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CONCORD
THEATRICALS

Monologues for 'Others'

by Charlie Josephine

SAMUEL FRENCH

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NOTES ON TEXT

A /.. indicates where a word can't be found, because sometimes words aren't enough, and so the actor expresses something physically instead. This could be a small pedestrian gesture or a big abstract movement. Breath and sound are encouraged.

INTRODUCTION

The first time I encountered the word 'monologue' was when daring myself to apply for drama school. I had to prepare a Classical and a Contemporary monologue, and I didn't know what that meant, or where to begin. I wanted to do Hamlet, obviously. Or Macbeth, or Mercutio! But because I was assigned female at birth, I was told I had to pick a female character's speech. I was seventeen, gender scrambled, working class, neurodiverse, and fucking frustrated. Playing a Shakespearean Queen felt completely ridiculous. I chose Juliet's *'gallop apace'* speech, because I liked the line about cutting out stars. I didn't understand the speech, or the emotional context required to perform it. She felt too 'girly' to me. Which actually is a totally incorrect character assessment, for which I blame Luhrmann more than Shakespeare. It was uncomfortable doing that speech, so to balance the dysphoria I knew I needed something 'punchy' for my Contemporary one. But I couldn't find anything. The local library didn't have much to offer. It looked like there was loads on offer for men, they get all the best parts, all the long speeches, all the juicy words. My mum got bored of my moaning and told me to get on with it, write myself summink to say. So I did. I secretly wrote my Contemporary monologue. And to audition panel after audition panel I said some made-up writer's name had written it, as part of some made-up play that I definitely hadn't seen at my imaginary trip to the Edinburgh Fringe. I lied, again and again. And sometimes the people auditioning me lied back, saying yeah they think they saw that play, yeah it was really good. Which actually is my sneaky top tip for imposter syndrome, tell a lie and watch them lie, cus turns out everyone's winging it.

Anyway, eventually I did get into drama school, and I started writing to give myself parts to play. Because I couldn't find characters like me. And I couldn't bear the pain of that anymore. I needed to be proactive. I needed to learn how to write.

And now I hear that actors are picking bits of *Bitch Boxer*, *Blush* or *Pops* for their auditions speeches! People are using words wot I wrote to get themselves where they wanna be?! It makes me smile so wide! People have been saying for ages that I should put a collection together and so this is it.

This book is for the 'others'. For anyone who's ever felt othered. For us lot. Who deserve celebration and opportunity. I've focused mainly on writing for working-class women and trans people, because that's where my heart is. Class and queerness will forever be an intersecting dance for me. Some of the speeches are from plays I've previously had produced, and some are brand new, daydreamed up just for this book. There is a short description of the character or location before each speech, with some considerations or provocations, for you to use or ignore as you wish. There is also a glossary of themes and tones in the front of the

book, so you can quickly look up speeches that give you a specific feeling or context you're looking for. I've written each one with love, with the actor in mind, hoping to provide some juicy material that will showcase your individual talent. I hope you enjoy them, I hope they make your body feel fizzy, I hope they get you all the jobs, I hope your flowers bloom.

Glossary

Poetic: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 27, 29, 30
Queer: 1, 2, 6, 12, 14, 17, 18, 22, 23, 25
Urgent and Angry: 1, 4, 9, 12, 21, 27, 29, 30
Soft and Intimate: 2, 13, 16, 23
Confessional: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 15, 19, 20, 24, 26, 28
Working Class: 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 15, 19, 22, 23, 26, 28, 29
Funny: 1, 9, 12, 14, 15, 20, 25, 28, 30
Fizzy and Pingy: 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 23, 28, 30
Vulnerable: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 19, 20, 26, 27, 29
Summink with Bite: 1, 5, 9, 11, 12, 14, 19, 20, 21, 24, 27, 29
Epic: 1, 4, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 21, 27
Conversational: 7, 8, 10, 17, 18, 19, 20, 25, 28

1

*(***RABBIT** *from* Moon Licks*, written for Royal Welsh College and Paines Plough. Directed by Sean Linnen,* Moon Licks *was first performed at Cardiff's Richard Burton Theatre and London's The Yard Theatre in 2022. Everyone in* Moon Licks *is half-human-half-animal. It's a strange, dystopian world, only eight characters are left, after the day The Rains Came. Rabbit is possibly trans*, definitely queer. They're very sexy, very in their body, they make everyone's head turn. This is the first and only time they've ever spoken in the play. There's flashes of real rage here under the quick torrent of words. They speak confidently and directly to the audience, all during an abstract dance sequence, lights flashing and bass thumping. This speech can be performed by an actor of any gender.)*

RABBIT. I see you, looking at me, thinking you're in charge but, *it's an illusion*! I direct your attention to exactly where I want it. I'm in control. Look. Here. Here. Here. Now here! Now here! Now here! Admire the arch of my foot, my long long legs, my derriere my dear. Oops! Made you look, made you stare. *Look!* Keep your eyes peeled. Don't blink! Or you'll miss it. I walk down the street and I *feel them* looking, I *feel* their eyes on me and *I* control what they see. *Look!*

Light reflects off me, and passes through your Cornea and the Optical Lens, producing a clear image, on a sheet of Photoreceptors called the Retina. The

Retina sends the information, in the form of electrical signals through the Lateral Geniculate Nucleus of the Thalamus to the Primary Visual Cortex, located in the Occipital Lobe in the back of your brain. Your brain then transfers the signal to the Spinal Cord, allllllllll the way down, to your Genitals. Those high high high levels of Testosterone in your blood signal the arteries in your shaft to open. The veins tighten, locking the blood in your cock, causing it to grow enlarged and firm. The skin of the Scrotum is pulled tighter, and the Testes are retracted up against the body. The head of the Erect Penis will swell. The Testicles grow double in size, produce Pre-Ejaculatory Fluid, functioning as a lubricant and an acid neutralizer stain your Calvin Klein's bought on sale last Christmas in TK Maxx.

I, on the other hand, continue to sashay my way down the alleyway, uninterrupted, uninterested, bored. Listen. I've been around the kings, been around the princes, the politicians, the performers, the butchers the bakers the 'can't-help-myself-love's, the vegans the veggies and the carnivores, the 'just-a-little's, and the 'please-give-me-more's, the emperors, the dukes, the bankers in their suits, the west-end wide boys and the east-end gangsters, the northern quarter and the southern hemisphere, the millionaire businessmen and the drunks on your park bench, the clergy and the laymen, the fathers and their sons, the tall the short the long the fat the wide, the boss, the henchmen, the gang, the boys, the lads lads lads, all the lads, I've had *all* the lads looking at me, they *all* look at *me*. And I tell you what, feels the same. They all feel, *exactly*, the same. Nothing special about a single one of them.

So d'you know what? Bring the rain again, I say *bring it*! Bring the rain, bring the thunder, I'll survive it all! I'm powerful, I'm full of power, I'm centre stage and I am *not* afraid!

2

*(***JAX** *from* Massive *written for Audible, directed by Julia Head, released in 2020.* **JAX** *is a nonbinary chef dating Emily, a cis woman. The couple are madly in love, it's all poetry and fireworks.* **JAX** *is AFAB and enjoying their masculinity. They're working class and not usually this poetic in public, so this speech is a rare glimpse into their inner world. Performed directly to the audience, whilst Emily is asleep. Enjoy the poetry but avoid indulging in it. Lean into the desire to be understood, the struggle to articulate these huge feelings. This speech could be performed by an actor of any gender.)*

JAX. I think about her mouth. Dream about her tongue. Lose hours deliberatin' perfect proportions of salt, heat, fat, sweat. Want it to be *just right*, you see, I cook for her. Shape up recipes, concoct combinations so exquisite she nearly loses her mind, bring her back down to earth just in time for the next mouthful. I study her taste buds. Learn the sugar chasin' young ones push their way up to the front, eager and impatient. The middle are more mature, craving savoury tones, softer, more mellow, somethin' to savour, to swill, to swim and to sink in. Delicious sinking, aromatic magic, swirl starlight, flowers and thunder, I'm cooking up a storm one spoon at a time. And down the sides? I set 'em alight, spark electricity, zinging and bright and bouncin' up into her cheeks, make her whole face light up grinnin'! A festival of flavour, taste buds havin' a rave up, we started a riot! Pain't each of her teeth with glitter. Spray pain't love letters on the roof. Swing on her tonsils. Bang on her gums a war cry of love, we fought, we conquered, we came! Fill the whole of her mouth with my name! Hear her moan it again, and

again! And again and again and again. *Here babes*, *taste this*, offer you the spoon, watch you chew for clues, how'd I do? What's that flavour doin' for you? Watch you lick your lips, your eyes closed, then suddenly wide, you ask for more and I wanna cry. Seein' I've satisfied you? Inspired you, ignited reactions inside of you? See, I *dream*, of your mouth. Keeps me up *all* night and… alright? Babes, shhh, go back to sleep… And yeah okay, I know I'm punching. She's a queen, and I ain't nearly good enough. But I'm trying. Gonna work all the hours in the restaurant, graft harder than anybody, show her I'm a somebody, but for now it's just her body and mine.

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