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to a stage magician. He gives you illusion that has the appearance of truth. It gives you truth in the pleasant disguise of illusion. To begin with, I reverse it to that quint point, the thirties, when the huge middle class of America was matriculating in a school for the blind. Their eyes had failed them or they had failed their eyes, and so they were having their fingers pressed forcibly down on the fiery Braille alphabet of a dissolving economy. In Spain there was revolution. Here there was only shouting and confusion. In Spain there was Guernica. Here there were disturbances of labour, sometimes pretty violent, in otherwise peaceful cities such as Chicago, Cleveland, Saint Louis. . . . This is the social background of the play. The play is memory. Being a memory play, it is dimly lighted, it is sentimental, it is not realistic. In memory everything seems to happen to music. That explains the fiddle in the wings. I am the narrator of the play, and also a character in it. The other characters are my mother Amanda, my sister Laura and a gentleman caller who appears in the final scenes. He is the most realistic character in the play, being an essential part of world reality that we were somehow set apart from. But since I have a poet's weakness for symbols, I am using this character also as a symbol; he is the long-delayed but always expected something that we live for. There is a fifth character in the play who doesn't appear except in this larger-than-life-size photograph over the mantel. This is our father who I think we saw only a long time ago.He was a telephone man who fell in love with long distances; he gave up his job with the telephone company and skipped the light fantastic out of town. . . .The last we heard of him was a picture postcard from Mazatlan, on the Pacific coast of Mexico, containing a message of two words - 'Hello - Good-bye!' and no address. I left the rest of the play will explain itself ..." 13. "Try and calm yourself, and make your mind easy again..." - Torvald Helmer from 'A Doll's House' Torvald comforts his wife, Nora, in this snippet from Henrik Ibsen's play, 'A Doll's House'. Monologue Length: 1:20 - 1:45 "Try and calm yourself, and make your mind easy again, my frightened little singing-bird. Be at rest, and feel secure; I have broad wings to shelter you under. [Walks up and down by the door.] How warm and cosy our home is, Nora. Here is shelter for you; here I will protect you like a hunted dove that I have saved from a hawk's claws; I will bring peace to your poor beating heart. It will come, little by little, Nora, believe me. Tomorrow morning you will look upon it all quite differently; soon everything will be just as it was before. Very soon you won't need me to assure you that I have forgiven you; you will yourself feel the certainty that I have done so. Can you suppose I should ever think of such a thing as repudiating you, or even reproaching you? You have no idea what a true man's heart is like, Nora. There is something so indescribably sweet and satisfying, to a man, in the knowledge that he has forgiven his wife-forgiven her freely, and with all his heart. It seems as if that had made her, as it were, doubly his own; he has given her a new life, so to speak; and she has in a way become both wife and child to him. So you shall be for me after this, my little scared, helpless darling. Have no anxiety about anything, Nora; only be frank and open with me, and I will serve as will and conscience both to you... What is this? Not gone to bed? Have you changed your things?" 14. "Oh, Miss Julie, a dog may lie on the couch of a Countess..." - Jean from 'Miss Julie' Jean's complex character first appears one way to Miss Julie, the play's protagonist, before showing his true colors. Monologue Length: 1:15 - 1:25 "Oh, Miss Julie, a dog may lie on the couch of a Countess, a horse may be caressed by a lady's hand, but a servant--yes, yes, sometimes there is stuff enough in a man, whatever he be, to swing himself up in the world, but how often does that happen! But to return to the story, do you know what I did? I ran down to the mill dam and threw myself in with my clothes on--and was pulled out and got a thrashing. But the following Sunday when all the family went to visit my grandmother I contrived to stay at home; I scrubbed myself well, put on my best clothes, such as they were, and went to church so that I might see you. I saw you. Then I went home with my mind made up to put an end to myself. But I wanted to do it beautifully and without pain. Then I happened to remember that elderberry blossoms are poisonous. I knew where there was a big elderberry bush in full bloom and I stripped it of its riches and made a bed of it in the oat-bin. Have you ever noticed how smooth and glossy oats are? As soft as a woman's arm.--Well, I got in and let down the cover, fell asleep, and when I awoke I was very ill, but didn't die--as you see. What I wanted--I don't know. You were unattainable, but through the vision of you I was made to realize how hopeless it was to rise above the conditions of my birth." 15. "I'm celebrating because I've got a friend who tells me all the things that ought to be told me." - George Gibbs from 'Our Town' Thornton Wilder's beloved "Our Town" chronicles the story of one town, Grover's Corner, and the families that encompass the community. George Gibbs is an all-American boy navigating family, school, love for Emily, and growing up. Monologue Length: 0:45 - 1:00 "I'm celebrating because I've got a friend who tells me all the things that ought to be told me. I'm glad you spoke to me like you did. But you'll see, I'm going to change. And Emily, I want to ask you a favor. Emily, if I go away to State Agricultural College next year, will you write me a letter? The day wouldn't come when I wouldn't want to know everything about our town. Y'know, Emily, whenever I meet a farmer I ask him if he thinks it's important to go to Agricultural School to be a good farmer. And some of them say it's even a waste of time. And like you say, being gone all that time - in other places, and meeting other people. I guess new people probably aren't any better than old ones. Emily - I feel that you're as good a friend as I've got. I don't need to go and meet the people in other towns. Emily, I'm going to make up my mind right now - I won't go. I'll tell Pa about it tonight." 16. "Why do you got to get killed?" - Lennie Small from 'Of Mice And Men' Known for his kind heart and loyalty, Lennie struggles with accepting that he has accidentally killed a puppy given to him by his friend, George. Monologue Length: 1:00 - 1:15 "Why do you got to get killed? You ain't so little as mice. I didn't bounce you so hard. (bends pup's head up and looks in its face) Now may be George ain't gonna let me tend no rabbits if he finds out you got killed. (Scoops a little hollow and lays puppy in it out of sight and covers it over with hay. He stares at the mound he has made.) I'll tell George I found it dead. (unburies pup and inspects it. Twists its ears and works his fingers in its fur, sorrowfully) But he'll know. George always knows. He'll say: "You done it. Don't try to put nothin' over on me." And he'll say: "Now just for that you don't get to tend no -- you know wats." (his anger rises. Addresses pup) Damn you. Why do you got to get killed? You ain't so little as mice. (picks up pup and hurls it from him, turns his back on it. Sits bent over his knees, moaning to himself) Now he won't let me... Now he won't let me. You was'n't big enough. They tole me and tole me you was'n't. I didn't know you'd get killed so easy. Maybe George won't care. This here pup was'n't nothin' to George." 17. "What can I do?" "I'm a patsy, what can a patsy do?" - Eddie Carbone from 'A View From The Bridge' Though well intentioned, Eddie Carbone struggles to stay afloat in the real world as he lets himself slowly fall into a delusional state of mind in 'A View From The Bridge'. Monologue Length: 0:45 - 1:00 "What can I do? I'm a patsy, what can a patsy do? I worked like a dog twenty years so a punk could have her, so that's what I done. I mean, in the worst times, in the worst, when there wasn't a ship comin' in the harbor, I didn't stand around lookin' for relief--I hustled. When there was empty rooms in Brooklyn, I went to Hoboken, Staten Island, the West Side, Jersey all over--because I made a promise. I took out of my own mouth to give to her. I took out of my wife's mouth. I walked hungry plenty days in this city! (It begins to break through.) And now I gotta sit in my own house and look at a son-of-a-bitch punk like that--which he came out of nowhere! I give him my house to sleep! I take the blankets off my bed for him, and he takes and puts his dirty filthy hands on her like a goddam thief!" Have a great dramatic monologue to share with other thespians? Comment below... Page 4 The audition room can be a stressful place, and preparing for your shot in front of casting directors can be equally as daunting. Pick up your metaphorical sword and slay your next audition for a dramatic role by choosing a monologue that fits you. Have no fear! Here are 17 dramatic monologues for women: 1. "Set down, set down your honourable load..." - Lady Anne Neville from 'Richard III' When it comes to drama, Shakespeare's 'Richard III' doesn't fall short - as shown by this monologue spoken by the complex and emotionally-driven Lady Anne... Monologue Length: Up to 2:00 "Set down, set down your honourable load, If honour may be shrouded in a hearse, Whilst I awhile obsequiously lament The untimely fall of virtuous Lancaster. Poor key-cold figure of a holy king! Pale ashes of the house of Lancaster! Thou bloodless remnant of that royal blood! Be it lawful that I invoke thy ghost, To hear the lamentations of Poor Anne, Wife to thy Edward, to thy slaughter'd son, Stab'd by the selfsame hand that made these wounds!" [Full Monologue HERE] 2. "And for that matter I have no secrets" - Julie from 'Miss Julie' The woeful tale of Miss Julie dates back to 1888, written by playwright August Strindberg (it has since then been adapted into modern works such as the National Theatre's production of 'Julie'). Monologue Length: 1:25 - 2:00 "And for that matter I have no secrets. You see, my mother was not of noble birth. She was brought up with ideas of equality, woman's freedom and all that. She had very decided opinions against matrimony, and when my father courted her she declared that she would never be his wife--but she did so for all that. I came into the world against my mother's wishes, I discovered, and was brought up like a child of nature by my mother, and taught everything that a boy must know as well; I was to be an example of a woman being as good as a man--I was made to go about in boy's clothes and take care of the horses and harness and saddle and hunt, and all such things; in fact, all over the estate women servants were taught to do men's work, with the result that the property came near being ruined--and so we became the laughing stock of the countryside. At last my father must have awakened from his bewitched condition, for he revolted, and ran things according to his ideas. My mother became ill--what it was I don't know, but she often had cramps and acted queerly--sometimes hiding in the attic or the orchard, and would even be gone all night at times. Then came the big fire which of course you have heard about. The house, the stables--everything was burned, under circumstances that pointed strongly to an incendiary, for the misfortune happened the day after the quarterly insurance was due and the premiums sent in by father were strangely delayed by his messenger so that they arrived too late." 3. "My sister, Veronica, and I did this double act..." - Velma Kelly from 'Chicago' ...5, 6, 7, 8! Take on the role of Cook County Jail diva, Velma Kelly, who recounts her murderous mishap involving her late husband and sister. Monologue Length: 0:40 - 1:00 "My sister, Veronica, and I did this double act and my husband, Charlie, traveled around with us. Now for the last number in our act, we did these 20 acrobatic tricks in a row, one, two, three, four, five...splits, spread eagles, flip flops, back flips, one right after the other. Well, this one night we were in Cicero, the three of us, sittin' up in a hotel room, boozin' and havin' a few laughs and we ran out of ice, so I went out to get some. I come back, open the door and there's Veronica and Charlie doing Number Seventeen--the spread eagle. Well, I was in such a state of shock, I completely blacked out. I can't remember a thing. It wasn't until later, when I was washing the blood off my hands I knew they were dead." 4. "I dream of a place where we could be together at last..." - Audrey from 'Little Shop Of Horrors' While 'Little Shop Of Horrors' offers audiences plenty of laughs (and horrors), it also carries a few heavy themes. Cue Audrey's heartfelt monologue, denoting her hopes and dreams to live somewhere that's green beyond Skid Row. Monologue Length: 0:30 - 0:50 "I dream of a place where we could be together at last... It's just a daydream of mine. A little development that I dream of. 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