created from dirt. Your father was dirt. He never raped her...it was me. He raped me! Under this house. Me! He did it to me! Under that burning house. He was just one of Mum's boyfriends. If he walked down the street I don't think I'd even recognize him. Mum was in town. He was going to drive away but his car had no petrol, so he went and bought a can. He sucked on a tube to get it flowing into the tank. I was playing under the house. Then suddenly he was there. He had this screwdriver. I tried to fight him but he was too strong. As he was doing it he kept kissing me with his mouth stinking of petrol. The pain – all the awful pain through my body like he was stabbing me in two. He said he'd kill me if I told Mum. I stayed under the house for hours trying to clean myself with some old rags. Then a few months later I realized I was having that man's baby. I tried to keep it from her. You know what happened when I told her? She hit me. She said I was lying, that it was one of the local boys and I was blaming her boyfriend. She didn't believe me. I had you in that house. In my bed. I was twelve. Twelve, Nona.

(Pause)

I hated Mum for not believing me. But at least she kept you, pretended you were hers. That's not your mother. I'm your mother, Nona. You were born because your so-called Black Prince raped me. Just a filthy pig smelling of petrol. We kept it a secret. I was ashamed. She was ashamed. But I'm not ashamed of you. I'm telling you the truth. You're my flesh and blood, my daughter. You're my blood. My blood is yours, Nona! I named you because you were mine. That's all Mum would allow me to do – name you, Nona...I want you to know the truth. You have to know the truth.



GILLIAN - DAGS by Debra Oswald

All right. I'm going to admit something I never thought I'd admit to anyone ever. I've got a crush on Adam. Head over heels. uncontrollable passion, etcetera. Unrequited passion, of course. Now I know this sounds like I'm throwing away everything I've said so far. And I guess I am. I know every girl at school except Monica is in love with him. I know he'd never go for a dag like me. I know it's hopeless. I know all that. But I can't help it. Just thinking he might look at me, my heart starts pounding like mad. And then I worry about whether he can tell my heart's going crazy, and I have to act really cool. This crush - it's like a disease. Do you know - oh, I'm almost too embarrassed to admit this - Adam misses the bus sometimes. 'Cos he's chatting up some girl or something. And do you know what I do? I get off the bus after one stop and walk back to school, so I can hang round the bus stop hoping he'll turn up. Just so I can ride on the same bus with him. Isn't that the most pathetic thing you've ever heard? I'm crazy. I can lie here for hours thinking about him. Writing these movies in my head where Adam and me are the stars. I try to imagine how he'd notice me and fall hopelessly in love with me and all that. Like, one of my favourites is that the bus breaks down one day in this remote place and there we are stranded together. He discovers that I was this really fascinating woman all along. Far more interesting than all those silly girls at school. But - I say that I can't bear to be just another notch on his belt. So Adam has to beg me to go out with him. Grovel almost. That's a pretty over-the-top version.



CAROL - ORPHEUS DESCENDING by Tennessee Williams

I used to be what they call a Christ-bitten reformer. You know what that is? – A kind of benign exhibitionist... I delivered stump speeches, wrote letters of protest about the gradual massacre of the coloured majority in the county. I thought it wrong for pellagra and slow starvation to cut them down when the cotton crop failed from armyworm or boll weevil or too much rain in summer. I wanted to, try to, put up free clinics, I squandered the money my mother left me on it. And when that Willie McGee thing came along – he was sent to the chair for having improper relations with a white whore – I made a fuss about it. I put on a potato sack and set out for the capitol on foot. This was in winter. I walked barefoot in this burlap sack to deliver a personal protest to the Governor of the State. Oh, I suppose it was partly exhibitionism on my part, but it wasn't completely exhibitionism; there was something else in it, too. You know how far I got? Six miles out of town – hooted, jeered at, even spit on! – every step of the way – and then arrested! Guess what for? Lewd vagrancy! Uh-huh, that was the charge, 'lewd vagrancy', because they said that the potato sack I had on was not a respectable garment ... Well, all that was a pretty long time ago, and now I'm not a reformer any more. I'm just a 'lewd vagrant'. And I'm showing the 'S.O.B.S' how lewd a 'lewd vagrant' can be if she puts her whole heart in it like I do mine! All right. I've told you my story, the story of an exhibitionist. Now I want you to do something for me. Take me out to Cypress Hill in my car. And we'll hear the dead people talk. They do talk there. They chatter together like birds on Cypress Hill, but all they say is one word and that one word is 'live,' they say 'Live, live, live, live, live!' It's all they've learned, it's the only advice they can give. – Just live ... Simple! – a very simple instruction.



BRIT - IN NEW YORK - STUFF HAPPENS By David Hare

'America changed.' That's what we're told. 'On September 11th everything changed.' 'If you're not American, you can't understand.' The infantile psychobabble of popular culture is grafted opportunistically onto America's politics. The language of childish entitlement becomes the lethal rhetoric of global wealth and privilege. Asked how you are as President, on the first day of a war which will kill around thirty thousand people: 'I feel good.' I was in Saks Fifth Avenue the morning they bombed Baghdad. 'Isn't it wonderful?' says the saleswoman. 'At last we're hitting back.' 'Yes,' I reply. 'At the wrong people. Somebody steals your handbag, so you kill their second cousin, on the grounds they live close. Explain to me,' I say, 'Saudi Arabia is financing Al Qaeda. Iran, Lebanon and Syria are known to shelter terrorists. North Korea is developing a nuclear weapons programme. All these you leave alone. No, you go to war with the one place in the region admitted to have no connection with terrorism.' 'You're not American,' says the saleswoman. 'You don't understand.' Oh, a question, then. If 'You're not American. You don't understand' is the new dispensation, then why not 'You're not Chechen'? Are the Chechens also now licensed? Are Basques? Theatres, restaurants, public squares? Do Israeli milk-bars filled with women and children become fair game on the grounds that 'You don't understand. We're Palestinian, we're Chechen, we're Irish, we're Basque'? If the principle of international conduct is now to be that you may go against anyone you like on the grounds that you've been hurt by somebody else, does that apply to everyone? Or just to America? On September 11th, America changed. Yes. It got much stupider.



SECRETARY - SPECIAL OFFER by Harold Pinter

(At a desk in an office)

Yes, I was in the rest room at Swan and Edgars, having a little rest. Just sitting there, interfering with nobody, when this old crone suddenly came right up to me and sat beside me. You're on the staff of the B.B.C. she said, aren't you? I've got just the thing for you, she said, and put a little card into my hand. Do you know what was written on it? MEN FOR SALE! What on earth do you mean? I said. Men, she said, all sorts' shapes and sizes, for sale. What on earth can you possibly mean? I said. It's an international congress, she said, got up for the entertainment and relief of lady members of the civil service. You can hear some of the boys we've got speak through a microphone, especially for your pleasure, singing little folk tunes we're sure you've never heard before. Tea is on the house and every day we have the very best pastries. For the cabaret at teatime the boys do a rare dance imported all the way from Buenos Aires, dressed in nothing but a pair of cricket pads. Every single one of them is tried and tested, very best quality, and at very reasonable rates. If you like one of them by any of his individual characteristics you can buy him, but for you not at retail price. As you work for the B.B.C. we'll be glad to make a special reduction. If you're at all dissatisfied you can send him back within seven days and have your money refunded. That's very kind of you, I said, but as a matter of fact I've just been on leave, I start work tomorrow and am perfectly refreshed. And I left her where she was. Men for Sale! What an extraordinary idea! I've never heard of anything so outrageous, have you? Look - here's the card.

(Pause)

Do you think it's a joke. . . or serious ?



ELIZABETH BARRY - THE LIBERTINE by Stephen Jeffries

You have no understanding, do you? You have comprehended – just – that I am tired of being your mistress and your solution is to conscript me into becoming your wife. It is not being a mistress I am tired of, John. I am tired of you. I do not wish to be your wife. I do not wish to be anyone's wife. I wish to continue being the creature I am. I am no Nell Gwyn, I will not give up the stage as soon as a King or a Lord has seen me on it and, wishing me to be his and his alone, will then pay a fortune to keep me off it. I am not the sparrow you picked up in the roadside, my love. London walks into this theatre to see me – not George's play nor Mr. Betterton. They want me and they want me over and over again. And when people desire you in such a manner, then you can envisage a steady river of gold lapping at your doorstep, not five pound here or there for pity or bed favours, not a noble's ransom for holding you hostage from the thing you love, but a lifetime of money amassed through your own endeavours. That is riches. 'Leave this gaudy, gilded stage'. You're right, this stage is gilded. It is gilded with my future earnings. And I will not trade those for a dependency on you. I will not swap my certain glory for your undependable love.



MURRI WOMAN - 7 STAGES OF GRIEVING by Wesley Enoch, Deborah Mailman

(Delivered in the style of Stand-up comedy)

Have you ever been black? You know when you wake up one morning and you're black? Happened to me this morning. I was in the bathroom, looking in the mirror and I thought, "Nice hair, beautiful black skin, white shiny teeth... I'm BLACK!" You get a lot of attention, special treatment from being black. I'm in this expensive shop and there's this guy next to me, nice hair, nice tie, nice suit, waving a nice big gun in the air and the shop assistant says, "Keep an eye on the nigger... eye on the nigger." OK, so I went to try on a dress and the shop assistant escorts me to the 'special' dressing room, the one equipped with video cameras, warning to shop lifters, a security guard, fucken sniffer dog... 'Get out of it'. Just so I don't put anything I shouldn't on my nice dress, nice hair, beautiful black skin and white shiny teeth... Now I'm in this crowded elevator, bathed in perfume, in my nice dress, nice hair, beautiful black skin and white shiny teeth... 'Hey which way'.

The Woman sniffs the air. Somebody boodgi and they all look at me! Now I go to my deadly Datsun, looking pretty deadly myself, which way, lock my keys in the car. Eh but this Murri too good, she got a coat hanger in her bag! Fiddling around for a good five seconds and started hearing sirens, look around, policeman, fireman, army, fucken UN and that same sniffer dog. Just to make sure everything's OK.

(Spoken in an American accent while holding the audience at 'gunpoint'.)

"Who owns the car, Ma'am?"

(Indicating herself.)

"ME."

So I'm driving along in my deadly Datsun, stylin up to that rear vision mirror. Car breaks down. Get out. Started waving people for help.

(Imitating a fast car.)

Started waving people for help. Vroom! Started waving people for help. Vroom! Next minute I see this black shape coming down the road – fucken sniffer dog. Finally get home, with the help of the policeman, fireman, army, fucken UN. Still looking deadly in my nice dress, nice hair, beautiful black skin and white shiny teeth. Aunty comes in, "Eh Sisgirl, nice dress, can I borrow it? 'Mmmm'. Thinking that tomorrow will be a better day, I go to bed. Kicking that sniffer dog out. Still with the sound of sirens in my head. Snuggling up to my doona and pillow. Morning comes, I wakeup, looking in the mirror. Nice hair, beautiful black skin, white shiny teeth. I'M STILL BLACK! NUNNA!



MARGOT – THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES by Joanna Murray – Smith

I'm not to blame for every thing that's gone wrong in your lives. I'm a thinker! It's my job to think. Because that's something I do better than other people. You're all spoiled brats. Go on shoot me, but that's the truth! Talk about the Me Generation! All this nonsense about personal identity and self-growth and being fulfilled! What a load of self – indulgent crap. Has it ever occurred to any of you that there was a generation of men and women who didn't wake up in the morning and wonder how the day was going to pan out for them, but leapt out of bed intent on figuring out how the world was going to pan out for everyone? Maybe we got things wrong. Maybe we went too far. Maybe we had a goddamn mission and that was to make this planet a better place for our inheritors than it was for us. You whiners and whingers! What would you rather? That I'd sat quietly back and lead a sweet, unrestrained, anonymous life? So that your destiny as repressed, stupefied, second-class citizens could have gone on uninterrupted? I happened to get famous and now you're going to use my fame against me because you're not happy with yourselves? Why don't you take a little responsibility and, while you're at it, show a tiny bit of ordinary gratitude?



ROSE – THE SEED by Kate Mulvany

There was a spray that Dad breathed in and now I don't have the eggs. They've all been destroyed by radiotherapy and even if they found one, I can't carry it. The tumour wiped out half my organs, my body can't support a baby. Grandda, I'm thirty and I've just started menopause. I will never have children.

(Beat)

I will never have children.

(Beat)

I will never have children.

And you know what? I don't think I deserve them anyway. When a friend tells me she is pregnant I smile and hug and kiss and ask her dumb questions. 'How far along?' 'Any names picked yet?' 'What are you craving?' But I don't let on what I'm craving. That despite my big smile and congratulations I'm green and I'm bubbling and I'm thinking, you bitch, I hope it fucking dies inside you, you bitch. And when a pregnant woman walks past me on the street I want punch her belly and walk away when she falls to the ground and just leave her there to deal with it. And when a husband tells me he's having his third boy I want to put my hand down his pants and rip his fucking cock off and squeeze it dry of any seed. And when I see a baby in a pram...

(Beat)

I just want to pick it up and smell its skin and hold it to my heart and stroke its little head and never let another person touch it for the rest of its life. Is that normal, Grandda? I don't know. And I never will. Because the seed stops here.



GETTING OUT by Marsha Norman

Arlie

So, there was this little kid, see, this creepy little fucker next door. Had glasses and something wrong with his foot. I don't know, seven, maybe. Anyhow, every time his daddy went fishing, he'd bring this kid back some frogs. They built this little fence around 'em in the backyard like they were pets or something. And we'd try to go over and see 'em but he'd start screaming to his mother to come out and get rid of us. Real snotty like. So we got sick of him being such a goody-goody and one night me and June snuck over there and put all his dumb old frogs in this sack. You never heard such a fuss. (Makes croaking sounds.) Slimy bastards, frogs. We were planning to let 'em go all over the place, but when they started jumping and all, we just figured they were asking for it. So, we took em out front to the porch and we threw 'em, one at a time, into the street. (Laughs.) Some of them hit cars going by but most of them just got squashed, you know, runned over? It was great, seeing how far we could throw 'em, over back of our backs and under our legs and God, it was really fun watching them fly through the air then splat (Claps hands.) all over somebody's car window or something. Then the next day, we were waiting and this little kid comes out in his backyard looking for his stupid frogs and he don't see any and he gets so crazy, crying and everything. So me and June goes over and tells him we seen this big mess out in the street, and he goes out and sees all them frogs' legs and bodies and shit all over the everywhere, and, man, it was so funny. We 'bout killed ourselves laughin'. Then his mother come out and she wouldn't let him go out and pick up all the pieces, so he just had to stand there watchin' all the cars go by smushing his little babies right into the street. I was gonna run out and git him a frog's head, but June yellin' at me "Arlie, git over here 'fore some car slips on them frog guts and crashes into you." (Pause.) I never had so much fun in one day in my whole life.



CRYING IN H MART By Michelle Zauner

I am sitting next to a Korean mother and her son. The kid dutifully gets their silverware from the counter and places it on paper napkins for the both of them. He's eating fried rice and his mom has seolleongtang, ox-bone soup.

He must be in his early twenties, but his mother is still instructing him on how to eat, just like my mom used to. "Dip the onion in the paste." "Don't add too much gochujang or it'll be too salty." "Why aren't you eating the mung beans?" Some days, the constant nagging would annoy me. Woman, let me eat in peace!

The mom places pieces of beef from her spoon onto his spoon. He is quiet and looks tired and doesn't talk to her much. I want to tell him how he should be kind to his mom, remember that life is fragile and she could be gone at any moment. Tell her to go to the doctor and make sure there isn't a small tumor growing inside her. I want to tell him how much I miss my mother.

THE BLACK SEQUIN DRESS by Jenny Kemp

Woman 1

I can see a beautiful nightclub. Black shiny surfaces, all polished and clean, sparkling glasses full of champagne, gin and tonic, cocktails, liqueurs etc. Women melting into their partners' bodies, the men wrapped around them like blankets. The band, in a row laid back, handsome. Snacks, cards, cigarettes, money, lipstick, watches, jewellery, high stools, dancing, wild dancing, bare bodies under not much. They abandon themselves here. Get out of their day shoes and set off at a gallop, drinks whizzing down the gullet, talk gurgling up, hands wandering all over the place, anywhere will do, who cares. They have learned how not to care, how here to let go the reins. They want to show off, they want to fall in love with the moment and it to fall in love with them. Greedy are they? No, not greedy. Hungry.

I love, I love, I love, love they think. Love me, me, me, me, all of me. Fill me up, fill me up. I've had a bath, I've put on my deodorant, my clothes are impeccable. Now now now do the next bit, come over they seem to be screaming.

Come over here and really fill me up with something significant something – of value. A right word a soft word at just the right moment straight down the ear hole, ping bullseye, right to the hungry spot, ping and then ah, ah, that was it. Got it thank you, now anything I can do for you back? No, yes, not a sure thing at all, perhaps not. Or someone could walk up their timing perfect, and stand fitting the shape of me. Perfection, it would register. I would breath out, relax and they would sit and put a



hand out somewhere on the table, it would contact my hand and ping down the arm would go, the message and it would run up the shoulder into the head, down whiz straight to the heart and zoom, zing the genitals aflame. And my dress would fill up with light. I would wake up and dance I would jump off the end of the pier, free fall. And he would fly over the end after me splash, gurgle gurgle gurgle. And down we go.

JULIE (AFTER STRINDBERG) by Polly Stenham

Kristina

I hold your hair up when you're sick. I pick you up after your abortion. I wash your bloodstained underwear. I get up most days and I serve you. But I tell myself, it's not her fault. She's a nice girl. It could be the other way round. She treats me well. She treats me like a person. She didn't write history. She's just snared in the story like me. Sometimes she even makes it possible for us to both pretend that we're not hostage to our situation. Sometimes when we're talking in the kitchen, we can both pretend that it's all pretend. And that makes the job, sort of bearable, that we both have moments of pretending. That it all isn't so fucked. That it all isn't so fucking unfair. You see all I had here, was a tiny bit of dignity. But even that you've snatched, and it wasn't even precious to you. I don't think you even knew I had it. That I need it. I don't think you know what it's like to need something. Just what it's like to want. And want. And want. Because, what you've done, what you've just done, is worse than sex with someone you shouldn't. That's child's play really. It's ordinary. It's the oldest trick in the book. What you've actually done is you've turned the light on. When we'd both agreed to sometimes have it off. In what you've done, you've reiterated everything. In your action is the whole world. Of taking and taken. You are wrong. You are what's wrong.

FLEABAG by Phoebe Waller Bridge

Fleabag

It was a guinea-pig-themed café.

Yeah.

I opened the café with my friend Boo. She's dead now. She accidentally killed herself. It wasn't her intention, but it wasn't a total accident. She didn't think she'd actually die, just found out that her boyfriend slept with someone else and she wanted to punish him by ending up in hospital and not letting him visit her for a bit. She decided to walk into a busy cycle lane wanting to get tangled in a bike. Break a finger, maybe. But it turns out bikes can go fast and flip you into the road. Three people died. I fucked that café into liquidation, I fucked up my family, I fucked my friend by fucking



her boyfriend, I don't feel alive unless I'm fucked and I don't feel in control unless I'm fucking, to me, there isn't anything worse than someone who doesn't want to fuck me. That I fuck everything. But this time, I genuinely wasn't trying to – I wasn't – I was – Either everyone feels like this a little bit and they're just not talking about it, or I'm completely fucking alone. Which isn't fucking funny. And I need this fucking job. Silence Well...People make mistakes. That's why they put rubbers on the ends of pencils.

WOMAN OF MANHATTAN by John Partick Shanley

Judy

I will! I will dream on. Because that is exactly what I am talking about. My dreams. Which you do not know. And which you don't think are important enough to know. Do you think this body is something? What a joke! Any great poet the last three thousand years will tell you what a joke that is! This stuff, this flesh, this heavy breathing ... We have this aptitude in our hearts and brains and souls to arrive at something so rich and inflamed and unspeakable and sacred and New! Not this tired shit you want to foist on me. That's not what I want. I won't give up my standards! I know what I know. If I tried to live on the kind of things you're offering me, I'd starve to death. You've got to dig for treasure, Duke! Not settle for the stuff just lying out on the ground. You could sleep with me if you weren't so god damn lazy and narcissistic and were willing to exert yourself a little and show some interest in the actual core of another human being! But you will not sleep with me because I will not perform a stupid mechanical pantomime, like I was trying and failing to remember something fine, something from a better world, something alien and beautiful and lost! What, you look vacant, don't you get it? I'll give it to you in a nutshell. I'll give it to you in basic modern American: I'm not interested in the hardware without the software. Look, let's just let this fall apart, okay? Don't hang around for the sake of neatness. I'll get the check. It was worth that much to me to have my say.

GLORIA by Branden Jacobs Jenkins

Kendra

You know, a bad thing happened to both of us! -to all of us! -but you seem to think it happened only to you. And why is that? Because you went to Gloria's dumb party and she saved you? Because you were "a witness" to everyone's last moments? Or because you're entitled to think the world automatically cares about you and what you saw and what you think? (Beat.) You are aware that the rest of the world has moved on from Gloria, correct? Every other week there's been another tragedy -another shooting. Every other week there's been a disgruntled somebody mowing down a movie theatre or a kindergarten or a shopping mall or a doctor's office. With every bullet that's passed through their guns, Gloria has receded farther and farther into memory,

becomes a shorter and shorter sentence in the annals of American violence. The only thing people will probably remember about that day is that it was the day Sarah Tweed died. You didn't survive the Holocaust. I think I just realized what Gloria actually did. She didn't save you at all, did she? She couldn't. She thought she was giving you your life back, but there was no life there to give back. I mean, what are you trying to save here? What is the endgame? You don't believe a writing career is waiting for you on the other side of this? A career as what? A "memoirist"? Do you think you're still in some race? What was all that worth now, Dean? All that networking? All that self-righteousness? All that slaving away in that cubicle as Nan's lapdog? Was it worth these fifteen minutes you're living as a footnote in the life of our office freak?

CASTING DOUBTS By Maryanne Sam

Tammy

A Harley pulls up out the front. It's Titman and he wants to talk to Mum. We don't want her to. She says she won't be long. I watch them out the window. Next thing he's coming inside.

Mum's dancing and he walks and whispers something in her ear...

He punches Mum. Pop comes in and says 'You can't hit women'...Bang...He punches Pop into the wall. Pop says 'You're fuckin' mad,' and he's off over the phone box across the road. Titman runs up, grabs Pop, and pulls him to the ground, and he's kickin' the fuck out of Pop. Mum's friends on the door step, she runs across the round and lies down on top of Pop and says 'Get off him! Leave him alone!'

Titman's in the phone box and he's pulling it apart. Mr Walsh works in Telecom, he's our next door neighbour, he says 'You can't do that to Telecom property!' Bang, he punches Mr Walsh our cold. My uncles' running up the street and Titan chases him. Nan comes screaming out of the house in her petticoat yellin' 'If I get a hold of you ya mongrel bastard!', then Titan turns and chases Nan and she's running the other way.

The neighbours are looking out their windows. 'Help us, somebody, help me'...I can hear cops, the ambulance coming. Titman goes and gets on his Harley and kicks it over and says 'You say anything and I'll be back with a petrol bomb' and then he's gone.

Mum's sitting on the front doorstep. Her eyes are punched shut and her blonde hair is all red. Pop's on the ground not moving. Mr Walsh has a black eye and a big bump on his head. The kids are standing there screaming and crying. They're cold and their feet are blue. The ambulance takes Mum and Pop to the hospital.

Nan yells out to me, 'Come and sleep in with me, Tam'.



Male Monologues



MARK ANTHONY - JULIUS CAESAR by William Shakespeare

O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,
That I am meek and gentle with these butchers.
Thou art the ruins of the noblest man
That ever lived in the tide of times.
Woe to the hand that shed this costly blood!
Over thy wounds now do I prophesy
(Which, like dumb mouths, do open their ruby lips
To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue),
A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;
Domestic fury and fierce civil strife
Shall cumber all the parts of Italy;
Blood and destruction shall be so in use,
And dreadful objects so familiar,
That mothers shall but smile when they behold
Their infants quartered with the hands of war,
All pity chok'd with custom of fell deeds;
And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge,
With Ate by his side come hot from hell,
Shall in these confines with a monarch's voice
Cry 'Havoc!' and let slip the dogs of war,
That this foul deed shall smell above the earth
With carrion men, groaning for burial.



HENRY V - HENRY V by William Shakespeare

This day is call'd the feast of Crispian:
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when this day is nam'd,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall see this day, and live old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say "To-morrow is Saint Crispian".
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars,
And say "These wounds I had on Crispin's day".
Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember with advantages
What feats he did that day. Then shall our names,
Familiar in his mouth as household words,
Harry the king, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,
Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd;
This story shall the good man teach his son;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered;
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition:
And gentlemen in England now a-bed
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.



EDMUND - KING LEAR by William Shakespeare

Thou, Nature, art my goddess; to thy law
My services are bound. Wherefore should I
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? Wherefore base?
When my dimensions are as well compact,
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?
Who in the lusty stealth of nature take
More composition and fierce quality
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,
Go to th' creating of a whole tribe of fops,
Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well then,
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to th' legitimate. Fine word "legitimate"!
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base
Shall top th' legitimate -: I grow, I prosper;
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!



BEROWNE - LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST by William Shakespeare

And I, forsooth, in love! I that have been love's whip.
A very beadle to a humorous sigh,
A critic, nay, a night-watch constable,
A domineering pedant o'er the boy,
Than whom no mortal so magnificent!
This wimpled, whining, purblind, wayward boy,
This Signor Junior, giant dwarf, Dan Cupid
Regent of love-rhymes, lord of folded arms,
Th' anointed sovereign of sighs and groans,
Liege of all loiterers and malcontents,
Dread prince of plackets, King of codpieces,
Sole imperator and great general
Of trotting paritors - O my little heart!
And I to be a corporal of his field,
And wear his colours like a tumbler's hoop!
What? I love, I sue, I seek a wife! -
A woman, that is like a German clock,
And never going aright, being a watch,
But being watched that it may still go right!
Nay, to be perjured, which is worst of all;
And among three to love the worst of all -
A whitely wanton with a velvet brow,
With two pitch-balls stuck in her face for eyes;
Ay, and, by heaven, one that will do the deed
Though Argus were her eunuch and her guard.
And I to sigh for her, to watch for her,
To pray for her! Go to! It is a plague
That Cupid will impose for my neglect
Of his almighty dreadful little might.
Well, I will love, write, sigh, pray, sue, and groan.
Some men must love my lady, and some Joan.



SEBASTIAN - TWELFTH NIGHT by William Shakespeare

This is the air, that is the glorious sun,
This pearl she gave me, I do feel't, and see't
And though tis wonder that enwraps me thus,
Yet tis not madness. Where's Antonio then?
I can not find him at the Elephant,
Yet there he was, and there I found this credit,
That he did range the town to seek me out.
He counsel now might do me golden service:
Through my soul disputes well with my sense
That this may be some error, but no madness,
Yet doth this accident and flood of fortune
So far exceed all instance, all discourse,
That I am ready to distrust mine eyes,
And wrangle with my reason that persuades me
To any other trust but that I am mad,
Or else the lady's mad; yet if twere so,
She could not sway her house, command her followers,
Take and give back affairs and their dispatch,
With such smooth, discreet, and stable bearing
As I perceive she does. There's something in't
That is deceivable. But here the lady comes.



BENEDICT - MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING by William Shakespeare

This can be no trick: the conference was sadly borne; they have the truth of this from Hero.

They seem to pity the lady: it seems her affections have their full bent. Love me?

Why, it must be requited. I hear how I am censured: they say I will bear myself proudly, if I perceive the love come from her; they say too that she would rather die than give any sign of affection. I did never think to marry:

I must not seem proud: happy are they that hear their detractions and can put them to mending. They say the lady is fair -tis a truth, I can bear them witness; and virtuous - tis is so, I cannot reprove it; and wise, but for loving me - by my troth, it is no addiction to her wit, nor no great argument of her folly, for I will be horribly in love with her. I may chance have some odd quirks and remnants of wit broken on me because I have railed so long against marriage: but doth not the appetite alter? A man loves the meat in his youth that he can not endure in his age. Shall quips and sentences and these paper bullets of the brain awe a man from the career of his humour? No, the world must be peopled. When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married.

Here comes Beatrice. By this day, she's a fair lady! I do spy some marks of love in her.



LAUNCE -THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA by William Shakespeare

Nay, twill be this hour ere I have done weeping. All the kind of the Launces have this very fault. I have received my proportion, like the prodigious son, and am going with Sir Proteus to the Imperial's court. I think Crab my dog be the sourest-natured dog that lives: my mother weeping; my father wailing; my sister crying; our maid howling; our cat wringing her hands, and all our house in a great perplexity; yet did not this cruel-hearted cur shed one tear. He is a stone, a very pebble stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog. Why, my grandam, having no eyes, look you, wept herself blind at my parting. Nay, I'll show you the manner of it. This shoe is my father. No, this left shoe is my father; no, no, this left shoe is my mother; nay, that cannot be so either. Yes, it is so, it is so; it hath the worsere sole. This shoe with the hole in it is my mother; and this is my father. A vengeance on't, there tis. Now, sir, this staff is my sister; for, look you, she is as white as a lily, and as small as a wand. This hat is Nan our maid. I am the dog. No, the dog is himself, and I am the dog. O, the dog is me, and I am myself. Ay, so, so. Now come I to my father: Father, your blessing. I Now should not the shoe speak a word for weeping; now should I kiss my father; well, he weeps on; now I come to my mother. O that she could speak now, like a wood woman! Well, I kiss her. Why, there tis: here's my mother's breath up and down. Now come I to my sister; mark the moan she makes. Now the dog all this while sheds not a tear; nor speaks a word; but see how I lay the dust with my tears.



IAGO - OTHELLO by William Shakespeare

That Cassio loves her, I do well believe it.

That she loves him, tis apt and of great credit The Moor - howbe't that I endure him not -Is of a constant, loving, noble nature, And I dare think he'll prove to Desdemona A most dear husband.

Now I do love her too, Not out of absolute lust - though peradventure I stand accountant for as great a sin - But partly led to diet my revenge, For that I do suspect the lusty Moor Hath leapt into my seat, the thought whereof Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards; And nothing can or shall content my soul Till I am evened with him, wife for wife - Or failing so, yet that I put the Moor At least into a jealousy so strong That judgement cannot cure.

Which thing to do; If this poor trash of Venice whom I trace For his quick hunting stand the putting on, I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip, Abuse him to the Moor in the rank garb - For I fear Cassio with my nightcap, too - Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me For making him egregiously an ass, And practising upon his peace and quiet, Even to madness: tis here, but yet confus'd; Knavery's plain face is never seen, till us'd.



ANGELO - MEASURE FOR MEASURE by William Shakespeare

What's this, what's this?

The tempter or the tempted; who sins most, ha?

Not she, nor doth she tempt; but it is I

That, lying by the violet in the sun, do as the carrion does, not as the flow'r Corrupt with virtuous season.

Can it be that modesty may more betray our sense than woman's lightness?

Having waste ground enough, Shall we desire to raze the sanctuary

And pitch our evils there? O, fie, fie, fie! What dost thou, or what art thou, Angelo? Dost thou desire her foully for those things that make her good? O, let her brother live!

Thieves for their robbery have authority when judges steal themselves. What, do I love her, that I desire to hear her speak again, and feast upon her eyes? What is't I dream on? O cunning enemy that, to catch a saint,

With saints dost bait thy hook! Most dangerous to sin in loving virtue.

Never could the strumpet, with all her double vigor, art, and nature, once stir my temper; but this virtuous maid subdues me quite. Ever till now, When men were fond, I smil'd and wond'ered how.



ROO - SUMMER OF THE SEVENTEENTH DOLL by Ray Lawler

You selfish little bastard! You listen to me - we come down here for the lay-off, five months of the year, December to April. That leaves another seven months still hangin' - what d'yer reckon Olive does in that time? Knocks around with other blokes, goes out on the loose every week? No, she doesn't, she just waits for us to come back again - 'cos she thinks our five months is worth all the rest of the year put together! It's knowin' that that brought me down this time, broke and - and when I would have given anythin' to have stopped up there. But I couldn't let her down - and if I hear you mention either grapes or the Murray to her now, I'll kick you so far they'll have to feed you with a shanghai.

(Beat)

Now remember what I said.



MAX - MYTH, PROPAGANDA AND DISASTER IN NAZI GERMANY AND CONTEMPORARY AMERICA by Stephen Sewell (Adapted)

Look, mate, I don't know what's happening - I just arrived, right? And, all right, I know the Americans go on with all this flag-waving, patriotic bullshit and think the rest of the world hates them, but fuck, Talbot, they're right: the rest of the world does hate em, I hate em, and I want to live here! It's envy, isn't it? Everyone looks at what they've got and wants it! They just want the stuff, that's right, isn't it? And figure the reason they can't get the stuff, is because the Americans are stopping them. That's where we're at now, and now some prick's actually done something about it, and killed three thousand people, and the Americans are fucking mad as hell, because they know every single one of them is on that plane hurtling towards the Twin Towers and they don't like it and they're not going to stand for it, and they're going to get the pricks that're threatening them. Well, all power to George W - I don't want the fucking pricks to win, either. There were Aussies killed up there, mate, there were English, there were Scots, there were fucking Moslems, for fuck's sake! There was fucking everybody: everyone's hopes were up there in those two towers!. It's a war, Talbot - It is a war. It's a war against terror and it's a war against ignorance, and it's a war against prejudice and pure dumb-arsed fuckwittedness, and we've got to win that war, otherwise we're fucked.



IAN - UP THE ROAD by John Harding

Hey, brother, how do I look? Or have you been watching me for a while. I never got to tell you about the places I've been or the people I've met. I've travelled a bit. Went to Cooper Pedy, had a go at mining. First day on the job I fell down a shaft and broke my arm. Decided mining wasn't for me. Some way or other I ended up in Canberra. You used to Brylcreem my hair for me. I used to love the way you'd grab my ears like motorcycle handles and twist them? Vroom vroom. And that toy sheep we used to fight over. I was just talking with Auntie about it. Had a bit of a blue with Susie. She's been at my throat since I got back. They've all been having a go at me. They reckon it's easy. But they've never been off the bloody mission. They reckon I'm a coconut. She's a fiery woman. It's bloody fresh up here, isn't it? Those boots of yours keep you warm? I got a big electric heater at home. I bought my own place now. What a whitefella, eh? A real house. double brick. And I'm the only one in it. Well, you got the family up here. What've I got? I hate being alone. You all keep leaving me alone. Mum, dad, you. Now Uncle Kenny's gonna be up here. You's be fucking right. What the fuck's going on? They're punishing me. Are you punishing me too? I didn't want to leave, Nat. They all told me to go. They made me go away. Not doing nothing. I fucking hated 'em. They did jack shit. Those cops killed you and they did jack shit. Are you ashamed of me for that, my brother? If it was me they'd killed, you would've rode your horse into the fucken station and torn those cunts apart. That's what I wanted to do. But they made me go away. I thought you were a king and they killed you like a fucken dog. I'm sorry, Nat, I'm sorry. You knew I'd be back. You knew I'd be back here with you. It's fresh, eh? I love you, Nat. I love you brother.

(Sings)

Amazing Grace how sweet the sound / That saved a wretch like me / I once was lost but now I'm found / Was blind but now I see.



KONSTANTIN TREPLEV - THE SEAGULL by Anton Chekhov

(Pulling petals off a flower)

She loves me - she loves me not - She loves me - she loves me not - Loves me, loves me not.

(Laughs)

There you are, she doesn't love me. Well, of course she doesn't. She wants to live and love and dress in light colours, and there am I, twenty-five years old, perpetually reminding her that she's stopped being young. When I'm not there she's thirty-two - when I am she's forty-three; and that's why she hates me. Then again I don't acknowledge the theatre. She loves the theatre she thinks, she's serving humanity and the sacred cause of art, whereas in my view the modern theatre is an anthology of stereotypes and received ideas. When the curtain goes up, and there, in a room with three walls lit by artificial lighting because it's always evening, these great artists, these high priests in the temple of art, demonstrate how people eat and drink, how they love and walk about and wear their suits; when out of these banal scenes and trite words they attempt to extract a moral - some small and simple moral with a hundred household uses; when under a thousand different disguises they keep serving me up the same old thing, the same old thing, the same old thing - then I run and don't stop running, just as Maupassant ran from the sight of the Eiffel Tower, that weighed on his brain with its sheer vulgarity. What we need are new artistic forms. And if we don't get new forms it would be better if we had nothing at all.



LOPAKHIN -THE CHERRY ORCHARD by Anton Chekhov

I bought it! I bought it! One moment! wait! if you would, ladies and gentlemen! My head's going round and round, I can't speak!

(Laughs).

So now the cherry orchard is mine! Mine!

(He gives a shout of laughter)

Great God in heaven - the cherry orchard is mine! Tell me I'm drunk - I'm out of my mind - tell me it's all an illusion! Don't laugh at me! If my father and grandfather could rise from their graves and see it all happening - if they could see me, their Yermolay, their beaten, half-literate Yermolay, who ran barefoot in winter - if they could see this same Yermolay buying the estate! The most beautiful thing in the entire world! I have bought the estate where my father and grandfather were slaves, where they weren't even allowed into the kitchens. I'm asleep - this is all just inside my head - a figment of the imagination. Hey, you in the band! Play away! I want to hear you! Everyone come and watch Yermolay Lopakhin set about the cherry orchard with his axe! Watch these trees come down! Weekend houses, we'll build weekend houses, and our grandchildren and our great grandchildren will see a new life here! Music! Let's hear the band play! Let's have everything the way I want it. Here comes the new landlord, the owner of the cherry orchard!



CORNELIUS - THE MATCHMAKER by Thornton Wilder

Isn't the world full of wonderful things. There we sit cooped up in Yonkers for years and years and all the time wonderful people like Mrs Molloy are walking around in New York and we don't know them at all. I don't know whether - from where you're sitting - you can see - well, for instance, the way

(Pointing to the edge of his right eye)

her eye and forehead and cheek come together, up here. Can you? And the kind of fireworks that shoot out of her eyes all the time. I tell you right now: a fine woman is the greatest work of God. You can talk all you like about Niagara Falls and the Pyramids; they aren't in it at all. Of course, up there at Yonkers they came into the store all the time, and bought this and that, and I said "Yes, ma'am", and "That'll be seventy-five cents, ma'am"; and I watched them. But today I've talked to one, equal-to-equal, equal-to-equal, and to the finest one that ever existed, in my opinion. They're so different from men! Everything that they say and do is so different that you feel like laughing all the time.

(He laughs)

Golly, they're different from men. And they're awfully mysterious, too. You never can be really sure what's going on in their heads. They have a kind of wall around them all the time - of pride and a sort of play-acting: I bet you could know a woman a hundred years without ever being really sure whether she liked you or not. This minute I'm in danger. I'm in danger of losing my job and my future and everything that people think is important; but I don't care. Even if I have to dig ditches for the rest of my life, I'll be a ditch-digger who once had a wonderful day.



BIFF - DEATH OF A SALESMAN by Arthur Miller

Now hear this, Willy, this is me. You know why I had no address for three months? I stole a suit in Kansas City and I was jailed. I stole myself out of every good job since high school. And I never got anywhere because you blew me so full of hot air I could never stand taking orders from anybody! That's whose fault it is! It's goddamn time you heard that! I had to be boss big shot in two weeks, and I'm through with it! Willy! I ran down eleven flights with a pen in my hand today. And suddenly I stopped, you hear me? And in the middle of that office building, do you hear this? I stopped in the middle of that building and I saw - the sky. I saw the things that I love in the world. The work and the food and the time to sit and smoke. And I looked at the pen and said to myself, what the hell am I grabbing this for? Why am I trying to become what I don't want to be? What am I doing in an office, making a contemptuous, begging fool of myself, when all I want is out there, waiting for me the minute I say I know who I am! Why can't I say that, Willy? Pop! I'm a dime a dozen, and so are you! I am not a leader of men, Willy, and neither are you. You were never anything but a hard-working drummer who landed in the ash-can like all the rest of them! I'm one dollar an hour, Willy! I tried seven states and couldn't raise it! A buck an hour! Do you gather my meaning? I'm not bringing home any prizes any more, and you're going to stop waiting for me to bring them home! Pop, I'm nothing! I'm nothing, Pop. Can't you understand that? There's no spite in it any more. I'm just what I am, that's all. Will you let me go, for Christ's sake? Will you take that phoney dream and burn it before something happens?



CHOPPER - CHOPPER by Andrew Dominik

So, am I? Am I charged with this? Oooh, shit. So that's it? I mean, like, what? Am I, how do you call, flavour of the month or something? What's going on here? Are you just gonna bloody get me on popular opinion or something? I don't know this bloke, Mr Downie. I've never, never seen his face. I wouldn't know that bloke right? Was he young, the bloke who got shot? What? He was young. Young then, was he? What? What are you writing everything down for?

(Indicating the photo)

That's not me, mate; I got no interest in that sort of thing. You know that. Mr Downie, you know -you know how I work. Right? We go back - I know you got nothing personal against me and, and! I mean perish the thought I should do something like that. I mean, look.

(Indicating the photo)

Fuck! Do you reckon I shot this bloke? Seriously? Like, in your heart? I mean, in your heart? Oh mate!. if you think that, right? Well, I'm buggered then, aren't I? Oh, fuck. I mean!. how can you think that?

(Beat)

Well, of course I shot the prick. If you knew the cunt you'd shoot him too. I did the prick a favour. Hey? Dontcha think so? Last week it was, 'Neville who?'. This week he's a criminal superstar. The bloke what Chopper shot, number whatever.

(Laughs)

Yes, well, he's still got one perfectly good leg and that's more than enough for him.

(Beat)

Well, it's a disgrace what's going on out here, all these bloody wogs and dagos and assorted Third World fuckin' yellow people and they're getting around in Mercedes Benz.

(Beat)

If you walked into

(Indicating photo)

Neville Bartos, biggest heroin dealer in the western suburbs, you could walk into his house - If you saw! a turd sitting on his lounge room floor! it wouldn't be the first dirty thing you noticed. I mean these blokes: they live like animals. Like pigs. These aren't people - You don't fuckin' care about (lifting up photo of Bartos) Would you invite that bloke into your home? I mean, perish the thought you'd have him in your home. They've got no right to their money and I've got no money, so bugger them.



BLAKE - GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS screenplay by David Mamet

Let me have your attention for a moment! So you're talking about what? You're talking about, bitching about that sale you shot, some son of a bitch that doesn't want what you're selling, some broad you're trying to screw and so forth. Let's talk about something important. Put that coffee down! Coffee's for closers only. Do you think I'm fucking with you? I am not fucking with you. I'm here from downtown. I'm here from Mitch and Murray. And I'm here on a mission of mercy. Your name's Levene? You call yourself a salesman, you son of a bitch? You don't wanna listen to this? You certainly don't pal. 'Cause the good news is - you're fired. The bad news is you've got, all you got, just one week to regain your jobs, starting tonight. Starting with tonight's sit. Oh, have I got your attention now? Good. 'Cause we're adding a little something to this month's sales contest. As you all know, first prize is a Cadillac Eldorado. Anyone want to see second prize? Second prize's a set of steak knives. Third prize is you're fired. You get the picture? You're laughing now? You got leads. Mitch and Murray pay good money. Get their names to sell them! You can't close the leads you're given, you can't close shit, you ARE shit, hit the bricks pal and beat it 'cause you are going out!! (Hears something) 'The leads are weak.' Fucking leads are weak? You're weak. I've been in this business fifteen years. (And something else) What's my name? FUCK YOU, that's my name!!! You know why, Mister? 'Cause you drove a Hyundai to get here tonight, I drove a eighty thousand dollar BMW. That's my name!! And your name is "you're waiting." And you can't play in a man's game. You can't close them. And you go home and tell your wife your troubles. Because only one thing counts in this life! Get them to sign on the line which is dotted! You hear me, you fucking faggots?



ROBERT - NIGHT LETTERS by Susan Rogers and Chris Drummond

I've cancelled the cooking course. And my German. It's all pointless. I feel like a scaly bag of filth. People can smell death. I'm an affront. If I go out there, they'll sniff at me. Know I'm rotting. And the terrible thing is I've never felt more alive in my life. Every sound, every flicker of movement, every skerrick of meaning in every word, I hear it, I see it. When you touch me, I feel it. It's like a cut. Like I've lost three layers of skin. And I don't want you to touch me and I do want you to touch me. And I want your love and I don't want you to love me. And it's all unbearable. I don't want to go out there and I do want to go out there. And I want everything that's out there and I want to dance and I want to make love and I want to sing and I want to be humiliated and I want to feel. And I want it now. Because now I know I can't have it.



DOWNNS - THE LIBERTINE by Stephen Jeffreys

To become a wit, a blade, a spark. The very word, spark, hot slinter of fashion to scorch the town and burn it to the ground. There was never another way for me. I live for the cocky swagger: toss the head, grind the loins and gob the pavings. What though they had kept me two years at my Cambridge Latin, learning to parse and wrangle, I came to London bent on cutting a figure with the hot boys. A lecherous leer to the traffic and a stamp of the boot on the alehouse floor: I lived for these Friday night gestures and thought they would satisfy until till I was twenty - five and in my grave. But to be part of the merry gang, for Billy Downs to hang on the coats-tails of my Lord Rochester and the Earl of Dorset, such a thing stood several leagues beyond my dreams and cling to their companionship like an old toper to his pottle. My mother writes to me, asks what I am doing in this dreadful town. I cannot reply, for there is no setting down with ink and paper that I drink till I'm sick, mump and quarrel till I duel and wench till I am slapped or satisfied. I am the youngest of three brothers. The eldest has the estate and the second is a canting priest. Between them they have done me out of wealth and piety. There is nothing left to me but spark, so spark I shall. Today we jolly forth to the Epsom races, and though my jerkin has not the force of my companions' top coats, yet I keep my end up with a clutch of lively sallies and modern curses that fan the fading embers of their youth.



ROCHESTER - THE LIBERTINE by Stephen Jeffreys

Allow me to be frank at the commencement: you will not like me. No, I say you will not. The gentlemen will be envious and the ladies will be repelled. You will not like me now and you will like me a good deal less as we go on. Oh yes, I shall do things you will like. You will say that was a noble impulse in him' or He played a brave part there,' but DO NOT WARM TO ME, it will not serve. When I become a BIT OF A CHARMER that is your danger sign for it prefaces the change into THE FULL REPTILE a few seconds later. What I require is not your affection but your attention. I must not be ignored or you will find me a troublesome a package as ever pissed in the Thames. Now. Ladies. An announcement.

(He looks around.)

I am up for it. All the time. That's not a boast. Or an opinion. It is bone hard medical fact. I put it around, d'y know? And you will watch me putting it around and sigh for it. Don't. It is a deal of trouble for you and you are better off watching and drawing your conclusions from a distance than you would be if I got my tarse pointing up your petticoats. Gentlemen. (He looks around.) Do not despair, I am up for that as well. When the mood is on me. And the same warning applies. Now, gents: if there be vizards in the house, jades, harlots (as how could there not be) leave them be for the moment. Still your cheesy erections till I have had my say. But later when you shag - and later you will shag, I shall expect it of you and I will know if you have let me down - I wish you to shag with my homuncular image rattling in your gonads. Feel how it was for me, how it is for me and ponder. Was that shudder the same shudder he sensed? Did he know something more profound? Or is there some wall of wretchedness that we all batter with our heads at that shinning, livelong moment.' That is it. That is my prologue, nothing in rhyme, certainly no protestations of modesty, you were not expecting that I trust. I reiterate only for those who have arrived late or were buying oranges or were simply not listening: I am John Wilmot, Second Earl of Rochester and I do not want you to like me.



BRYAN - THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES by Joanna Murray-Smith

I think most of us fellas probably have no idea just how good women are at doing a hundred darn things at once. Sometimes I look at Tess and she's feeding Rosie and, stirring the dinner and on the phone and folding the laundry and throwing something at Tom and, and sobbing, all at once, and I think, gee whiz, what I do out there in the so called real world amounts to pretty much nothing compared to her and no one thanks her for it, no one thanks her for the fact that she's raising the next generation of humankind.

(Building with increasing feeling to the point of a Presidential address)

However tiring my work is, and sometimes I'm doing seventeen-hour days, at least it's out there in the world, part of the ebb and flow of global currents. And Tess back home is trapped in this little micro world of domesticity and its the tinyness of it, the banality of it, which is so exhausting because it's simultaneously the most important job in the world and the most invisible.

(Reaching a crescendo)

These women are heroines. And in their own way, in charting the mystery of new lives, they are society's Amelia Earharts. They are the great adventurers and by gosh, they're doing it for all of us.



DOUGLAS - EUROPE by Michael Gow

What a great place. This area's like something out of Thomas Mann or Kafka. God it's exciting being in Europe. So alive, isn't it? So! pulsating. I've had a great morning. I saw your Roman mosaic. Went on a tour of that poet's house. Had a look at the inn where whasisname wrote his opera. And I went to this great exhibition at the big gallery. There's some amazing things in there. Stuff I knew quite well. And that altar they've got! But there was this performance art thing. Incredible! There was this big pool full of fish, carp, I don't know, and this guy, nothing on, you were right, with all these crucifixes and beads in his hair, wading through the water, dragging this little raft behind him; he had the rope in his teeth. On the raft was this pile of animal innards with candles sticking out of it. Then these other people dressed as astronauts and red Indians ran round and round the pond screaming and then they lit this fire and threw copies of the Mona Lisa into it. And then, I don't know how they did it but the water turned bright red. Just incredible. You must see it. It's great being here. Everything's so exciting. I've been keeping everything I get. Every little item, every bus ticket, gallery ticket, the train tickets. Every postcard. Every coaster from every bar, every café.



RAY - DEAD HEART by Nick Parsons

(Interrupting)

No! No! No! Don't give me that bullshit. That spooky Aboriginal bullshit. I don't want to hear it; I don't want to know. Christ. Time was the man was dead and that was it. A man was just a man. Now they follow you round. If he's dead he should be in the ground: in the cold fucking ground; he should be ! growing into something else, not ! crawling out and trailing you with his long rope hangin' off him. That's not ! the way it's done. I won't stand for it. I've worked for people. I've tried to make ! They gotta learn to be whitefellas!

(Tapping his head)

Up here. That's what the world is. You know that Dave; You - you seen it. Tribal way is finished; it doesn't have a chance, and Poppy is not gunna drag this on and on and on till every last young fella's drunk himself to death or ! strung himself up because he doesn't know what he is any more. And some poor fuckwit walks out the station and sees that ! see that ! that thing ! hangin' there and !and carries it round for the rest of his life. I'm telling you: Poppy is going down for what he's done. I've got something on him and he's going down.

(Pause)

I try and think of him ! like he was, you know? Like on the footy field or something. But I can't see his face any more; it's all got ! sucked out somehow. All I can see is a ! black tongue hangin' out. Swollen up. Nothing else will come, you know? That's all that's left. Of him. In my head. A black ! tongue.



BRIT IN NEW YORK - STUFF HAPPENS by David Hare

'America changed.' That's what we're told. 'On September 11th everything changed.' 'If you're not American, you can't understand.' The infantile psychobabble of popular culture is grafted opportunistically onto America's politics. The language of childish entitlement becomes the lethal rhetoric of global wealth and privilege. Asked how you are as President, on the first day of a war which will kill around thirty thousand people: 'I feel good.' I was in Saks Fifth Avenue the morning they bombed Baghdad. 'Isn't it wonderful?' says the saleswoman. 'At last we're hitting back.' 'Yes,' I reply. 'At the wrong people. Somebody steals your handbag, so you kill their second cousin, on the grounds they live close. Explain to me,' I say, 'Saudi Arabia is financing Al Qaeda. Iran, Lebanon and Syria are known to shelter terrorists. North Korea is developing a nuclear weapons programme. All these you leave alone. No, you go to war with the one place in the region admitted to have no connection with terrorism.' 'You're not American,' says the saleswoman. 'You don't understand.' Oh, a question, then. If 'You're not American. You don't understand' is the new dispensation, then why not 'You're not Chechen'? Are the Chechens also now licensed? Are Basques? Theatres, restaurants, public squares? Do Israeli milk-bars filled with women and children become fair game on the grounds that 'You don't understand. We're Palestinian, we're Chechen, we're Irish, we're Basque'? If the principle of international conduct is now to be that you may go against anyone you like on the grounds that you've been hurt by somebody else, does that apply to everyone? Or just to America? On September 11th, America changed. Yes. It got much stupider.



STEVE - THE RETURN by Reg Cribb

No, no, no! ya can't turn back now. I'm startin' to see you as the voice of a very misunderstood section of our society. But you know! there's a million of me gettin' round, mate. And they'll all tell ya they had a tough life. You know, beaten up by their dad, in trouble with the cops, pisshead mum, rough school. A million fuckin' excuses why they turned out to be bad eggs. And I got all of the above! Oh yeah! Truth is, most of em are just bored. They leave their shit-ass state school and live on the dole in their diddly bumfuck nowhere suburb. Before ya know it, ya got some girl up the duff and no money. She spends the day with a screamin' sprog and a fag in her mouth plonked in front of a daytime soap wearin' her tracky daks all day, dreamin' of bein' swept away by some Fabio and she just gets! fatter. But! her Centrelink payments have gone up and all her fat friends are waitin' in line behind her! It's a career move for em. Gettin' up the duff. And you! drink with ya mates, watch the footy and the highlight of the week is the local tavern has a skimpy barmaid every Friday. And ya know the rest of the world is havin' a better time. Ya just know it. The magazines are tellin' ya that, the newspapers, the telly. Everybody's richer, everybody's more beautiful, and everybody's got more! purpose. And ya thinkin', how do I make sense of this dog-ass life? And the one day ya just get hold of a gun. Ya don't even know what ya gonna do with it. It's like the sound of a V8 in the distance. It takes ya! somewhere else.

(Pause)

I didn't see ya writin' any of this down. I'm spillin' my guts out in the name of art and you don't give a shit. What sort of writer are ya?

UP THE LADDER by Roger Bennett

Johnny

When I stare into the mirror I keep asking myself over and over and over, "What's wrong with me?" I got no horns growing out of my head. I got no big tail growing out of my moum.

What's wrong with me, Mum...? Why do some white fullas stare at me and abuse me with so much feeling of hatred in their voices? Why are things this way?

Burke and Wills, they didn't have to die the way they did. They only had to ask. Very strange...

I don't know, Mum. I just keep moving and searching, hoping that one day I might find a place that suits me. I never used to hate, but now I seen a lot more of this country and the treatment of us blackfullas, I start to get sick and want to spew up everything inside me.

I keep thinking of Mick's death and tears come to my eyes. He was like a brother to me, Mum. I know he was troublesome at times and did things on the spur of the moment. But the frustration that builds up like an animal in a cage...with no way out. What Mick did was like a key to the door that gave him a sense of freedom...It was his way of saying, "Let me go...let me go!" When I heard the coppers found him hanging by his shirt in the cell I felt a hundred years pass by me. I cried all week. Mick was part of me...a part of my life just seemed to have shriveled up and died. He was my friend and brother. I loved him.

SLAVE PLAY By Jeremy O. Harris

Gary

She said speak from aggression.

And I've expelled

All of it.

I'm done.

To speak to you from aggression
would mean to speak to you like I care.

And I don't.

I don't give a fuck anymore.

I don't even know if I like you.

I just know that whatever love I have for you
is the only reason I'm even talking
to you right now.

Because I just want to crawl into myself and disappear for a
good little while.

I feel stupid.

"I refuse to dignify that."

How dare you?
"I refuse to dignify that."
I'm so fucking stupid.
So
fucking
Stupid.
For almost a decade I've given myself over
to someone who doesn't dignify me
who acts like he's the prize
and I'm the lucky recipient.
No motherfucker I'm the prize.
Always have been, always will be.
Somehow I forgot that.
Or I never knew that.
How could I?
Got so wrapped in you
That I forgot myself
because when someone presents themselves as a prize
you receive them as one.
And when we met
nobody but my mama had ever told me I was a prize.
And nobody had ever
thought I deserved to receive one.
But then one day there you were
on the train.
Your little beige belly poking out
and your eyes staring at me from behind a script
like you were saying:
"This is a gift just for you if you're willing to take it."
And I did.
And I loved it.
Because we were babies
And receiving your gift felt like
a type of reciprocation
like you were receiving me as a gift too.
But you weren't.
You never did.

A MANUAL OF TRENCH WARFARE By Clem Gorman

MOON

There was this ... I was in a long line of soldiers, we were some sort of unit, we went

behind enemy lines and we attacked a command post in a school building. Then we retreated through some small paddocks and bush. We stayed too long in one place, I dunno why, and they ... were spotted by the enemy, and they came toward us in big trucks with huge lights on them, on the front of them. They lit us up. We decided to make a stand and die, so with light hearts we attacked the enemy. To our surprise we shot many enemy soldiers and we weren't hit ourselves. I seen two big, strong, healthy young enemies: they was full of life and vigour, running towards a position, a sort o' trench, you know. With two shots I cut them down. The second one, a bloody great hole in his chest, he didn't want to die; he cried out 'Oh, no!' and sank slowly to the ground, staring across at me. Then, without his rifle, he came at me, and though I shot him many more times, and I saw the bullets go into him, he did not fall. I became terrified, though he was obviously unable to harm me. Finally I shot him in the head at point blank range. This stopped him; but still only slowly.

[There is silence.]

You can kill a man and it feels like nothing. But afterwards ...

MICHAEL SWORDFISH By Lachlan Philpott

MATT

Holidays and I see Shannon heaps. She makes lots of plans. Shannon is really pretty and I love a lot of things about her.

Yeah I mean love.

Her hair.

Shannon's smell. It's kind of sweet and when I get close to her it makes me feel like I am some weird insect that can't stay away from her.

I love her lips.

They're soft and full and pink and I love love love love love love her tits. I mean they drive me totally mad, I just want to like do this all day. Her ears are like little shells you'd find on a beach in the Barbados.

I love the look she gets on her face when she's concentrating but this is the problem. That look... it never stays for long. Because Shannon has to look at her phone. So she will try something for about ten seconds before she stops and has to check her Phone.

Shannon is like addicted to her phone. And because I spend so much time with her, it means I've enabled her addiction, become addicted to it too. But tonight I'm sick of the feed about Michael. All the rumors and the likes and the shares. I just want to turn it all off. I try to tell Shannon this when we meet, I ask like do you really need to be on your phone right now and she kind of laughs and rolls her eyes and says No Dad.

The movie takes forever to start, and Shannon keeps checking her phone as she shoves popcorn into her mouth. Five minutes later all the popcorns gone, and I know the movie's gonna suck. It is a remake of some film that sucked in the first place.

The movie finishes and the phones come back out and as we walk out Shannon is sending a message to someone as she's repeating one of the lines that Jennifer Lawrence said and then she puts her phone in her pocket and waits.

Finally. Finally, she's put her phone away. Then she just looks at me and asks:
Do you have something you want to say to me?

What?

This isn't working for me Matt.

Huh?

We are there in the cinema foyer on a Saturday night surrounded by boyfriends and girlfriends.

I want to break it off with you.

It is the most undramatic breakup. Shannon doesn't even cry. As she turns her phone back on, she says:

Expressing myself is the most important thing to me. Why do you want to take that away from me? I already have a Dad.

ANIMAL KINGDOM A film by David Michod

Leckie

You know what the bush is about? It's about massive trees that've been standing for thousands of years and bugs that'll be dead before the minute's out. It's big trees and pissy little bugs. The way it works, if we were standing here a few million years ago, maybe the whole forest'd be full of impractical animals and soft juicy plants that animals eat like ice cream. But that was never gonna work, now it's about superefficient animals and hard thorny plants and everything knows it's place in the scheme of things. Everything sits in the order somewhere. Things survive because they're strong and everything reaches an understanding.

But not everything survives because it's strong. Some creatures are weak but they survive because they're protected by the strong. For one reason or other. You might think, because of the circles you've been moving in or whatever, that you're a strong creature. But you're not. You're one of the weak creatures. And that's nothing against you. You're weak because you're young. You've survived because you've been protected by the strong. But they aren't strong anymore and they certainly aren't protecting you.(beat) You feel like you're in a tough situation. But you have an out. There's nothing your uncles can do to squirm out of this. Craig's learnt it the hard way. But you're not one of them. You know that.(beat)They're telling you talking to me is betraying your family, but they've betrayed you.You're out here dealing with us right now. That's all the proof you need. And you're in danger. Don't be confused about it. I think you know. And I think you know I can help you. But I can't keep offering. You gotta decide. You gotta work out where you fit.

MILO By Ned Manning

Toby

I never dreamt... never in a thousand years. I've seen other people go under and I've

always thought we could survive. I always knew we could pull through. And I... I just can't accept that we won't.

I was born on the Western Plains. Its my country and don't tell me it isn't. I know all about the history but I'm not talking about that, I'm talking about us. Four generations of our family. How could I leave it? I can't watch Yallaroy go under, it'd be like... like watching yourself drown. Its like my guts are being dragged out of me.

I love that place... riding out on that stupid mongrel of a horse, just me and the dogs... so peaceful and so, I dunno... at times it's even... (beautiful). Flat and dry to everyone else but to me its... All the pasture we've put in, all the clearing, the hours we dragged rocks and shit away, ploughing, twelve-hour shifts getting bogged and I feel... proud. Because its our country, its Murray country. Wherever I look I see the old man and my grandfather and his father and I think of them clearing all that scrub country. I look at the big scribbly barks and the river oaks. I watch the sheep huddling under them and I think of how smart they were to clear so selectively. You're not the first person to talk about conservation, Milo. There's people who've stuffed this country all right but don't you fucking well forget about the ones who've looked after it either. All I ever done is work me bloody guts out. It breaks my fuckin' heart... and I just can't handle it that it's me... who's fucked up! Yallaroy is, is everything, it's everything that I... I love. I've, I've let the whole bloody shooting match go down the gurgler... Christ almighty what am I going to do?

GOODBYE CHARLES By Gabriel Davis

The Fact Checker

I'm not the kind of guy who spends hundreds on a last minute flight, back to New York, tears across town, then run up six flights of stairs and knocks on my best friend's girlfriend's door in order to run off and elope with her based on one crazy, thoughtless, inexplicable romantic night.

So what am I doing here, Audrey? I'm not passionate. I'm a fact checker for Christ's sake. And the fact of me – being here – doesn't check out. It's nuts! Soul mates? I don't believe in them. Never have. So how can I be yours? The fact is, you hardly know me! And I hardly know you!

Now your boyfriend, I've known since kindergarten. Am I really willing to throw all those years of friendship away based on...what? Some feeling?

Because the fact is you are in a relationship. Because the fact is we just met yesterday. Because the fact is I'm not the kind of guy who falls in love. That's a fact. A cold hard fact. And facts are supposed to be true.

But the problem is....despite every fact I can muster, there's something that still doesn't check out. Because the truth is despite all facts to the contrary...I still love you madly. And it just defies all reason. All morality. All sense. But I do. I love you madly. And it's not like me. And I don't want to. But I can't help it.



A LIE OF THE MIND By Sam Shepard

Frankie

Look — I don't know why it is but nobody around here will make an effort to try and get me outa here. How come that is? My brother — I've got a brother with a real short fuse. He gets weird ideas in his head. It doesn't take much to tip him over the edge. Now I've been here way too long. Way, way past the time I was supposed to get back. And he's gonna start gettin' the wrong idea about me and your daughter. I mean, your daughter is his wife. You know that, don't ya? I mean I suppose you know that but it's hard to tell anymore if anybody knows anything about anybody else around here. Like her, for instance. Your daughter. She is getting very strange with me. Very strange. I mean she started talkin' to me like I was him. Like I was my brother. To her, I mean. Like she thought I was him and not me. Your daughter. Beth. I mean I don't even know if she knows who I am anymore but—she thinks—she thinks her brother—your son and you, in fact—even you—she includes you in this too—she thinks you and him, your son and you, are somehow responsible for taking her brain out. For removing her brain and meanwhile—MEANWHILE—I AM STUCK HERE TRYING TO GET BACK HOME! AND NOBODY IS MAKING ANY EFFORT TO HELP ME!

If I die on you here—If I die, you're gonna be in big trouble, mister. You and everybody else in this family.

THE LONE STAR By James McLure

Roy

In the spring of nineteen hundred and sixty-one I took Edith Ellen Hyde out in that car a' mine. Took her parkin' out to Thompson's Road. That was the night I looked up her dress. Up until then I had no idea what life was all about.

[Pause.]

We kissed and kissed till we got half way good at it. Then she took off her shirt.

[Pause.]

That was the first nipple I'd had in my mouth since Mom's. But nipples are like bicycles: once you learn you never forget how. Finally we got the windows all steamed up, and I couldn't wait. Got the car to smell like the smell of a woman and I just had to see it. Edith Ellen didn't want me to see it. Said it was bad enough me touchin' it without wantin' to look at it. She even tried to scare me. Said it looked God awful. But she couldn't talk me out of it. I was a man with a mission. So I scooted over and scrunched down under the steerin' column like this and she lifted up her skirt and I lit a match like that. And I looked at the damn thing.

[Pause.]

And y'know, y'wonder what the first explorer felt. The first explorer that climbed over that hill and saw-stretched out before him, in all its God glory—the Grand Canyon. Well,

that's what I felt when Edith Ellen Hyde lifted her skirt and said, 'here it is', I looked, and it was AWE INSPIRING. I felt like Adam. I felt like the man who discovered the Grand Canyon.

