

Contemporary

2022 Performing Arts Intake - Monologues
Arts Academy

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All Souls by Daniel Keene

Angela:

We live... the way we understand things. We got no choice, have we?
What we don't know, we don't. And the things we do understand...
who knows if they're right or not? No one can tell us. No one...

[pause]

When I was a kid I used to think that when stars got very old they
fell out of the sky. I thought they fell out of the sky and into the sea
and that's what a starfish was. One night, one of them hot summer
nights when mum and dad would take us down to the beach to get
the cool breeze of the water, I found a starfish, just layin' in the
shallows. I took it home with me, and I didn't tell anyone I had it. I'd
take it out into the yard at night and I'd hold it, real tight, and I'd
look up in the sky where I thought it had come from and it was like I
was holding a piece of the sky.

[pause]

And I'd wish, I'd make a wish for ... for whatever it was I most
wanted. And sometimes I got what I wished for, and sometimes I
didn't. But I always believed that starfish was a star out of the sky.

[pause]

When my mum died... I took it outside, in the backyard. With her
still lying in her room. And I held that starfish and I wished my
mother wasn't dead. I held the starfish so tight it smashed to pieces
in my hand. My hand was bleeding.

[pause]

I saw you that night, it seems so long ago, I went around to your
place and you asked me what had happened to my hand... and I told
you I broke a glass... and you kissed my hand, and there was blood
on your lips.

[pause]

I'll never forget that...

The Matchmaker by Thornton Wilder

Cornelius:

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.

Vital Signs by Jane Martin

Daughter:

This isn't fat, mother, this is bloom. The bloom on the rose. This is the radiance you read about in your two hundred romance novels a week. Don't look down on the carpet. I'm not on the carpet mother. I'm here in the kitchen next to the refrigerator. You caught me, sheriff! Two in the morning but you sniffed me out! I'm the Sarah-Lee bandido. The Che Guevara of Haagen-Daaz ice cream. By day my name is Nutra-Slim but come sunset, I rip the calorie counter from my heart, I trample grapefruit and carrot sticks and celery beneath my Nike Air Cross-Trainers and I expand. I fill with cholesterol like a deranged zeppelin. I inhale cheesecake. I eat graham crackers box and all. Bits of packaged ham and pepperoni flake my disordered hair. My fangs drip butter almond swirl. And with my eyes rolled back in my head I crash through the wall into your pristine, chintz, unendurably perfect bedroom and fling myself on you screaming "this is me mother! This is your nightmare daughter you patronizing, priggish, punishing, unforgiving cancer of my life!"

The Call by Patricia Cornelius

Denise:

This mother thing sucks. I hated it right from the start. Complete strangers came up and patted my belly as if it was going to bring them luck. And after the birth, which was fucking torture, mad people cooed and gurgled and talked in high-pitched voices. They smiled at me and expected me to smile back. Like, what the fuck! It's this 'You've got a little baby' stuff.

I go crazy while she sleeps in her cot and you're at work and my friends have got a life and I'm on my own and I think, 'Jesus Christ, what have I done. How in hell am I going to get through this?'

I push her in her pram to the shops because I've run out of baby wipes. I push her to the shops to buy disposable nappies and spend my last fifteen bucks. I push her to the shops because I can't think of anywhere else to push her. Sometimes I think if I leave her there someone nicer might come and get her and it'd be much much better.

I meet with other mothers and I pray to fucking God that I don't look like them, or sound like them, or am like them. They tell me how smart their kid is, how early she talked, or walked. How their three-month-old baby is reading Shakespeare. And I look down at my fat little bald baby sucking on her dummy and I think, 'Oh, that's funny because mine's as thick as a brick'.

This mother thing is weird. I'm bored. I'm lonely. And it doesn't stop.

School of Rock

Music by Andrew Lloyd Webber; Lyrics by Glenn Slater; Script by Julian Fellowes

Dewey:

OK. OK. Everybody sit down, I will explain everything.

Welcome to Parents' Night! Hello, I am Ned Schneeibly, Mrs. Dunham's substitute.

Look. Over the last few weeks I've gotten to know your kids. Your kids. Zack. You say that he isn't smart. Are you crazy? He's an incredible guitarist and mind. You should hear him play. He's the next Hendrix. Freddy and Katie can jam with the best of them. But more importantly, since they picked up these instruments, they have grown so much. I've seen it! They're great, great kids.

(To Mrs. Turner)

You! You say Lawrence plays keyboards all day. Well why shouldn't he?! He's insane! He's going to go down in the rock record books. Marcy and Shonelle have the voices of angels. I worship every note that comes out of their mouths. And Tomika? Tomika is a star. And don't even get me started on Summer. Summer will be the first woman President of the United States.

The truth is, they are all really cool kids. If they were mine, I'd be so proud. I am proud.

Summer of the Aliens by Louis Nowra

Dulcie:

Angels hover in the air like dragonflies. Like this. Now I have no wings. Angels have to think of them and then they imagine having them and there is a feeling, like it must be when boys get stiff, a growing from the shoulders. Two wings on either shoulders. But they don't look like wings at first, they look like buds, white buds, Then slowly, like a flower, they slowly open, breaking through the angels' clothes. Real slow, unfolding like in a dreamtime. And then they open out, like my wings. They begin to float testing new, unnamed muscles. Then they're like a bird flying, break free of the ground. I begin to rise. Above you. Higher, higher, like a cloud, my body feels light as a cloud. I begin speaking but my voice has changed, it's as loud as a scream, softer than a whisper. I speak like an angel. My speech sounds like this. [She presses her lips against his hands and says the one phrase over and over.] I am saying something secret to you in angel talk.

The Call by Patricia Cornelius

Gary:

(Gary peers through the mesh of a cage. It's unclear if he's inside the cage or out.)

Gary: If I think of what I was like, of that man, Gary, it's like he was in another life, another time, in a bad dream. It was as if he was made up, put together, shaped from paper mache or clay. There's only the finest thread that connects him and me. He knew...knew is too strong. He sensed there was something else. He caught hold of the thread of it before it was too late, he grabbed it and knew that he must never let it go. When he looked at the moon and it was full, when he heard a bird call, when he smelt something he couldn't trace sometimes, when he touched something fine, he sensed there was more. I stepped out of Gary, I shed him like an old coat, I stepped out a new and finer man, a man who wants things, who wants to live life, to be part of something larger than himself. I heard the call. I'd been waiting for it for a long time. And finally, finally it came. I promised myself to be open, to new adventures, to be willing to go where most would be terrified to go. I promised myself to be ready, for new experiences, to try anything, wear new clothes, taste foods I'd never known, travel exotic places, hear languages new to my ear. I was ready to endure the heat or cold, to forget about comfort, to find something to fight for, something to believe in, to believe in so completely and worth dying for. What else could a man want for?

Atlanta by Joanna Murray-Smith

Grace:

I remember that sensation when Jack's touch felt like an electric current and love just meant such strangeness. In the grip of it, you're trying to work it out, work out what makes love happen and it never becomes clear. Getting close, close inside the head, that's what makes me fall. I hated the way he ate, he held his knife like a pencil. I hated the way he tapped his finger on any available surface. I hated the way he pronounced cerebral and the fact that it was clearly a new word in his vocabulary that he was using much too often. And the more ugly things I knew about Jack, the more I loved him. He became so real. I knew we'd have to end up fucking because, Christ!, we'd been inside everywhere else, inside each other's minds and souls and nervous systems and brains. There was nowhere else to go!

You wouldn't believe how inexperienced Jack was back then... in the loveliest way... The first time we went to bed his body was just shaking uncontrollably. We didn't fuck, we just lay there holding each other, just lying there. It wiped away all the significance, all the meaning of all those words. He just shook and shook.

The Crucible by Arthur Miller

Mary Warren:

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

Still Waiting by Alexandra Collier

Mad:

Good evening sir... Yes it's lovely to see... I'm well thank you and yourself?... Mmmm. What a shame... You'd like to order? Fish of the day. Excellent choice. (Beat) Blue Eye sir and it comes with chilli and – (Beat) Sure, just grilled then? Well they grill it sir. (Beat) The chef puts it on the grill... Ahh, it's from... somewhere... I think it's... (looks at other Waiter, hoping he'll tell her. He shrugs and walks off.) South? To be honest... Yes sir that is my job. Well as far as I know, down South, somewhere , there is a little man in a little boat – let's say Tasmania or somewhere near the sea ... And every morning this little man putts out into the ocean and casts his rod into the blue depths. And he waits. And then he feels it... a nibble, a tug... and he begins to reel in his rod, quickly now, and then out of the ocean (it's a miracle!) he yanks a FISH. The fish is angrily thrashing its tail back and forth. One minute it was swimming happily in its school, watching the sunlight filtered through the water and then there's a glint... (Pause. Lighting shifts so that Madeleine is spot lit) I swim towards the glint and open my mouth to taste this glinting morsel and suddenly there's a sharp pain, metal piercing through my lips, tugging... and I am being pulled up upwards towards a white square of light. And then I'm out of the water... into the dry air, and I'm swimming through space. Whacked onto the side of the boat. Stunned, flipping my tail in desperation. Blood is seeping into my mouth. I'm drowning on my own blood and... What? The steak. Of course. How would you like it done, sir?

A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder by Robert L Friedman

Monty:

Perhaps emboldened by the newfound knowledge of my heritage, I was compelled to make an attempt to connect with my Mother's kin. The Reverend Lord Ezekiel D'Ysquith was the one Parson in the family and I envisioned that he, more than anyone, might receive me with sympathy. (Turning to speak with the Reverend) Thank you for speaking to me and giving me a tour of your lovely cathedral, I'm afraid there's a great deal of family history I haven't been privy to. So, then, I may count on you, Lord Reverend? To put in a good word for me, with the D'Ysquiths? Perhaps with the Earl, himself? No? (desperate) Yes, it is a marvellous view, your lordship. Are you certain you couldn't make an exception, in this one case? For the sake of my charming Mother, your cousin? Or perhaps out of loyalty to my Grandfather, your childhood playmate? (frustrated) Have you no ... Christian charity, then? What was her great sin, after all? Only love! (worried – reaching out hand) Careful my lord you are close to the.... (realization strikes) no, nothing... please go on. (Reverend falls to his death) (Monty talks to audience dispassionately) The Reverend's death was ruled an accident. It was a windy day in Lincolnshire, rather typical for that time of year. And it was no secret among his flock that the Lord Reverend was prone to inebriation. Had he deserved it? I couldn't say he hadn't. What I did know for certain was that, in one moment, my life was now changed forever.

Ruben Guthrie by Brendan Cowell

Ruben:

School school school school school.

Fuck, um – well my parents sent me to a boarding school. I mean how hard is it to have one kid asleep at night in your house how hard is it but no . . . boarding school!

Look, I gotta say I wasn't like —this at boarding school, I didn't like getting smashed on rocket fuel and talking about vaginas, honestly I had no interest in Alcohol at all.

I spent my money on magazines and electronics – fashion mostly. By the time I reached Year Eight I had fifteen pairs of jeans.

So of course the rugby guys and the rowing guys and the wrestling guys would come in at night and they'd pin me down and get it out of their system – the rage.

—Nice shoes faggot – you got mousse in your hair let's put mousse in his anus!

I'd be flipping through MAD magazine and just put the thing down and take it. Fine.

But then this guy called Corey joined our school, and suddenly all that stopped.

Corey was older than me, bigger than me and a whole lot cooler than me. He drove a black Suzuki

Vitara had five earrings and the word 'Fuck' tattooed inside his lip. My mum was always saying

—bring Corey with you on the weekend and she'd go all flushed and wear low-cut tops in the kitchen.

To this day I don't know why he chose me but he did.

Kiss Me Like You Mean It by Chris Chibnall

Tony:

Listen... I need to... Um... Say... I mean... I know we only met earlier... And I nearly set you on fire... And we're both going out with people. Obviously that's quite tricky. But... Well... You are the most beautiful woman I have ever laid eyes on in my entire life. I saw you and my heart leapt. You make me want to change my life. To... participate. I know it's not possible and that you have a boyfriend and we're not compatible or whatever but... I just... I know it's stupid... but maybe just hear me out for a second and then you can tell me I'm an idiot and we'll both go back in and pretend this never happened but... I want to travel the world with you. I want to bring the ice-cold Amstel to your Greek shore. And sit in silence and sip with you. I want to go to Tesco's with you of a Sunday. Watch you sleep, scrub your back, rub your shoulders, suck your toes. I want to write crap poetry about you, lay my coat over puddles for you, always have a handkerchief available for you. I want to get drunk and bore my friends about you, I want them to phone up and moan about how little they see me because I'm spending so much time with you. I want to feel the tingle of our lips meeting, the lock of our eyes joining, the fizz of our fingertips touching. I want to touch your fat tummy and tell you you look gorgeous in maternity dresses, I want to stand next to you wide-eyed and hold my nose as we open that first used nappy, I want to watch you grow old and love you more and more each day. I want to fall in love with you. I think I could. And I think it would be good. And I want you to say yes. You might feel the same.

Beat.

Could you? Maybe?

The Cherry Orchard by Anton Chekhov

(Translated by Michael Frayn)

Trofimov:

All Russia is our orchard. The earth is broad and beautiful. There are many marvellous places. Think for a moment, Anya: your grandfather, your great-grandfather – all your forebears – they were the masters of serfs. They owned living souls. Can't you see human faces, looking out at you from behind every tree-trunk in the orchard – from every leaf and every cherry? Can't you hear their voices? The possession of living souls – it's changed something deep in all of you, hasn't it. So that your mother and you and your uncle don't even notice you're living on credit, at the expense of others – at the expense of people you don't allow past the front hall... We're two hundred years behind the times at least. We still have nothing – no properly defined attitude to the past. We just philosophise away, and complain about our boredom or drink vodka. But it's only too clear that to start living in the present we have to redeem our past – we have to break with it. And it can be redeemed only by suffering, only by the most unheard-of, unceasing labour. You must understand that, Anya.

Throw the keys down the well, and go. Be free as the wind.

Have faith in me, Anya! Have faith in me! I'm not thirty yet – I'm young – I'm still a student – but I've borne so much already! Every winter I'm hungry, sick and fearful, as poor as a beggar. And the places I've been to! The places where fate has driven me! And all the time, at every minute of the day and night, my soul has been filled with premonitions I can't explain or describe. I have a premonition of happiness, Anya. I can just see it now.

This is Our Youth by Kenneth Lonergan

Warren:

I don't really get what you're upset about. I thought we had a really good time together and I was actually in a fairly up state of mind for once.

Well, I didn't mean that in any kind of lascivious way, so I don't know why you want to take it like that. I really like you.

I'm sorry I said anything to Dennis. I definitely caved in to the peer pressure. But I also definitely said as little as possible and was totally respectful of you in the way I talked about you. Even though I was pretty excited about what happened last night, and also about like, maybe like, the prospect of like, I don't know, like going out with you – Which I would be very into, if you were. But if you want to think the whole meant nothing to me, then go ahead because that's not the case.

It's totally weird, like, taking all your clothes off and having sex with someone you barely know, and then being like "What's up now?" You know? Like it's such an intense experience but then nobody knows what to fuckin' say, even though nothing really bad actually happened. You know?

I really like you... I don't really agree with most of your opinions...but I don't meet a lot of people who can actually make me think, you know? And who can hold their own in an interesting discussion. And who I'm totally hot for at the same time. You know?

It's a fairly effective combination.

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 breathe 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.