



Season 2018-2019 Monologues for General Auditions

Monologues are edited and not exactly as they appear in the full scripts.

The Book of Will by Lauren Gunderson

BEN JONSON - 60s, poet laureate of England, friend/rival of Shakespeare, amazing drunk, a bear of a man, surprisingly weepy.

BEN: William. Bloody. Shakespeare. I started your lines - some "good man, good words, hey nonny nonny." Then I said, let me read a play or two to remind myself. I set out at midnight. And I read everything. Hamlet, Lear, Romeo and What's-Her-Name. I'd only ever heard the plays, seen them, never ... been alone with them. And there I was. And there they were, these pinnacles of story, these peaks of heart, and I hate heart! The way he grows in the writing too. As a man himself. But even young, the wisdom he put down. How did he know those things so young? How could he? God help me. I started drinking and haven't stopped since. Of course I knew him. I was with him the day before he ... he died. I was there and I could've ... He was drinking with me, he was out with me. We gorged ourselves, we fought, we drank, we drank more. I could've sent him home. I didn't. Out from the Stratford pub hot and drunk, and he steps outside and falls asleep in the snow. I find him half an hour later, and he's ... the fever was already in him. I could've ... I miss him. I miss the fight, I miss the work. I miss the world. The one we had and loved is gone. Yes, Yes, Yes, he lives on in art. Let me drink and bemoan time's cruel reaping in the corner.

REBECCA HEMINGES - 60s, a good wife. Strong, busy with a grocery business. A woman who has weathered much but loves her husband, sons and God.

REBECCA: All right. Yes. This is mostly absurd and rather improbable, and you're not even publishers. And the project is enormous and costly, and it is all on your head because this theatre has come to depend on you for its very life. But not its art. You gave up the stage, the stage you loved, the stage that made you and made you alive, to make *The King's Men* great, and they are, you are. That's why you have to do this. That book is ... it's you. Those plays are you at your best. You gave up what you loved once, I won't let you do it again. A theater is an empty thing. A theater you fill up. With words. I'm tired too. I'm tired after my long days, and I know my lines aren't grand ones, "apples, pears, figs and nuts," but I say them every day, on cue, with no applause. Because not everyone doing good work gets applause. And not everyone gets the chance at a legacy. Dammit John, that book is mine too. Those plays are mine and Ali's and your sons', and I should tell you to abandon this thing just so I can have you at home, so your children can have you. You know, the little people who sleep here at night. I should tell you to drop this whole thing because that would make my life better and probably yours. But those plays are not yours and not Will's and not Burbage's, no, they're ours, and if they are lost to time, I'm sorry my love, but that will be on your head. So you will do it. Yes, you will.

The Royale by Marco Ramirez

NINA - African American, 30s, Jay's fierce older sister, immovable, stern, smart, loving. Born in another era, she might've ended up leading the Black Panthers or running for District Attorney. But given her time and circumstance, she'll settle for raising the children who will.

NINA: I wasn't gon' come here, Jay. I wanted to let you have this. Truly. Have you thought about what you're doing? In the middle of the title-fight heavyweight champion nonsense, have you stopped to think, for one second that you gon' up'n get somebody killed? I don't think you have, Jay. No, I think you're so caught up in playing David to Goliath, in being the one fish swimming upstream, I think you up and forgot about the rest of us, the ones ain't as strong as you. Where's the checkpoints in Harlem, Jay? Where's the checkpoints in Memphis, New Orleans? 'Cause you know as well as I do what

happens when you knock that bastard out. I don't want you to lose. I'm just afraid of what happens when you win. One day, you won't be the strongest one in the room, Jay. Someday, you'll learn to love things outside of yourself, and once you do, you'll know there's a *lot* out there to be afraid of.

JAY JACKSON - African American, 20s-30s, solid/tall/powerful physique of a champion heavyweight boxer. An athlete through-and-through, but one who operates with the swagger of an artist. Cut from the same cloth that made Michael Jordan, Miles Davis, and Kanye West. A loveable bravado. Seemingly impenetrable, until it's not. Stubborn. Kind. Complicated.

JAY: What we're about to do, out there, it's important. Man said they can't sneak a toothpick into this fight. They got thirty-two checkpoints. Ain't nothing gonna happen. Did you really come back here to tell me to lose? You always been afraid. I ain't come all this way to just give up, not like this, not after all we done. We ain't come all this way – I want this. You remember that pharmacy on Colby Lane? You remember how much you liked those posters they'd put out front? Posters for toothpaste, posters for perfume. How much you liked those pretty ladies in them pictures. How much none o' them ladies looked like *you*.

JAY: Four men with guns come in the night before the biggest fight of my life. You were gonna let me get killed?! I've told you I wanted protection. I'm a target, Max. Hiring a couple men don't do anybody any harm. It's getting' hard for me to tell where their opinion stops and yours begins. Ain't nobody gonna kill "us." They're comin' after me. You don't like this? You want out? You want out, there's the door, Max. You sacrificed? And what did you mean "business as usual?" Four men, four pistols, business as usual. Men showin' up. Men with pistols. You tellin' me it's happened before? Where. Where? WHERE?! I ain't gonna ask again!

Miss Bennet - Christmas at Pemberley by Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon

ANNE DE BOURGH – 20's, only daughter of the late Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Lived in her mother's very large shadow, never having to ask for anything or speak for herself, her entire life. Judgmental and impatient, just like her mother.

ANNE: Arthur, we must leave immediately. I am ready to be away from this place and these people! We have an estate to run. We have a wedding to plan. Arthur. Come. Arthur. Oh, of course you love me. And I you. Since we were children. Now can we please - you require a wife and I a husband. Everyone marries without happiness. You might not have to, but I do. I have to marry you, or I lose everything, Arthur, don't you see? Rosings has always been my home, and it was mother's wish for my future, and what will happen to me if I have nothing? I will be nothing, I will be lost, and I will not be ignored or slighted or thrown aside any longer. For pity's sake, the kind of love you speak of is fiction. It is the stuff of novels and operas ... the ones where everyone dies in the end.

ARTHUR DE BOURGH – male, 25, a studious, unsociable, only child who has never been around women or large families. He is a loner who prefers books to people. He has recently inherited a large estate and has no idea what to do next.

ARTHUR: No. No, I don't wish to leave. No, Miss de Bourgh. I ... foremost, I do not wish you any pain or displeasure. But I cannot marry you. I do not love you. I do not love you. It is as simple as that. I do not wish you any harm, but you must acknowledge that this is an arrangement and not a match of hearts. I cannot, I will not marry without happiness. Everyone does not have to. We do not have to. I will not let you suffer, I promise you on my honor, you may continue to live at Rosings your entire life if you wish. You will have whatever you need. But I will not deny what I know is true. Love is ... attainable. And we are both deserving of it. Of something finer and more free than either of us thought possible, something that is a complement rather than a command. Human hearts are built for stronger stuff. This love I speak of is not fiction. It is very real. I know it is. Now. I do know it.

I Love to Eat: A Love Story with Food by James Still

JAMES BEARD - male, 81, the celebrity chef

JAMES: I often cook in the nude, you know. Doesn't everyone? Be honest! The neighbors complained about me walking around in my undershorts, which I found insulting because I was *not* in my undershorts - I was naked! I got so bored with their complaining that I finally had window shades put up and sent them a note that said, "There! The party's over." Then I built onto the back of my house where I now have this wonderful glassed in conservatory with a shower that's on the second floor, facing the garden, the sky as its ceiling ... and the complaints again. But why shouldn't I do my feeble ablutions in any way and anywhere I want? They don't have to watch. But they do. So you tell me: who's the pervert? I love my shower. Besides, the bathtub is too small. I'd need a crane to haul me in and out of it. And anyway, they'd be gloriously scandalized by my bathroom. It has mirrored walls floor-to-ceiling.

JAMES: The first time was when I was doing a cooking demonstration in a department store. All these people crowded in to see James Beard cook something delicious, and they had these ridiculous hotplates that would not do. So I had my assistant go to the housewares aisle and bring back several irons, propped them up like this and put the skillet right on the iron. I've made delicious steak au poivre and flambeed crepes this way. You can make pancakes right on the iron itself. You can even steam vegetables! You can be a diva and throw a fit, or you can make it work and get applause. Flexibility! It's a requirement in the kitchen. I find it arrogant not to be flexible. Arrogance is from the Latin "a-rogo" which means "I have no questions." I cannot abide arrogance. Never trust anyone who doesn't have questions! My advice: have an opinion about everything, but don't be set in your ways. So what if you change your mind. Changing your mind is liberating. It means you're still alive.