

Sock' N 'Buskin Monologue Compilation

Here are some examples of monologues you can use for your audition. It is not required for you to use one of these, but you can if you would like.

Dramatic Monologues

Female

500 Days of Summer

SUMMER: I dream about flying. Not really flying. More like... floating. Like, it starts out I'm running really fast.

And then the... terrain... gets all rocky and steep. But I don't slow down. I just climb higher with every stride. Before I know it, I'm... floating.

I'm going so fast my feet don't even touch the ground. I'm up in the air and I'm ... I don't know... free. It's this incredible feeling.

But then I look down. And the minute I do... everything changes. There I am... I'm floating, high above the earth, nothing can touch me, right? I'm free and I'm safe and it hits me, just like that... I'm completely, utterly, alone.

And then I wake up. I've never told anyone that.

Five Women Wearing the Same Dress

GEORGEANNE: I was walking down the aisle; first thing I saw was the back of his head. It jumped right out at me. I recognized that little hair patter on the back of his neck, where his hair starts. You know where it comes to those two little points, and it's darker than the rest? I always thought that was so sexy. Then I looked at him during the ceremony, and something about the way the light hit his face ... I swear, it just broke my heart. And then outside, I saw him talking to this awful woman in a navy blue linen dress with absolutely no back, I mean you could almost see her butt. And he was smiling at her with that smile, that same smile that used to make me feel like I really meant something to him. And then it all came back, just bang, all those times I sat waiting for his phone call, me going out of my way to make things convenient for him. You know, I started smoking cigarettes because of him. And if I ever die of cancer, I swear it's going to be Tommy Valentine's fault.

Can I Be a Mother?

REBECCA: Jeannine, do you know what he said to me? He said that I would be a really beautiful Mother. I just don't know if I've got it in me. I mean, I love kids, I do. But if I'm around them too much, I get agitated. I hear things will be different with my own child... will it really? How do I truly know that? I mean I've always been pretty selfish. I've put myself first in many situations, if a friend wants to meet uptown and I'm downtown, I'm not going to go out of my way. It's not that I'm a bad person, I don't think that's it, I just think I get overly conscious of time. I worry a lot about time and if I feel that anything is sucking my time, it starts to eat away at me... I delve into this deep depression knowing I've wasted a day trying to fix someone else's problem.

It's not an age thing either, I've been like this since I was a kid, come to think of it...perhaps it was my Mother who brought this upon me...I mean she was and still is a great Mother but I remember waiting for hours at the school entrances, waiting to be picked up, all the cars were gone, all the children had gone home and there I was, slumped over on the sidewalk...waiting. I wasn't reading, I wasn't writing or talking...just waiting. Perhaps that messed me up psychologically but we will always find someone to blame something on, right? See, I'm coming up with all these excuses, it's not fair to blame it on anyone else. I just can't seem to figure this out, I know it can't be fear, I'm just worried I guess, that I'll be sucked into the routine of some of those desperate Mothers who put every ounce of energy into their own child, and none into themselves...I love him and it's a shame that I can't see the joy in creating a little boy or girl that will have all the beauty he does...I couldn't think of a man who would be a better Father.

Male

One of the Good Guys

CARLSTON: How can you say that stuff about me in the media, Jim? I've known you for twenty-one odd years and you go and slander my name, my entire reputation on things that aren't even fact checked? How do you know?! How do you know if the allegations against me are true or false? There is no leaked source, there is no solid data, there are no facts, Jim.

What you have is a deep desire to get your story out to the masses and hurt everything I've worked so hard for because it will make you shine and make you a rock star journalist. Am I right? Am I right?

Well, you blew it, pal. I will take you for everything you are worth. I will destroy you, the same way you have tried to destroy me. And why? Huh? Why? Why me? You know who I am, what I'm about. Why me?!

You're double-dealing, aren't you? Getting a big payoff from one of my competitors, is that it? ...Okay, if that's the way they want to play ball, then that is the way we will play ball.

You know Jim, I actually liked you. I thought you were one of the good guys and I'm usually a pretty damn good judge of character. I am. But this has all taken me for quite a loop. Maybe I am losing my touch cause I didn't see this coming.

But one things for sure Jim, it will be set right...

A Faint Whisper of Love or Compassion

JACOB: All these years I've often wondered why I've had such a lousy father. You've never given a damn about me...at best, maybe a faint whisper of love or compassion but never anything truly substantial.

I'm looking at you now and I feel bad for you. It must have been hard to walk in your shoes.
(pause.)

You kill me. You really do. I never understood how a man can just give up on life and yet still physically exist...holding on, holding on...

I don't know, dad. You've taught me how not to be and for that, I'm grateful. Whatever was lacking in your DNA I am sure to make certain that it's in mine.

(beat)

I have a son. His name is Jacob. Like me. Like you. He's the most beautiful thing I've ever seen in all my life. My son is giving me everything that was empty for so long... I wanted to come here and tell you this face to face... I wanted you to know that you have a Grandson. I don't expect nothing. I only wanted you to know because it's right for you to know... I guess. So... congratulations on being a Grandfather.

The Breakfast Club

ANDY: Do you guys know what I did to get in here? I taped Larry Lester's buns together. Yeah, you know him? Well then, you know how hairy he is, right? Well, when they pulled the tape off, most of his hair came off and some skin too. And the bizarre thing is, is that I did it for my old man. I tortured this poor kid because I wanted him to think I was cool. He's always going off about, you know, when he was in school, all the wild things he used to do, and I got the feeling that he was disappointed that I never cut loose on anyone, right? So, I'm sitting in the locker room and I'm taping up my knee and Larry's undressing a couple lockers down from me and he's kinda, kinda skinny, weak, and I started thinking about my father and his attitude about weakness, and the next thing I knew I, I jumped on top of him and started wailing on him. Then my friends, they just laughed and cheered me on. And afterwards, when I was sittin' in Vernon's office, all I could think about was Larry's father and Larry having to go home and explain what happened to him. And the humiliation, the humiliation he must have felt. It must have been unreal. I mean, how do you apologize for something like that? There's no way. It's all because of me and my old man. God, I hate him. He's like, he's like this mindless machine I can't even relate to anymore. "Andrew, you've got to be number one. I won't tolerate any losers in this family. Your intensity is for sht." You son of a bitch. You know, sometimes I wish my knee would give and I wouldn't be able to wrestle anymore. He could forget all about me.

Gender Neutral

Silent Treatment

What's wrong? ...What happened? Why you in such a mood? You can't talk to me? Is it something I did? Did I do something? What? What is it? Can't you talk to me? Is this the silent treatment? Is that what you're doing? Are you giving me the silent treatment? Why do you always do this when you're upset with me? Don't you think it's better to talk about it? Why do you do this to me all the time? Do you really think that this is going to solve things or improve things between us? Do you ever take my feelings into consideration? Do you ever think that this makes me extremely frustrated and crazy?! Is that why you do it? Do you think I'm a mind reader?? Do you want me to go completely insane at some point in this relationship?! (pause.)

Why can't you just tell me the point of all of this?

Custody

Do you know what it's like to be trapped between your parents? Well, I do. And you know something, it sucks. You see, my parents are divorced. I'm not upset by the divorce; I mean I can hardly remember their marriage. And I'm really glad that they both found someone else to spend their lives with. But damn, why can't I just be left out of the whole deal? I live with my mother

who has full custody of me. I hate the sound of that - custody. It makes me sound like a prisoner, which I am most of the time. Or worse, like I'm just one more thing that needs to be divided up. Who gets the house? The car? The kid? Like I said, my mother's got me in her clutches, but that doesn't stop my father from trying to snag me. Like last weekend, for example, my father called, asking if he could see me. My mother said no, because she'd already made other plans for us. Then, like every other time, they scream and yell, curse each other out, and it always ends up with one of them slamming down the phone. I thought that's why they got divorced, to stop all that crap. You know what is really ironic about the whole thing? Both my mother and father knew perfectly well that I'd already made other plans, just to get away from the two of them. It's pretty frustrating to feel that way. To feel like I have to constantly avoid them. Sometimes it makes me crazy going back and forth between them like a goddamn tennis ball. It won't be forever, though. You see, I have this plan. I figure that, when I'm eighteen, I'll just pack up my stuff and move to California or Alaska. Anyplace where I won't be caught between them anymore. That way I can live my own life, make my own decisions. And I promise myself that, when I have kids, I'll never do to them what my parents did to me.

Split Second

VAL: That's right! I lost it! I finally lost my "cool". I snapped, and it was all out front. And do you want to know how long I've been waiting to do it? All my life. The "chip" just got too heavy, and I didn't want to carry it around anymore. One split second, that's all it took to knock it off, and that make him dead. No, it didn't happen to you. Not you. But let's say it did happen. One time, one night, when you'd finally heard it once too often. It was hot out. It was dark. You were alone. The scum of the earth, spitting it out at you. And you didn't want to take it anymore. You couldn't take it anymore. And then "click". Nobody heard the shot, and nobody heard him fall. Who was he anyway. Nobody. What would you have done? Thrown it all away? Just because somebody, the lowest of the low, screamed at you once too often and once too loud?!

Comedic Monologues

Female

The Fantasticks

LUISA: This morning a bird woke me up. It was a lark, or a peacock; something like that. So I said hello. And it vanished, flew away, the very moment I said hello! It was quite mysterious. So do you know what I did? I went to my mirror and brushed my hair two hundred times, without stopping. And as i was brushing it, my hair turned mauve. No, honestly! Mauve! Then red. then some sort of a deep blue when the sun hit it.... I'm sixteen years old, and every day something happens to me. i don't know what to make of it. When i get up in the morning and get dressed, I can tell...something's different. I like to touch my eyelids, because they're never quite the same. oh, oh, oh! I hug myself till my arms turn blue, then I close my eyes and cry and cry till the tears come down and I can taste them. I love to taste my tears. I am special. I am special! Please god, please, don't let me be normal!

Phone Calls

MEAGAN: Why do these guys have to play these stupid asinine games? Why do they have to have a dumb three day rule? I mean, if you like me and you are thinking about me, pick up your phone and dial my number. Right? Why play these games? What is it, so they don't look desperate or something? They have to PROVE their manliness. Whippiddy doo! Waiting three days is stupid and it gets the guy no where because by the time he does call, who wants to be bothered???

I'm certainly not going to wait around all damn day for HIS call. I met Frank like three days ago, yeah, it was Saturday night. He hasn't called me. We text messaged each other for like half a day but he still hasn't called me to make plans of any kind. What is wrong with him? I talk, I'm a good phone talker, I like talking, I love talking actually but he needs to call me. I'm not even going to answer the phone when he calls me. I'm going to make HIM wait now. See if he likes that. Yep. Watch, as soon as he calls, HA, let the phone ring until it reaches my voice-mail. Than we'll see if he leaves a mess-

(her phone rings and it's Frank)

Oh shit! It's HIM! It's Frank, Oh my God, Oh my God, what should I do? Should I pick up? Should I answer? Should I pick up?! Wait let him leave a message. No wait, I gotta get a grip, let him leave a message....

(pause)

I'm waiting for the little BEE BOO noise my phone makes when someone leaves a message. (beat) He didn't leave a message. DAMN IT! I should have picked up! Should I call him back? Should I call him? Should I call him back? Does it look bad to call him back if he didn't leave a message? I don't want to look needy. Cause I'm not, I'm not needy. Right? Right? I'm not the needy type right? Okay, so what should I do?

(her phone rings again)

Oh shit! It's Frank, it's Frank, it's Frank, it's Frank. Okay, okay, okay, okay, okay! Ummmmmmmm, I gotta answer now right? Yeah, okay, I'm gonna, oh boy, gotta take a few deep breaths....

(she takes a few deep breaths)

(she answers her phone overly calm)

Hellllllo!

Clueless

CHER: Everything I think and everything I do is wrong. I was wrong about Elton, I was wrong about Christian, and now Josh hated me. It all boiled down to one inevitable conclusion, I was just totally clueless... Oh and this whole Josh and Ty thing was wiggin' me more than anything. I mean, what was my problem? Ty is my pal, I don't begrudge her a boyfriend. I really... Oooh! I wonder if they have that in my size! What does she want with Josh anyway? He dresses funny, he listens to complaint rock, he's not even cute in a conventional way... I mean, he's just like this slug that hangs around the house all the time! Ugh! And he's a hideous dancer, couldn't take him anywhere. Wait a second, what am I stressing about, this is like, Josh. Okay, okay.....so he's kind of a Baldwin. What would he want with Ty, she couldn't make him happy, Josh needs someone with imagination, someone to take care of him, someone to laugh at his jokes in case he ever makes any...the suddenly.... Oh my god! I love Josh! I'm majorly, totally, butt crazy in love with Josh! But now I don't know how to act around him. I mean normally I'd strut around in my cutest little outfits, and send myself flowers and candy but I couldn't do that stuff with Josh.

Male

Ferris Bueller's Day Off

FERRIS BUELLER: The key to faking out the parents is the clammy hands. It's a good non-specific symptom. A lot of people will tell you that a phony fever is a dead lock, but if you get a nervous mother, you could land in the doctor's office. That's worse than school. What you do is, you fake a stomach cramp, and when you're bent over, moaning and wailing, you lick your palms. It's a little childish and stupid, but then, so is high school.

I did have a test today. That wasn't bullsh!t. It's on European socialism. I mean, really, what's the point? I'm not European, I don't plan on being European, so who gives a crap if they're socialist? They could be fascist anarchists - that still wouldn't change the fact that I don't own a car. Not that I condone fascism, or any ism for that matter. Isms in my opinion are not good. A person should not believe in an ism - he should believe in himself. I quote John Lennon: "I don't believe in Beatles - I just believe in me." A good point there. Of course, he was the Walrus. I could be the Walrus - I'd still have to bum rides off of people.

Brigadoon

JEFF DOUGLAS: Well, kiddies, that's what happened to Tommy today. But, what about his friend Jeff? Well, he had fun too. Tonight he went running off through the woods after some highland hot-head who was gonna make all the people disappear by crossing the wrong street. Well after a while, Jeff thought he saw a bird perched low in a tree, and he shot at it. Something fell to the ground. He rushed over to it, and whaddya think it was? It was hot-head Harry. Yessir, the boy Dermish himself, lying there looking all dead....Now to kill somebody somewhere else in the world would've been an awful thing, but you see, Harry was a citizen of the little town that wasn't there, and he probably never lived in the first place. Chances are there weren't even any woods. In fact the whole day probably never even happened, because you see, this is a fairy tale...(angry) Dream stuff, boy, all made up outta broomsticks and wishing wells! It's either that or a boot camp for lunatics, I don't know what goes on around here. All I know is that whatever it is, it's got nothing to do with me and nothing to do with you! And anything that happens to either of us just doesn't count! How can it when you don't understand it? And you wanna give up your family, your friends, your whole life for this? It's not even worth arguing about. Now go say goodbye to the little people and thank them for the picnic!...You're confused aren't ya boy? You know, if you believed as much as you think you do, you wouldn't be.

Banana Boys

SHEL: Okay, cell phone, me and you need to talk. We've been through a lot together. The last 6 months here have been... marginal. I've given your number to a few people, and so far, no one calls you but The Boys back home. This sucks for both of us. I mean, we came to Ottawa to find someone. To end The Quest. Twenty-four years old, and I still hadn't had a serious girlfriend. Or any sort of girlfriend. I almost had you disconnected. (pause) Don't look at me like that, I didn't go through with it. And do you know why? Because the day we stopped looking... was the day we met Her. I went twenty minutes out of my way, in minus-thirty-degree weather, to walk Her home, breaking the ice in front of Her with my CSA approved boots so She wouldn't slip and fall. She's wonderful. (He beams.) I have Her your number, and She said She'd call. So... cell phone, if ever you were going to ring, if ever you were going to make that special connection... let it be now. You're fully charged. We're sitting in the bathtub where you get the best reception.

So... ring. (It doesn't ring.) C'mon. Please? (nothing) She's really special. She's got these beautiful eyes, and really great hair, and... I'm prattling, but... the way She – The phone rings. SHEL is startled, then fumbles the phone and picks it up. Hello? (pause) Kathy! Hi! (pause) No, I'm not busy, just... waiting... for you. (pause) Oh man, that sounds lame, doesn't it? I didn't... uh... (pause) Really? Well, I think you're sweet too...

Gender Neutral

The Stage Manager's Nightmare

STAGE MANAGER: Hello, I'm your front-of-house manager and I really must apologize to you for the delay this evening. The show will be beginning shortly... while we're waiting I may as well tell you a little about the work. As you probably know it's about a king whose wife is raped by two gentlemen - perhaps gentlemen isn't the word I'm looking for - who cut off both her hands and removed her tongue in order that she will not be able to identify them. Eventually, however, the husband discovers the ruffians' identity, bakes them into a pie and serves the boys to their parents. It's a tragedy. A Shakespearean tragedy. That means everybody dies. If it was a comedy everybody would get married, except for the villain. It's not a very good play actually, but I'm sure you'll enjoy it. After all, it is Shakespeare... And while we're waiting I'll introduce you to some of the people involved in the show. Fred Jenkins, our lighting board operator. Susan Wong, who does our sound. I'd like to introduce you to the author, but he couldn't be with us this evening. That was a joke. You see, the author's dead. Died hundreds of years ago. That's why everybody does his play — no royalties.

500 Days of Summer

Actually. You know what? Can I say something about the cat? Yeah, uh, this is- and Rhoda, no disrespect here....but, um, this is total shit. "Go for it" and "You can do it"? That's not inspirational. That's suicidal. (Points to the greeting cards) If Pickles goes for it there, that's a dead cat. These are lies. We're liars....think about it. Why do people buy these cards? It's not because they wanna say how they feel. People buy these cards because they can't say how they feel or they are afraid to. We provide the service that lets them off the hook. And you know what? I say the hell with it. I say let's level with America. At least let them speak with themselves. I mean, look at this. What does it say? Congratulations on the new baby. How about congratulations for your new baby, guess that's it for hanging out. Nice knowing ya buddy. Wait, what's this? Ooh... fancy!

Look at this one with all the hearts. Let's open it up. "Happy Valentine's Day, Sweetheart. I love you." Oh that's nice. This is exactly what I'm talking about? What does it even mean? Love. Do you know? Do you? Anybody? If somebody gave me this card, Mr Vance, I would eat it. It's the cards and the movies and the pop songs. They are to blame for all the lies and the heartache. We are responsible. I am responsible. I think we do a bad thing here. I mean, people should be able to say how they feel, how they really feel, not some words that some stranger puts in their mouth. Maybe it's not love at all. Maybe there's no such thing as love. Maybe it's... "galoogoo." Yeah I made it up, so what?! (Tom gets up and walks to the door.) It's all crap. We make and peddle crap. And sometimes people believe in this crap. I just can't do it anymore, Mr. Vance. There's enough bullshit in the world without my help. I quit.

Pterodactyls

In the beginning, there were dinosaurs. Lots of dinosaurs. And they were big. They were very, very large – in comparison to man they were. They were huge. And there were so many different kinds. There were ceratops and stegosaurus. There was the tyrannosaurus and the pterodactyl. And they lived, not in harmony, roaming the earth at will, raping, as it were, the planet and pillaging without regard. And, and um ... uh. (*He loses his place and quickly checks his pockets for notes.*) Um, I seem to have forgotten my notes. I'm sorry. I thought I left them in my pocket. Maybe I wasn't supposed to wear this. Maybe I left them on the table. Maybe I – oh well, it doesn't matter now. I don't have them. That's the point. I think I remember most of it – Maybe I left them – it doesn't matter. Where was I? Oh, yes. It got cold. That's right, it got very, very cold and all the dinosaurs died. They all died. At once. It got cold and they died. And the land masses shifted and arranged themselves into the pattern we see now on the map. Basically. I think. There weren't any divisions for countries or states or anything, and I'm sure California was bigger, but it resembled what's on the map. During the cold spell, which is generally referred to as “the ice age” – or maybe it was before the ice age, or after it – I can't remember – but life started spontaneously. In a lake. Here, I think. And amoebas multiplied and became fish – don't ask me how – which evolved into monkeys. And then one day, the monkeys stood up, erect, realized they had opposing thumbs and developed speech. Thus, Mankind was born. Here. Some people liked Africa, so they stayed there and became black. Some people left, looking for something, and became Europeans. And the Europeans forgot about the Africans and made countries and Queen Elizabeth executed her own half-sister Mary Queen of Scots. Some Europeans were Jewish, but most were Christians of some kind, Jesus having been born some time prior – oops, I forgot that. I'm sorry. Jesus was born. And there were other religions too, but I can't remember much about them, so I'm sure they weren't very important. During the Renaissance people got very fat. Picasso sculpted “David”, Marco Polo invented pizza, Columbus discovered the new world and Gaetan Dugas discovered the fountain of youth. Europeans imported tea, to drink. Edison invented the telephone. Martha Graham invented modern dance. Hitler invented fascism and Rose Kennedy invented nepotism. Orson Wells made Citizen Kane and mothers loved their children, who rebelled, and the sun shined most of the time, except when it rained and there was a rhythm to our breathing. There was an order to the world. I give you this brief summary of events, this overview, so you'll have some perspective. I'm sure I got some of it wrong. I've lost my notes, but it's basically the idea. And I wanted you to have, I think, some sense of history.

Classical Monologues

Female

As You Like It

PHEBE: Think not I love him, though I ask for him;
'Tis but a peevish boy; yet he talks well.
But what care I for words? Yet words do well
When he that speaks them pleases those that hear.

It is a pretty youth; not very pretty;
But sure he's proud; and yet his pride becomes him.
He'll make a proper man. The best thing in him
Is his complexion; and faster than his tongue
Did make offense, his eye did heal it up.
He is not very tall; yet for his year's he's tall.
His leg is but so so; and yet 'tis well.
There was a pretty redness in his lip,
A little riper and more lusty red
Than that mixed in his cheek; 'twas just the difference
Betwixt the constant red and mingled damask.
There be some women, Silvius, had they marked him
In parcels as I did, would have gone near
To fall in love with him; but, for my part,
I love him not nor hate him not; and yet
I have more cause to hate him than to love him;
For what had he to do to chide at me?
He said mine eyes were black and my hair black;
And, now I am rememb'red, scorned at me.
I marvel why I answered not again.
But that's all one; omittance is no quittance.
I'll write to him a very taunting letter,
And thou shalt bear it. Wilt thou, Silvius?

A Midsummers Night's Dream

HELENA: How happy some o'er other some can be!
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;
He will not know what all but he do know.
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,
So I, admiring of his qualities.
Things base and vile, holding no quantity,
Love can transpose to form and dignity.
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind,
And therefore is winged Cupid painted blind.
Nor hath Love's mind of any judgment taste;
Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haste.
And therefore is Love said to be a child,
Because in choice he is so oft beguiled.
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,
So the boy Love is perjured everywhere.
For ere Demetrius looked on Hermia's eyne,
He hailed down oaths that he was only mine;
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolved, and show'rs of oaths did melt.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight.

Then to the wood will he to-morrow night
Pursue her; and for this intelligence
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense.
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
To have his sight thither and back again.

Macbeth

HECATE: Have I not reason, beldams as you are,
Saucy and overbold? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close contriver of all harms,
Was never called to bear my part
Or show the glory of our art?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful, who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now: get you gone
And at the pit of Acheron
Meet me i' th' morning. Thither he
Will come to know his destiny.
Your vessels and your spells provide,
Your charms and everything beside.
I am for th' air. This night I'll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end.
Great business must be wrought ere noon.
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vap'rous drop profound;
I'll catch it ere it come to ground:
And that, distilled by magic sleights,
Shall raise such artificial sprites
As by the strength of their illusion
Shall draw him on to his confusion.
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear:
And you all know security
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.

Male

Othello

OTHELLO: Her father loved me, oft invited me;
Still questioned me the story of my life
From year to year -- the battles, sieges, fortunes

That I have passed.
I ran it through, even from my boyish days
To th' very moment that he bade me tell it.
Wherein I spoke of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field;
Of hairbreadth scapes i' the' imminent deadly breach;
Of being taken by the insolent foe
And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence
And portance in my travels' history;
Wherein of anters vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven,
It was my hint to speak -- such was the process;
And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders. This to hear
Would Desdemona seriously incline;
But still the house affairs would draw her thence;
Which ever she could with haste dispatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse. Which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour, and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intentively. I did consent,
And often did beguile her of her tears
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffered. My story being done,
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs.
She swore, i' faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange;
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful.
She wished she had not heard it; yet she wished
That heaven had made her such a man. She thanked me;
And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake.
She loved me for the dangers I had passed,
And I loved her that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have used.
Here comes the lady. Let her witness it

Julius Ceaser

BRUTUS: Our course will seem too bloody, Caius Cassius,
To cut the head off and then hack the limbs,
Like wrath in death and envy afterwards;
For Antony is but a limb of Caesar:

Let us be sacrificers, but not butchers, Caius.
We all stand up against the spirit of Caesar;
And in the spirit of men there is no blood:
O, that we then could come by Caesar's spirit,
And not dismember Caesar! But, alas,
Caesar must bleed for it! And, gentle friends,
Let's kill him boldly, but not wrathfully;
Let's carve him as a dish fit for the gods,
Not hew him as a carcass fit for hounds:
And let our hearts, as subtle masters do,
Stir up their servants to an act of rage,
And after seem to chide 'em. This shall make
Our purpose necessary and not envious:
Which so appearing to the common eyes,
We shall be call'd purgers, not murderers.
And for Mark Antony, think not of him;
For he can do no more than Caesar's arm
When Caesar's head is off.

Twelfth Night

SEBASTIAN: This is the air; that is the glorious sun;
This pearl she gave me, I do feel't and see't;
And though 'tis wonder that enwraps me thus,
Yet 'tis not madness. Where's Antonio, then?
I could not find him at the Elephant;
Yet there he was; and there I found this credit,
That he did range the town to seek me out.
His counsel now might do me golden service;
For though my soul disputes well with my sense,
That this may be some error, but no madness,
Yet doth this accident and flood of fortune
So far exceed all instance, all discourse,
That I am ready to distrust mine eyes
And wrangle with my reason that persuades me
To any other trust but that I am mad
Or else the lady's mad; yet, if 'twere so,
She could not sway her house, command her followers,
Take and give back affairs and their dispatch
With such a smooth, discreet and stable bearing
As I perceive she does: there's something in't
That is deceiveable. But here the lady comes.

Gender Neutral

As You Like It

JAQUES: All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first, the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.
Then the whining schoolboy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like a snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like a furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slippered pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side;
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank, and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion,
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

A Midsummers Night's Dream

PUCK: My mistress with a monster is in love.
Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial-day.
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
Who Pyramus presented, in their sport
Forsook his scene and enter'd in a brake
When I did him at this advantage take,
An ass's nole I fixed on his head:
Anon his Thisbe must be answered,

And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy,
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,
Rising and cawing at the gun's report,
Sever themselves and madly sweep the sky,
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly;
And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls;
He murder cries and help from Athens calls.
Their sense thus weak, lost with their fears thus strong,
Made senseless things begin to do them wrong;
For briars and thorns at their apparel snatch;
Some sleeves, some hats, from yielders all things catch.
I led them on in this distracted fear,
And left sweet Pyramus translated there:
When in that moment, so it came to pass,
Titania waked and straightway loved an ass.

Henry IV Part II

RUMOUR: Open your ears; for which of you will stop
The vent of hearing when loud Rumour speaks?
I, from the orient to the drooping west,
Making the wind my post-horse, still unfold
The acts commenced on this ball of earth.
Upon my tongues continual slanders ride,
The which in every language I pronounce,
Stuffing the ears of men with false reports.
I speak of peace while covert enmity,
Under the smile of safety, wounds the world;
And who but Rumour, who but only I,
Make fearful musters and prepar'd defence,
Whiles the big year, swoln with some other grief,
Is thought with child by the stern tyrant war,
And no such matter? Rumour is a pipe
Blown by surmises, jealousies, conjectures,
And of so easy and so plain a stop
That the blunt monster with uncounted heads,
The still-discordant wav'ring multitude,
Can play upon it. But what need I thus
My well-known body to anatomize
Among my household? Why is Rumour here?
I run before King Harry's victory,
Who, in a bloody field by Shrewsbury,
Hath beaten down young Hotspur and his troops,
Quenching the flame of bold rebellion
Even with the rebels' blood. But what mean I
To speak so true at first? My office is

To noise abroad that Harry Monmouth fell
Under the wrath of noble Hotspur's sword,
And that the King before the Douglas' rage
Stoop'd his anointed head as low as death.