

PICNIC by William Inge

MADGE

Whenever I hear that train coming to town, I always get a feeling of excitement – in here. (Hugging her stomach). I always wonder, maybe some wonderful person is getting off here, just by accident, and he'll come into the dime store for something and see me behind the counter, and he'll study me very strangely and then decide I'm the person they're looking for in Washington for an important job in the Espionage Department. (She is carried away). Or maybe he wants me for some great medical experiment that'll save the whole human race.

SONNY

THE DARK AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS by William Inge

Mom. Look. Mom! Mrs. Stanford gave me five dollars for speaking my piece. See? Five whole dollars. She said I was the most talented little boy she ever saw. See, Mom? Then she got out her pocketbook and gave me five whole dollars. See? And Mrs. Stanford sent me home with her chauffeur, too, Mom. (He gives the word its French pronunciation. That's the way you're supposed to pronounce it, chauffeur. It's French. She had all kinds of little sandwiches. Gee, they were good. And cocoa, too, Mom with lots of whipped cream on top, in little white cups with gold edges. Gee, they were pretty. And lots of little cakes, too, with pink frosting and green. And ice cream, too. I just ate and ate and ate.

THE CRUCIBLE by Arthur Miller

ABIGAIL

Now look you. All of you. We danced. And Tituba conjured Ruth Putnam's dead sisters. And that is all. And mark this. Let either of you breathe a word, or the edge of a word, about the other things, and I will come to you in the black of some terrible night and I will bring a pointy reckoning that will shudder you. And you know I can do it; I saw Indians smash my dear parents' heads on the pillow next to mine, and I have seen some reddish work done at night, and I can make you wish you had never seen the sun go down! Now, you – sit up and stop this!

BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS

Neil Simon

1930s. A house in Brighton Beach, Brooklyn. EUGENE (16) is lying on HIS bed, making another entry in HIS "memoirs." This one concerns a conversation between HIS mother, KATE, and his aunt, BLANCHE, about a dreaded disease. All of EUGENE's monologues are directly to the audience.

EUGENE: (*Writing, says aloud*) "That's-what-they-have-gutters-for" . . . (*To audience*) If my mother knew I was writing all this down, she would stuff me like one of her chickens . . . I'd better explain what she meant by Aunt Blanche's "situation" . . . You see, her husband, Uncle Dave, died six years ago from . . . (*He looks around*) . . . this thing . . . They never say the word. They always whisper it. It was—(*He whispers*)—Cancer! . . . I think they're afraid if they said it out loud, God would say, "I HEARD THAT! YOU SAID THE DREAD DISEASE!" (*He points finger down*) JUST FOR THAT, I SMITE YOU DOWN WITH IT!!" . . . There are some things that grown-ups just won't discuss . . . For example, my grandfather. He died from—(*He whispers*)—Diphtheria! . . . Anyway, after Uncle Dave died, he left Aunt Blanche with no money. Not even insurance . . . And she couldn't support herself because she has—(*He whispers*) Asthma . . . So my big-hearted mother insisted we take her and her kids in to live with us. So they broke up our room into two small rooms and me and my brother Stan live on this side, and Laurie and her sister Nora live on the other side. My father thought it would just be temporary but it's been three and a half years so far and I think because of Aunt Blanche's situation, my father is developing—(*He whispers*)—High blood pressure!

THE CRUCIBLE

By Arthur Miller

MARY WARREN

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 I hear a voice, a screamin’ voice, and it were my voice – and all at once I remembered everything she done to me! 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, “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!” And of all the ten show could not say a single one. She never knew no commandments, and they had her in a flat lie!

Nice People Dancing to Good Country Music by Lee Blessing

JASON:

You only been here a few hours. I been here all summer. He's nuts. He makes me work in his crumby business. I'm on my vacation, and he makes me push beer cases around in the back room down there. He's a creepoid jerk. Today he told me to move twenty cases of Schlitz from the front wall to the back wall, and restack 'em. It's the same twenty cases I moved from the back wall to the front wall yesterday. He can't decide where they're "the most efficient." Efficient, my roaring butt. I'm going home tomorrow --- what the hell do I care where they are?! I'm doing all this work for him, and when I'm done he comes in and looks at it, and says he liked it better the other way. So I dumped three cases of Schlitz on his foot. He start screaming like crazy, and threw a bottle at my head. He could've killed me, the stupid mother. You know, that's the only thing Jim ever did I liked. Started calling me Jay Bob. Jay Bob is just as stupid a name as Jason, but at least you can claim your folks didn't know any better.

5TH OF JULY by Lanford Wilson

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!”

YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN by Clark Genger

Snoopy -- an ageless dog

PAGE -- COMIC

Snoopy makes clear that being a World War One flying ace is not as wonderful.

Here's the World War One flying ace high over France in his Sopwith Camel, searching for the infamous Red Baron. I must bring him down. Suddenly anti-aircraft fire,archie we call it, begins to burst beneath my plane. The Red Baron has spotted me. Nyahh, nyahh, nyahh! You can't hit me. (Parenthetically.) Actually, tough flying aces never say "nyahh, nyahh." I was just, uh . . . (Back to business.) Drat this fog. It's bad enough to have to fight the Red Baron without having to fly in weather like this. All right, Red Baron! Come on out. You can't hide from me forever. Ah! The sun has broken through. I can see the woods of Montsec below. But, what's this? It's a Fokker triplane. Ha, I've got you. You can't escape from me this time, Red Baron! Augh! He's diving down out of the sun. He's tricked me again. I've got to run. Come on, Sopwith Camel, let's go. Go, Camel, go! I can't shake him. He's riddling my plane with bullets. Curse you, Red Baron! Curse you and your kind! Curse the evil that causes this unhappiness. (Snoopy relaxes, removing his goggles and scarf.) Here's the World War One flying ace back at the aerodrome in France. He is exhausted and yet he does not sleep, for one thought continues to throb in his brain: Someday, someday I'll get you, Red Baron!

OUR TOWN by Thornton Wilder

EMILY

“(Defensive.) I’m not mad at you. (Dreading to face the issue.) But, since you ask me, I might as well say is right out, George – (Faces down again. Then finding it hard to say) I don’t like the whole change that’s come over you in the last year. (She glances at him.) I’m sorry if that hurts your feelings; but I’ve just got to – tell the truth and shame the devil.

(Facing mostly out, on the verge of tears.) 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. (She bites the word.) 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. (All innocence, yet firm.) 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 more – nervous. Now, I’m sorry I said all that about you. I don’t know what made me say it. (Cries.) Now I can see it’s not true at all. And I suddenly feel that it’s not important, anyway. (Cries.)”

TEACH ME HOW TO CRY

WILL: Nothing is so very terrible. *(Cornet begins to play. He goes over to her, speaks honestly and forcefully.)* There was a house once down by a lake near where we used to live. The house was all boarded up and deserted, and the kids all said it was haunted and were afraid of it. I was too. More afraid than any of them. And then my mother and dad decided we'd live in that house, and I nearly ran away. I was going to, but I didn't. I decided to be brave, but I didn't know how I could do it I felt so sick. But I went inside that house and I looked at it, every bit of it, up close. It was just an ordinary old house and there I was being afraid of nothing at all.

(MELINDA begins to cry, looking at him. The weeping becomes a tearing sobbing, and she puts her head down and continues to sob for a long time. She sinks down onto the steps. WILL stands quietly, watching her. Once he starts to reach out his hand to her, but takes it back. When the crying has subsided a little)

WILL: Some people say men don't like it when girls cry, but they're the kind of people that don't like girls to laugh either. Or anybody. I think if you can do one, then it's easier to do the other, and both of them make you feel good. Will you write to me too, Melinda, every day? You don't have to stop crying. Just nod.

THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK

Adapted by Francis Goodrich and Albert Hackett

ANNE

Look, Peter, the sky. What a lovely, lovely day. Aren't the clouds beautiful? You know what I do when it seems as if I couldn't stand being cooped up for one more minute? I think myself out. I think myself on a walk in the park where I used to go with Pim. You know the most wonderful thing about thinking yourself out? You can have it any way you like.

I wish you had a religion, Peter. Oh, I don't mean you have to be Orthodox. I just mean some religion. It doesn't matter what. When I think of all that's out there, and the goodness of the people we know, all risking their lives for us every day, when I think of the good things, I'm not afraid anymore.

I know it's terrible, trying to have any faith, when people are doing such horrible things... But I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are really good at heart.

Listen to us, going at each other like a couple of stupid grown-ups. Look at the sky now, isn't it lovely?

TALES FROM THE ARABIAN MICE

Will Averill

Rock, a perennial bit player, believes there are small parts for actors. He gripes to the audience.

ROCK. Hi. I don't know if you remember me or not, but I was the kid who played the Crocodile last year in Peter Pan? Do you remember? Probably not. It was a little part, and although I've trained for years for a life in the theatre, three years running here at the [name of venue], they have neglected to use me to my fullest potential...again. You know what I am this year? I'm. a. rock. Not the professional wrestler and famous actor in such cinematic classics as 'The Scorpion King', no, I'm just a routine lousy geological formation which our protagonist (that's a big word for hero that I learned in my three years of professional theatre training, all of which did me NO good when it came to casting), finds himself collapsing against in his time of trouble. Can't wait for school to start again—"We went to Disneyworld this summer, oh, wow, we went to Europe. Hey, what'd you do this summer (kid's name). Who, me? Oh. I stayed at home AND PLAYED A LOUSY 'ROCK!' Not that I'm bitter. Cause it's—

(Uber-sarcastic.)

"—it's great training."

(PIPSQUEAK coughs.)

Oh. Excuse me. Gotta go LIE ON THE FLOOR AND DO NOTHING now for a while.

(ROCK returns to his position.)

THE MEMBER OF THE WEDDING by Carson McCullers

FRANKIE

Did you hear what Jarvis said? They were talking about whether to vote for C.O. MacDonald. And Jarvis said, "Why I wouldn't vote for that scoundrel if he was running to be dogcatcher." I never heard anything so witty in my life. And you know what Janice remarked. When Jarvis mentioned how much I've grown, she said she didn't think I looked terribly big. She said she got the major portion of her growth before she was thirteen. She said I was the right height and had acting talent and ought to go to Hollywood. She did, Bernice. She said she thought I was a lovely size and would probably not grow any taller.

FRANKIE

Don't bother me, John Henry. I'm thinking. About the wedding. About my brother and the bride. Everything's been so sudden today. I never believed before about the fact that the earth turns at the rate of about a thousand miles a day. I didn't understand why it was that if you jumped up in the air you wouldn't land in Selma or Fairview or somewhere else instead of the same backyard. But now it seems to me I feel the world is going around very fast. I feel it turning and it makes me dizzy.

FRANKIE

I just now thought of something. I know where I'm going. It's like I've known it all my life. Tomorrow I will tell everybody. After the wedding I'm going with them to Winter Hill. I'm going off with them after the wedding. The trouble with me is that for a long time I have been just an "I" person. All other people can say "we." All people belong to a "we" except me. Not to belong to a "we" makes you lonesome. I know that the bride and my brother are the "we" of me. So I'm going with them, and joining with the wedding. I love the two of them so much and we belong together. Because they are the we of me.

OVER THE TAVERN

Tom Dudzick

The year is 1959. 12-year-old Rudy Pazinski rushes into church and kneels in a pew. Oops, he forgot to genuflect. He jumps out of the pew, genuflects quickly and jumps back in. He makes a quick sign of the cross and folds his hands, pointing them to Heaven.

RUDY. Please, please, please Dear Jesus, please make her ease up on me. I promise I'll learn my catechism and get confirmed and all that, but please, I mean, c'mon, look at that! *(Shows the stinging palm of his hand to heaven.)* Please just make her not so mean, that's all. And I'll be a soldier for you, I promise. Whatever that means, I'll do it. Thank you. *(Makes a quick sign of the cross, gets up, then suddenly kneels again.)* And the spaghetti! *(Quick sign of the cross.)* The spaghetti! Please don't let Daddy forget the spaghetti tonight. Please, please, that's very important. The spaghetti. Don't let him forget the spaghetti. Okay? The spaghetti. Very important. So, it's Sister Clarissa and the spaghetti. Thank you.

(Makes a quick sign of the cross, gets up, genuflects, almost makes it out, but he runs back again, rushes a genuflection, kneels and makes the sign of the cross.)

And the bad mood! Ple-e-eze dear Jesus, don't let Daddy be in a bad mood tonight. Please, just no bad mood! Supper would be great without that. No bad mood, please. And I'll learn my catechism and get confirmed. Okay, so it's a nicer Sister Clarissa, the spaghetti, and no bad mood, and I'll get confirmed. Okay, thank you, dear Jesus, thank you!

THE EFFECT OF GAMMA RAYS ON MAN-IN-THE-MOON MARIGOLDS by Paul Zindel

TILLIE

He told me to look at my hand, for a part of it came from a star that exploded too long ago to imagine. This part of me was formed from a tongue of fire that screamed through the heavens until there was our sun. And this part of me – this tiny art of me – was on the sun when it itself exploded and whirled in a great storm until the planets came to be.

And this part of me was then a whisper of the earth. When there was life, perhaps this part of me got lost in a fern that was crushed and covered until it was coal. And then it was a diamond millions of years later – it must have been a diamond as beautiful as the star from which it had first come. Or perhaps this part of me became lost in a terrible beast, or became part of a huge bird that flew above the primeval swamps.

And he said this thing was so small – this part of me was so small it couldn't be seen – but it was there from the beginning of the world. And he called this bit of me an atom. And when he wrote the word, I fell in love with it. Atom. *Atom*. What a beautiful word.

OVER THE TAVERN

Tom Dudzick

The year is 1959. 12-year-old Rudy Pazinski kneels in a church pew.

RUDY. Jesus, what did you do?! Sister Clarissa's in the hospital! I just asked that you make her ease up on me, I didn't say rub her out! ...And now Daddy's bad mood is worse. And we never did get the spaghetti. Is this a punishment? All 'cause I'm looking for something else? How can you blame me, Jesus? All I get from you is rules. No miracles, no fun, just rules. And crazy rules! Like don't eat meat on Friday. I can't believe you came all the way down to Earth to say that. What's it for? Eddie says you might've done it for the Apostles, to help their fish business. That I could see. But, okay, they're dead now, and I'm still eating fish sticks on Friday. And I hate fish sticks!

And other stuff, like giving up things for Lent. Last year, because you died on the cross, I gave up TV for a month. I'm not complaining. But in the end you came back from the dead, and I saw everything on reruns anyway, so what was the point? ...I've got to keep looking, Jesus. But you understand. I know this kid, Arnie Silverman; I always see him at the Sunday matinees. And he says you switched religions, too. You started out Jewish! And you said it yourself— "Go thou and do likewise!"

Nora -

Brighton Beach Memoirs

Nora. ACT I.

Nora, Blanche's pretty sixteen-year-old daughter, has just been chosen to appear in a musical that will ultimately be produced on Broadway. She is ecstatic and has returned home in a much elevated state to impart the good news to the family.

NORA

(A little breathless.) Okay! Here goes! . . . I'm going to be in a Broadway show! *(They look at her in stunned silence.)* It's a musical called *Abracadabra* . . . This man, Mr. Beckman, he's a producer, came to our dancing class this afternoon and he picked out three girls. We have to be at the Hudson Theater on Monday morning at ten o'clock to audition for the dance director. But on the way out he took me aside and said the job was good as mine. I have to call him tomorrow. I may have to go into town to talk to him about it. They start rehearsing a week from Monday and then it goes to Philadelphia, Wilmington and Washington . . . and then it comes to New York the second week in December. There are nine big musical numbers and there's going to be a big tank on the stage that you can see through and the big finale all takes place with the entire cast all under water . . . I mean, can you believe it? I'm going to be in a Broadway show, Momma! *(They are all still stunned.)*

Nora. ACT I.

Nora's enthusiasm for appearing in a Broadway musical is not shared by her mother, Blanche. She rightly feels that Nora is too young and naive and that getting a proper education is paramount. But she has not given her decision. Rather, due to the fact that her brother-in-law Jack is the head of the household, she has relinquished her authority to him. Nora's fate rests in Jack's hands.

THE KATRINA PROJECT: HELL AND HIGH WATER

Michael Marks and Mackenzie Westmoreland

Billy, a high school student, cannot forget the screams during his first night volunteering in New Orleans.

BILLY. I got permission to skip high school for a week to go on a rescue mission in New Orleans. All my teachers required is that I write a report about what I saw and did. Sounds like a good deal, right?

I arrived in New Orleans to the sounds of people screaming for help. But it was too dark and the police wouldn't let us go in. The next morning while boating around the flooded city I saw several children with their heads sticking out of the attic—dead—those were the screams I had heard.

I rescued a woman who handed me a bloody pillowcase. She told me her baby son was in it. That she had given birth to him on a roof and that while she was waiting to be rescued, he died.

I saw dozens of bloated bodies float past my boat. I almost threw up from the smell. I watched many people drown. I saw a girl clinging to a piece of plywood, only to be pushed off by a man trying to save himself. I grabbed her and pulled her into the boat. But when we arrived at the evacuation site I had no choice but to leave her there, even though there were no government officials to release her to and mobs of people fighting over supplies, I wanted to stay with that little girl. She was too small and too weak to take care of herself. *(Pause. Takes bottle of pills from pocket.)* I have to take medication to help me sleep now. I have yet to write that school report. I'm really having a hard time. I know we couldn't save everyone, but I won't ever forget the screaming.

MULLEN'S ALLEY

Timothy Mason

Rebecca, a poor Jewish girl, exults over her new glasses and restored sight.

REBECCA. Yes, he gave them to me! Terry Dolan! He took me to the Children's Aid Society and a man there put so very many glasses on my face and then, all of a sudden, I could see—I can see, Lily! And the charge was two dollars and Terry Dolan paid it right then and there! I've been all over, looking. You know the great tree on Mott Street, near the church?

I've been living my life seeing only a blur of green. But thousands and thousands of leaves, each leaf sharp and clear and different from every other? This I did not know! And grass is not a carpet painted one color only, grass is blades, there in St. Patrick's churchyard, among the graves, millions of little green soldiers, waving at me, Hello, klein Beccah! Lily, I taught myself to read with the books this close to my face, but now I can walk along the Mulberry Bend and read the signs from where I stand, thousands of words, everywhere I look!

(REBECCA moves off, looking at all she can see, reading the signs as she leaves.)

"Dutch's Dry Goods." "Hammetstein's Stables." "Rosen's Diner."
"Klein and Company, Knickerbockers," I never was so proud!

FEEDING ON MULBERRY LEAVES

Lucinda McDermott

17-year-old Jeb Stuart Flint desires to escape the confines of the Virginia mountains and spin his dream of becoming a fashion designer in the canyons of New York City. He offers up a prayer to who ever may be listening.

JEB. Hello? Anybody out there? Jeb here. Guess you know that being all knowing and powerful, right? I'm not sure about this God thing. I like the idea of a fairy godmother. Yeah. Or godfather—hey, I ain't prejudiced. I mean, it worked for Cinderella, right? Guess I'm lookin' for a little divine intervention here. See, my family runs this store near the Natural Bridge of Virginia. Guess you know that, too. Seventh Natural Wonder of the World, by God—or, whatever. Yeah, we buy squirrel tails and ginseng. Got black and gold ceramic plaques of The Last Supper. It's the Land 'o Little Debbies, cigarettes and gasoline. Something for everybody, right? Nah. What I need ain't here. Now, if you don't mind, this is where I'm hoping you'll come in. I need...magic, a miracle... I need... See, I got this dream. On a clear night, outside my bedroom window—you can see a huge slice of sky with a slight hump of Stoner's Mountain. The sky is a delicious cobalt blue, and I'm a Matisse cut-out. Running. Looking for others to hold hands with—to dance over hills shaped like the curves of a woman—to dance to the hum of the industrial revolution. Needle and thread marrying with cloth. The hum of coming together. All us separate, cocooned beings join in the dance. Over the hills, up the mountain. For once, no longer alone. We rise. We float. Up, up, into that night sky.

OVER THE TAVERN

Tom Dudzick

The year is 1959. Annie Pazinski, 16, makes a midnight confession to her mother. It concerns a rumor going around that some girl in the neighborhood was seen undressing in front of her window at night, with the shade up, on purpose!

ANNIE. (Upset.) Okay, here's what happened. The other day, me and Tina, we sort of took a long lunch hour at school. How long? Oh...about the length of a movie. Tina said that these two boys would meet us at the theatre. From Bishop Cleary. They take long lunch hours, too, sometimes. It didn't seem like a great idea, but since boys haven't exactly been beating down my door. Anyway, they never showed up. They got caught by the school janitor. So, me and Tina went in. And, this movie, it was sort of artistic. Foreign, actually. I don't think it was on the Legion of Decency list. But it wasn't one of those dirty movies! Oh, no, it was beautiful. It really was! And so romantic, I just wanted to die! It took place in this little town in Italy. And there was this one part where this girl's father forbids her to see her lover and he locks her in her room. So, that night, while her lover is outside, she goes to her window and, sort of, gets ready for bed. ...But they didn't show anything! They covered most of it with trees and stuff and showing his face looking up at her. It was so artistic! And, so anyway, all day I couldn't stop thinking about that part. And that night I couldn't sleep 'cause all I could think about was how she loved him so. And him outside all alone. And then, lying there in bed, thinking, I just sort of became the girl. I got up out of bed, and, Oh, Mama, I never thought anybody would be watching. I swear! (Sobs.)

THE 1ST ANNUAL ACHADAMEE AWARDS

(full-length version)

Alan Haehnel

Norman receives a nomination for the best male actor (liar) at Achadamee High School. This monologue shows him at work.

NORMAN. I ain't afraid of you, man. No way I'm afraid of you. You want to fight me? I'll fight you. Don't you even think I won't fight you, man. Bring it on—any time! Right now? Uh, now's not actually a good time for me. A chicken? Me? You calling me a chicken? Is that what you're saying? Oh, man, you're not going to get away with that. Nobody calls me a chicken. Nobody. It don't matter to me that you're taller by five inches or that you outweigh me by a hundred pounds. Don't even think it bothers me that you're three times Golden Glove champion and that you've been invited as a guest commentator for the Ultimate Fighting League. So what? That's nothing! If you get me mad—and let me tell you, you're getting close!—then you just better watch out! I don't care if you're Superman. Or the Amazing Hulk. Or any of those 'cause I'll take you on just the same. I ain't afraid of you; I ain't afraid of nobody! Nobody! You hearing me? So you just better back off. Right now! Just back away and you won't have to get trounced! I'm telling you, you take one more step and I will not be held responsible for what I do! *(He watches, as if his adversary has stepped closer. He looks up.)* Oh, yeah? I ain't afraid of you, and if my mother didn't need me home right now, you'd be dead meat.

(He runs away.)

THE 1ST ANNUAL ACHADAMEE AWARDS

(full-length version)

Alan Haehnel

Connie is nominated as the best female actor (liar) at Achadamee High School. This monologue shows her at work.

CONNIE. Mom, please sit down. Listen, I know you've been disappointed with my behavior in the past. I haven't always made wise choices. When I had Bill Raymond drive his motorcycle into our living room, that was a bad choice. When I shoplifted those times, those were bad choices, especially when I set up my on-line clothing business with the stolen goods and made over sixteen thousand dollars selling brand-name items for a significant discount. I shouldn't have done that. The thing with the explosives and the police breaking through our windows at two in the morning, that was wrong. I can see that now. But Mom, I need you to know that I have changed. I truly have. I am not the same girl I was last week when I tried to market my unique brand of cigarettes. You can believe me now. You can trust me. Please. I am a changed person. I am back to being that innocent, trust-worthy little girl you sent off to kindergarten so many years ago. So when I ask you if I can borrow our new Jetta for the next week and a half, and to completely disregard that odd chemical smell coming from the trunk, you can believe me now. I will not let you down.

THE 1ST ANNUAL ACHADAMEE AWARDS

(full-length version)

Alan Hachnel

Nigel receives a nomination for the best male actor (liar) at Achadamee High School. This monologue shows him at work.

NIGEL. Before I begin my oral presentation on the play *Hamlet*, I would like to take just a moment to clear the air about a few things. I understand that some nasty rumors have been going around about me. Rumor one: I have never even read the play *Hamlet*. The book has been in the bottom of my locker, unopened since the first day we got the assignment. Rumor two: I don't know a thing about *Hamlet*. Up until yesterday morning, I thought a *Hamlet* was a clever name for a small breakfast item. According to that rumor, I even went to Denny's and tried to order a Hamlet with a side of home fries. Rumor three: I am completely unprepared for this presentation, and all I plan to do is get a barely passing grade by standing up here and bluffing my way through until my time is up. And rumor four, the most sickening one of all: I, Nigel Thorburn, have no academic motivation whatsoever. I expend the least amount of energy possible to squeak by, using only my natural charm and extreme talents in the art of slinging the bull. I want to say, right here and right now, that I highly resent these rumors. If any of you have been spreading them, I say—pardon my language, please—damn you. Damn your conniving hearts and your lying mouths. To those of you who have begun to doubt me because of these rumors, I say listen! For I am about to deliver a presentation on *Hamlet* that will erase all doubt, all fear, all worry, all...excuse me? What? My time is up? Do you mean to say I'll be getting a D- for simply using up my time even though I haven't yet begun to reveal the great mysteries of the play *Hamlet*? I will? I am appalled. But, I accept my fate without complaint. Hey, that almost rhymed. I am good!

18 MORE REASONS NOT TO BE IN A PLAY

Alan Haehnel

High-strung Julie tells us one of the 18 Reasons why being in a play is a dangerous idea. At monologue's end, she faints.

JULIE. Because you're a fast talker. You come from a family of fast talkers and if there's such a thing as a gene for fast talking you have definitely inherited it and if you were in a play you'd memorize your lines and all that but you'd say them too fast and you know the director would say...

Take it slower.

And you'd know you're supposed to take it slower and you would say to yourself over and over, "Talk slower, talk slower," but when you worried about it you'd get tense and when you got tense you'd talk even faster so the director would start to get mad and he'd say...

You have to talk slower!

And you'd practically be screaming at yourself inside yourself and beating yourself up because you'd know you were still talking too fast but you'd be getting so nervous about it you'd be getting faster and faster so the director would lose his patience finally and yell...

Slower!

And that would make you go so fast that you never even took a breath and you'd go and go and go and go and go and go so fast that you ran completely out of air but still you'd be telling yourself to slow down so the director wouldn't yell at you because you hated that but you couldn't stop racing and racing until finally you just...

JAY

LOST IN YONKERS by Neil Simon

Don't do it, Arty...Leave him alone, Uncle Louie. You want the bag open, do it yourself (*He takes the bag from Arty and tosses it at Louie's feet*). Maybe you don't rob banks or grocery stores or little old women. You're worse than that. You're a bully. You pick on a couple of kids. Your own nephews. You make fun of my father because he cried and was afraid of Grandma. Well, everyone in Yonkers is afraid of Grandma...And let me tell you something about my father. At least he's doing something in this war. He's sick and he's tired but he's out there selling iron to make ships, and tanks and cannons, and I'm proud of him. What are you doing? Hiding in your mother's apartment and scaring little kids and acting like Humphrey Bogart...Well, you're no Humphrey Bogart...And I'll tell you something else - No. That's all.

THE EFFECT OF GAMMA RAYS ON MAN-IN-THE-MOON MARIGOLDS
by Paul Zindel

RUTH: I thought she'd tell the whole world.
Imagine, right in front of the assembly, with everybody laughing at her. ^{My} heavens, she was a sight. She had that old jumper on—the faded one with that low collar—and a raggy slip that showed all over and her hair looked like she was struck by lightning ———
She was cranking this model of something—

This model of the atom . . . you know, it had this crank and a long tower so that when you turned it

these little colored balls went spinning around like crazy. And there was Tillie, cranking away, looking weird as a coot . . . that old jumper with the raggy slip and the lightning hair . . . cranking away while some boy with glasses was reading this stupid speech . . . and everybody burst into laughter until the teachers yelled at them. And all day long, the kids kept coming up to me saying, "Is that really your sister? How can you bear it?" And you know, Chris Burns says to me— *She looks like the one that went to the looney doctors.*" I could have kissed him there and then.

SCHROEDER

YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIES BROWN by John Gordon

I'm sorry to have to say it right to your face, Lucy, but it's true. You're a very crabby person. I know your crabbiness has probably become so natural to you now that you're not even aware when you're being crabby, but it's true just the same. You're a very crabby person and you're crabby to just about everyone you meet. Now I hope you don't mind my saying this, Lucy, and I hope you'll take it in the spirit that it's meant. I think we should all be open to any opportunity to learn more about ourselves. I think Socrates was very right when he said that one of the first rules for anyone in life is "Know thyself." Well, I guess I've said about enough. I hope I haven't offended you or anything.

(From YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN) By Clark Gesner

LUCY: Excuse me a moment Charlie Brown, But I was wondering if you'd mind answering a few questions. I'm conducting a survey to enable me to know myself better, and first of all I'd like to ask: on a scale of zero to one hundred, using a standard of fifty as average, seventy-five as above average and ninety as exceptional, where would you rate me in regards to crabbiness? Your ballots need not be signed and all answers will be held in strictest confidence. You may have a few minutes to think it over if you want, or we can come back to that question later. This next question deals with certain character traits you may have observed. Regarding personality, would you say that mine is A forceful, B pleasing, or C objectionable, which one would you say, hum? Charlie Brown, um? (Listens to his response) "Forceful." Well, we'll make a check mark at the letter A then. The next question deals with physical appearance. In referring to my beauty, would you say that I was "stunning," "mysterious," or "intoxicating"? (listens again) "Stunning." Very well then, that about does it. Thank you very much for helping with this survey, Charlie Brown. Your cooperation has been greatly appreciated.

CHARLIE BROWN

YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN by John Gordon

You know, I don't know if you'll understand this or not, but sometimes, even when I'm feeling very low, I'll see some little thing that will somehow renew my faith. Just something like that leaf, for instance - clinging to its tree in spite of the wind and storm. You know, that makes me think that courage and tenacity are about the greatest values that a man can have. Suddenly my old confidence is back and I know things aren't half as bad as I make them out to be.

Suddenly I know that with the strength of his convictions a man can move mountains, and I can proceed with full confidence in the basic goodness of my fellow man. I know that now. I know it.

LINUS

YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN by John Gordon

In examining a work such as Peter Rabbit, it is important that the superficial characteristics of its deceptively simple plot should not be allowed to blind the reader to the more substantial fabric of its deeper motivations. In this report I plan to discuss the sociological implications of family pressures so great as to drive an otherwise moral rabbit to perform acts of thievery which he consciously knew were against the law. I also hope to explore the personality of Mr. McGregor in his conflicting roles as farmer and humanitarian.

ANNE OF GREEN GABLES

Adapted by R.N. Sandberg

ANNE

Marilla's trying to teach me to cook, but it's uphill work. There's so little scope for imagination in cookery. You have to go by rules. The last time I made a cake I forgot to put the flour in. I was imagining a lovely story about you and me. You had smallpox and I was nursing you back to health. The cake was a dismal failure. Flour is so essential to cakes, you know. Marilla was very cross, and I don't blame her. I'm a trial to her. Last week, Marilla made a pudding sauce to serve to Mr. and Mrs. Chester Ross. She told me to put it on the shelf and cover it, but when I was carrying it I was imagining a nun taking the veil to bury a broken heart and I forgot about covering the sauce. When I finally remembered to cover it, I found a mouse drowned in it. I took the mouse out, of course, but Marilla was milking at the time and I forgot to tell her until I saw her carrying the sauce to the table. I screamed, "Marilla, you mustn't use that pudding sauce. There was a mouse drowned in it, and I forgot to tell you." Marilla and Matthew and Mrs. Ross all just started at me.

SAMMY

THE DARK AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS by William Inge

I always worry that maybe people aren't going to like me, when I go to a party. Isn't that crazy? Do you ever get kind of a sick feeling in the pit of your stomach when you dread things? Gee, I wouldn't want to miss a party for anything. But every time I go to one, I have to reason with myself to keep from feeling the whole world's against me. See, I've spent almost my whole life in military academies. My mother doesn't have a place for me, where she lives. She...she just doesn't know what else to do with me. But you mustn't misunderstand about my mother. She's really a very lovely person. I guess every boy thinks his mother is very beautiful, but my mother really is. She tells me in every letter she writes how sorry she is that we can't be together more, but she has to think of her work.