

FEMALE AUDITION MONOLOGUES 2019-20

1 . THE CRUCIBLE, by Arthur Miller *The Crucible is based on the Salem Witch Trials and the hearings that took place to prosecute a great many innocent women accused of witchcraft. Set in colonial Massachusetts between February 1692 and May 1693, the town's inhabitants begin to turn against each other for their own manipulative reasons and in some cases to save themselves. In this moment, Mary is sharing fictional account of her interactions with another woman, whom she hopes will be tried for witchcraft as a result of her story.*

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!

2. A RAISIN IN THE SUN, by Lorraine Hansberry

This play focuses on the Youngers, an African-American family living on the South Side of Chicago in the 1950s. When the play begins, the family is about to receive an insurance check for \$10,000 from their deceased father's life insurance policy. Each member of the family has an idea as to what this money should be used for. Beneatha

tries to convince her brother and mother to use the money for her medical school tuition.

BENEATHA: When I was small... we used to take our sleds out in the wintertime and the only hills we had were the ice covered stone steps of some houses down the street. And we used to fill them in with snow and make them smooth and slide down them all day... and it was very dangerous, you know., far too steep... and sure enough one day a kid named Rufus came down too fast and hit the sidewalk and we saw his face just split open right there in front of us... And I remember standing there looking at his bloody open face thinking that was the end of Rufus. But the ambulance came and they took him to the hospital and they fixed the broken bones and sewed it all up... and the next time I saw Rufus he just had a little line down the middle of his face.... I never got over that... What one person could do for another, fix him up - sew up the problem, make him all right again. That was the most marvelous thing in the world... I wanted to do that. I always thought it was the one concrete thing in the world a human being could do. Fix up the sick, you know - and make them whole again. This was truly being God... It used to be so important to me. It used to matter. I used to care. Yes - I think [I stopped). Because it doesn't seem deep enough, close enough to what ails mankind! It was a child's way of seeing things - or an idealist's. You are still where I left off. You with all of your talk and dreams about Africa! You still think you can patch up the world. Cure the Great Sore of Colonialism - (loftily, mocking it) with the Penicillin of Independence - ! Independence and then what? What about the crooks and thieves and just plain idiots who will come into power and steal and plunder the same as before-only now they will be black and do it in the name of the new independence WHAT ABOUT THEM?

3. THE LITTLE FOXES, by Lillian Hellman

A home in the South, the spring of 1900. The Hubbard siblings, Ben, Horace and Regina, scheme to outwit each other in a business deal that could make them very wealthy. The brothers need \$75,000 to complete a cotton mill and they hope the money will come from Regina's ailing husband, Horace. He is set upon by his greedy wife and her greedy relatives. Soon realizing that the brothers have stolen bonds from him, he informs his wife that, in his will, he has left the bonds to her with stipulations. She cruelly recounts their unhappy married life, causing Horace's heart condition to act up, then refuses to get his medicine, which results in a heart attack that kills him. Alexandra, their 17 year old daughter, eventually sees her mother for who she really is, and in this final moment of the play, decides that she needs to leave her and the family for good.

ALEXANDRA: Mama, I'm not coming with you. I'm not going to Chicago. I mean what I

say with all my heart. There is nothing to talk about. I'm going away from you. Because I want to. Because I know Papa would want me to. Say it, Mama, say it. [Say no] And see

what happens. That would be foolish. It wouldn't work in the end. You only change your mind when you want to. And I won't want to. You couldn't [make me stay], Mama, because I want to leave here. As I've never wanted anything in my life before. Because I understand what Papa was trying to tell me. (Pause) All in one day; Addie said there were people who ate the earth and other people who stood around and watched them do it. And just now Uncle Ben said the same thing. Really, he said the same thing, Well, tell him for me, Mama, I'm not going to stand around and watch you do it. Tell him I'll be fighting as hard as he'll be fighting some place where people don't just stand around and watch. Are you afraid, Mama?

4. ELEEMOSYNARY, by Lee Blessing *This play examines the delicate relationship of three women: a grandmother, Dorothea, who has sought to exert her independence through strong willed eccentric behavior, Artie, her daughter, who has run from her overpowering mother, and Echo, Artie's daughter, who is incredibly smart and equally sensitive. After Dorothea (who has raised Echo into her teens) suffers a stroke, Echo is forced to reestablish contact with her mother through extended phone conversations, during which real issues are skirted and the talk is mostly about the precocious Echo's unparalleled success in a national spelling bee. In the end, Artie and Echo come to accept their mutual need and summon the courage to build a life together, despite their fears after so many years of estrangement.*

Echo: Uncle Bill hardly remembers you, you know that? I asked him what you were like as a little girl, and he couldn't even say. He remembers Grandma even less. He didn't have one interesting thing to say about her – about *Grandma*. To them, she's just a woman who lived a big, embarrassing life. They all think they've saved me just in time. Not just from Grandma – from you, too. (A beat.) So I started wondering if they weren't right. Maybe the smartest thing would be to forget you completely. And Grandma. After all, what did I ever get from the two of you, except a good education? You especially - what were you ever to me, except a voice on the phone now and then? And I looked around the new room where I was staying, and it was real nice and... blank, the way a thing is before you put any time into it. I thought, I could live a whole new life here. I could invent a whole new me. I could be Barbara if I wanted to, not Echo. I could fit in. I could live without the one thing I wanted. But I kept hearing your voice. That voice on the other end of the phone, hiding behind spelling words, making excuses - or so energetic sometimes, so... Wishing. I don't even remember what you said, just the

sound of it. Just a sound that said, "I love you, and I failed you." I hate that sound. And I will never settle for it, because no one failed me. No one ever failed me. Not Grandma and not you. I am a prize among women. I'm your daughter. That's what I choose to be.

5. ELEEMOSYNARY

In this moment, Echo is competing in the National Spelling Bee, determined to win, both the bee and the love and adoration of her mother and grandmother. Note: she is simultaneously talking to herself and participating in the bee.

Echo: Glunch. G-L-U-N-C-H. Glunch. (She opens her eyes, looks anxious, then smiles. She speaks quickly.) I knew I was right. Glunch is such an easy word - spelled like it sounds. But you always have that little moment of doubt that maybe you thought the right letter, but you said the...(Interrupting herself) What's he getting? What's his word? el. It's not fair, (Suddenly outraged.) He guessed! He guessed and got it! He didn't know it and he guessed. I could kill him! (Suddenly her public self.) Yes, Ma'am I'm ready. (Listens for the word she must spell.) Palinode? (A huge grin on her face, as once again we hear her thoughts.) Palinode - great! I love that word.

That's the easiest word there is. Thank God! Thank God - I deserve it. I've had too many hard words, and he's guessed on too many. Palinode - a poem in which a poet takes back something he said in another poem. (Public again.) Palinode. P A-L-I-N-O-D-E. Palinode. (Again she looks anxious until she receives confirmation that she is right. Her grin is almost totally malicious.) This can't go on forever, buddy. I'm going to crack you like an egg. What's his word? Ovoviviparousness? I know that! I know it. It's the quality of being ovoviviparous. Why'd he get it?! He's guessing! I know he's guessing! Dear God, please let me win! Please! I want five minutes. Just five minutes when all the lights are on me, and all the pictures are being taken of me, and for five minutes I'm the most famous (child) in America, and Mom and Dorothea see it! And after that you can wash me back into the ocean with everybody else. I don't care. I'll just be one of the rabble, hoi polloi, the clamjamfry, the.... (Her public self again.) What? Excuse me, could you repeat the word? Clamjamfry? (Overjoyed.) I don't believe it! She asked the exact word I was thinking of! (With machine-gun precision.) Clamjamfry. C-L-A-M-J-A-M-F-R-Y. Clamjamfry. (Awed by her own abilities.) I know everything in the world!!!

6. OUR TOWN, by Thornton Wilder

The play focuses on the fictional town of Grover's Corners and its inhabitants. Emily and George are now teenagers and realizing their interest in each other is changing. In this

moment, Emily is angry with George because he's not been paying much attention to her. But when he apologizes and explains he never meant to upset her, she's the one left feeling guilty. .

Emily: I'm not mad at you. But, since you ask me, I might as well say it right out, George. (to the teacher) Oh goodbye, Mrs. Corcoran. (back to George) I don't like the whole change that's come over you in the last year. I'm sorry if that hurts your feelings; but I've just got to - tell the truth and shame the devil. Well up to a year ago, I used to like you a lot. And I used to watch you while you did everything - because we'd been friends so long. And then you began spending all your time at baseball. And you never stopped to speak to anyone anymore - not to really speak - not even to your own family, you didn't. And George, it's a fact - ever since you've been elected captain, you've got awful stuck up and conceited, and all the girls say so. And it hurts me to hear 'em say it; but I got to agree with 'em a little, because it's true. I always expect a man to be perfect and I think he should be. Well, my father is. And as far as I can see, your father is, There's no reason on earth why you shouldn't be too. But you might as well know right now that I'm not perfect - It's not easy for a girl to be perfect as a man, because, well, we girls are inore - nervous. Now, I'm sorry I said all that about you. I don't know what made me say it. Now I can see it's not true at all. And I suddenly feel that it's not important, anyway,

7. THE FIFTH OF JULY, by Lanford

Wilson

Kenneth Talley, Jr. is a paraplegic Vietnam veteran living in his childhood home with his boyfriend, Jed. At the beginning of the play, he is due to return to his former high school to teach English, but has decided not to. Visiting Ken and Jed are Ken's sister, June and her daughter, Shirley, as well as their longtime friends, John Landis and his wife Given. John is visiting to purchase the Talley House for Gwen to convert to a recording studio, so that she can have a career as a country singer. Unbeknownst to anyone but June, John and Ken, Shirley is John's daughter, and his visit has as much to do with a desire to gain joint custody of Shirley as it does with the house. In this moment, Shirley expresses her desire to be someone of great substance and commits whole heartedly to the possibility.

SHIRLEY: "(Quietly determined.) I'm going to be the greatest artist Missouri has ever produced.

No- the entire Midwest. There have been very famous people - world famous people - Tennessee Williams grew up in Missouri, He grew up not three blocks from where I live now! All his formative years. And Mark Twain. And Dreiser! And Vincent Price and Harry Truman! And

Betty Grable! But me! Oh God! Me! Me! Me! Me! I am going to be so great! Unqualified! The greatest single artist the Midwest has ever known! A painter. Or a sculptor. Or a dancer! A writer! A conductor! A composer! An actress! One of the arts! People will die. Certain people will literally have cardiac arrests at the magnitude of my achievements. Doing something astonishing! Just astonishing. I will have you know that I intend to study for ten years, and then burst forth on the world. And people will be abashed! Amazed! Astonished! At the magnitude. Oh, God! Look! Is that she? Is that she? Is it? IT IS! IT IS SHE! IT IS SHE! AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH! (She collapses on the floor. Slowly getting to a sitting position; with great dignity) She died of cardiac arrest and astonishment at the magnificence of my achievement in my chosen field. Only Shakespeare, Michelangelo, Beethoven, and Frank Lloyd Wright have raised to my heights before me!"

8. THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK, dramatized by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett (Based upon the book, Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl)

The top floors of a warehouse in Amsterdam, Holland, spanning from 1942 to 1945. Concentration camp victim Otto Frank returns to his former hiding place after the war where he is given his daughter's diary. Anne Frank kept a record of how she, her parents and sister, along with three members of the van Daan family and a dentist named Albert Dussel, hid in an attic from the Nazis for two years. The story is told in flashback sequences, showing growing tensions between the families, their food shortages, and Anne's falling in love with Peter van Daan. In this moment, a 15 year old Anne is speaking hopefully to Peter. Only seconds after she finishes this speech, the building is raided by the Nazis and all of its occupants, except Otto Frank, are sent to their deaths in concentration camps,

Anne: *(Looking up through the skylight)* Look, Peter, the sky. What a lovely day. Aren't the clouds beautiful? You know what I do when it seems as if I couldn't stand being cooped up for one more minute? *I think myself out?* I think myself on a walk in the park where I used to go with Pim. Where the daffodils and the crocus and the violets grow down the slopes. You know the most wonderful thing about *thinking* yourself out? You can have it any way you like. You can have roses and violets and chrysanthemums all blooming at the same time... It's funny... I used to take it all for granted... and now I've gone crazy about everything to do with nature. Haven't you? I wish you had religion, Peter. Just to believe in something! When I think of all that's out there... the trees... and flowers... and seagulls... when I think of the dearness of you, Peter... and the goodness of the people we know... Mr. Kraler, Miep, Dirk, the vegetable man, all risking their lives for us every day... When I think of these good things, I'm not afraid anymore... I find myself, and God, and I... I know it's terrible, trying to have any faith... when people are

doing such horrible... but you know what I sometimes think? I think the world may be going through a phase, the way I was with Mother. It'll pass, maybe not for hundreds of years, but some day... I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are really good at heart.

9. **Brighton Beach Memoirs**, by Neil Simon.

The story of Brighton Beach Memoirs follows almost 15-year-old Eugene Jerome as he grows up in 1937 Brooklyn. Eugene learns about girls, family, relationships, and the impending war. Eugene makes many witty observations about life and the need for family throughout the play, as he interacts with his passionate, quirky Polish-Jewish relatives. Nora is Eugene's cousin, beautiful and ambitious, a 16-year-old girl with dreams of Broadway. She's often resentful of her younger sister and troubled by the death of her father.

Nora: Oh, God, he was so handsome. Always dressed so dapper, his shoes always shined. I always thought he should have been a movie star...like Gary Cooper...only very short. Mostly I remember his pockets. When I was six or seven he always brought me home a little surprise. Like a Hershey or a top. He'd tell me to go get it in his coat pocket. So I'd run to the closet and put my hand in and it felt as big as a tent. I wanted to crawl in there and go to sleep. And there were all these terrific things in there, like Juicy Fruit gum or Spearmint Life Savers and bits of cellophane and crumbled pieces of tobacco and movie stubs and nickels and pennies and rubber bands and paper clips and his grey suede gloves that he wore in the winter time. Then I found his coat in Mom's closet and I put my hand in the pocket. And everything was gone. It was emptied and dry-cleaned and it felt cold...And that's when I knew he was really dead. Oh God, I wish we had our own place to live. I hate being a boarder.