

NORTHLIGHT THEATRE

EPA Monologues for the 2020-2021 Season

Actors may select one of the following monologues from the 2020-2021 season plays to prepare for the Equity Principal Auditions on March 16th and 17th. Actors may alternatively prepare a two-minute or less monologue of their choosing. Scripts are available

LIFESPAN OF A FACT by Jeremy Kareken, David Murrell, and Gordon Farrell

1. JIM 1
2. JIM 2
3. EMILY 1
4. EMILY 2
5. JOHN 1
6. JOHN 2

1. JIM 1

(edited)

Okay, he says that on the day Levi died, “lap dancing was temporarily banned by the city,” but that doesn’t check out. The day *before* Levi died, the *Las Vegas Sun* wrote about a possible upcoming ban on touching strippers in fully nude establishments, but there’s nothing about a possible ban on lap dancing altogether in topless or even so-called go-go bars, where nipple nudity is essentially banned, but of course establishments get around that using pasties... Also, he says there were thirty-four licensed strip clubs in Vegas; his reference is *Adult Industry News*, which wrote that “since 1999 the number of strip clubs in Las Vegas has skyrocketed from three to sixteen” but then claims there were “thirty-one topless or all-nude clubs.” So even if we trust “*Adult Industry News*,” it doesn’t say thirty- four strip clubs, plus it contradicts itself. John gives one number for strip clubs. But his source not only does not confirm that number, it contradicts itself by providing two different numbers. (*To himself.*) But maybe that’s because—wait, though, that brings up another problem, is he talking about topless bars or fully nude bars? Though I guess they’re not necessarily bars; in fact, it’s harder to get a full liquor license if you can see the vaginal area... like I’m guessing you can at this place, *Pussy Rockets*— Sorry, can I say...?

2. JIM 2

(edited)

Here’s what I mean. You claim it’s a traffic jam. And you claim that there were five dozen cars and one hundred people there. How can you know this? Was someone there counting? To say nothing of your claim that this was in fact a jam, because let’s be clear: This was no jam. But let’s assume that this was a jam because you say it’s a jam. You say it’s a jam so I think it’s a jam. Right here: where Baltimore Avenue comes in from the west and dead-ends at Las Vegas Boulevard. You said so, plus I confirmed it on a map. And yes, Vegas Boulevard has six lanes and Baltimore has four; five dozen cars means sixty

(JIM 2 CONT'D)

cars. How do I know this? I did math! Sixty cars divided by ten lanes on each side means about three cars in each lane. Maybe four if we stretch it. Go ahead! Stretch it! I wouldn't call that a jam but again I'm going to bend over backwards and entrust my entire worldview to the deep poetic truth you're in contact with that two cars in front of me somehow constitutes a jam! And a hundred people sure sounds like a shit ton, but when you divide it over a total of twenty lanes of traffic— five whole people in each lane. Even assuming all single-occupancy vehicles—no cab passengers, no spouses, no children, no passengers of any kind, and everyone's driving some kind of Cadillac supervehicle, that is no jam, my friend. No jam at all. No honking. No idling. No jam! Wow. Not too jammy. So, knowing everything that we now know about modern civil engineering and traffic patterns, how on Earth can you claim that this is any kind of jam?!

3. EMILY 1

(edited)

Jim? Do you know what it is we are doing here? You asked me if what you're doing is important. Well, let me tell you there is nothing more important than story. To me, anyway. What is story to you? It's how you organize your life—all life. Scientists say that life is atoms and forces and fluids and genomes. But we live in stories. Events organized to make ourselves known to each other and to history. Organized in a way that gives our lives meaning. I don't think you understand. Because if you did, you wouldn't be asking me if what you're doing is important. This is important. I have been here for who knows how long, and I have seen that the right story at the right time changes the way people look at the events in their own lives. This is the right time. And I depend on you to get the story right. Now go get it done.

4. EMILY 2

(edited)

If you don't want to have to deal with someone like him, then don't *shake* me, don't plant cute little *bombs* all over this thing. You do not understand the difference between...MY magazine and the Bumblefuck Literary Review this is going to end up in. It's one thing to say it was sunny on a day it was cloudy. It's another thing to claim that a girl *hanged* herself when in fact she jumped off a building! Lorenza Ortiz! She's as dead as Levi, and you pissed on her memory for the sake of some literary conceit. And what do I do when her parents read the story? When her father sues the magazine for emotional distress? He has to prove in a court of law his daughter's death was important. The girl's father, John. Her mother? What are you thinking?

5. JOHN 1

(edited)

Kid grows up on welfare. No dad in the picture. Gets kicked out of high school. That's not a story. It's just details. You hear those facts and you come to certain conclusions that have nothing to do with reality. "Facts" privilege some people. Other people they fuck over. I'm letting you IN, Jim. Please take it as a

(JOHN 1 CONT'D)

compliment. Of course the facts EXIST, yeah, a liter of water at one atmosphere of pressure boils at a hundred degrees Celsius—hooray, let's throw a fucking party and burn Shakespeare's sonnets. The facts I was born to, barred from any security, financial or otherwise, put a bad taste in my mouth about your easy certainty that facts are some herd of purebred white horses galloping majestically, looking down their noses at ambiguity or suspicion or nuance.

6. JOHN 2

(edited)

You really need to stop treating me like I'm a journalist, Emily. I'm not a journalist. I'm an essayist. Since antiquity respected authors have regularly arranged and nudged details to create a closer understanding—writers like Herodotus, Cicero, Seneca, and Plutarch— St. Augustine, Lamb, De Quincey, Thoreau, Defoe, Orwell, Didion, Sontag—I'm done. I'm not the one who's lost faith. Fire him. He's poison to the creative process. This isn't a business to me. It's not a business. You are asking for a simple, pat, conversational answer to why people end their lives. There isn't one. My essay is the best "answer" you're ever going to get.

MR. DICKENS' HAT by Michael Hollinger

1. ACTOR Side 1
2. ACTOR Side 2
3. ACTOR Side 3
4. ACTOR Side 4
5. ACTOR Side 5

1. ACTOR Side 1

(edited)

Good eventide, ma'am – don't mean to startle. The name's Witslow, of the London constabulary. I've entered the premises merely to find out whether a crime may be in progress. If I may be perfectly frank: The Chief Inspector says hit's not sufficent to keep the peace no more. 'E wants arrests and conwictions – keeps a runnin' talley in 'is office. At present, I'm on the verge of promotion; just one more felony -- and conwiction -- and I'll be bumped up to Inspector. Murder's the obwious one, of course; plus high treason, the four B's. Burglary, bribery, blasphemy, bigamy. Not to mention your perjury, forgery, robbery, 'ousebreakin', assault accompanied by wounding. But there's nefarious persons about, and we must be wigilant.

2. ACTOR Side 2

(edited)

My dear Mrs. Prattle, I'm simply astounded. One might say "flabbergasted". Even "thrown from the pony." What you have done, in combining Garbleton's shop with your own, might render a patron apoplectic. Is there a good kind of apoplexy? I very much doubt it. What in the name of fashion could have compelled you both to take down the common wall between you and bring together a millinery and a hatmaker's shop?

3. ACTOR Side 3

(edited)

Having spent years as next-door neighbors, Mr. Garbleton and I became friends – companions in widowhood, one might say – following the death of Mrs. Garbleton, and six months later, my Mr. Prattle. God rest his soul. And then one day, I looked at our shops – side by side, like groom and bride, men's hats in one, and ladies' the other, and thought, "Why shouldn't they be conjoined?" And so I said to him, there and then, "Mr. Garbleton, tear down this wall!" And so he did. We're to be married this very evening, in Henley-on-Thames. My people are very significant there.

4. ACTOR Side 4

(edited)

Oh, yes. You see, when I was about your age, I worked at my father's bootblackening factory in Hungerford Stairs. And one day, a boy called Charley came into our employ. His father, like yours, was sitting in prison for debt, and so "the Young Gentleman," as we called him then, laboured ten hours each day but the Lord's at pasting labels on bottles of boot-black, for which he was paid six shillings a week. This was forty years ago. Young Charley wasn't made for such toil, for he had a quiet, sensitive nature – observant and quick, like you. And when I saw him flag, from the strain of the pace, I sometimes slipped in by his side, and without a word, we laboured together, he and I, and over time became fast friends. Being the seventh son of my father, I saw I'd have no share in bootblackening; so I apprenticed myself to a hatmaker. And here we are.

5. ACTOR Side 5

(edited)

All prisoners will be locked in their cells; the front gate will be latched and bolted. By my calculations, we'll be out and back in an hour and a half. Nothing happens in Queen's Prison, Gnat. That's its purpose. To crush a man's spirit with utter boredom. My father was sent here for debt when I was only nine. He'd sunk all our cash in Peruvian silver mines, which turned out not to exist. My mother, sisters and I moved in, too – cheaper than renting a room somewhere else. The governor of the prison saw that I had promise, took pity on me, gave me odd jobs. After my father died, he even made me a warder, then Chief Warder, "Master of the Keys." And so I have lived my entire life within iron and stone. Well – no more. As of tomorrow, I shall retire from Queen's Prison, and turn over all my keys to you.

FIREFLIES by Donja R. Love

1. CHARLES 1
2. CHARLES 2
3. OLIVIA 1
4. OLIVIA 2

1. CHARLES 1

(edited)

I think, I think I felt something. I don't know. Maybe. I always knew you would bear my children. You remember the first time I told you you would? We was no more than twelve, thirteen years old, but I knew it. The sun was set on hell, but I picked the most tobacco that day, more than the grown men; and sharecropper Jameson didn't even give me one penny. But the point is, I knew you were going to be mine and have mine. You knew you'd be the mother of my kids, didn't you? I know you did. 'Cause it was in college when I would sneak out my dorm and meet you at yours so we could go for walks? 'Cause it was when we got married, and through all your mama's hooping and hollering and catching the Holy Ghost, she stopped, looked at us and said, "Y'all gonna give me some pretty grandbabies!" You knew then, right?

2. CHARLES 2

(edited)

It's hard, Liv. When I go on these trips, I'm not thinking about food. My mind is too busy entertaining death. It's always there. Somewhere. Lurking. It seems like death is always greeting a colored person at their front door. It doesn't matter if we change our address or put up a sign that flat-out say *Death You Ain't Welcome Here*—we ain't got no choice but to let it in. It's greeting us at church now. Our place of worship? Those four little girls woke up yesterday morning, put on their prettiest of dresses, wore the biggest smiles they could find, thinking they were going to praise the Lord. I bet it ain't cross their minds that that would be the day they'd meet Him. I never thought white people would get so low as to bomb churches.

3. OLIVIA 1

(edited)

Last night I had a dream the sky wasn't on fire anymore. After all this time it just wasn't anymore. But it was still so bright. The sky was filled with...fireflies. For as far as your eyes could see there were fireflies. I didn't know what to do. I got so used to the fire that seeing fireflies in the sky actually scared me. So I start to pray. I ask, what does it all mean? And I hear Him. I hear God. His voice is real faint. I was struggling to hear Him. But I do. He says, "Each firefly is one of my colored kids flying home." That scare

(OLIVIA 1 CONT'D)

me even more because it was so many. I would much rather have fire. I'm used to that. I'm used to the bombings, and crosses burning, and all of that. I'm not used to seeing God's children fly home.

4. OLIVIA 2

(edited)

You would think that after all these years of doing this I wouldn't have to give you notes anymore. That with all the standing in front of so many pulpits and cameras you'd know how to talk to and lead people—without my help. Or, better yet, I wouldn't have to write your speeches. You would think there would come a time when I don't have to write these speeches—a time when death stops trying to be a colored person's best friend. I'm tired of having to write eulogies for flowers that wilted too soon. I keep asking myself, "What is it going to take for things to change?" Huh? What?! After I wait for an answer that never comes, I ask myself, "Is Charles really making a difference?" Then when I realize I have to answer myself, I say, "No, because if he was then things would be different." You ain't doing shit for this world, Charles. Not a damn thing!

UNLIKEABLE HEROINE by Melissa Ross

1. DIANA 1
2. DIANA 2
3. MARGARET 1
4. VIOLET 1
5. WILL 1
6. EDDIE 1

1. DIANA 1

(edited)

You should apologize because one day you are going to pack up your little girl to go to college. And I'm sure you would like her to have four years where she can believe that she has value in the world and that her value is not about helping her middle aged *mentor* navigate his fucking mid-life crisis. You should apologize because if you really truly do consider yourself a "feminist" you could stop feeling like a victim and instead suck it up. And take responsibility. And stop blaming everybody but yourself for the chaos you caused. (*Beat.*) If you truly have "skin in the game" like you say you do. All I'm saying is. Now is the time to step up and prove it.

2. DIANA 2

(edited)

OK done. And... You did it. You put yourself into your thesis. It's beautiful. It's honest. It's truthful. It's a really strong thesis. You should feel really proud of your work. *I'm* really proud of your work. You were really risking something by writing it. Listen there's a moment when the personal turns around a corner

(DIANA 2 CONT'D)

and becomes universal. And... I gasped because you were writing about yourself. But. I knew what that felt like. From my own life. And so. It took me off guard. To see it in print like that. So... I think you should keep it. Clean it up. Go through the minutia. But. As your advisor. I'm going to sign off on this and say well done Violet Rosewood. *(She holds out her hand.)* It was a pleasure working with you.

3. MARGARET 1

(edited)

I've been an orphan for almost twenty years. And I don't have children. *(A bit of a joke.)* And women are supposed to have children, you know. While I don't necessarily agree that we should define anything as "matriarchal" or "patriarchal" I *do* think that. Sisterhood. And the idea of sisterhood as a foundation for a place of higher learning. Isn't something to let go of. Anytime soon. I no longer *have* a mother nor have I *been* a mother but. I have always appreciated the eternal *sisterhood* of Kensington. I can't imagine that when women started going to West Point there was any thought about how to make the school more. Hospitable. To *them*. So. *(Beat.)* Thank you.

4. VIOLET 1

(edited)

OK OK OK so. First thing is. I know this is a sensitive subject for some people. But we reeeeealllly need to get rid of the word sisterhood in the school song. We haven't been an all girls school in over forty years. And so it's insane that we are still referencing our sisterhood in the song. It's supposed to be about friendship and inclusion and it's doing the opposite of that, really. It's ostracizing anybody who doesn't connect to that word. And so... There has been a battle with the old regime but we. We think it should be personhood. The student body really loves personhood. We had survey and it was almost unanimous.

5. WILL 1

(edited)

Why didn't you bring it to me. *(No response.)* I've mentored you for three years and... I'm always open to address any problems that the student body has. I welcome discourse. I just wish you had come to me. That's all. *(Beat.)* I'm really happy for you. That you are working with Diana on this. I think it's great... If Diana brings up the class. To you. If... If you wouldn't mind telling her. That it inspired your thesis? I... I just I love teaching that class you know? And I think it's really important. And I'd hate for it to get sucked up into this politically correct black hole. I mean. *(Beat.)* You don't think it's misogynist? Do you?

6. EDDIE 1

(edited)

Oh for fuck's sake why are you crying! Get it together Eddie! Get it together. You are smart and you are talented and handsome and you are a good person. You will find a husband who loves you. And you will not meet him on Grindr. So. Get off Grindr. Grindr is not a place for husbands. Grindr is wasting your time. You will find a job that isn't this. You will pay off your student loans. You have your whole life ahead of you! You will not wake up eighty years old still standing in the same place. You hear me? You will not. This is not all there is in your life Eddie! You are gonna do. Great things. And so get it together

(EDDIE 1 CONT'D)

and stop crying in your boss's office. Because that is. Wasted fucking energy. Oh for fucks sake how long were you/standing there.
