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Theatre - Monologues

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Introduction to the Set Monologues for SEC Theatre Syllabus

In this section of the syllabus, one may find a number of monologues that offer a choice to the candidate, one of which is to be performed in front of the examiners. The chosen monologue has to be from this list, and both the journal with its research and the improvisation need to link to this monologue. There are in fact, two lists from which the monologues have to be chosen - one for level 1-2 and one for level 2-3.

- The theatre monologues treat various subjects and themes, and are taken from different eras and also cultures. One may therefore, find Ancient Greek comedies and tragedies as well as contemporary pieces.
- Some monologues are in English and others in Maltese. There are some that are provided in both languages - giving a further possibility of choice.
- The monologues hereunder are all presented in the same format i.e. Character name in blocks, stage directions in brackets and in separate lines. This should help to identify spoken text.
- Respecting the time limit for monologue performance, some of the monologues had to be edited or cut – as differing from the original play script version.
- Despite the gender of the indicated character, candidates are free to make their own appropriate choices.
- Despite the stage directions that make up some of the monologues, a candidate is free to make his/her own interpretative choices and disregard the original stage directions.

All monologues will be adjudicated according to the criteria as explained in the marking scheme within the syllabus, and no monologue carries more weight than another, regardless of language or length of piece. The performance will be assessed according to the marking scheme that emphasizes a credible performance, justifiable work presented in journal, and the improvisational task set by the examiners.

Daħla għall-Monologi tas-Sillabu taċ-ĊES Teatru

F'din il-parti tas-sillabu jinstabu numru ta' monologi minn fejn il-kandidati jridu jagħzlu biex jirreċtaw quddiem numru ta' eżaminaturi. Il-monologu magħżul bilfors irid ikun minn din il-lista u kemm il-Journal bir-riċerka kif ukoll l-Improvizzazzjoni, ikunu marbuta mal-għażla tal-monologu. Jinstabu żewġ listi: l-ewwel lista hija minn fejn jintgħażlu l-monologi ta' livell 1-2 filwaqt li t-tieni lista hija minn fejn jintgħażlu l-monologi ta' livell 2-3.

- Il-monologi magħżula jittrattaw diversi suġġetti u huma meħuda minn żminijiet u anki kulturi differenti. Għalhekk, hemm monologi minn traġedji u kummiedji Griegi sa monologi minn xogħlijiet kontemporanji;
- Il-monologi jvarjaw minn dawk bl-Ingliż u oħrajn bil-Malti. Hemm uħud mill-monologi li huma provduti kemm bil-Malti kif ukoll bl-Ingliż sabiex il-kandidati jkollhom għażla usa';
- Il-monologi sarilhom addattament skont ir-regoli tad-Deciżjonijiet ortografici li setgħu inbidlu xi ftit minn meta nkitbu x-xogħlijiet oriġinali;
- Il-monologi kollha huma pprezentati bl-istess format jiġifieri l-karattri huma indikati b'ittri kbar waqt li d-direzzjonijiet huma f'parentesi u f'linja għalhom biex jintgħażlu mit-test li jrid jingħad;
- Peress li kull monologu huwa marbut bit-tul ta' ħin, xi wħud mill-monologi sarilhom adattament mill-iskritti oriġinali jew mill-pubblikazzjonijiet li ġew meħuda;
- L-għażla tal-monologi tirrispetta t-temi ta' reliġjonijiet, politika jew razez differenti;
- Minkejja li kull monologu huwa indikat jekk jingħadx minn karattru maskil jew femminil, il-kandidati huma liberi li jinterpretaw liema monologu jridu u liema karattru jridu mingħajr ma jhossuhom limitati;
- Għalkemm xi wħud mill-monologi jidentifikaw id-direzzjonijiet u huma miktuba biex juru x'jiġri waqt li tkun qed tittella' r-rappreżentazzjoni, il-kandidati jistgħu jinterpretaw il-monologu kif jixtiequ u huma liberi li jagħzlu jew ma jagħzlux li jimxu ma' dawn id-direzzjonijiet.

M'hemm l-ebda monologu li jekk jintgħażel, jista' jwassal għal vantaġġ fil-marki, minkejja d-differenza fil-lingwa magħżula jew fit-tul tas-silta. Il-marki jitqassmu skont l-Iskema tal-Marki mnizzla fis-sillabu li tinkludi t-tqassim ta' marki fuq ix-xogħol li jsir fuq il-monologu kemm fl-interpretazzjoni, fir-riċerka u x-xogħol tal-Journal u r-rispons bl-Improvizzazzjoni mitluba waqt l-intervista mill-eżaminaturi.

Monologues Level 1-2

1. *Satira* – Oreste Calleja

(FL-Uffiċċju tax-Xogħol. Tqahqih, kultant xi kelma mlissna bil-mod, xi tgemgima mill-irġiel jistennew.)

L-AWTUR: Ninsabu f'Uffiċċju tax-Xogħol. Titqarrqux. Ma jfissirx li għax ninsabu f'Uffiċċju tax-Xogħol għandna quddiemna xi xena ħabrieċa. Kif forsi tistgħu tisimgħu.

(Ċekċik ta' kuċċarina f'kikkra. Xi ħadd jixrob bi ħsejjes esaġerati. Tmeċliq disgustanti.)

Dak l-Iskrivan. U dik li qed ifettet fit-te u jmaxtar hija t-tielet qagħqa. Minn hawn u ftit ieħor tisimgħuh jieħu r-raba' waħda, imbagħad jerga' lura għax-xogħol – forsi. Taħt l-iskrivanija għolja tiegħu, iħarsu lejha b'ħalqhom miftuħ hemm kju ta' rġiel bilqiegħda fuq bank, jistennew – jistennew ir-raba' qagħqa. Issa drawh lill-Iskrivan.

(It-tmeċliq jieqaf)

Hemm hu, lest. Naħseb dalwaqt nibdew.

(Qaħqihha marradija)

Dak ir-raġel qsajjar u mixrub li hemm f'ras il-bank qed ilesti ruħu. Qed jittama li minn hawn u ftit ieħor ikun imissu hu. Qed ifarfar it-trab minn fuqu; ftit ilu neħħa wkoll l-għanqbut li kien trabbielu bejn il-ħġieg tan-nuċċali. Ir-raġel qsajjar u mixrub jistenna 'l-Iskrivan. L-Iskrivan ilaqqat iz-zokkor bil-kuċċarina. Issa ħariġha minn ħalqu. Forsi ... le, reġa' daħħalha. Ir-raġel qsajjar u mixrub għadu jistenna. L-Iskrivan għadu jlaqqat il-kuċċarina.

(Bieb tal-ħġieg jistabat bir-riħ.)

Dak il-bieb ilhom sentejn jistennew l-aħjar offerta biex isibu ħaddied iwaħħallu lukkett ġdid. L-Iskrivan bil-kuċċarina f'ħalqu qed jirtogħod. Mill-għoli tal-iskrivanija tiegħu xorta jħossu l-frisk.

2. *The Tempest* – William Shakespeare

ARIEL: To every article.

I boarded the king's ship; now on the beak,
Now in the waist, the deck, in every cabin,
I flamed amazement: sometime I'd divide,
And burn in many places; on the topmast,
The yards and bowsprit, would I flame distinctly,
Then meet and join. Jove's lightnings, the precursors
O' the dreadful thunder-claps, more momentary
And sight-outrunning were not; the fire and cracks
Of sulphurous roaring the most mighty Neptune
Seem to besiege and make his bold waves tremble,
Yea, his dread trident shake.

Not a soul
But felt a fever of the mad and play'd
Some tricks of desperation. All but mariners
Plunged in the foaming brine and quit the vessel,
Then all afire with me: the king's son, Ferdinand,
With hair up-staring, – then like reeds, not hair, –
Was the first man that leap'd; cried, 'Hell is empty
And all the devils are here.'

3. 4 A.M. – Jonathan Dorf

FRANKIE: This is Frankie 4 A.M. in the studio, so don't be rudio. I am live with a special guest. You all think about him when you're lying there alone: he's the merchant of death, he'll take your breath away – literally. Put your hands together and give it up for the man who'll make you a permanent sleeper – it's the big guy in the hood, the Grim Reaper.

(Sound of Audience Applause)

Hey Grim – may I call you Grim? – thanks for coming by. I know you're a busy man ... er, entity. And you're very tall. The pictures do not do you justice. So, uh ... Mr Reaper, how does it feel to be the taker of lives, the stealer of souls, the harbinger of doom?

(Long pause)

The silence is really scary – and I mean *really* scary, but ...

(Beat)

Uh – the finger wagging in my direction is about to make me wet my pants, but nobody can see it.

(Beat)

This is radio! You can't gesture silently on the radio!

(Beat)

We're going to go to a commercial, and hope we can get a word, any word, after the break.

(There's a Musical Interlude [Frankie's Radio Jingle], one of Frankie's cheesy radio fill-ins.)

(Trying to disguise his/her voice)

It's been called ergonomic. The chef's ultimate weapon. Four inches of drop dead sexy. But don't take our word for it that this four inch tower of chopping and peeling power will give your knife life the edge it's been missing. Ask our customers.

(As the First Customer)

I love this knife. It couldn't peel a boiled potato, but it looks so beautiful.

(As the Second Customer)

If I had a kid that was as bad as this knife, I'd kick his lazy butt out of the house and change the locks.

(As the Third Customer)

Thank you. Thank you so much. Thank you ... for making such crappy knives.

4. *Whistle Down the Wind* – Mary Hayley Bell

SWALLOW: Can you keep a secret? A really big secret? You've got to hold up your hand and do the 'See this wet' routine:

See this wet, see this dry,
Cut my throat if I tell a lie ...

This is a great and fabulous secret known to none but those within these walls. You have to join a society to be allowed to know the secret, and all who know must swear never to divulge. Will you absolutely swear? If you ever breathe a word something ghastly will happen to you ... Alright ... That's Jesus ... We have proof. We were in here messing about. There was a sort of knock on the door and I opened it. He stood there smiling at us, and said, 'Knock on the door and it shall be opened unto you' ... And I said, 'Who are you?' and he stood staring round this place, not answering at once, and then suddenly said, rather loud: 'JESUS' ... just like that ... His legs were all cut, and his boots and socks crammed with mud and he kind of lurched. I asked Him if I should get someone and He said 'Don't tell them till I've recovered' ... He's ill ... too ill to talk. He's been asleep for six hours! ... In the daytime! ... The grown-ups may not believe ... suppose they try and take Him away ... after all they did last time ... But we can have a gigantic meeting, we can tell them all ... swear them all to secrecy. There're hundreds of children around here and every child knows other children. We can bring them a few at a time to see Him and hear His words. Little by little we can spread the news to children all over the country that the first people to know Jesus has come back will be the children. And ... if the grown-ups try to take Him away again, we'll defend Him ... Hundreds of us!

5. *Repubblika Immakulata* – Simone Spiteri

(*Fid-dinja ta' ANON – Udjenza*)

ANON: Meta konna żgħar – din jgħiduheli ħuti ... ommi ħarġitna kollha sal-bandli. Erbat itfal taħt it-tmien snin, jien tarbija tat-twelid. Ħuti taru għal fuq iż-żurzieqa u l-bandli, il-ħbula u d-dawradurella ... bilkemm messejna l-għatba: fost l-għajjat u t-twerżiq u għied ta' bejniethom. David dejjem jinbexx lil Franklin minn taħt sakemm itellagħhomlu u jfajjarlu daqqa ta' ponn, Petra dejjem tindaħal fejn ma jesagħhiex mingħajr ma taf x'inhu jġri eżatt ... l-aqwa li ndaħlet. F'hin minnhom ... jgħiduli ... is-subien spicċaw jagħtu bil-ponn għax riedu jirkbu l-istess bandla – minn sitta vojta ovvjament – u Petra bdiet tixher u tibki għax f'nofs it-taqbida għidulha xagħarha – u dik minn dejjem tgħaġġibhom. Ommi ... bejn il-ħdax u t-tnax-il sigarett tal-ġurnata – għadhom id-disgħa ta' filgħodu ... marret tiġri tipprova tferraqhom; sigarett imdendel fit-tarf ta' xoffitha f'kawrata sħiħa t'idejn, għajjat, daqqiet fuq is-srum u għid tal-widnejn. U hawn ... dejjem kif jirrakkontawli ... nidhol jien. Tarbija kwieta qatt ma tibki. Invisibbli.

Jgħidu.

Buffura riħ tgħaddi u tmexxi l-pram biżżejjed biex titħarrek minn postha u r-roti jieħdu spinta biex titlaq għan-niżla tal-passaġġ tal-ġnien li konna fih ... ir-roti jduru jduru, iżidu fil-velocità ... sakemm ċblumm! Waqfet ġo xitla folta u daqsiex li swiet ta' mħadda biex trattab ir-rankatura tal-pram li kienet ġejja biha.

U bqajt ma bkejtx.

Sadanittant ommi, wara battikata prima, ħarġet it-tlettax-il sigarett bil-lest f'idha biex tqabbdu kif tispicċa t-tnax-il wieħed ... frisk frisk imdendel bejn par xufftejn niexfa qoxqox, l-aħmar tal-ġamar inemnem bis-slow motion.

6. *L-Alla ta' Wara l-Ħġieġa* – Lon Kirkop

(Pulpetta hi soft toy jew pupa. Nokkla bilqiegħda mal-art tirranġa widnejn Pulpetta.)

NOKKLA: Hekk ara kemm int sabiħa u nadifa. Toqgħodx tissuppervjali ta, xi trid li ma tinħasilx?

Ar'issa x'titkessaħ hux għax qed tfuħ? U ma ngħidlekx jien, imma xi trid tagħmel la l-bambin sallabni bik.

(Nokkla tidħak u tgħannaq lil Pulpetta.)

U iva x'għaġeb, qisek tal-ħaxu binti, bilkemm missejtek. Iva ok ok titbaqbaqx. Isma', trid tazza ilma? Żgur? Mhux jibda u tqajjimni għax bil-għatx inħallik, għax l-aħħar darba telliftni nofsu biex għamiltlek is-cereal. Taf li nkun qed nistennieh fuq ix-xwiek.

U iva, naf li int ukoll.

(Nokkla tferra' tazza ilma. Tixrob u terġa' tferra' t-tazza. Tkun ser tersaq lura lejn Pulpetta imma tiddeċiedi li tferra' tazza lilha wkoll. Aħjar ma tixrobhiex u tarmi tazza ilma, milli tfottilha l-programm.)

Ar'hemm, ħa nagħmillek tazza għax int malajr idurlek. Ok ok, toħodhiex, fil-każ noħodha jien jew narmuha għall-madoff ta' naqra ilma. Issa nsibuh tibżax. Għadhom neqsin għaxra ta, u int taf daqsi li dejjem mal-ħin jibda. Min jaf jaranix illum. Kif rajtu hemm, iħarisli minn wara l-ħġieġa, iħares fiss lejja ssammart. Qabadni tferfir kbir ma' ġismi kollu.

(Nokkla ma tiħux gost bil-kumment ta' Pulpetta.)

Ejja ma nitkessħux għax ngħidlek. Jien għax naffaxxina ruħi bil-mod divin li jitkellem bih, mhux għall-affarijiet li qed jaħseb dak il-maħmuġ moħħok. Għalkemm vera raġel sabiħ u mzejjen b'kollox, imma dak mizzewweg ta. Jaf qed jistenna lili għandu mara bħal dik.

(Nokkla tinduna li sar il-ħin, taħtaf ir-remote biex issib l-istazzjon.)

Iv'arani ħa neqliblu. Hawn ħa għadu ma bediex qas ħaqq il-panik, fadal 30 sekonda.

(Nokkla tpogġi fejn Pulpetta.)

Issa m'hemmx paroli. Ħamsa, erbgħa, tlieta, tnejn, wieħed ...

7. Mitt Elf Isem leħor – HappyVeganGirlJules – Lon Kirkop

JULES: HeLOW tfajliet u ġuvintur sbieħ. Jien Julia u dan hu l-ewwel vidjow fuq iċ-channel ta' Youtube tiegħi HappyVeganGirlJules. Nisthajjilkom tistaqsu, Julia jew Jules? Tkunu tafu sal-aħħar ta' dan il-vidjow. Mela, xi haġa żgħira fuqi. Jien tfajla ta' tlettax-il sena mill-gżira żgħira ta' Malta. Għalfejn iddeċidejt li naqsam dawn il-vidjows magħkom? Lanqas naf ezatt. Malta ftit hawn Youtubers, u l-ftit li hawn ma tantx huma xi popolari ħafna. Jien beħsiebni nkun. Barra minn hekk, il-Maltin fuq Youtube li jgawdu kemxejn popolarità, kollha f'kompetizzjoni bejniethom minn ser jgħawweg ħalqu l-iżjed bl-Ingliż. Għall-kuntrarju, jien beħsiebni nwassal il-kontenut tiegħi bil-lingwa Maltija. U għalikom minn madwar id-dinja li ma tifhmux il-Malti? Tinkwetawx, hawn taħt fuq l-iskrin għandkom is-subtitles bl-Ingliż. Fuq dan iċ-channel, m'hawnx reċti, skripts miktuba minn qabel jew imitazzjoni ta' persuni oħrajn, jien beħsiebni nkun jien. Intom jisthoqqilkom ħafna iżjed minn hekk. Intom jisthoqqilkom il-verità, u jien beħsiebni nagħmel hekk billi nkun quddiem il-kamera l-istess Jules ta' meta ma nkunx. Kif jgħid il-Malti, 'Kif tarani pingini'. U hawn fejn ser jibdew il-problemi għas-subtitles, kif nibda nitkellem bl-għejdut Maltin. Imma issa ejja nitkellmu daqsxejn fuq il-kontenut. Kull ġimgħa ser nibda nippowstja vidjow ġdid fuq dan iċ-channel. Dawn il-vidjows ser ikunu varjati ħafna. Daqqa ser insajru flimkien xi haġa healthy, u vegan importanti, daqqa ser naqsam magħkom xi esperjenzi minn tiegħi, u drabi oħra ser inħalli lilkom tiddeċiedu xi triduni nagħmel. Tistgħu tibdew issa tgħiduli x'tixtiquni nagħmel billi tikkumentaw taħt dan il-vidjow. L-għan ta' dan il-Youtube channel hu li flimkien nikbru f'saħħitna u ngawdu kemm nifilħu dan iż-żmien, li ejja nkunu sinciera, mhux daqshekk faċli li tkun teenager fiż-żmien tagħna. Għandna ħafna influwenzi ġejjin minn kullimkien. X'ser taqbad tagħmel? Lil min ser taqbad temmen? Kemm għandek tiekol biex tkun milqugħa f'socjetà ckejna ta' skola sekondarja? X'għandek tilbes? Kif għandek tidher? U dan mhux biss għalina l-girls ta, imma anki għalikom il-boys. Tinsewx li daqskemm intom tiflu lilna, aħna niflu lilkom.

8. Dreams of Anne Frank – Bernard Kops

ANNE: Morning star. Evening star. Yellow star, Amsterdam. 1942. The German army occupies Holland. They have applied terrible rules that we must obey. Rules for Jews. That applies to me. 'Jews must wear a yellow star. Jews cannot go on trains. Jews must not drive. Jews cannot go shopping, except between three and five. Jews must only patronize Jewish shops.' We cannot go to the cinema, play tennis, go swimming. I cannot even go to the theatre. And now for the most frightening thing of all. They are beginning to round Jews up and take us away. Away from our homes, our beloved Amsterdam. A few days ago, I celebrated my thirteenth birthday. My parents gave me this diary. It is my most precious possession. Yesterday I was just an ordinary girl living in Amsterdam. Today I am forced to wear this by our Nazi conquerors. Morning star, evening star, yellow star.

It was Sunday. The 5th of July. The day after American Independence Day. My mother pretended she wasn't crying.

Then Father made the announcement. I remember his exact words. 'Listen, children. Please. I must tell you something. We're going into hiding.' When are we going into hiding? Will we be alright? What do I leave behind? What can I take?

(Getting her satchel)

Essentials. My school satchel. I'm going to cram it full. Hair curlers. Handkerchiefs. School books. Film star photographs. Joan Crawford. Bette Davis. Deanna Durbin. Mickey Rooney. Comb. Letters. Thousands of pencils. Elastic bands. My best book. Emil and the Detectives. Five pens.

(She smells a little bottle.)

Nice scent. Oh yes! Mustn't forget my new diary.

(She has put all her things into her satchel but she has not included her diary.)

We're going into hiding. Going into hiding.

Four days later. It was Thursday, the 9th of July. I shall never forget that morning. It was raining. Imagine leaving your house, maybe forever.

I'm so happy. In hiding we no longer have to obey the Germans, the master race. No more dreaded rules for Jews.

Goodbye, House. We'll always remember you. Thank you for everything. My brain is at a fairground, on the roller coaster. Up and down. Happy. Sad. Afraid. Excited. My emotions are racing. My imagination spilling over. After all, I am a creative artist. I'm going to be a writer when this war is over.

Diary! Can't go without my diary.

(She takes up the diary and opens it.)

You can be trapped in a box, or in sadness, but you travel in your mind. You can be imprisoned in a basement or an attic, but you can go anywhere. In your dreams you are free, the past, the present, the future. It is all open to you within my pages. Use me as well.

(As herself)

I promise. I shall write everything down. Everything. Thoughts. Events. Dreams. I shall confide my secrets. Only to you.

(Clutching her diary close)

Let's go. My diary. I couldn't survive without my diary.

9. *Bazaar and Rummage* – Sue Townsend

(Gwenda unaware that Fliss has gone, she continues stacking the books into paperback and hardback piles.)

GWENDA: I read a lot when I was a girl. Asthmatics are usually well read, have you noticed? I had Enid Blyton's complete works. Complete. My father brought one home every Friday night without fail. My mother had a quarter pound of Mint Imperials, father had two ounces of Shag and I had my new Enid Blyton. I'm sure that's why I'm quite without racial prejudice you know. Golly, Wog and Nigger were always my favourites, they were naughty to the other toys, but they always took their punishment well.

(She finds Black Beauty)

Black Beauty! I could go on Mastermind with Black Beauty as my main subject.

(Quickly)

What was Black Beauty's mother's name?

(Carefully)

Duchess.

(Quickly)

Who was the first man to break Black Beauty in?

(Carefully)

Squire Gordon.

(Quickly)

What lesson did Squire Gordon teach Black Beauty?

(Softly)

You must never start at what you see, nor bite nor kick, nor have any will of your own. But always do your master's will, even though you may be very tired or hungry. That was more or less what father taught me. It's kept me in good stead, service first self second.

10. *The Chocolate Affair* – Stephanie Alison Walker

BEYERLY: I can't take it anymore!

I'm up every day at five. Every day. Up at five, go for a jog, take a shower, wake Sally, cook breakfast – something healthy – egg whites, flax, kale, organic coffee, sprouted wheat, Sit down with Dave and Sally for breakfast. Eat a tiny portion. Be sure to leave some on the plate. Always leave some on the plate.

Get dressed. Something feminine, flattering. Kiss Dave goodbye. Make sure to give him a little something worth coming back home to.

Check on Sally. Comb her hair. Pack her lunch. Wait with her for the bus. Hug her goodbye. Make sure that hug lasts all day long ... that she feels your arms around her even at recess when the mean kids pick on her because their moms don't hug them enough. Then let go. Watch her walk away, board the bus.

Choke back your tears. Taste the salt slide down the back of your throat. Go back inside. Check yourself in the mirror. Ugh, turn around. Turn back hoping to see someone else. Cross through the kitchen. Pause. Feel the quiet of the empty house. No one watching. What can you eat? Open the pantry, look inside. Grab the jar of peanut butter. Unscrew the lid. Take a whiff. Stick your finger in the jar of peanut butter. Lick it off. Feel someone watching you. Shit. Turn around to face them. No one's there. Put the peanut butter away. Wash your hands. Careful to remove any trace of peanut butter. Reapply lipstick. Head out the door. To work. Again.

This isn't fun anymore. There's something wrong with me.

11. *The Scoundrel* – Alexander Ostrovsky

KLEOPATRA: There's no need for a great brain when you're as handsome as Yegor. What does he want a brain for? He's not going to be a professor. A good-looking young man can always find somebody who'll help him, simply out of sympathy. Either to make a career or just with money so that he can live comfortably. With a clever man it's different. Nobody minds if they see a clever man shabbily dressed, living in a cheap apartment and dining off a cold sausage and a piece of bread – that doesn't bring a lump to your throat and make you feel you must do something for him. You expect a clever man to live like that. But when you see a poor boy who's young and handsome, shabbily dressed, it's unbearable. It mustn't be allowed, no, and it won't be. I'll see that it isn't! The women of Moscow must band together! We must insist that our friends, our husbands, all the authorities rise to their feet to help him. We simply cannot allow a handsome young man to be spoiled by poverty. There are so few of them nowadays. Of course, we should sympathise with all poor people, it's our duty, that goes without saying – but to see a handsome young man with sleeves too short, or frayed shirt collars, that's what touches the heart!

And besides, a man can't be bold and dashing when he's poor, he can't have that conquering expression, that air of jauntiness which is so pardonable in a handsome young man.

12. Deoxiribonucleic Acid (DNA) – Dennis Kelly

MARK: Only because you had to, you would've been there otherwise, you did all the ...

(Beat)

We went up the grille. You know, that shaft up there on the hill. Just a big hole really, hole with a grille over it, covering, just to see if he'd climb the fence, really and he did, and we thought, you know, he's climbed the fence which we didn't think he'd do so walk, you know, walk on the grille, Adam, walk on the, and he did, he's walked on, you know, wobbling and that but he's walking on the grille and we're all laughing and he's scared because if you slip, I mean it's just blackness under you, I mean it's only about fifteen foot wide so, but it might be hundreds of feet into blackness, I dunno, but he's doing it, he's walked on the grille. He's on the grille. He is.

And someone's pegged a stone at him.

Not to hit him, just for the laugh.

And you shoulda seen his face, I mean the fear, the, it was so, you had to laugh, the expression, the fear ...

So we're all peggin them. Laughing. And his face, it's just making you laugh harder and harder, and they're getting nearer and nearer. And one hits his head. And the shock on his face is so ... funny. And we're all just ...

Just ...

really chucking these stones into him, really hard and laughing and he slips.

And he drops.

Into ...

Into the er ...

So he's ...

So he's ...

So he's -

13. *Rinoċeronti* – Eugene Ionesco tradotta minn Clare Azzopardi u Albert Gatt

BERENGER:

(Waqf li jħares fil-mera.)

Għax bniedem mhuwiex daqstant ikrah wara kollox. Għalkemm jien m'iniex wieħed mis-sbieħ nett!
Emmini, Daisy!

(Idur)

Daisy! Daisy! Fejn int, Daisy? Tagħmillix hekk!

(Jigri lejn il-bieb.)

Daisy!

(Meta jasal fl-indana tat-taraġ, jixxabat mal-poġġaman.)

Daisy! Erga' itla'! Erga' lura, Daisy ħanini! Għadek 'qas biss kilt! Daisy, thallinix waħdi! Ftakar x'wegħedtni!
Daisy! Daisy!

(Jaqta' qalbu u jieqaf isejħilha, jagħmel ġest iddisprat u jerġa' jidħol lura f'kamartu.)

Hemm aħna. Ma konniex naqblu. Bqajna mifrudin. Ma stajniex nibqgħu sejrin hekk. Imma mhux sew qabdet u telqet bla kliem.

(Imur isakkar il-bieb, bil-galbu, iżda rrabjat.)

Imma lili ma tiħdunix. Mhux se nimxi warajkom, lanqas biss nifhimkom! Jien se nibqa' jien. Jien bniedem.
Bniedem.

(Imur ipoġġi fuq il-pultruna.)

Din sitwazzjoni impossibbli. Inġib quddiem għajnejja l-aġħar li jista' jinqala', għax kollox possibbli.

(Mill-ġdid il-ħsejjes ta' tkarwit, ġiri sfrenat, sħab ta' trab.)

Ma niflaħx nismagħhom. Se nsodd widnejja bit-tajjar.

(Ipoġġi t-tajjar f'widnejh u jitkellem max-xbieha tiegħu fil-mera.)

M'hemm ebda soluzzjoni għajr li nikkonvincihom, imma nikkonvincihom, minn xiex? U l-bidliet jitreggġu lura? Heqq, dik hi, jitreggġu lura? Trid ħila ikbar minn tiegħi, ħila ta' Erkole. Qabelxejn, biex nikkonvincihom, ikolli nkellimhom. Biex inkellimhom, irrid nitgħallem il-lingwa tagħhom. Jonkella jkollhom jitgħallmu tiegħi. Imma x'lingwa nitkellem jien? X'inhil-lingwa tiegħi? Dan li qed nitkellem Franciż? Suppost Franciż dan? Nista' nsejjaħlu Franciż jekk irrid, ħadd mhu se jmerini, jien l-unika wieħed li nitkellmu. X'qed ngħid? Imma qed nifhem lili nnifsi, qed nifhem x'qed ngħid?

14. *Ineż kienet perf* – Simone Spiteri

(Intervista 3: ĠUVNI, 14)

ĠUVNI: Qatt ma kellek aptit taħrab int?

(Pawża)

Jekk le Wow mela eh ... like, kollox sew għandek f'ħajtek. Thumbs Up. LOL.

(Pawża)

Le qatt ma ltaqajt magħha din Ineż. Ovvja dħalt Profiles kollha tagħha: Snapchat, Insta. Vera tidher cute, ħanini. Tgħidx kemm smajt fuqha fuq Facebook. Like, ovvja eh. Faqgħuh b'comments. Ovvja. Għandi xi erbat iħbieb jafuha sew. Jien ikolli aptit naħrab kważi darba kuljum. Speċjalment meta nannti tiġi tgedwed fuq xi ħaġa li suppost qed nagħmel imma m'għamiltx jew m'għamiltx sew biżżejjed. Għax qatt ma tikkuntentaha. Teqridni, man. Jew omni tippretendi li sakemm tiġi mix-xogħol inkun sajjart, għamilt it-time table tal-iskola, għamilt il-homework u l-kbira ... Żbarazzajt kamarti. LOL. Kieku ħadt one cent ta' kull darba li qalitha omni ġa miljunarju.

(Pawża)

Kif inhi għadha. U ħa tibqa'. Ħallini, man, jien xi (*isem ta' videogame*) tini, mela nnaddaf. Kultant qishom il-kbar jagħmlu apposta narahom jien – qishom ixommu x'inhuma l-affarijiet li huma l-aktar importanti għalik u jridu jaraw kif ser jiddeffsu biex jindaħlu. Ħa jfottuhielek. U dejjem bl-istess kantaliena tas-soltu biex mingħalihom jagħlqulek ħalqek: għall-aħjar tiegħek qed ngħidlek ibni. Eħe. Mela. Mhux hekk. Like LOL.

Jiġifieri, eħe, nifhem għala Ineż ħarbet ... jekk ħarbet. Ma nafx min hi jien. U niġi naqra għala biebi fil-verità. Imma li xi ħadd ma jifhmekx? Jew ma jħallikx tkun dak ... kif verament tħossok ... li għandek tkun? Ma jaċċetawkx kif int? Eħe dak feeling li naf. Sew.

(Kwiet)

Miskina.

(Pawża)

Xi waħda minn daw' li jriduha tal-Perfs smajt jien eh, din Ineż? Li jixtru l-Likes minn fuq eBay. Kemm trid tkun imdejjaq, eh? Wiċċ bħal dak ... kollox on point eh kellha, hekk kienet tidher. Imma nifhimha.

(Serju)

Għax jekk Ineż kellha farka mid-dwejjaq li ġieli jkolli jien meta nħossni down, li kollox kontrija, u ħadd ma jifhimni ... anki jien naħrab. Imma fejn taqbad tmur eh!

15. *Problemi tal-Qalb* – Joe Friggieri

FSADNI: Dak kien tal-posta. Din l-ittra waslitilna mingħand is-sur Emanuel B. Debattista li joqgħod is-Swieqi. Mal-ittra dan is-semmiegħ bagħtilna ritratt sabiħ tiegħu jmexxi l-kelb. Is-sur Debattista kitbilna hekk.

(Jixrob it-te b'ħafna ħsejjes.)

Għaziż Professur Fsadni, jiena raġel ta' ħamsin sena, u għandi tlett itfal, il-kbir għandu tmienja u għoxrin sena, jismu Joey, u jaħdem il-posta; it-tieni wieħed sena iżgħar minnu, jismu Raymond u jaħdem it-Telemalta, taqsima ħsarat; u l-aħħar waħda, Marvik, għandha ħamsa u għoxrin sena u taħdem ta' – x'inhil din? – kutrabandista? karambolista? kuntrabassista? karabuddista? – ma nistax nagħrafha – e, iva! – kiropodista. Dejjem ngħidilkom biex tiktbu ċar. Jekk ma tridux li niftiehm u ħazin.

(Jerġa' jixrob it-te b'ħafna ħsejjes. Tidħol is-segretarja bi platt kannoli, tħallihomlu quddiemu.)

Grazzi, Frida. Issa, x'inhil l-problema? Il-problema tas-sur Debattista hi din.

(Jiekol kannol u jimsaħ il-krema fil-komma.)

Fejn marret? ... tgħidli qalbi ... Għax tant irċevejna ittri ...

(Iwaqqa' l-kannoli u jitlef l-ittra.)

Marru! ... iva fejn marret? ... Sant'Antnin! ... hawn hi! Sibnieha. Ikompli s-sur Debattista. Fuq l-ewwel tnejn ... min kienu l-ewwel tnejn?

(Jaqleb l-ittra)

... Joey, li jaħdem il-posta, u Raymond, tat-Telemalta, taqsima ħsarat – fuq dawn m'għandix xi ngerger. Imma t-tielet waħda, tinkwetani. Kull darba li jiġi xi ħadd biex taralu l-kallijiet, tispicċa toħroġ miegħu. Kull ġimgħa b'xi kallu ġdid. Wieħed ġej u l-ieħor sejjer, bħall-vapur t'Għawdex. Issa din għandha l-klinik fid-dar fejn noqgħod jien, parti minnha, kif tidħol mill-antiporta, biswit is-salott. U l-kjuwijiet jitwalu kuljum. Kulħadd ġej biex taralu l-kallijiet. Ftit ilu tant ġew nies li kellna ngħibu l-pulizija. U ħaġa tal-għaġeb, kollha rġiel. Mank mara waħda. Fl-aħħar, meta telaq kulħadd, daħal il-pulizija. U s-Sibt ta' wara ħarġet miegħu, għax inzerta frank. Anki hu hekk jismu, Frank.

16. *Les Misérables (The Republic)* – Alain Boublil Translated by William Nicholson

MARIUS: We can't strike. Why not?

Because it's against the law to strike!

The king has declared that everything is a crime.

Writing is a crime.

Two weeks ago, the police destroyed the Galaty,

The worker's newspaper.

They smashed the press. They burned over two thousand newspapers

But that didn't satisfy the king.

Three days ago at a student meeting, a peaceful meeting,

Soldiers broke it up

And arrested two of my friends.

Writing, talking, going to class,

Speaking out is a crime.

Being poor is a crime.

Being poor is the worst crime of all.

And if you commit these crimes,

You are condemned for life.

Our government has no mercy, no pity, no forgiveness.

And there is no work for us.

And because there's no work,

Our children are starving.

Tell me: why are we powerless to save the people we love?

All of you know. Tell me why?

The king betrayed us. We were promised the vote,

Do we have it?

Do we have the vote?

Is this the republic our fathers died for?

It's here my brothers. It lives here in our heads.

But most of all, best of all,

It's here in our hearts.

In our hearts – WE ARE THE REPUBLIC!

17. *Man in Motion* – Jan Mark

LLOYD: Yes. I have got something on my mind ... There's this boy I know, Keith Mainwaring; I met him down at American football practice, and we got friendly. I mean, we were friends right off, and his dad gives me a lift home afterwards. He's really friendly ... but he says things, they both do ... Racist things. All the time, like without thinking. Every time they see somebody Asian, they say something ... and I don't say anything. I don't know what to say, I keep thinking they don't really mean it, especially Keith, because he's nice, really, I mean, otherwise he's nice. He rings up and asks how I am, and paid for my lunch and that. I really like him, except for what he says ... That's why I've stopped going to practices; to avoid him. I don't think he really means it, I think it's just because of what his dad says. Like my friend Vlad – from school, like he said; if you're sexist it's because you've been brought up to think like that, you never get the chance to work it out. And I don't think Keith knows any Asians. He lives up at the Highbridge end ... It's funny ... ODD ... calling somebody a racist. It doesn't sound real. We have this lesson at school, Social Awareness Studies, only we all it Isms. Because that's what it is, all the time; sexism, racism, feminism. And last week we had this discussion on racism, somebody brought in a cutting from a newspaper, and everyone said how awful it was, only we've got these two girls in our class, Farida and Farzana, and nobody thought about them. They just sat there, and nobody took any notice or asked them what they thought, I mean, they never say much anyway, but that wasn't the point. Racism's just something half of us argue about while the other half do our homework. It's just a word. It doesn't mean anything, because it doesn't happen to us ... I think most of us are against it ... It's the first time I've had to do anything about it. Where we lived before, everyone was white anyway. If I'd met Keith there I'd never have known what he thought because he'd never have said anything. Racism was just something on the news ... But it's not for me. Not anymore.

Monologues Level 2-3

1. *Blue Bird* – Jonathan Dorf

STUDENT: There's a birdbath in my yard. In the back. We get robins, sparrows, pigeons. A lot of pigeons. Sometimes there's a cardinal and squirrels. Yeah, I know they're not birds, but maybe the squirrels think they are. I mean, there's flying squirrels – right? I've never seen one, but flying squirrels exist. Right?

(Beat)

I like watching the birds. The real birds. The way they all kinda twitch their heads forward.

(Demonstrates a pecking motion)

It's like they're talking to each other. Saying how's your day and how's the weather and would you like worms with that order? Sometimes when I'm bored, I make up what they'd say. Like this one pigeon, he's complaining about his taxes to a sparrow, and the sparrow's like, "dude, maybe if you spent more time working and less time looking for handouts in the park ..."

(Beat)

I'm supposed to put water in the birdbath once a week. Today's my day. And the birds are there talking about the weather and their kids and there's a duck talking about how his cousin bought the farm and got served up in orange sauce last week. And the other birds are saying how sad that is and how sorry they are, only this one bird's not talking. He's not even in the bath. He's wet, like he was there, but he's not in there. He's on the ground under the bath, and he's trying to hop up, only he can't. There's something wrong with his left wing. He can't flap the right one and he's spinning around in a circle, like he's breakdancing – only he's not.

(Beat)

I go over to the bath, and they all scatter when I get close. Except for the break-dancing bird. It's a bluebird – I don't remember when I've ever seen a bluebird in our backyard, and now there's one spinning like a merry-go-round under the birdbath. He's beautiful. He's flapping his right wing like crazy, but the poor little guy can't go anywhere. And he's going nuts when I pick him up in my hands. I hold him real tight, so he doesn't scratch me, and I've got my thumb and finger around his neck to keep him from biting. "Don't worry, little bird. I've got you." And I hold him.

(Beat)

The phone rings in the house. I'm the only one home, but I don't move. I've got this beautiful, living thing in my hand, and that's more important than –

(Beat)

The longer I hold him, the less he fights. He knows he's safe. I'm like Dr Doolittle of my backyard.

(Beat)

And then I start to squeeze my finger and thumb together. Around his neck. Around its neck. Tighter and tighter. The bluebird starts going crazy. I know it can't breathe, and I don't stop. I keep going – because I can. I keep going until it – It feels good. It feels good, because for once in my life, I'm not the bird.

2. *Debris* – Dennis Kelly

MICH: I used to believe that babies were found under gooseberry bushes. I had heard that they were delivered by storks, dropped gently down chimneys to land in little white bundles of fluff. I even once believed that we were brought into this world by the miracle of conception, gestation and then childbirth, but I now know that not to be the case. Like mushrooms, babies grow in rubbish. They construct themselves from rotten leaves, coke cans, syringes and empty packets of monster munch and wait for their parents to find them. I know this to be the truth. Because I found one.

Beside me this rustling sound, rustling beside me, in the dark, smell, rustling in, I was still sweating, hiding and beside me there was this rustling in, in the dark and I look down in a shaft from the streetlight, from the crack in the door I had to push open the door to let in a shaft of street light in a crack so I could see, which cut across the rubbish and illuminated a, a hand, a very small hand. A very small hand. A very small baby. It was a very small baby in the rubbish.

I reach down, my hand, reach with my hand and push aside washing powder boxes and ladies' tights and pull out a very small baby, greens clinging to its head, browns covering its hand and I pull out a very small baby and lift it up a very small naked cold baby, a boy a little boy, and I pull out a very small cold naked baby boy, my boy, my boy I pull out my boy.

What happened inside was an organ in my chest dissolved, was teleported from me, into me, out of me, turned to snow, into warmth into golden blood which rushed to my veins and tuned my mind into fire, my body into blazing scream, laugh, I didn't know what was – instinct kicked in, inside, instinct burned around my body like adrenaline, like gin, burned around my body destroying my mind in a second, in a flush, searing the shadow of it against the inside of my skull and replacing it with something else, something new, something very different, a new, a new ...

He was very cold. Dying. He was dying. I sat there for an hour, I was there for an hour sat in other people's rubbish with a dying baby in my arms rocking back and forth and I was happy, oh yes, I was happy. I look down, his lips are like – ebbing, his life is – slugs, his lips like tiny grey slugs – fading, his lips moving slightly, little circles made from his hands in the air surrounding us, floating around us, tiny ice cubes, he was cold with my shirt, I opened my shirt because panic was now pushing its way through, I was beginning to panic because to find and then lose, so I opened my shirt I hid him close to me, I wrapped him in me I dragged him into me into my love, rocking, close to my heart, the circles becoming smaller now as he became weaker, though warmth began, it was maybe too late, I could see his slugs lips, in his lips, weakness, hunger draining his cold, draining into me, his life draining out of him, his movements going, leaving him and I pulled him to me and rocked faster because what else could I do?

And somehow ...

He finds his way to my breast.

(He/she screams as the baby bites into him/her. He/she gasps with pain and anguish, still holding the child, writhing but not wanting to disturb it. He begins to get used to it as he/she looks down at the baby.)

And he fed at my breast. Not milk but blood. He slowly drinks what life he can from my tiny nipple, his grey lips becoming red, his hand waving, and I feel that surge of feeling burst through my chest again, flooding my body, my mind. It's love. Isn't it. It's love. I look down at my boy, my son, my...my ... feeding there, my... my...life pounding back into him, my...my...Rubbish? Garbage? Debris. Good name. Sounds French. Be able to get him into posh schools with a name like that. My Debris. My Debris.

3. *Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA)* – Dennis Kelly

LEAH: Are you happy?

No, don't answer that, Jesus, sorry, what's wrong with me, sorry –

Are you?

No, I'm just wondering. I mean what is happy, what's happy all about, who says you're supposed to be happy, like we're all supposed to be happy, happy is our natural, and any deviation from that state is seen as a failure, which in itself makes you more unhappy so you have to pretend to be even happier which doesn't work because people can see that you're pretending which makes them awkward and you can see that they can see that you're pretending to be happy and their awkwardness is making you even more unhappy so you have to pretend to be even happier, it's a nightmare. It's like nuclear waste or global warming.

(Beat)

Isn't it Phil? Phil? Isn't it, like nuclear ...

(Phil doesn't answer)

Yeah, you know, you know it is, you know more than I do, I can't tell you any, you know. People getting all upset about polluting the natural order? When this planet is churning molten lava with a thin layer of crust on top with a few kilometers of atmosphere clinging to it? I mean, please, don't gimme all that, carbon dioxide? Carbon dioxide, Phil? And look at the rest of the universe, Venus, Phil, there's a, look at Venus, what about Venus, hot enough to melt lead or Titan with oceans of liquid nitrogen, I mean stars, Phil, a billion nuclear reactions a second, I mean to be honest it's all either red hot or ice cold, so, so, so ... No. It's life that upsets the natural order. It's us the anomaly.

But that's the beauty, isn't it Phil. I couldn't say this to anyone else they'd say 'That's a pretty fucking bloody grim view of the world, Leah' but you can see the beauty, which is why I can talk to you, because you can see the incredibly precious beauty and fragility of reality, and it's the same for happiness, you can apply the same theory to happiness, so don't start Phil, don't come here giving it all the, you know, all the, all the ...

(Beat)

Can you remember the happiest moment of your life?

(Beat. Phil eats another toffo.)

I know mine. I know my happiest moment. Week last Tuesday. That sunset. You remember that sunset? Do you? You don't do you. Oh my God, you don't.

(He says nothing. He opens the Tupperware container. Shows it to Phil.)

It's Jerry, I killed him. I took him out of his cage, I put the point of a screwdriver on his head and I hit it with a hammer. Why do you think I did that?

(Phil shrugs)

No. No, me neither.

(She/he closes the lid.)

Everything's much better, though. I mean really, it is. Everyone's working together. They're a lot happier. Remember last month, Dan threatened to kill Cathy? Well yesterday I saw him showing her his phone, like we

were old friends. Last week Richard invited Mark to his party, bring a friend, anyone you like, can you believe that? Richard and Mark? Yep. Everyone's happier. It's pouring into the school, grief, grief is making them happy.

They say John Tate's lost it though, won't come out of his room. Bit odd. Maybe that's what's making people happier. Maybe it's just having something to work towards. Together. Do you think that's what it is. Are we really that simple?

Where will it stop? Only been four days but everything's changed

(Pause)

Adam's parents were on the telly last night.

(Phil looks up.)

Yeah. Another appeal.

To the fat postman with bad teeth.

What have we done, Phil?

4. *My Children, My Africa* – Athol Fugard

(Thami, a black South African boy in an inter-school debate.)

(Abandoning all attempts at patience. He speaks with the full authority of anger inside him.)

THAMI: Stop, Isabel! You must keep quiet now and listen to me. You're always saying you want to understand us and what it means to be black ... well if you do, listen to me carefully now. I don't call it murder, and I don't call the people who did it a mad mob, and yes, I do expect you to see it as an act of self-defence – listen to me! – blind and stupid but still self-defence. He betrayed us and our fight for freedom. Five men are in detention because of Mr M's visit to the police station. There have been other arrests and there will be more. Why do you think I'm running away? How were those people to know he wasn't a paid informer who had been doing it for a long time and would do it again? They were defending themselves against what they thought was a terrible danger to themselves. What Anela Myalatya did to them, and their cause is what your laws define as treason when it is done to you and threatens the safety and security of your comfortable white world. Anybody accused of it is put on trial in your courts and if found guilty they get hanged. Many of my people have been found guilty and have been hanged. Those hangings we call murder!

Try to understand, Isabel. Try to imagine what it is like to be a black person, choking inside with rage and frustration, bitterness, and then to discover that one of your own kind is a traitor, has betrayed you to those responsible for the suffering and misery of your family, of your people. What would you do? Remember there is no magistrate or court you can drag him to and demand that he be tried for that crime. There is no justice for black people in this country - other than what we make for ourselves. When you judge us for what happened in front of the school four days ago just remember that you carry a share of the responsibility for it. It is your laws that have made simple, decent black people so desperate that they turn into 'mad mobs'.

5. *Menaechmi* – Plautus

CLOWN: Two twinborn sons, a Sicily merchant had, Menechmus one, and Policies the other:
The first his father lost a little lad; The Grandsire named the latter like his brother.
This, grown a man, long travel took to seek His brother, and to Epidamnum came,
Where Brother dwelt enriched, and him so like, that citizens there take him for the same:
Father, wife, neighbours, each mistaking either, much pleasant error, ere they meet together

In other words, ... There was a merchant at Syracuse,
an old man, who had two twin sons, boys so much alike
that the nurse who fostered them could not tell which was which,
nay not their own mother who bore them. When the boys were seven years old,
the father freighted a large ship with merchandise.
one of the twins he took aboard and sailed away with him to Sicily on trading bent.
the other he left at home with the mother.
When he came to Tarentum, it happened that there were games afoot:
amongst the crowd of visitors, the boy went astray from his father.

A merchant of Epidamnum who happened to be there,
Took pity on the boy and carried him home to Epidamnum.
The boy thus gone! His father lost heart,
and before many days had past, he died of that distress.

Now when the news came to the child's grandfather at Syracuse,
that one of the twins had been lost and the father was dead,
the grandfather changed the name of the other twin,
and called him by the same name as the lost one.
so dearly did he love the child that was lost.
Thus, he gave the lost one's name to the one that stayed at home,
Menaechmus – the same name as the other had:
and so, he also now went by the same name as the grandfather.
Both the twins had the same name!

6. Qabel Tqum il-Prinċipessa – Alfred Sant

(Jidher il-BUFFU)

BUFFU:

(Lill-udjenza)

... U b'hekk ergajna għal li konna. Qed nara li intom għadkom hawn ... Nittama li mhux bi ħsiebkom tibqgħu tħarsu lejja għall-elf sena li ġejjin ... Minn issa nista' nerga' nibda bir-rutina tas-soltu. U għandi wiċċ ieħor xi nnaddaf, tal-Prinċep, baħ! Jien u s-Saħħara għadna kemm irrangajna kolloxx kif kien qabel. Daħħalna ċ-ċittadini fi djarhom, neħhejnielhom ix-xwabel minn idejhom. Karkarna lis-suldati riegda fil-kwartieri tagħhom. Lill-Gwida libbisnieh it-tonaka ta' Pirjol u poġġejnieh fil-monasteru l-kbir tal-belt. Meta jqum x'aktarx li se jkollu biċċa xogħol jirrifirma d-dixxiplina tal-kunvent. Dan l-aħħar il-patrijiet kienu bdew jeħxienu ftit żzejjed u ...

(Jidhaq)

Meta jerġgħu jqumu, kulhadd ikun mill-ġdid sudditu fidil tar-Re ... Jien u l-Prinċipessa? Ħm. Min jaf? Forsi għad baqagħli tama ... imma elf sena oħra ... min jaf, elf sena oħra ... Forsi tkun insietni. Jew forsi nkun insejtha jien ... Jew ... min jaf?

(Jidhaq)

Fuq xiex tridu tkunu tafu issa? L-Awtur? Ah – l-Awtur! Lil dak, ħallejnieh fl-aktar ċella mudlama taħt l-art. Is-Saħħara qalet li hekk kien jixraqlu. U ħudu l-parir tiegħi. Jekk fostkom għadkom oħrajn bħalu, agħmlu bħalna, dik l-aħjar haġa, waddbuhom fl-aktar ċella mudlama taħt l-art.

(Jidhaq)

U issa se jkolli nħallikom. Wasal il-ħin biex immur innaddaf imnifsejn ir-Re mit-trab. Malajr reġa' beda jonhor, dak!

(Jidhaq)

Saħħa.

... jew 'au revoir'?

Tgħid terġgħu tkunu miegħi f'dan il-palazz ... elf sena oħra?

(Il-BUFFU joħroġ. Minn barra jinstemgħu l-passi tiegħu jitbiegħdu, u l-ħoss tagħhom hu mdallam, qisu dieħel jintilef fis-sekli futuri.)

7. Fear And Misery In The Third Reich – Bertolt Brecht

JEWISH WIFE: Yes, I'm packing. Don't pretend you haven't noticed anything the last few days. Nothing really matters, Fritz, except just one thing: if we spend our last hour together without looking at each other's eyes. That's a triumph they can't be allowed, the liars who force everyone else to lie. Ten years ago, when somebody said no one would think I was Jewish, you instantly said yes, they would. And that's fine. That was straightforward. Why take things in a roundabout way now? I'm packing so they shan't take away your job as senior physician. And because they've stopped saying good morning to you at the clinic, and because you're not sleeping nowadays. I don't want you to tell me I mustn't go. And I'm hurrying because I don't want to hear you telling me I must. It's a matter of time. Principles are a matter of time. They don't last forever, any more than a glove does. (There are good ones which last a long while. But even they only have a certain life.) Don't get the idea that I'm angry. Yes, I am. Why should I always be understanding? What's wrong with the shape of my nose and the colour of my hair? I'm to leave the town where I was born just so they don't have to go short of butter. What sort of people are you, yourself included? You work out the quantum theory and the Trendelenburg test, then allow a lot of semi-barbarians to tell you you're to conquer the world but you can't have the woman you want. The artificial lung, and the dive bomber! You are monsters or you pander to monsters.

Yes, I know I'm being unreasonable, but what good is reason in a world like this? There you sit watching your wife pack and saying nothing

8. *The Casket Comedy* – Plautus

HALISCA: If heaven doesn't rescue me, I'm dead and done for, with not a soul to look to for aid! Oh, how miserable my own heedlessness makes me! Oh! how I dread what will happen to my back, if my mistress finds out I've been so negligent!

(Thinking)

Surely, I had that little casket in my hands and received it from her here in front of the house – and where it is now, I don't know, unless I dropped it somewhere about here, as I suspect.

(To audience)

Dear gentlemen, dear spectators, do tell me if anyone of you saw him, the man who carried it off or who picked it up. Did he go

(Pointing)

this way, or that?

(Pauses then indignantly)

I'm none the wiser for asking or pestering them – the creatures always enjoy seeing a woman in trouble! Now I'll

(Scans the ground)

examine the footprints here, in case I can find any. For if no one passed by after I went inside, the casket would be lying here.

(Looking about again, then hopelessly)

What am I to do? I'm done for, I fancy! It's all over, my day has come, unlucky, fated wretch that I am! Not a trace of it, and there won't be a trace left of me, either! It's lost, and so I'm lost, too! But I won't give up, though; I'll keep on looking. Oh, my heart's in a flutter and my back's in a fright - fear on both sides driving me frantic! What poor, poor things human beings are! Now he's happy, whoever he is, that has it – something that's no use to him and the death of me! But I'm delaying myself by not setting to work. To work, Halisca! Eyes on the ground, eyes down! Track it – sharp now-like an augur!

(Looks for footprints, her nose close to the ground)

But he went this way – ... here's the mark of a shoe in the dust ... I'll follow it up this way! Now here's where he stopped with someone else ... Here's the scene of the fracas I saw a moment ago ... No, he didn't go on this way ... he stood here ... from here he went over there ... A consultation was held here ... There are two people concerned, that's clear as day ... Aha! Just one person's tracks! ... He went this way, though ... I'll investigate ... From here he went over here ... from here he went

(After an energetic and futile search)

nowhere!

(With wry resignation)

It's no use. What's lost is lost – the casket and my cuticle together. I'm going back inside.

(Approaches Alcesimarchus's door)

9. L-Għodwa – Franca Rame u Dario Fo tradotta minn Marco Galea u Simone Galea

(Fid-dawl baxx il-mara qed toħlom, bħal ħolma kerha.)

MARA: Tliet biċċiet, saldatura, toqba bit-trapan ... żewġ boldijiet, saldatura, daqqa ta' mqass ...

(Għajta)

Madonna! Qtajt subgħajja barra! Subgħajja ... Tellgħuhomli ... is-sid ma jkunx irid ... ikun hawn il-ħmieġ!

(Tqum b'ħasda: għadha ma qamitx mill-ħolma kerha.)

Subgħajja ... qatt mhu se nkun nista' ndaħħalhom fi mnieħri iktar ...

(Thares lejn idejha)

Hawn għadhom! ... Kont qed noħlom! X'ħin sar?

(Thares lejn l-iżveljarin)

Is-sitta u nofs?!

(Toħroġ tigri mis-sodda u tilbes il-papoċċ u l-house-coat malajr.)

Ma daqqx dal-mingħul! Mamma mia, kemm sar ħin!

(Tigri lejn is-sodda tat-tarbija u terfa' t-tarbija.)

Isa, baby, isa!

(Tersaq lejn il-mejda li hemm ħdejn is-sink.)

Qum, qum, sabiħ tal-mamà, ejja! Il-pipì, għamilt pipì taħtek ... m'iliex tliet sigħat li biddiltlek! Haqq għax-xjafek ... iktar ma jien mgħaġġla! Irridu niġru lejn in-nursery, għax jekk naslu wara s-sebġha s-soru tibgħatna lura d-dar!

(Tnezza' lill-pupu)

Issa l-mamà se taħsillek il-patatina ...

(Tiftaħ il-vit tal-ilma)

L-ilma sħun ... ma tarax, m'hawnx mišħun ... Naqta' rasi li dak l-istordut ta' Luigi tefa' l-geyser ilbieraħ? Le, mhux stordut, arah ġej il-mišħun ...

(Taqbad it-tifel f'dirgħajha u tmur lejn is-sink.)

Naħslu wiċċna, isa iskot għax tqajjem lill-papà ... ħa nħalluh jorqod nofs siegħa oħra ... niġru biex naqbdut-t-tramm, it-tren, u naslu l-fabbrika,

(Taqiegħed lit-tifel fuq il-mejda u tixxuttah b'xugaman.)

u nibdew nagħmlu l-ginnastika bħal xadina mħarrġa, fuq il-production line

(Tagħmel il-mossi tal-production line:)

one two three ...

(Tidħaq)

Ah, kemm jaf jidhaq it-tifel tiegħi ... toghg bok il-mamà meta tagħmilha tax-xadina mharrġa. Issa ha nixxuttak sew ...

(Taqbad bott terra u titfagħlu mhux hażin fuq sormu.)

Ftit ...

(Tieqaf miblugħa)

ġobon maħkuk! Min tefagħli l-ġobon maħkuk minflok it-terra?! Madonna x'taħwid! Stenna ha niġbru ... daqskemm jiswa!

(Tagħmel il-mossi li qed tiġbor il-ġobon minn ma' sorm it-tarbija.)

Hekk jew hekk il-warrani tat-tifel tiegħi nadif tazza!

(Tlibbes lit-tarbija bl-għaġla)

Madonna kemm sar ħin!

(Tmur lejn is-sink u tiftaħ il-vit; tagħmel mima li qed taħsel wiċċha u jdejha, tkanta.)

Camaj, is-sapun tal-artisti! Camaj, is-sapun ...

(Tieqaf)

ilma, mhux ġej ilma! Istrina! ... kulhadd għandu l-vizzju li jinħasel dal-ħin! Issa kif se nitlaħlaħ!

(Taqbad xugaman u tneħħi s-sapun.)

M'hemmx x'tagħmel, ninħasel darb'oħra, hekk jew hekk jien min iħares lejja? ...

(Tippettna xagħarha malajr)

Issa nitfa' naqra sprej!

(Taqbad bott sprej)

Haqqu premju min ivvinta l-isprej!

(Tilbes bl-għaġla. Taqbad it-tifel, tgeżwru f'kutra u tmur lejn il-bieb.)

Isa, għaġġel, iġri! Is-sebgħa nieqes għoxrin ... irnexxielna.

(Tigri lejn il-bieb. Tieqaf)

Iċ-ċavetta? Iċ-ċavetta? Fejn qegħidtha?

10. *Electra* – Euripides

(Electra wants vengeance, and she'll have it one way or another.)

ELECTRA: Well, then, how shall I first begin to speak about

The evil you have done. Where do I end? What words shall I use for the central part?

It's true that in the dawn I never stopped rehearsing what I wished to say to you,

Right to your face, if I were ever free from my old fears. Well, now I am free.

So, I will pay you back, abusing you the way I wanted to when you were living.

You ruined me, taking away from me and from this man here our dear father,

Although we hadn't done you any wrong.

You made a shameful marriage with my mother, then killed her husband, who was commander

Of all the Greeks. You never went to Troy. And you were so idiotic you believed

That with my mother you would get a wife who was not evil, though she was betraying

My father's bed. But you must know this – when any man corrupts another's wife,

Having sex with her in secret, and then is compelled to take her as his wife,

Such a man is foolish if he believes that, though she was not virtuous before,

She will be now with him. You were living a miserable life, although it seemed

As if the way you lived was not so bad. You knew well you'd made a profane marriage.

My mother realized she had in you a sacrilegious man. You are both evil,

And so you both acquired each other's traits. She shares your wickedness, and you share hers.

You heard these words from all the Argives – "That woman's husband," not "that man's wife."

And this is truly shameful – when the wife controls the home rather than the husband.

I hate those offspring whom the city calls children of their mother instead of saying

Sons of their father. Still, when any man makes a distinguished marriage well above

His station, no one ever talks of him, but only of his wife. But most of all,

You were so ignorant you were deceived in claiming to be someone because your strength

Was in your wealth. But that's not worth a thing – its presence is short lived. What stays secure is not possessions but one's nature, which stands

Beside you and takes away your troubles. But when riches live with fools unjustly,

They bloom a little while, then flee the house.

11. L-Interdett taħt is-Sodda – Clare Azzopardi

MIMÌ: suppost kelli nixjieħ ... kelli nixjieħ biex nara nibqax sabiħa ... imma ... ġara li ma xjaħtx ... u ma nafx ġhadnix sabiħa xorta ...

... suppost kellu jkun hawn ritratt tiegħi hawn ... imma naħseb li baqa' fuq il-komodina ... jew fil-kexxun tal-komodina jinnamra mar-riħa tal-kamla ... x'aktarx riedet iżzommu ommi ... dak, l-uniku wieħed li għandi ... u naħseb li s'issa d-dmugħ tagħha rnexxielu jqaxxar dik it-tbissima li weħlet miegħu għal ħafna snin ... heqq kemm jiflaħ idum jitbissew dan ir-ritratt? ... suppost kellu jixjieħ ...

... qalu li raw is-sriep u d-dud ħiereg mill-istonku u n-nemus idur fuq moħħi qiegħed ... qalu li jien hekk kien ħaqqni ... ommi ħalfet lill-qassis li ma ratx sriep u skorpjuni ... ma nafx emminhiex ... imbagħad bdiet tgħajjat u twerzaq bil-biza' ... u gġieldet biex jeħduni bis-salib ... imma l-ġirien qalulha li ma kienx ħaqqni ...

it-triq, il-memorji tagħha tiegħi bdew jaqgħu waħda waħda biex forsi jinbtu ... imma n-nisa li kienu joqogħdu ħdejna bdew jaqilgħuhom u jittfghuhom fiż-żibel għax kienu memorji tal-mistħija ... u wara ommi marret tfittxhom ... imma ma sabithomx ... imbagħad bdiet tizra' memorji ġodda kull darba li tiġi hawn ... u bdiet issaqqihom bid-dmugħ tagħha ... imħeddel ... li nixef malajr ... u allura ma nibtux ...

... naħseb li għalhekk zammitu fil-komodina r-ritratt ... u fuqu għamlet salib ... ma jmurx jiġi x-xitan u jeħodulha ... 'qas ix-xitan ma jridni lili ma ...

... l-aħħar li rajtu għamel xi kwarta hawn waħdu ... jiċċassa fit-telqa li sab ... għandu jkun ma kienx ċert liema wieħed kien tiegħi ... kien ilu ma jiġi ... ritratt m'hawnx ... ismi m'għadux jidher ... nassumi li nesa ... u baqa' bil-fjuri f'idu ... kif qatt nista' ninsieh ... suppost kelli niżzewġu ...

(Skiet)

... inħobbok, inħobbok ... imma ma semagħnix ... il-fjuri ħadhom lura miegħu ... imbagħad qatt aktar ma reġa' ġie.

12. *The Boors (I Rusteghi)* – Carlo Goldoni translated by Simon Parker

(FELICE, is trying to make things clear in the following explanation.)

FELICE: Be quiet and listen! I'll explain everything.

No, don't interrupt! Once you've heard me out, if you still think I've done wrong, I'll let you tell me off. If I've been right, I expect you to accept it. Is that a deal? But don't lose your temper till I've finished, right?

First of all, my good sirs, the way you treat your women – folk is outrageous! Your wives, your daughters ... you are so rough and uncouth ... how on earth can you expect them to love you? Oh, they may well obey you – because they have to – but they don't think of you as husbands and fathers but as jailers, tyrants and thugs!

Let's just look at the facts, shall we? Signor Leonardo wants to marry off his daughter. He doesn't tell her, he doesn't want her to know anything about it – she's not even allowed to see the young man. She's got to marry him whether she wants to or not. Now, I'm not arguing against arranged marriages – heaven knows where we'd all be if young girls were allowed to choose for themselves – but shouldn't you at least consult her, Signor Leonardo? She's your only daughter! Are you happy to sacrifice her? It's true that the young man is good, he's kind, he's not ugly and he's perfectly likeable. But what if she doesn't like him?

That's why we arranged for them to see each other – she was worried he might be a tyrannical brute like her father! Your wife wanted them to see each other, but she was too scared of you to say so. So we arranged the business with the masks and I asked the young man to come. The young people saw one another, and they liked one another. They were happy. You should be relieved, not angry.

I acted in good faith. If you are men, you'll approve of what I did. If you're brutes, you'll just have to accept I did it. Your daughter is honest, the young man is blameless and we women have acted honourably. So send for the lawyer and arrange the marriage.

13. Hekuba – Ewripide, tradotta minn Alfred Palma

POLISSENA: Qed nara, Odisseus, illi idek il-lemnija moħbija ġo mantarek, u li wiċċek la ġenba mdawwar biex jiena d-daġna tiegħek ma nkunx nista' mmiss. Intreħa! Inti ħrabort liż-Żeus li jħares lil dawk kollha li jitolbu. Iva, se mmur. Il-ħtieġa qalbha tajba, għax jien nixtieq immut. Jekk le, jien nidher mara mbissma, 'mma li l-mewt twarrab. Għal' għandi ngħix? L-ewwel tifkira tiegħi: missieri sid fuq it-Trojġani kollha. U kbirt, fil-għożża, imrobbija b'tama middija li xi re miżżewweġ. Mhux żgħira l-pika dwar liem' qorti, liem' nar seta' jagħtini merħba. U jien, iss' umiljata, principessa fost in-nisa Trojġani, l-aktar waħda ammirata fost ix-xebbiet tagħha, il-alla mara f'kollox barra f'ħaġa – jeħtieġli mmur.

Imma issa jien ilsira. Biss dak l-isem, dak l-isem aħrax, għall-mewt iġaġħ'lni nikteb. Jista' r-risq ilaqqagħni, ukoll, ma' xi sid kiefer li jġebbed u jbegħ'ni għall-muniti tal-fidda – lili oħt Ettore u lill-bosta oħra, u lili jġaġħal inwettaq ħtiġijietu – il-qamħ nitħan, nagħmel il-ħobż, niknislu l-ħmieġ minn daru, in-newl ninseġ, kuljum inħoss id-diq. Jagħfas hu fuqi r-rieda tiegħu. U xi l-sir, li nixtara min jaf minn fejn, iħammeg soddti darba mħollija għas-slaten biss. Le! Jien imcaħħad minn dan id-dawl xemxi – ħielsa – xħin nagħti dan il-ġisem tiegħi lill-alla min tal-mewt. Mexxini, Odisseus. Ħalli tieqaf għalija dit-taqbida. Għax jien tama ma nistax nara, la sies sabiex naħseb li tista' l-glorja terġa' tlibbes jiemna. U inti, ma, la tittantax twaqqafna b'taqwil jew idejn jigbdu. Izda aqbel li għandi mmur qabel ma dinjitati mkerrha tisfa' mill-mistħija. Waħda mhix imdorrija għat-togħma min tal-kefrija ġġarrab dan ma' għonqha tilwi għal ġewwa l-madmad tat-tbatija. Li mmur ikun aħjar m'li ngħix għalija, għax ħajja mingħajr ġmiel morali tnissel uġiġħ li ma jintemmx.

13. *Hekabe* – Euripides, translated by George Theodoridis

POLYXENA: Odysseus, I can see your hand hidden in the folds of your cloak and your face turned away from me so that I won't touch your beard while I am pleading to you. Fear not, Odysseus. You have escaped from my Lord, Zeus, the protector of all suppliants. Fear not because I shall go with you to the altar, not only because I must but also because I want to die. If I don't, I shall be regarded as a coward; a weak-hearted woman.

Should I live? To what purpose now? My father was the king of the Phrygians. That was the most important thing in my life. Then I was brought up as a true royal bride, one that has provoked many rivalries as to into whose palace and to whose hearth I should go.

I was the lady mistress of the Trojan women then, equal to the gods, if you forget mortality, and I, poor wretch than I am now much admired among both, the single as well as the married women.

Now I am a slave! This name alone, this name that I cannot get used to, urges me to seek death. Then there's the thought that some cruel man will buy me with silver, me, Hector's sister and sister to many others. A man who'll force me to bake his bread, to sweep the floors and stand at the loom. What a black life that would be! And then there'd be some slave, bought from who knows where, who will defile my bed, a bed that once belonged to kings.

Never!

I cast out the sun's rays from my eyes while they're still free and give my body to Hades.

Come then, Odysseus! Take me and lead me to my murder. Come, because I can see nothing to give me hope or belief that Fate will one day give me joy.

14. *The Lark – Anouh*

JOAN: A man in a white robe, with two white wings – from the sky to the ground. He didn't tell me his name that day, but later on I found out that he was the blessed St. Michael.

(In the deep voice of the Archangel.)

Joan, go to the help of the King of France, and give him back his kingdom.

(She replies in her own voice.)

Oh sir, you haven't looked at me; I am only a young peasant girl, not a great captain who can lead an army. You will go and search out Robert de Beaudricourt, the Governor of Vaucouleurs. He will give you a suit of clothes to dress you like a man, and he will take you to the Dauphin. St Catherine and St Margaret will protect you.

(She suddenly drops to the floor sobbing with fear.)

Please, please pity me, holy sir I'm a little girl; I'm happy here, alone in the fields. I've never had to be responsible for anything, except my sheep. The Kingdom' of France is far beyond anything I can do. If you will only look at me you will see I am small, and ignorant. The realm of France is too heavy, sir. But the King of France has famous Captains, as strong as you could need, and they're used to doing these things. If they lose a battle, they'll sleep as soundly as ever. They simply say the snow, or the wind was against them; and they just cross all the dead men off their roll. But I should always remember I had killed them. Please have pity on me ... No such thing. No pity. He had gone already, and there I was, with France on my shoulders. Not to mention the work on the farm and my father, who wasn't easy.

15. *As You Like It* – William Shakespeare

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; 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'ed, 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?

16. Ippermettili Nitlaq – Alfred Buttigieg*(GRAZIELLA hija tifla li tbat bil-kundizzjoni omfalosil.)*

GRAZIELLA: Jiena Graziella, tifla ta' erbatax-il sena. Kulhadd kien jaħseb li se mmut żgħira. Nirringrazzja 'l Alla li għadni ħajja. Xortija tajba li għadni ħajja. Imma kieku xortija tajba, kieku jiena b'saħħti. Kieku jiena b'saħħti, kieku nista' nagħmel affarijiet li jagħtuni pjaċir fil-ħajja. Kieku xortija tajba kieku jiena kuntenta u ma niddependix fuq ħaddieħor. Kieku nista' naqbez u nogħla u nigri fil-kampanja u ngħix ħajja normali, noħroġ mal-ħbieb, immur niżfen id-diskos. Forsi għal xi wħud xorti tajba tfisser tqum filgħodu, tara d-dawl tax-xemx u tirringrazzja 'l Alla li żammek ħajja jum ieħor.

(Pawża)

Jiena twelidt bil-kundizzjoni omfalosil (omphalocèle), jiġifieri bi msarni barra. Kieku nikxfilkom zaqqi tistgħu taraw x'ferita għandi. U bħallikieku dan mhuwiex biżżejjed, twelidt bi problemi oħra, xi wħud minnhom ma jidhrux għax huma moħbijin ġewwa, oħrajn jidhru bħal riglejja ... għalhekk inżommhom moħbijin taħt din il-kutra. Qatt ma stajt nimxi bħalkom jew nigri bħal tfal oħra. Dejjem imwaħħla f'dan il-wheelchair.

(Pawża)

L-unika ħaġa li twelidt biha sura huwa moħħi. B'hekk nista' nifhem li jien differenti minn ħaddieħor. Ninsab f'dis-sitwazzjoni grazzi għat-tabiba brava li ħaditni taħt idejha. Ma nistax inwaħħal f'ommi, mhux hekk, għax ommi ma kinitx ħa tħallini mmut qisu xejn. Imma t-tabiba, dik dehrilha li għandha tagħmel minn kollox biex issalvani. U rnexxielha ssalvani. Ħasbet li ħa tagħmilli pjaċir. Ħasbet li setgħet tiddeċiedi għalija wkoll.

17. Agamemnon – Seneca

(The King of Argos, Agamemnon, is returning home from the Trojan War to his wife Clytemnestra.)

CASSANDRA: 'Where am I? Fled is the kindly light, deep darkness blinds my eyes,
And the sky, buried in gloom, is hidden away.
But see! with double sun the day gleams forth,
And double Argos lifts up twin palaces!
Ida's groves I see.
There sits the shepherd, fateful judge midst mighty goddesses
– Fear him, ye kings, I warn you, fear the child of stolen love.
that rustic foundling shall overturn your house.
What means that mad woman with drawn sword in hand?
The king of beasts with his proud neck, by a base fang lies low,
an African lion, suffering the bloody bites of his bold lioness.
Why do ye summon me, saved only of my house, my kindred shades?
Thee, father, do I follow, eyewitness of Troy's burial.
thee, brother, help of the Phrygians, terror of the Greeks,
I see not in thine old-time splendour,
or with thine hands hot from the burning of the ships,
but mangled of limb, with those arms wounded by the deep-sunk thongs.
thee, Troilus, I follow, to early with Achilles met.
unrecognisable the face thou wearest, Deiphobus, the gift of thy new wife.
'Tis sweet to fare along the very Stygian pools.
sweet to behold Tartarus' savage dog and the realms of greedy Dis!
Today this skiff of Phlegethon shall bear royal souls, vanquished and vanquisher.
Ye shades, I pray; thou stream on which the gods make oath,
thee no less I pray for a little withdraw the covering of that dark world,
that on Mycenae the shadowy throng of Phrygians may look forth.
Behold, poor souls; the fates turn backward on themselves.

18. Invisible Friends – Alan Ayckbourn

LUCY: Come with me if you will. Upstairs. If you listen very carefully you can just hear the distant sound of the greater spotted Grisly Gary, my unbelievably talkative brother. Here we go, I'll just have a quite word with him, you might want to cover your ears.

(Talking loudly, and quickly)

Hallo, Grisly. It's your loving sister, Lucy. Just wanted to tell you that I have been picked for the school swimming team. Thought you'd like to know. Bye, grisly. I enjoyed that chat. He didn't hear a thing. This is my room. No one is allowed in here except for me. I'm a very tidy sort of person. Which is a bit extraordinary in this house. I think I must be a freak. I actually like to know where I have put my things. This is my bed. And this is my desk. And up there on the shelf are my special, most favourite books. Actually, one of the reasons that I keep it tidy is because my very, very special friend, Zara, also likes things tidy. Oh yah, I ought to explain to you about Zara, shouldn't I? You may have heard my mum talking about my invisible friend? Do you remember? Well, that's my invisible friend, Zara. This is Zara. I want you to say hallo to her. Zara, say hallo to my friends. And won't you say hallo to Zara, she did say hallo to you. I invented Zara, oh years ago, when I was seven or eight. Just for fun. I think I was ill at the time and wasn't allowed to play with any of my real friends, so I made up Zara. She's my special friend that no one else can see, except me. Of course, I can't really see her either. Not really. Although sometimes I? It's almost as if I could see her, sometimes. If I concentrate vary hard it's like I can just glimpse her out of the corner of my eye. Still. Anyway. I've kept Zara for years and years, it's been almost 10 years now actually. Until they all started saying I was much too old for that sort of thing and got worried and started talking about sending for a doctor. So, then I didn't take her round with me quite so much after that. But she's still here. And when I feel really sad and depressed, I sit and talk to Zara. Zara always understands. Zara always listens. She's special. Aren't you, Zara? What? Yes, I wish he'd turn his music down, too. I've asked him, haven't I?

(Mimicking)

but he just says, 'how can I hear the music then if I turn it down. I can't hear the bass then!' I used to have pictures up on the walls of this room, but every time he put a CD on, they would all fall down off the walls. I wish he would listen to quiet music, just once, like some Bach or Mozart. Of course, if he did that, he wouldn't be Grisly Gary now would he be? Oh Zara, I almost forgot to tell you. I got picked for the school swimming team today. I know, I'm really excited too. I did the breaststroke and freestyle just like you told me to do and I got in. No. no they didn't come. I mean it's not like I? no? why should they have?

(Yelling)

If anyone cares at all, I was picked for the school swimming team today. How about that folk? Mom? Dad? Anybody that cares? Great, thanks everyone. God dammit, they could have. They could? But no, no of course not, they don't? of course not, what was I expecting, someone to actually? Yah, yah Zara. I know you're always here. It's just that sometimes? I get so lonely.

19. *People, Places and Things* – Duncan MacMillan

EMMA: Yeah. I used to think that too.

She sits.

With a play you get instructions. Stage directions. Dialogue. Someone clothes you. Tells you where to be and when. You get to live the most intense moments of a life over and over again, with all the boring bits left out. And you get to practice for weeks. And you're applauded. Then you get changed. Leave through stage door. Bus home. Back to real life. All the boring stuff left in. Waiting. Temping. Answering phones and serving canapés. Nothing permanent. Can't plan. Can't get a mortgage or pay for a car. Audition comes in. Try to look right. Sit in a room surrounded by people who look just like you, all after the same part. Never hear back. Or if you get the part, it'll be sitting around in rehearsal and backstage making less than you did temping. Make these friendships with people, a little family, fall in love on stage and off and then it's over and you don't see them again. You try not to take it personally when people who aren't as good as you get the parts. When you go from being the sexy ingénue to the tired mother of three.

But you keep going because sometimes, if you're really lucky, you get to be onstage and say things that are absolutely true, even if they're made-up. You get to do things that feel more real to you, more authentic, more meaningful than anything in our own life. You get to speak poetry, words you would never think to say but which becomes yours as you speak them.

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 garnish sun.

It feels like Lydia wants me to acknowledge some buried trauma but there isn't any. I played Antigone and every night my heart broke about her dead brother. Then my own brother died, and I didn't feel anything. I missed the funeral because I had a matinee. I'm not avoiding talking to the Group because I've got something to hide. It's the opposite. If I'm not in character I'm not sure I'm really there. I'm already dead. I'm nothing. I want to live hundred lives and be everywhere and fight against the infinitesimal time we have on this planet.

Acting gives me the same thing I get from drugs and alcohol. Good parts are just harder to come by.

I really ... I really miss my brother.

20. *A Woman of No Importance* – Oscar Wilde

GERALD: Mother, how changeable you are! You don't seem to know your own mind for a single moment. An hour and a half ago in the Drawing-room you agreed to the whole thing; now you turn round and make objections and try to force me to give up my one chance in life. Yes, my one chance. You don't suppose that men like Lord Illingworth are to be found every day, do you, mother? It is very strange that when I have had such a wonderful piece of good luck, the one person to put difficulties in my way should be my own mother. Besides, you know, mother, I love Hester Worsley. Who could help loving her? I love her more than I have ever told you, far more. And if I had a position, if I had prospects, I could – I could ask her to – Don't you understand now, mother, what it means to me to be Lord Illingworth's secretary? To start like that is to find a career ready for one – before one – waiting for one. If I were Lord Illingworth's secretary, I could ask Hester to be my wife. As a wretched bank clerk with a hundred a year it would be an impertinence. Then I have my ambition left, at any rate. That is something – I am glad I have that! You have always tried to crush my ambition, mother – haven't you? You have told me that the world is a wicked place, that success is not worth having, that society is shallow, and all that sort of thing – well, I don't believe it, mother. I think the world must be delightful. I think society must be exquisite. I think success is a thing worth having. You have been wrong in all that you taught me, mother, quite wrong. Lord Illingworth is a successful man. He is a fashionable man. He is a man who lives in the world and for it. Well, I would give anything to be just like Lord Illingworth.

21. Antigone – Sophocles

(Creon's watchman, tells him that someone has dared to bury the body of someone who was executed.)

GUARD: I'll not say that I'm out of breath from running, King,
 because every time I stopped to think about what I have to tell you,
 I felt like going back. And all the time a voice kept saying,
 "You fool, don't you know you're walking straight into trouble?"
 and then another voice: "Yes, but if you let somebody get the news to Creon first,
 it will be even worse than that for you!"
 But good sense won out, at least I hope it was good sense,
 and here I am with a story that makes no sense at all.
 but I'll tell it anyhow, because, as they say,
 what's going to happen's going to happen, and – I did not see who did it.
 You must not punish me for what someone else has done.
 A dreadful thing ... I don't know how to put it –
 Well, then; ... The dead man – ... Polyneices – ... out there –
 someone, – ... new dust on the slimy flesh!
 Someone has given it burial that way, and gone ...
 I swear I do not know! You must believe me!
 Listen: The ground was dry, not a sign of digging, no,
 Not a wheel track in the dust, no trace of anyone.
 The body, just mounded over with light dust: you see?
 Not buried really, but as if they'd covered it Just enough for the ghost's peace. And no sign of dogs or any
 wild animal that had been there.
 And then what a scene there was! Every man of us
 Accusing the other: we all proved the other man did it,
 We all had proof that we could not have done it.
 We were ready to take hot iron in our hands, walk through fire, swear by all the gods, It was not !!
 I do not know who it was, but it was not !!
 And then, when this came to nothing, someone said
 A thing that silenced us and made us stare down at the ground:
 you had to be told the news, And the bad luck fell to me.

22. *P'Tang Yang Kipperbang* – Jack Rosenthal

(Alan Duckworth is a pupil at a co-educational school in the late 1940's. He is outside Ann's house, she has been friendlier than before, and this gives Alan courage.)

(Looking at Ann. He speaks quietly, solemnly, completely unselfconsciously, and very, very simply).

ALAN: You're beautiful, Ann. Sometimes I look at you and you're so beautiful I want to cry. And sometimes you look so beautiful I want to laugh and jump up and down and run through the streets with no clothes on shouting 'P'tang, yang, kipperbang' in people's letterboxes.

(Pause)

But mostly you're so beautiful-even if it doesn't make Me cry, it makes my chest cry. Your lips are the most beautiful. Second is the nape ...

(After she queries this word)

The back of your neck. It's termed the nape ... And your skin. When I walk past your desk, I breathe in on purpose to smell your skin. It's the most beautiful smell there is ... It makes me feel dizzy. Giddy. You smell brand-new. You look brand-new. All of you. The little soft hairs on your arms ... But mostly it's your lips. I love your lips. That's why I've ALWAYS wanted to kiss you. Ever since 3B. Just kiss. Not the other things. I don't want to do the other things to you.

(Pause)

Well. I DO. ALL the other things. Sometimes I want to do them so much I feel I'm – do you have violin lessons?
...

(Ann is rather thrown by this.)

... On the violin.

(She doesn't)

Well, on a violin there's the E string. That's the highest pitched and it's strung very tight and taut, and makes a kind of high, sweet scream. Well, sometimes I want you so much, that's what I'm like ...

(Pause. Ann thanks him for this remark.)

... I always wanted to tell you were lovely. Personally, I always think it's dead weedy when Victor Mature – or what's his name – Stewart Grainger – or someone says a girl's lovely. But you are.

(Pause)

And I know girls think it's weedy when boys call them sweet. But you are.

(Pause)

I don't suppose I'll ever kiss you now in my whole life. Or take you to the pictures. Or marry you and do the OTHER things to you. But I'll never forget you. And how you made me feel. Even when I'm 51 or something.

23. *The Moon's The Madonna* – Richard Cameron

(Michael, 16, half-brother to Danny and Shari, is under suspicion of sexual abuse. He is talking to his older brother, Tom. Time: The present.)

MICHAEL: Will I have to make a statement? ... What if I start getting mixed up? They might think I'm lying. If they think I'm frightened they might think I'm guilty ... Will they have a tape recorder? ... I've seen them tape recorders. And if you don't say what they want you to say, you have to stay there until you do. I've seen it! ... Will they tell Asda? I hope they don't. I don't want to lose my job now I'm working inside. I get on with everyone really well ... Can they find out? ... They've got it all down on paper. They've got it on files. They keep them for years ... I haven't done nothing, but I can't make them believe me. I wouldn't do anything to hurt Danny and Shari. I love them both. They kept saying about them not being my proper brother and sister, only half, about different dads, and how having a different dad might mean I thought of them different. That's all wrong, though, because we all belong to Mum, don't we? I couldn't hurt them. They kept saying about me not having a girlfriend. Why had I got no friends? Why did I stay in all the time? I don't want friends. I just want to look after Mum. I love her. And I want to help her. I had to tell them about her not having a nice life with Danny and Shari's dad. About him making her frightened sometimes and not letting her go out anywhere. I said how I stayed in now, to help her. She's my Mum and I love her ... They said that maybe I stayed in so I could be with Shari. So, I could have a cuddle ... I don't think they like families to have a cuddle.

24. *The School for Wives* – Molière

ARNOLPHE: Agnès, put your work down, and listen to me. Raise your head a little and turn your face round.

(Putting his finger on his forehead.)

There, look at me here while I speak, and take good note of even the smallest word. I am going to wed you, Agnès; you ought to bless your stars a hundred times a day, to think of your former low estate, and at the same time, to wonder at my goodness in raising you from a poor country girl to the honourable rank of a citizen's wife; to enjoy the bed and the embraces of a man who has shunned all such trammels, and whose heart has refused to a score of women, well fitted to please, the honour which he intends to confer on you. You must always keep in mind, I say, how insignificant you would be without this glorious alliance, in order that the picture may teach you the better to merit the condition in which I shall place you, and make you always know yourself, so that I may never repent of what I am doing.

Marriage, Agnès, is no joke. The position of a wife calls for strict duties; I do not mean to exalt you to that condition, in order that you may be free and take your ease. Your sex is formed for dependence. Omnipotence goes with the beard. Though there are two halves in the connection, yet these two halves are by no means equal. The one half is supreme, and the other subordinate: the one is all submission to the other which rules; the obedience which the well-disciplined soldier shows to his leader, the servant to his master, a child to his parent, the lowest monk to his superior, is far below the docility, obedience, humility, and profound respect due from the wife to her husband, her chief, her lord, and her master.

When he looks at her gravely, her duty is at once to lower her eyes, never daring to look him in the face, until he chooses to favour her with a tender glance. Our women now-a-days do not understand this; but do not be spoiled by the example of others. Take care not to imitate those miserable flirts whose pranks are talked of all over the city; and do not let the evil one tempt you, that is, do not listen to any young coxcomb.

Remember, Agnès, that, in making you part of myself, I give my honour into your hands, which honour is fragile, and easily damaged; that it will not do to trifle in such a matter, and that there are boiling cauldrons in hell, into which wives who live wickedly are thrown for evermore. I am not telling you a parcel of stories; you ought to let these lessons sink into your heart. If you practice them sincerely, and take care not to flirt, your soul will ever be white and spotless as a lily; but if you stain your honour, it will become as black as coal. You will seem hideous to all, and one day you will become the devil's own property, and boil in hell to all eternity – from which may the goodness of Heaven defend you! Make a curtsy.

As a novice in a convent ought to know her duties by heart, so it ought to be on getting married: here in my pocket, I have an important document which will teach you the duty of a wife. I do not know the author, but it is some good soul or other; and I desire that this shall be your only study.

(Rises)

Stay. Let me see if you can read it fairly.

25. *The Taming of the Shrew* – William Shakespeare

PETRUCHIO: I tell thee, Kate, twas burnt and dried away.
 And I expressly am forbid to touch it,
 For it engenders choler, planteth anger;
 And better 'twere that both of us did fast,
 Since of ourselves, ourselves are choleric,
 Than feed it with such over-roasted flesh.
 Be patient, tomorrow't shall be mended,
 And, for this night, we'll fast for company.
 Come, I will bring thee to thy bridal chamber.
 Thus have I politicly begun my reign,
 And 'tis my hope to end successfully.
 My falcon now is sharp and passing empty,
 And, till she stoop, she must not be full-gorged,
 For then she never looks upon her lure.
 Another way I have to man my haggard,
 To make her come and know her keeper's call.
 That is, to watch her, as we watch these kites
 That bate and beat and will not be obedient.
 She ate no meat today, nor none shall eat.
 Last night she slept not, nor tonight she shall not.
 As with the meat, some undeservèd fault
 I'll find about the making of the bed,
 And here I'll fling the pillow, there the bolster,
 This way the coverlet, another way the sheets.
 Ay, and amid this hurly I intend
 That all is done in reverend care of her.
 And, in conclusion, she shall watch all night,
 And if she chance to nod I'll rail and brawl,
 And with the clamour keep her still awake.
 This is a way to kill a wife with kindness,
 And thus I'll curb her mad and headstrong humor.
 He that knows better how to tame a shrew,
 Now let him speak; 'tis charity to show.

26. *Ħekuba* – Ewripide tradotta minn Alfred Palma

POLIDORU: Jien ġej mill-ħofra illi taħbi lill-mejtin, mid-dlam bil-bwieb imgħasses fejn Hades jgħix mifrud minn allat oħra. Jien ġej, Polidorus, iben Ħekuba u Priamu. Missieri ra l-għawġ lil Trojja tagħna taqa' taħt lanez il-Griegi. Imbezza', huwa lili mar joħroġni mill-art Trojjana għand Polimestor, ħabibu ġewwa Thracia, li jizra' dal-oqsma hekk għemmiela, u jsaltan fuq in-nies iħobbu ż-żwiemel. U lili bagħat missieri b'ħafna deheb moħbi. Imbagħad, jekk jaħslu jaqgħu s-swar ta' Trojja, uliedu, dawk illi jibqgħu ħajja, fqar ma jkunux. U jien, l-iżgħar fost subien Priamu, ħariġni hu bil-moħbi għax kont tifel żgħir wisq biex tarka tqila ngorr u lanza. Sa baqgħu jzommu l-fruntieri tagħna, u t-torrijiet ta' Trojja weqfin sodi u r-risq bierek il-lanza ta' ħija Ettore.

B'kemm ħeffa, imrobbi minn ħabib missieri. Jien kbirt, bħal siġra żgħira tikber għolja, sabiex nisfa' maqtuġħ, għax Trojja ltaqgħet mal-għawġ. Hekk ukoll ħajjet Ettore. U mġarraf mal-art ġie fuklar missieri, u hemm qrib dak l-altar mill-allat mibni, hu waqa', maqtul għas-sagrificċju minn iben Akille b'demm il-qtil imċappas. Ħabib missieri lili qatel waqt li kont qed nitnikket. Għad-deheb qatilni u rema ġismi ġewwa l-baħar biex dak id-deheb b'hekk seta' jzomm ġo daru. Nimtedd jien fuq ir-ramel, nimtedd fil-baħar imkisser jġbed lura, mill-mewġ jinzel u jogħla mitfugħ lil hemm u 'l hawn, bla mibki, bla midfun. U issa, qoxret laħmi mħollija vojta, jien biss arja li tteptep ħfejfa fuq dak illi jiena nħobb ... ommi Ħekuba.

Tlitt ijiem sħaħ ili nittajjar – minn meta l-imsejkna ommi ġiet miġjuba hawnhekk 'il bogħod minn Trojja fuq din l-art Thracjana; u l-Griegi kollha, kalmi mal-ġfien tagħhom, qed jistennew fuq l-art ir-riħ li jaqbel. Għax, mejjet, mar Akille juri nnifsu fuq qabru ħa jzomm lura lill-ġgajta tal-Griegi jaqdfu lura lejn pajjiżhom.

27. Hekabe – Euripides

POLYDORUS: I am Polydorus! I have come from the lair of the dead and the gates of darkness where Hades lives, far away from the rest of the gods. I am son of Hekabe and Priam. My mother is Kisseus' daughter.

When the citadel of the Phrygians, Troy, was in imminent danger of falling under the Greek spears, my father, afraid for my safety, had sent me away to Polymestor, his Thracian friend who cultivates this here fertile peninsula of Thrace and with his spear rules over his horse-loving people. My father has sent with me a large quantity of gold so that if Troy fell, those of his sons who would survive would not lack the means of livelihood. I was the youngest of Priam's sons and that's why he had sent me away. I could not yet wear the arms of war or carry a spear in my young hand.

So, while Troy's boundaries stood intact, while her walls were impenetrable, my father's Thracian friend brought me up in his home properly and like his own flesh and blood. But I was doomed because the moment Troy was raised to ground, the moment Hektor, my brother was killed, the moment that my father was slain on the holy altar by that murderous sinner, Achilles, the moment my father's palace was destroyed, this Thracian friend of his, Polymestor, slaughtered me and took my gold for himself.

He has slaughtered me, threw me into the sea and kept the gold hidden inside his palace. Unlamented and unburied, sometimes I lie by the shore and sometimes I am dragged this way and that within the endlessly turbulent waves of the deep. Now, having left my corpse, I hover over my sweet mother, Hekabe.

28. *The Kitchen* – Arnold Wesker

PAUL: Listen, Peter ... I'll tell you something. I'm going to be honest with you. You don't mind if I'm honest? Right. I'm going to be honest with you. I don't like you. Now wait a minute, let me finish. I don't like you! I think you're a pig! You bully, you're jealous, you go mad with your work, you always quarrel. All right! But now it's quiet, the ovens are low, the work has stopped for a little and now I'm getting to know you. I still think you're a pig - only now... not so much of a pig. So that's what I dream. I dream of a friend. You give me a rest, you give me silence, you take away this mad kitchen, so I make friends. So, I think - maybe all the people I thought where pigs are not so many pigs.

Listen, I'll tell you a story. Next door to me, next door where I live is a bus driver. Comes from Hoxton, he's my age, married and got two kids. He says good morning to me. I ask him how he is; I give his children sweets. That's our relationship. Somehow, he seems frightened to say too much, you know. God forbid I might ask him for something. So, we make no demands on each other. Then one day the busmen go on strike. He's out for five weeks. Every morning I say to him 'Keep going mate, you'll win.

Every morning I give him words of encouragement; I say I understand his cause. I've got to get up earlier to get to work but I don't mind. We're neighbours. We're workers together. He's pleased. Then, one Sunday, there's a peace march. I don't believe they do much good, but I go; because in this world man's got to show he can have his say. The next morning, he comes up to me and he says, now listen to this, he says 'Did you go on that peace march yesterday?' So, I says Yes, I did go on that peace march yesterday. So, then he turns round to me and he says, 'You know what? A bomb should have been dropped on the lot of them! It's a pity.' He says, 'that they had children with them cos a bomb should've been dropped on them all!' And you know what was upsetting him? The march was holding up the traffic, the buses couldn't move so fast.

29. Thirst – Eugene O’Neill

GENTLEMAN: It was in the salon. You were very beautiful. I remember a woman on my right saying: “How pretty she is I wonder if she is married?” Strange how some idiotic remark like that will stick in one’s brain when all else is vague and confused. I was looking at you and wondering what kind of woman you were. You know I had never met you personally – only seen you in my walks around the deck. Then came the crash – that horrible dull crash. We were all thrown forward on the floor of the salon; then screams. Oaths, fainting women. The hollow boom of a bulkhead giving way. I vaguely remember rushing to the stateroom and picking up my wallet. It must have been that menu I took instead. Then I was on deck fighting in the midst of the crowd. Somehow, I got into a boat – but it was overloaded and was swamped immediately. I swam to another boat. They beat me off with the oars. That boat too was swamped a moment later. And then the gurgling, choking cries of the drowning! Something huge rushed by me in the water, leaving a gleaming trail of phosphorescence. A woman near me with a life bell around her gave a cry of agony and disappeared – then I realized – sharks! I became frenzied with terror. I swam. I beat the water with my hands. The ship had gone down. I swam and swam with but one idea – to put all that horror behind me. I saw something white on the water before me. I clutched it – I climbed on it. It was this raft. You and he were on it. I fainted. The whole thing is a horrible nightmare in my brain – but I remember clearly that idiotic remark. Of the woman in the salon. What pitiful creatures we are!

30. *Justice* – John Galsworthy

(Turning to the jury.)

FALDER: I was having my breakfast when she came. Her dress was all torn, and she was gasping and couldn't seem to get her breath at all; there were the marks of his fingers round her throat; her arm was bruised, and the blood had got into her eyes dreadfully. It frightened me, and then when she told me, I felt – I felt – well – it was too much for me!

(Hardening suddenly)

If you'd seen it, having the feelings for her that I had, you'd have felt the same, I know. When She left me - because I had to go to the office – I was out of my senses for fear that he'd do it again and thinking what I could do. I couldn't work – all the morning I was like that – simply couldn't fix my mind on anything. I couldn't think at all. I seemed to have to keep moving. When Davis – the other clerk – gave me the cheque – he said: 'It'll do you good. Will, to have a run with this. You seem half off your chump this morning.' Then when I had it in my hand – I don't know how it came, but it just flashed across me that if I put the twenty and the nought there would be the money to get her away. It just came and went – I never thought of it again. Then Davis went out to his luncheon, and I don't really remember what I did till I'd pushed the cheque through to the cashier under the rail. I remember his saying 'Notes?' Then I suppose I knew what I'd done. Anyway. when I got outside, I wanted to chuck myself under a bus; I wanted to throw the money away; but it seemed I was in for it, so I thought at any rate I'd save her. Of course, the tickets I took for the passage and the little I gave her's been wasted, and all, except what I was obliged to spend myself, I've restored. I keep thinking over and over however it was I came to do it, and how I can't have it all again to do differently!

31. *All My Sons* – Arthur Miller

CHRIS: Dad ... you, did it?

(Shocked but keeping voice down.)

You did it to the others? You sent out a hundred and twenty cracked engine-heads and let those boys die! How could you do that? How?

(Voice rises with anger)

Dad ... Dad, you killed twenty-one men! You killed them. You murdered them.

(Becomes more furious)

Explain it to me! Explain to me How you do it? What did you do?

(Pause)

Explain it to me goddammit or I will tear you to pieces! I want to know what you did, now what did you do? You had a hundred and twenty cracked engine – heads, now what did you do? Why'd you ship them out in the first place? If you knew they were cracked; then why didn't you tell them?

(Relatively long pause, becomes more disgusted)

You knew they wouldn't hold up in the air, you knew that those planes would come crashing down. Were you going to warn them not to use them? Why the hell did you let them out of the factory?

(Pause)

You were afraid maybe! God in heaven. What kind of a man are you? Kids were hanging up the air by those heads. You knew that, and yet you did nothing about it!

(Startled)

You did it for me? You wanted to save the business for me.

(With burning fury)

For me! Where do you live, where have you come from? For me! I was dying every day and you were killing my boys and you did it for me? What the hell do you think I was thinking of, the Goddam business? Is that as far as your mind can see, the business? What is that the world – the business? What the hell do you mean, you did it for me? Don't you have a country? Don't you live in the world? What the hell are you? You're not even an animal, no animal kills his own, what are you? What must I do to you? I ought to tear the tongue out of your mouth! What must I do?

(Begins to weep)

What must I do. Jesus God. What must I do?

32. *The Glass Menagerie* – Tennessee Williams

TOM: What do you think I'm at? Aren't I supposed to have any patience to reach the end of Mother? I know, I know. It seems unimportant to you, what I'm doing – what I want to do – having a little difference between them! You think I'm crazy about the warehouse?

(He bends fiercely toward her slight figure.)

You think I'm in love with the Continental Shoemakers? You think I want to spend fifty-five years down there in that – Celotex interior! with – fluorescent – tubes! Look! I'd rather somebody picked up a crowbar and battered out my brains – than go back mornings!

Every time you come in yelling ... that God damn 'Rise and Shine!' – 'Rise and Shine!' I say to myself, 'How lucky dead people are! 'But I get up. I go! For sixty-five dollars a month I give up all that I dream of doing and being ever! And you say self – self is all I ever think of. Why, listen, if self is what I thought of, Mother, I'd be where he is – G O N E!

(Pointing to father's picture.)

As far as the system of transportation reaches!

I'm going to opium dens! Yes, opium dens, dens of vice and criminals' hangouts, Mother. I've joined the Hogan gang, I'm a hired assassin, I carry a tommy-gun in a violin case! I run a string of cathouses in the Valley! They call me Killer, Killer Wingfield, I'm leading a double life, a simple, honest warehouse worker by day, by night a dynamic tsar of the underworld, Mother. I go to gambling casinos; I spin away fortunes on the roulette table! I wear a patch over one eye and a false moustache, sometimes I put on green whiskers. On those occasions they call me – El Diablo! Oh, I could tell you things to make you sleepless! My enemies plan to dynamite this place. They're going to blow us all sky-high some night! I'll be glad, very happy, and so will you!

33. Antigone – Sophocles

HAEMON: Father, the gods implant in mortal men
Reason, the choicest gift bestowed by heaven.
'Tis not for me to say thou errest, nor
Would I arraign thy wisdom, if I could;?
And yet wise thoughts may come to other men
And, as thy son, it falls to me to mark
The acts, the words, the comments of the crowd.
The commons stand in terror of thy frown,
And dare not utter aught that might offend,
But I can overhear their muttered plaints,
Know how the people mourn this maiden doomed
For noblest deeds to die the worst of deaths.
When her own brother slain in battle lay
Unsepulchered, she suffered not his corpse
To lie for carrion birds and dogs to maul:
Should not her name (they cry) be writ in gold?
Such the low murmurings that reach my ear.
O father, nothing is by me more prized
Than thy well-being, for what higher good
Can children covet than their sire's fair fame,
As fathers too take pride in glorious sons.
Therefore, my father, cling not to one mood,
And deemed not thou art right, all others wrong.
For whoso thinks that wisdom dwells with him,
That he alone can speak or think aright,
Such oracles are empty breath when tried.
The wisest man will let himself be swayed
By others' wisdom and relax in time.
See how the trees beside a stream in flood
Save, if they yield to force, each spray unharmed,
But by resisting perish root and branch.
The mariner who keeps his mainsheet taut,
And will not slacken in the gale' is like
To sail with thwarts revered, keel uppermost.
Relent then and repent thee of thy wrath.
For, if one young in years may claim some sense,
I'll say 'tis best of all to be endowed
With absolute wisdom, but, if that's denied,
(And nature takes not readily that ply)
Next wise is he who lists to sage advice.

34. Menz – Francis Ebejer

PULIZIJA:

(Jaqra mill-ktieb tan-noti wara li jkun fittex taħt l-ittra Ġ. Imbagħad ĠO)

Imsejjaħ Ġorġ. Ħamsa u għoxrin sena. Orfni minn ommu. Missieru keċċieh mid-dar wara serqa sigaretti u album mimli fotografiji familjari. Għeb għal sentejn minn din il-belt. Reġa' lura bla ħsieb, taha għall-qari. Mingħajr impjeg, kien jgħix bis-saħħa tal-munificenza tal-belt għaziza tagħna. Il-jiem beda jgħaddihom fil-Librerija pubblika. Darba wera l-istmerrija tiegħu għall-kotba li kien hemm fiha billi tefa' l-ktejjeb bl-isem ta' *'Kif għandek Tkun Ċittadin Tajjed'* fl-art tal-imsemmija librerija, għemil li ġiegħel waħda mil-librara żgħażaġħ li rat kollox b'għajnejha skandalizzati tmur tigris u tixher għal siegħa sħiħa mal-kmamar kollha tal-librerija, twaqqa' kotba, tgħaffeg fuqhom, tqatta' karti u għemil ieħor simili xejn normali. Ma deherx iktar b'kotba f'idejh, anqas gazzetti u għadda xi ftit xhur fil-wied ma' ragħaj li qabdu jiragħlu n-nagħaġ u xi erba' mogħziet. Osservaturi imparzjali jgħidu li sikwit kien jinstema' jtkellem mal-imsemmija nagħaġ u mogħoż. L-istess osservaturi, ħadd minnhom nisa, isostnu u jgħidu li ħafna minn dak li kien jgħid lill-annimali kellu xeħta sovversiva. *Exempli gratia: "Inwiegħed kuruna tar-rand lill-ewwel waħda minnkom li taqbad triq għal rasha"*, u wkoll, *ibid: "Wara u quddiem kollha xorta intom"*. Ir-ragħaj keċċieh mill-impieg tiegħu meta qabdu jlibbes nuċċali kbir minn dawk tal-karnival lil waħda min-nagħgiet xjuħ. Imbagħad sab post fl-istazzjon tal-ferrovija, fejn wera x-xewqa li jaħdem billejl. Billi ċ-ċittadini onesti l-oħra li jaħdmu fl-imsemmi stazzjon minn dejjem kellhom il-ħajra normalissima u xejn sovversiva li jaħdmu binhar u jorqdu billejl, il-post ġie minnufih mogħti lilu u għadu hemm sa ... h'mmm ... sal-lum ... h'mmm, sal-lum ...

(Iqalleb il-folji)

35. Is-Surmast – Trevor Żahra

SURMAST: Bravi ... ninsabu fix-xahar ta' Mejju! Tassew tfal bravi! L-antenati tagħna kienu ddedikaw dan ix-xahar lill-Madonna u sal-ġurnata mqaddsa tal-lum, dan ix-xahar ta' Mejju bqajna nsejnhulu "Ix-xahar tal-Verġni Marija". U tafu l-għaliex? Le, ma tafux ... ħa ngħidilkom jien. Matul ix-xahar ta' Mejju, dari kienu jsiru ħafna u ħafna diżgrazzji – issa toqogħdux tistaqsuni l-għaliex. Hekk jgħidu: kienu jsiru ħafna diżgrazzji. Nies jegħrqu, min ikorri b'xi għodda, min jaqa' minn xi mkien ... insomma, flaġell sħiħ. Imma missirijietna ma qatgħux qalbhom u lanqas ma ddispraw. Eh ... missirijietna kienu sħaħ fil-fidi. X'għamlu? Tafu jew ma tafux? Missirijietna ddedikaw dan ix-xahar lill-Madonna biex Hija tiproteġihom.

Issa ħa nara min jaf jgħidli din. Xi nsejnhulha dik it-talba twila ... imma sabiħa, li tant togħgob lill-Madonna? Bravi ... tassew tfal bravi! Ir-rużarju! Intom qegħdin tgħiduh xejn ir-rużarju? Jew tmorru torqdu qiskom qattgħa mogħoż? Tafu x'kien qal hux wieħed qaddis kbir? Kien qal: "Gwaj għalihom dawk it-tfal tal-iskola li jorqdu mingħjar rużarju!" Mhux billi taparsi bravi. Mhux billi ngħaddu mill-eżamijiet u ngibu ħafna marki sbieħ! Ara, irrid li f'kull klassi jibda jingħad ir-rużarju kuljum ... issa, hekk kif tmorru lura. Ħallikom mill-qari u s-sugġetti l-oħra kollha. Ruħna tiġi l-ewwel.

Tajjeb, mela Good afternoon Boys! ...

Eh bilħaqq ... ridt inkellimkom dwar ċirkolari importanti fuq l-eżamijiet tal-Lyceum ... imma issa m'hemmx ħin. Inkellimkom fuqha għada. Forward!

36. Xagħriet Mewwija – Trevor Żahra

DRAGUT: Ili kważi 450 sena midħla ta' dan il-poplu u għadni ma fhimtux. Aktar ma artu fiha daqs ħolqa, aktar ħsiebu biex jibniha. Mindu Ġanni Battista daħħallu f'moħħu li anki art mogħxa tista' tinbidel f'belt, dal-poplu ntrikeb mill-ossessjoni tal-bini. U x'bena l-aktar tul dawn l-450 sena li ili nafu? X'bena? Knejjes! Kappelli! Santwarji! Katidrali! Waħħalha f'moħħu li biex jikkalma l-qilla ta' Allah jeħtieġ jibnilu knisja. Aħsbu ftit: x'jibdew jgħidu dawk kollha li jsostnu li kellhom dehra divina? Ixandru li Allah iridhom jibnulu knisja. Bħallikieku Allah jeħtieġ il-knejjes tagħhom biex itaffi l-monotonija tal-eternità. Iżda mhux hekk biss. Ħarsu madwarkom: biex jimlewhom il-knejjes imqaddsa tagħhom? Biex? Għadkom ma ntbaħtux? Bid-dmija!

(Jitfaċċa r-ritratt tal-inkwatru tal-Caravaggio.)

Irjus maqtugħa. Iġsma msallba. Kustati mberrħa. Kuruni tax-xewk. Qaddisin imqaxxa ħajjin. Oħrajn mixwija fuq gradilja. Imsallbin rashom 'l isfel. Ma nafx jekk hawnx reliġjon oħra li tigglorifika l-makabru, daqs dik Nisranija. Imbagħad ... għax šabi sallbu erba' kavallieri u telquhom fuq wiċċ il-baħar, tgħidx x'għaġeb għamlu!

(B'referenza lejn il-Caravaggio.)

U kemm jiftaħru bid-dmija! Mela x'inhu ... sa anki jiffirmaw isimhom biha. Dejjem għall-glorja ta' Allah u tar-reliġjon glorjuża tiegħu. Xmajjar ta' dmija!

(Idur jindirizza lill-udjenja.)

U hekk bqajtu. Intom ma tinbidlu qatt. Bqajtu tieħdu gost issallbu u tberrħu l-grieħi ta' għajrkom. Tlibbsu lil xulxin il-kuruni tax-xewk miksijin bil-gawhar. U għadkom tibnu ... tibnu ġebel fuq ġebel biex tkomplu ssallbu lil din in-nitfa art li mingħalikom ħlistuha mill-ħakma mal-barrani. Imma l-għaliex jiena bqajt hekk imjassar hawn magħkom ... b'dil-katina invizibbli ma' qalbi? Eh ... Susanna! Susanna!

(Jibdel il-burdata f'salt.)

Qed taraw fiex ġibtuni? Kapaċi ttellgħuli demmi għal rasi. Imma issa ħallina minn dan. Oh ... kemm intom ħelwin! Kemm inħobbkom! Hux hekk tieħdu gost tisimgħu? Gżira gawhra tal-Mediterran!

37. Caravaggio: L-Inkjesta – Joe Friggieri

(Jidħol ifferuċjat CARAVAGGIO, bix-xabla misluta. L-oħrajn jinħasdu.)

CARAVAGGIO: X'qed tgħidu fuqi? Jien naf il-pitturi kollha ta' Ruma, kollha ħbieb tiegħi, imma mhux kollha kapaċi. Tridu tkunu tafu x'inhu bniedem kapaċi?

(Idur mal-kamra jipponta x-xabla, issa lejn wieħed, issa lejn l-ieħor.)

Bniedem kapaċi għalija xi ħadd li għandu s-sengħa, u jaf iħaddimha – għalhekk, fil-pittura, bniedem kapaċi hu min jaf ipingi, min jaf jimita sewwa l-oġġetti naturali. Pittur tajjeb irid ikollu s-sengħa tal-għajn u s-sengħa tal-id – kemm jekk qed ipingi l-fjuri, kemm jekk qed jagħmel il-figura umana. Mhux l-artisti kollha huma kapaċi, u mhux kollha ħbieb tiegħi lanqas, għax hemm minnhom min ma jkellimnix, l-oħrajn kollha jkellimuni. Artist tajjeb hu min jifhem fil-pittura, min jaqbel miegħi fuq min huma l-pitturi t-tajbin u min huma l-ħżiena; imma l-artisti ħżiena, l-artisti li ma jafu xejn, jaħsbu li hu artist tajjeb min hu ħażin u ma jaf xejn, bħalhom.

M'hemmx pittur wieħed li jfaħħar lil Baglione, jew li jaħseb li hu pittur tajjeb. Jiena rajt kważi x-xogħol kollu ta' Giovanni Baglione. Il-pittura li għamel tar-Rezurezzjoni ta' Kristu m'għogħbot lil ħadd. Jien mort naraha u m'għogħbitnix – pittura goffa, ma fihix gost, naħseb li hi l-agħar ħaġa li qatt għamel, u ma smajt l-ebda pittur ifaħħarha – ħlief wieħed, Mao Salini, l-aṅġlu kustodju ta' Baglione, li kien hemm fuq il-post, lest biex ifaħħarha malli tinkixef. Mao Salini wkoll iċaflas xi ħaġa, imma jien qatt ma rajt xejn tiegħu.

Ma naf bl-ebda żagħżuġħ jismu Giovan Battista, ma naf bl-ebda żagħżuġħ ta' dak l-isem li joqgħod wara l-Banchi. Mela naqtgħuha din tal-*bardassa*, naqtgħuha għax b'raskom idur.

Jien inpingi *dal vivo*, mill-ħajja. Ħaddieħor jikkopja, jew johloq minn żniedu. Il-mudelli tiegħi nagħzilhom jien, għall-karattru tagħhom. Fillide Melandroni, mara tal-azzar, ittajjar in-nar, ma jirbħilha ħadd. Hekk għandhom ikunu n-nisa. Bħal Ġuditta taqta' ras Oloferne. Bħal Salomé, lesta bil-platt f'idejha biex tilqa' ras il-Battista. Bħal Santa Luċija, li la beżgħet mill-barrin u lanqas minn elf raġel, u l-maġistrat, f'dagħdigħa demm, daħħlilha sikkina fi grizimejha. Bħal Sant'Ursula, tirrifjuta li tiżzewweg lill-kap tal-barbari, u tħares lejn il-vleġġa li għadha kemm nifditilha sidirha. U jien warajha, nixxabbat fuq ponot subgħajja biex nara sewwa.