



Actors
College
of Theatre
& Television



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Actors College of Theatre & Television
Australia's leading independent college for the performing arts

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2008 ACTT Female Audition Pieces

Diploma of Performance Practice
Advanced Diploma of Arts in Stage & Screen Acting

Welcome to your audition at ACTT

Preparing for the Audition

Please rehearse three monologues for your audition. Two pieces must be selected from this booklet and your third monologue can be one of your own choosing. One piece may be Shakespearean, but it is not a set requirement of the audition. Additionally you may be asked to sing a few verses of an unaccompanied song, also of your own choosing so please be prepared.

Choosing audition material

Keep in mind that the panel wants to see you at your best, so make choices that appeal to you but that also suit you (age, type, nationality etc.) To show your acting range, select strongly contrasting pieces. Your pieces should be no longer than two minutes. Do not use audition pieces you have devised or written yourself, or ones that are extracted from poems or novels, please keep your selection to established monologues.

What does ACTT look for in an audition?

ACTT is looking for moments that make us listen and feel something for you in your performance. Our training methods are oriented to prepare actors for theatre as well as film and we will be looking to discover if you will be able to allow an emotion to connect you with the lines and situation of the piece. We know that you will be nervous and we will take this into account but please be aware that if you have learned the lines well, the nerves will become performance energy and not paralyse you.

Hints for preparing your audition piece/s:

- Be well-prepared, and allow sufficient lead time - two weeks for each monologue is a good guide. We do not expect highly polished work and it can in fact work against you if you are locked into one way of performing a piece.
- Know what each scene and speech is about and read the entire play from which it comes so that you are aware of the context of the piece. Think about doing your preparation with another person as your scene partner or your audience. Basic furniture will be available, but do not plan to use hand props or costumes.
- Don't use an accent other than your own unless absolutely vital to the piece.
- When preparing, ask some vital questions of the piece including: How does this piece affect you? What emotions does the character go through? What does your character want? What are the circumstances? What is the character doing physically?
- Make bold choices in your interpretation and in your performance.
- Have fun with it!

What to bring and wear?

Wear loose comfortable clothing and soft-soled shoes (no high heels, boots, thongs or bare feet please!) to allow you to move and work easily. Avoid wearing jewellery that could fall off, get tangled, or become lost or damaged and please remove any tongue or facial piercings. Bring bottled water to drink on the day. Audition books can provide useful tips on how to prepare. A good selection is available from *Ariel Books*, 42 Oxford St, Paddington or *Performing Arts Bookshop*, 262 Pitt St, Sydney, 2000.

Rose: You really love him, don't you?

Quick: Everyone loved him. He was the funniest, stupidest kid in the whole bloody world, and everybody loved him. He's my brother.

Rose: Geez, I've got two of them, and I couldn't say I even liked them.

Quick: You would have loved him.

Rose: I probably did. You reckon we'd be any good married to each other?

Quick: Gimme that bottle!

Cloudstreet

Tim Winton

Rose & Quick

Rose: What are you like, Quick Lamb?

Quick: What sort of question's that?

Rose: Can't you answer it?

Quick: What am I like? A bit lost, I suppose.

Rose: The lost Lamb.

Quick: Yeah, I feel a bit sheepish about that.

Rose: We should get our own show on the wireless.

Quick: God, you're smilin'.

Rose: No, it's only a rumour. Well, what are you like? We live at the same house for years, and I don't even know who you are. I remember that time you clobbered me on the stairs with a bag. Knocked me down, you rotten sod. You remember that?

Quick: No, don't think so.

Rose: Well, you were in a hurry.

Quick: You grew up pretty good lookin', Rose.

Rose: Ta. How come you do this?

Quick: Fishin'? It's pleasant enough and pays my way. I haven't got any ideas about what to do. My old man was restless, goin' from thing to thing. Suppose that means we're weak.

Rose: What do you think about all day?

Quick: I reckon I'm trying to figure out what I lost. I keep figurin' I've lost something somewhere.

Rose: Something to do with him?

Quick: I reckon my whole life is to do with him.

The Audition

The audition consists of two or three stages. In *Stage One* you will perform your monologues. Selected applicants will then be invited to attend *Stage Two*, which may be held later on the same day - no additional preparation is required. A final *Stage Three* is often required a few days or a week later, and this will require additional preparation of a scene as directed during stage two. An interview will also be arranged during auditions. Please keep in mind that you will be auditioning with only the panel and possibly another actor in the studio.

Stage One

You will be assigned an audition day and time to present your pieces. Arrive at least half an hour ahead of time to warm-up. You will be encouraged to use one of the other people present (an ACTT student or another auditionee) to work to in your monologues. The panel may or may not offer any direction to re-work a piece.

Stage Two (First recall)

Sometimes this will take place on the afternoon of the same day. Be prepared to do any of the three pieces again. You will be given direction from the panel who may ask for a different interpretation, or for you to use your material in some new way.

Stage Three (Final recall)

This may be scheduled to bring together a final selection group to work together or re-work material as needed before final decisions are made. You may be given a scene to learn before this final audition.

Interviews

People being considered for a place will also be interviewed to determine their motivation behind applying for ACTT, their long-term goals for working in the industry and ability to finance their study. (This may occur during a scheduled audition or at a later time.)

Selection of Applicants

Selection is based entirely on the audition results. Applicants who receive an offer will be notified by telephone. Offers are made based on the applicant's potential for a career as a professional actor. When an offer is made, you will be given five days to make a decision to accept and pay a deposit. Whichever stage of the audition process you reach, regardless of whether you are offered a place, you will receive feedback. This may include advice about what was observed and how you may be able to better prepare another time. ACTT reserves the right to make offers to applicants who achieve outstanding results during the interview/audition process.

General

While auditions are generally quite daunting experiences, don't panic! The audition panel is made up of staff who have considerable experience in these matters and who understand the nerves and worries of auditionees. Every effort is made to create an atmosphere that is as relaxed and comfortable as possible. While allowances are made, you do need to be well-prepared, however, and determined to show yourself to your best advantage.

A warm-up room will be provided for you before your audition so please arrive at least 30 minutes early to prepare. ACTT students will be on hand to assist you and to work as scene partners in your audition. Should you have any questions please call us on (02) 9212 6000. Break a leg!

2008 Female Audition Pieces

- | | | |
|-----|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. | Hamlet | Shakespeare |
| 2. | A Winter's Tale | Shakespeare |
| 3. | As You Like It | Shakespeare |
| 4. | A Midsummer Night's Dream | Shakespeare |
| 5. | Macbeth | Shakespeare |
| 6. | Romeo and Juliet | Shakespeare |
| 7. | In the Name of the Father | Terry George and Jim Sheridan |
| 8. | Cowboy Mouth | Sam Shepard |
| 9. | A Girl's Guide to Chaos | Cynthia Heimel |
| 10. | The Seagull | Anton Chekhov |
| 11. | Three Sisters | Anton Chekhov |
| 12. | Europe | Michael Gow |
| 13. | The Diary of Anne Frank | Francis Goodrich |
| 14. | A Month in the Country | Ivan Turgenev |
| 15. | Stranger Than Fiction | Zach Helm |
| 16. | Five Kinds of Silence | Shelagh Stephenson |
| 17. | Can't Stand Up For Falling Down | Richard Cameron |
| 18. | Stuff Happens | David Hare |

Callback Scenes

- | | | |
|----|--------------------|-------------|
| 1. | <i>Away</i> | Michael Gow |
| 2. | <i>Cloudstreet</i> | Tim Winton |

- Tom: All right, I'm in love with you.
Meg: No you're not.
Tom: I want to. I have to. Please, please. Just once. Oh Christ, please. Come on. Just lie down. I won't hurt you. I have to.
Meg: Why are you crying?
Tom: Don't say no. Do you want me to beg?
Meg: No.
Tom: I will. Please, I beg you.
Meg: Stop it, get up. What's the matter? Maybe you're cracked as well, maybe it's catching.
Tom: What will make you give in? What can I say?
Meg: Nothing.
Tom: What can I do?
Meg: Nothing, nothing.
Tom: I want to do it, just once.
Meg: You will.

Away

Michael Gow

Tom & Meg

Meg: Ummm. No. Let's keep walking.
Tom: Let's sunbake for a while
Meg: I don't have a costume.
Tom: Don't need one.
Meg: No.
Tom: What's the problem?
Meg: Now look -
Tom: Come on -
Meg: You're frightening me.
Tom: I'm not.
Meg: All of a sudden I'm scared.
Tom: Come on -
Meg: I'm afraid.
Tom: Bull!
Meg: Please.
Tom: Lie down.
Meg: Why did you lead me here?
Tom: Lie down here.
Meg: Don't be like this.
Tom: I said lie down.
Meg: No.
Tom: Come here!
Meg: I can scream really well.
Tom: I want you to let me do it to you.
Meg: Let you? I don't want to.
Tom: Please.
Meg: No.
Tom: You have to.
Meg: I'm going to scream.

Hamlet

Act IV Scene vii

William Shakespeare

Queen Gertrude

There is a willow grows askant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.
There with fantastic garlands did she make
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them.
There, on the pendent boughs her crownet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up;
Which time she chanted snatches of old lauds,
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element. But long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

A Winter's Tale

Act III, Scene ii

William Shakespeare

Hermione

Sir, spare your threats:

The bug which you would fright me with, I seek.

To me can life be no commodity;

The crown and comfort of my life, your favour,

I do give lost, for I do feel it gone,

But know not how it went. My second joy,

And first-fruits of my body, from his presence

I am barr'd, like one infectious. My third comfort,

(Starr'd most unluckily) is from my breast

(The innocent milk in its most innocent mouth)

Hal'd out to murder; myself on every post

Proclaim'd a strumpet, with immodest hatred

The child-bed privilege denied, which 'longs

To women of all fashion; lastly, hurried

Here, to this place, i'th'open air, before

I have got strength of limit. Now, my liege,

Tell me what blessings I have here alive

That I should fear to die? Therefore proceed.

But yet hear this: mistake me not: no life! -

I prize it not a straw, but for mine honour,

Which I would free: if I shall be condemn'd

Upon surmises, all proofs sleeping else

But what your jealousies awake, I tell you

'Tis rigour and not law.

Your honour's all,

I do refer me to the Oracle.

The Following Scenes Are For Callbacks Only

Stuff Happens

David Hare

Brit in New York

'America changed.' That's what we're told. 'On September 11th everything changed.' 'If you're not American, you can't understand.' The infantile psycho-babble of popular culture is grafted opportunistically onto America's politics. The language of childish entitlement becomes the lethal rhetoric of global wealth and privilege. Asked how you as President, on the first day of a war which will kill around thirty thousand people: 'I feel good.' I was in Saks Fifth Avenue the morning they bombed Baghdad. 'Isn't it wonderful?' says the saleswoman. 'At last we're hitting back.' 'Yes.' I reply. 'At the wrong people. Somebody steals your handbag, so you kill their second cousin, on the grounds they live close. Explain to me,' I say, 'Saudi Arabia is financing Al Qaeda. Iran, Lebanon and Syria are known to shelter terrorists. North Korea is developing a nuclear weapons programme. All these you leave alone. No, you go to war with the one place in the region admitted to have no connection with terrorism.' 'You're not American,' says the saleswoman. 'You don't understand.' Oh, a question, then. If 'You're not American. You don't understand' is the new dispensation, then why not 'You're not Chechen'? Are the Chechens also now licensed? Are the Basques? Theatres, restaurants, public squares? Do Israeli milk-bars filled with women and children become fair game on the grounds that 'You don't understand. We're Palestinian, we're Chechen. we're Irish, we're Basque? If the principle of international conduct is now to be that you may go against anyone you like on the grounds that you've been hurt by somebody else, does that apply to everyone? Or just to America?

On September 11th, America changed. Yes. It got much stupider.

As You Like It

Act III, Scene v

William Shakespeare

Rosalind

And why I pray you? Who might be your mother,
That you insult, exult, and all at once,
Over the wretched? What though you have no beauty -
As by my faith I see no more in you
Than without a candle may go dark to bed -
Must you be therefore proud and pitiless?
Why what means this? Why do you look on me?
I see no more in you than in the ordinary
Of nature's sale-work. 'Od's my little life,
I think she means to tangle my eyes too!
No faith proud mistress, hope not after it.
'Tis not your inky brows, your black silk hair,
Your bugle eyeballs, nor your cheek of cream
That can entame my spirits to your worship.
You foolish shepherd, wherefore do you follow her
Like foggy South puffing with wind and rain?
You are a thousand times a properer man
Than she a woman. 'Tis such fools as you
That makes the world full of ill-favour'd children.
'Tis not her glass but you that flatters her,
And out of you she sees herself more proper
Than any of her lineaments can show her.
But mistress, know yourself. Down on your knees
And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man's love;
For I must tell you friendly in your ear,
Sell when you can, you are not for all markets.
Cry the man mercy, love him, take his offer;
Foul is most foul, being foul to be a scoffer.

A Midsummer Night's Dream

Act III, Scene ii

William Shakespeare

Helena

Lo, she is one of this confederacy.

Now I perceive they have conjoined all three

To fashion this false sport in spite of me.

Injurious Hermia, most ungrateful maid,

Have you conspired, have you with these contrived

To bait me with this foul derision?

Is all the counsel that we two have shared-

The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent

When we have chid the hasty-footed time

For parting us - O, is all quite forgot?

All school days' friendship, childhood innocence?

We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,

Have with our needles created both one flower,

Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,

Both warbling of one song, both in one key,

As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds

Had been incorporate. So we grew together,

Like to a double cherry: seeming parted,

But yet a union in partition,

Two lovely berries molded on one stem.

So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart,

Two of the first-, like coats in heraldry,

Due but to one, and crownèd with one crest.

And will you rent our ancient love asunder,

To join with men in scorning your poor friend?

It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly.

Our sex as well as I may chide you for it,

Though I alone do feel the injury.

Can't Stand Up For Falling Down

Richard Cameron

Lynette

Royce has now moved into the back bedroom, thank God. It's been a bit of a time, these last few weeks. I got a knife on the bedroom door lock and managed to get the paint off so it works, I can lock it at night now. Makes it a bit safer. I just don't know what he might do next, after the things he's said to me. Coming in, throwing things. Spoiling things in the house. What's the point of trying to keep things nice?

I keep my room clean, I make my own meals when he's out. It's like a pigsty down there. I tried to clean it up after he'd pulled everything out of the kitchen cupboard and smashed it, but I cut my hand quite bad on a bit of glass from the sauce bottle, I think it was, and I had to leave it. I should have had stitches re-ally. It's funny, I thought it was tomato ketchup. 'Serves you fucking right,' he says. 'Cleaning up. You're always cleaning up. Leave it. Fucking LEAVE IT!' and something's exploded in my head and he must have hit my ear. My hand's full of blood but it's my ear that hurts. 'Don't you swear in this house! You stop saying your foul language to me, I won't have it. Don't swear!' and I'm hanging on to the edge of the sink to stop from falling over, I'm going dizzy. It makes me ill to hear bad words said before God and he knows it and he says it all the more, over and over, and my hand's under the tap and my head's swimming and ringing loud and the water turns red. That night, I mend the door lock with one hand, while my other hand is throbbing through the cloth, and I hear him hammering and sawing in the shed in the yard, like it's been for days now into the night, but I don't care any more about what he's doing, I don't care, and I don't care if God doesn't want me to say it, I wish he were dead. I wish he were dead.

Five Kinds of Silence

Shelagh Stephenson

Janet

I can't sleep Mum, I can't sleep on my own the bed's too big there are noises in the room, things creak, footsteps on the stairs, out in the corridor, I think it's him, every time I think it's him. They say he's dead but what if he's not? The golden glow's gone. Euphoria, they said, hysteria. Small dreams I had then, a glimpse of him, a hand here, a breath there, but quick to go. He's shrinking I thought, death has shrivelled him, soon he'll be gone. He's back now, the whole of him, his breath on my face, his hands in my hair, pulling me to places I want to forget. I'm not strong like Susan, soon I will die of this. Smile he says, smile. Big dreams now, huge dreams, no point in sleeping, there's no rest in it, no ease. Close my eyes and I'm trapped in the film of our life. Snap. Another photo. Snap. Smile Janet, smile. What will they make of these happy family snaps, our sandals and frocks, our arms entwined, a rabbit eating grass at our feet. And we're smiling smiling smiling smiling for our lives but at the back of my head I say please someone read this secret sign, I'm sending you a message read it read it please. This is not real this is not true, can't you see it in my eye. He kicks us where it can't be seen, under our hair, under our clothes, he boots us across the room. I want to tear off my dress and shout look look look look look. I look at the photo and where is the message, the sign in my eye? I look at the photo and we're just smiling.

Macbeth

Act I, Scene vii

William Shakespeare

Lady Macbeth

Was the hope drunk
Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afraid
To be the same in thine own act and valour
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem;
Letting I dare not wait upon I would,
Like the poor cat i' the adage?
What beast was't, then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

Romeo & Juliet

Act III, Scene ii

William Shakespeare

Juliet

Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
Towards Phoebus' lodging! such a waggoner
As Phaeton would whip you to the West
And bring in cloudy night immediately.
Spread thy close curtain, love performing night,
That runaways' eyes may wink, and Romeo
Leap to these arms, untalked of and unseen.
Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
By their own beauties; or, if love be blind,
It best agrees with night. Come, civil night,
Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,
And learn me how to lose a winning match,
Played for a pair of stainless maidenhoods.
Hood my unmanned blood, bating in my cheeks,
With thy black mantle till strange love grown bold,
Think true love acted simple modesty.
Come, night. Come, Romeo. Come, thou day in night:
For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night;
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.
Come, gentle night. Come, loving black-brow'd night.
Give me my Romeo; and, when he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine
That all the world will be in love with night
And pay no worship to the garish sun.
O I have bought the mansion of a love,
But not possessed it; and though I am sold,
Not yet enjoyed. So tedious is this day
As is the night before some festival
To an impatient child that hath new robes,
And may not wear them. O here comes my nurse.

Stranger Than Fiction

Zach Helm

Ana

I went to Harvard Law. I didn't finish. ..I was... I was barely accepted. I mean barely. The only reason they let me come was because of my essay. How I was going to make the world a better place with my degree. And I went there thinking ... well, I went thinking that I might make a difference and uh...well... Harvard Law has the smartest people in the world, people who will one day shape the earth, and it's competitive and vicious and exhausting... And I'd have to participate in these study sessions, classmates and I, all night long.

Sometimes for a couple of days straight. And so...And so I would bake – cookies usually – so no one would go hungry while we worked. I'd bake all afternoon in the kitchen in the dorm before a big study session and write down what I was doing in one of those black Mead Journals they sell by the gross in the Campus Bookstore. And I'd bring my little treats to the study groups...and people loved them. Oatmeal Cookies. Peanut Butter Bars. Chocolate Chip and Macadamia Nut Wedges. And everyone would eat and stay happy and study harder and do better on the tests and more people would come to the study groups and the study groups got better and I would make more snacks and try to find better recipes and the results would always get better and better and soon it was Cheese and Apricot Croissants and Mocha Bars with Almond Glaze and Lemon Chiffon Cakes with Zesty Peach icing and our study groups were famous around all of Cambridge: not because we had the most copious notes, or the smartest people, but because we had the best snacks...

And at the end of the spring term...I had 27 study partners, eight black Mead journals filled with recipes...and a D average.

(pause)

So I dropped out. Simply without alarm, and without any regrets.

(pause)

I just figured, if I was gonna make the world a better place... I'd do it with cookies.

A Month in the Country

Ivan Turgenev

Vera

I'm not accusing you, Aleksei Nikolaich - what fault is it of yours? It's my fault, entirely mine, and I've been punished for it. I don't accuse her either; I know she's a kind woman but she couldn't control herself...Natalya Petrovna loves you, Belyaev. She is in love with you. I know what I'm saying. I've grown years older today...I'm not a child any longer, believe me. She decided to be jealous...of me. (Pause) Oh, I know what I'm saying! Why did she suddenly decide to marry me off to that gentleman, what is his name, Bolshintsov?

Why did she get the doctor to come and see me? Why did she try and talk me into it herself? If you could have seen, Belyaev, her entire face changed when I told her...Oh, you can't imagine the cunning, the tricks she used, to worm this confession out of me... Yes, she loves you; that's all too clear...If she doesn't love you, why has she tortured me like this? What have I done to her? Jealousy, that's the excuse for everything.

Oh, why go on!....And now, why is she telling you to go? Because she thinks that...you and I...Anyway, who can tell? Maybe she's right...maybe you do love her. Do you love her, could you love her?...you're not answering my question? (Pause) You're treating me like a child...like someone who doesn't deserve a serious answer...you simply want to get rid of me.

In the Name of the Father

Terry George and Jim Sheridan

Gareth

Will you read this statement that you took from him on the 3rd of November, 1974? A statement, my Lord, that vindicates all these people, all of these innocent people. Someone ordered that these people be used as scapegoats by a nation that was begging for blood. In return for the innocent blood spilled on the streets of London. And by God you got your blood Mr Dixon!

You got the blood of Giuseppe Conlon, you got the life-blood of Carol Richardson, and you've got 15 years of blood, sweat, and pain for my client and his only crime was being Irish, and being in the wrong place at the wrong time. And one of your colleagues, my Lord, who sat where you're sitting now, said, and I quote, "It was a pity that you were not charged with treason to the crown. A charge that carries a penalty of death by hanging. A sentence I would have had no trouble in passing in this case."

My Lord, this brings the entire English legal system into disrepute. My Lord, this alibi for Gerry Conlon was taken by Mr. Dixon one month after Gerry Conlon was arrested. This note was attached to it when I found it on the police files. It reads 'not to be shown to the defence.' I have one question for you Mr. Dixon. Why was the alibi for Gerry Conlon, who was charged with the murder of five innocent people, kept from the defence?

Please do not impersonate the actor's representation of the above character in the film version.

Cowboy Mouth

Sam Shepard

Cavale

You're so neat. You're such a neat guy. I wish I woulda known you when I was little. Not real little. But at the age when you start finding out stuff. When I was cracking rocks apart and looking at their sparkles inside. When I first put my finger inside me and felt wonderment. I would've took you to this real neat hideout I had where I made a waterfall with tires and shit, and my own hut. We could've taken all our clothes off, and I'd look at your dinger, and you could show me how far you could piss. I bet you would have protected me.

People were always giving me shit. Ya know what? Once I was in a play. I was real glad I was in a play 'cause I thought they were just for pretty people, and I had my dumb eyepatch and those metal plate shoes to correct my duck foot. It was The Ugly Duckling, and I really dug that cause of the happy ending and shit. And I got to be the ugly duckling, and I had to wear some old tattered black cloth and get shit flung at me, but I didn't mind 'cause at the end I'd be that pretty swan and all.

But you know what they did, Slim? At the end of the play I had to kneel on the stage and cover my head with a black shawl and this real pretty blonde-haired girl dressed in a white ballet dress rose up behind me as the swan. It was really shitty, man. I never got to be the fucking swan. I paid all the dues and up rose ballerina Cathy like the North Star. And afterwards all the parents could talk about was how pretty she looked. Boy, I ran to my hideout and cried and cried. The lousy fucks. I wish you were around then. I bet you would've protected me.

The Diary of Anne Frank

Francis Goodrich

Anne

Look, Peter, the sky. What a 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. Where the daffodils and the crocus and the violets grow down the slopes. You know the most wonderful thing about thinking yourself out? You can have it any way you like. You can have roses and violets and chrysanthemums all blooming at the same time. It's funny - I used to take it all for granted - and now I've gone crazy about everything to do with nature. Haven't you? I wish you had a religion, Peter.

Oh, I don't mean you have to be Orthodox - or believe in heaven and hell and purgatory and things - I mean just some religion - it doesn't matter what. Just to believe in something. When I think of all that's out there - the trees - and flowers - and seagulls - when I think of the dearness of you, Peter - and the goodness of the people we know - Mr. Kraler, Miep, Dirk, the vegetable man, all risking their lives for us everyday - when I think of these good things, I am not afraid any more - I find myself, and God, and I... We're not the only people that've had to suffer.

There've always been people that've had to - sometimes one race - sometimes another - and yet... I know its terrible, trying to have any faith - when people are doing such horrible... But you know what I sometimes think? I think the world may be going through a phase, the way I was with mother. It'll pass, maybe not for hundreds of years, but some day. I still believe in spite of everything, that people are really good at heart. But, Peter, if you'd only look at it as part of a great pattern - that we're just a little minute in life... Listen to us, going on at each other like a couple of stupid grown-ups. Look at the sky, now. Isn't it lovely?

Europe

Michael Gow

Barbara

I only have two more performances of this for a few months. Then the chorus in *Medea*. I hate that too. The girl in the lead can't act. She starts to weep the very second her foot touches the stage. We all cower in the shadows pretending to mourn the children. All these old plays. We do them over and over. We do them this way, we do them that way, we dress them up, we strip them bare, we expose them, we conceal them, we reinforce them, we deny them. And the new plays are just shadows of the old ones. Over and over.

Oh, God, why bother doing this? Theatre! It's torture. If only the public knew. If only they would learn something from it. We could go on to something new. But back we go to the next way of doing the same old thing, the new interpretation of the same ancient meaning. One night I *will* give a new interpretation. Sing a song, tell a joke, maybe a story; yes a true story: avoid the catastrophe completely; no plots, no mysteries, no betrayals. Of course that would do my career no good at all. Because I can do it all so well.

A Girl's Guide to Chaos

Cynthia Heimel

Cynthia

The realization hits me heavily, like a .44 Magnum smashing into my skull. My heart starts beating with a quick dread and my blood freezes in my veins. My stomach does backflips. The ordeal I am about to face is one of the most chilling, grisly, and macabre experiences known to woman. Dating. I will have to start dating again.

Please, God, no, don't make me do it! I'll be good from now on, I promise! I'll stop feeding the dog hashish! I'll be kind, thoughtful, sober, industrious, anything. But please, God, not the ultimate torture of dating.

That's why I stayed with him for so long, probably. I couldn't stand going through it all again. Sure, he might be a trifle wild and intractable, I kept telling myself, but at least I know I'll get laid tonight, and tomorrow night. At least someone will go to the movies with me and not try to hold my hand.

Hand-holding. The WORST thing about dating. It's the most nerve-wrecking experience! Once I start holding hands, I'm afraid to stop. If I pull my hand away, will he think I'm being cold, or moody? Should I squeeze his hand and kind of wiggle my fingers around suggestively? Or is that too forward? What if my hand is clammy? A clammy hand is more offensive than bad breath or right-wing politics! A clammy hand means you're a lousy lay! Everyone knows that! And what, dear spiteful God, will I wear?

The Seagull

Anton Chekhov

Nina

Why do you say you kiss the ground I walk on? I ought to be killed. I'm so tired Kostya! If I could only rest...rest. I am the seagull...No, that's not it. I'm an actress! It doesn't matter. So he's here too! It doesn't matter! He didn't believe in the theatre, he laughed at my dreams, and little by little, I stopped believing myself. I lost heart. And always the strains of love, jealousy, constant fear for the child...I became trivial, and commonplace, I acted without thinking or feeling...I didn't know what to do with my hands, I couldn't move properly, or control my voice. You can't imagine what it's like to know you're acting badly!

I am a seagull. Do you remember the seagull you shot? You left it at my feet, he came to me and said, "I had an idea. A subject for a short story. A girl, like yourself, lives all her life on the shores of a lake. She loves the lake, like a seagull...But a man comes along, by chance, and, because he has nothing better to do, destroys her..."

What was I talking about before? I – Yes, about acting. I'm not like that anymore. I'm a real actress now! I act with delight, with rapture. I feel drunk when I'm onstage and think that I am wonderful. Ever since I got here, I've been walking around, walking around and thinking, thinking and even believing that my soul grows stronger every day. Now I see at last, Kostya, that in our kind of work, whether we're writers or actors, the important thing is not fame, or glory, not what I used to dream about, but learning to endure. I must bear my cross, and have faith. If I have faith, it doesn't hurt so much, and when I think of my calling I'm not afraid of life.

When you see him, don't tell him anything...I do love him, yes, I love him more than ever..."By chance. A subject for a short story." How sweet it used to be, Kostya! Remember? How bright and warm, how joyous and pure our lives were! And the feelings we had for each other were like fine, delicate flowers! Do you remember?

Three Sisters

Anton Chekov

(Translation: Brian Friel)

Irina

Dear, darling, dopey Doctor! Why am I so happy today? I feel - I feel as if I had become ethereal – as if I were gliding along with the great blue sky above me and huge white birds all around me! D'you know what happened to me this morning just after I'd washed and dressed? I had a revelation! A genuine epiphany. Everything made immediate sense. Suddenly I know how life should be lived. Suddenly I possessed profound wisdom. Are you listening to me, dopey Doctor? That man must work. It doesn't matter who he is or what he is. He must toil by the sweat of his brow. Work – work – work; that's the only thing that gives life purpose and meaning. That's the only thing that guarantees contentment and happiness. I'm telling you.

My God, what I'd give to be a labourer with the county council, up at the crack of dawn and out smashing stones! Or a sheep-farmer. Or a bus driver. Or a teacher slogging away, informing young minds. Isn't that a real revelation? Because if I'm just a slut having my breakfast in bed and lying in til noon and then spending a couple of hours dithering over what I'll wear, then wouldn't I be far better off being a cart-horse or a Donkey – anything at all just as long as I can work, work, work. *That's* what life is – work! You know how you'd give anything for a cool drink in the middle of a hot summer day? Well that's exactly what I feel about work – I thirst for it! So from this moment, dopey Doctor, if I'm not up at dawn and out there slaving, never ever break breath with me again.