

**Bachelor of Creative Arts (Drama)
Recommended Monologues 2022**

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The following list of monologues maintains the gender of the character as originally written. When selecting your monologues, please feel free to choose irrespective of gender.

THE CHILD WHO DIDN'T KNOW FEAR: Caryl Churchill (UK)

Once upon a time there was a child who didn't know what fear was and he wanted to find out. So his friends said, Cold shiver down your back, legs go funny, sometimes your hands no not your hands yes your hands tingle, it's more in your head, it's in your stomach, your belly you shit yourself, you can't breathe, your skin your skin creeps, it's a shiver a shudder do you really not know what it is?

And the child said, I don't know what you mean.

So they took him to a big dark empty house everyone said was haunted. They said, No one's ever been able to stay here till morning, you won't stay till midnight, you won't last an hour, and the child said, Why, what's going to happen? And they said, You'll know what we mean about being frightened. And the child said, Good, that's what I want to know.

So in the morning his friends came back and there was the child sitting in the dusty room. And they said, You're still here? What happened? And the child said, There were things walking about, dead things, some of them didn't have heads and a monster with glowing - and his friends said, Didn't you run away? and the child said, There were weird noises like screams and like music but not music, and his friends said, What did you feel? and the child said, It came right up to me and put out its hand, and his friends said, Didn't your hair your stomach the back of your neck your legs weren't you frightened? And the child said, No, it's no good, I didn't feel anything, I still don't know what fear is. And on the way home he met a lion and the lion ate him.

ANGELS IN AMERICA PART 1: MILLENNIUM APPROACHES: Tony Kushner (US)

HARPER: I feel better, I do, I...feel better. There are ice crystals in my lungs, wonderful and sharp. And the snow smells like cold, crushed peaches. And there's something... some current of blood in the wind, how strange, it has that iron taste. Where am I? (*Looking around, then realising*) Antarctica. This is Antarctica! Oh boy oh boy, LOOK at this, I... Wow, I must've really snapped the tether, huh? I want to stay here forever. Set up camp. Build things. Build a city, an enormous city made up of frontier forts, dark wood and green roofs and high gates made of pointed logs and bonfires burning on every street corner. I should build by a river. Where are the forests? I'll plant them and grow them. I'll live off caribou fat, I'll melt it over the bonfires and drink it from long, curved goat-horn cups. It'll be great. I want to make a new world here. So that I never have to go home again. I can have anything I want here—maybe even companionship, someone who has...desire for me. There isn't anyone...maybe an Eskimo. Who could ice-fish for food. And help me build a nest for when the baby comes. Here, I can be pregnant. And I can have any kind of baby I want. I'm going to like this place. It's my own National Geographic Special! Oh! Oh! (*She holds her stomach*) I think... I think I felt her kicking. Maybe I'll give birth to a baby covered with thick white fur, and that way she won't be cold. My breasts will be full of hot cocoa so she doesn't get chilly. And if it gets really cold, she'll have a pouch I can crawl into. Like a marsupial. We'll mend together. That's what we'll do; we'll mend.

SALT CREEK MURDERS: Melissa Reeves (AUS)

NELLIE: I didn't mean to marry him. He asked and asked, and I told him, you're not my type John, slow and wooden and no sense of humour, but he wouldn't take no for an answer and when my friend Alice got married in Meningie, John was there, because he'd known Alice from somewhere or other, and the priest started talking about the divine state of marriage, about taking your rightful place in the world like the very first couple, like Adam and Eve in their paradise. Hand in hand we would be the first ones, the special ones, and I could see what he was saying, I could see all the big couples hand in hand, with the gum-trees and the tree ferns, and I could feel John looking at me with a peculiarly intent gaze, and I tried to not look back but I couldn't not look, he was staring at me and normally I would've laughed at his serious face, but a shaft of light had caught his hair and he was all lit up and looked noble and important, and I was full of what this priest was saying, and I was hot in my frock and my heart was beating and I said 'Lets get married. Lets get married right now.' And John strode over to me and grabbed my hand and we walked up to the priest, and the priest said we'd have to wait until he'd married Alice and Ryan Leckie cause they were first in line, so we waited, and already I started feeling like it was maybe a mistake, John's hand was unpleasantly damp and his slight stoop was irritating me, but I couldn't get out of it then, I couldn't run out the church, so we got married and everyone was excited because it was such a surprise, but as soon as I got back to where I worked for Mrs. Packham, I told her I wanted to be out of it, that I didn't want to be married, not to John Robinson, and she said that I couldn't get out of it, that marriage is like an iron weld, once it's done, it's done for ever.

[SILENCE]

...and to bring me here..to this place.. the plants are all grey and black, like dead things growing... No wonder with all that salt feeding poison into the roots. Bleaching any colour from the land...except for the pig-face.. creeping over everything.. spreading like a blood-stain...and the strange pink glow of the salt just before it gets dark...

SO WET: Samantha Bews (AUS)

SILV: Work is done, work is out, the stop work bell screamed - it was enough some hours ago. that's it, I've had enough, today can completely fuck off. Down pens, down dogs, the hungry pack can find something else to stare at. out of here, the day is done, goodbye the sun, bring on the night.

Tonight I will party.

Into the car. The three of us and vodka. Tim and Tom and one more is me. It's late. it's cold. it's dark. Fuck I love this. This turn of the night into a pretty picture of shimmering light. like I'm finally awake. The daylight glare of broad night. this is where my life could be. the only light sparkles and gleams. Who gets to sit on pretty Tom's grin. The pretty boy. tall dark and handsome. not even a scratch on him. tall dark and handsome, eyes that you could drop into. charming. gentle. strong. obnoxious. charming. feelgood. touch his skin. mouth. full dark haired moustache. do I want him. enough.

Up the stairs to the party. You and me and him. Party lights screaming. people yelling. music blaring. people drinking. occasional eating. Much flirting. And I love it. The party girl thing. Have a sip of vodka. have a bit of shmoozing. hear the news hear the gossip. tell me a thing. cut me a line. having a fine time. I walk around the room. I start to notice. Something. There's someone I want to know something from. can't sit down. can't stand still. another conversation a bit of a laugh. There's something itching at my side. I start looking. looking for what. looking for you. The boy in the car. Pretty boy blue. Tom, I knew it was you. I wander around the room. now I have you. I have you like a spy. I monitor you.

Dance. dancing will get you. Arm over some boy as he leans on the wall. That will get you. I walk past legs swishing. that will do. Oh god is that a flicker from you. Dance. It's late as I see you leave the room.

Him and me and you.

you and me and him.

him and you.

fuck. me.

ANTIGONE: Jean Anhouilh (FRA)

Antigone: I love Haemon. The Haemon I love is hard and young, faithful and difficult to satisfy, just as I am. But if what I love in Haemon is to be worn away like a stone step by the tread of the thing you call life, the thing you call happiness; if Haemon reaches the point where he stops growing pale with fear when I grow pale, stops thinking that I must have been killed in an accident when I am five minutes late, stops feeling that he is alone on earth when I laugh and he doesn't know why - if he too has to learn to say yes to everything - why, no, then, no! I do not love Haemon!

I am too far away from you now, talking to you from a kingdom you can't get into, with your quick tongue and your hollow heart. (*Laughs.*) I laugh, Creon, because I see you suddenly as you must have been at fifteen: the same look of impotence in your face and the same inner conviction that there was nothing you couldn't do. What has life added to you except those lines in your face, and that fat on your stomach? Do you think I can't see in your face that what I am saying is true? You can't admit it, of course; you have to go on growling and defending the bone you call happiness.

I spit on your happiness! I spit on your idea of life - that life that must go on, come what may. You are all like dogs that lick everything they smell. You with your promise of a humdrum happiness - provided a person doesn't ask too much of life. I want everything of life, I do; and I want it now! I want it total, complete: otherwise I reject it! I will *not* be moderate. I will *not* be satisfied with the bit of cake you offer me if I promise to be a good little girl. I want to be sure of everything this very day, sure that everything will be as beautiful as when I was a little girl. If not, I want to die!

TEEN: Kristen Doherty (AUS)

Jeannie: Okay so, I was on Insta right and saw Pete McIntire's name online. I don't know what possessed me, but I got brave and just wrote "Hi" ... I know! ... I can't believe I did either...

Anyway, he writes back! Straight away, almost, and said "Hi Jeanie... How R U?" Just the letters R U... Ok pay attention to that because it becomes important later in the story... Ok?

So anyway, I wrote "Great!" but with an 8 instead of the letters... so like Grr and then the number 8. Because I thought that sounded cooler... and he just used RU...

Are you keeping up? Yes? Good! Because then he wrote "We should totally catch up and watch a movie or something!" Yes! He actually did. I couldn't believe the words that popped up on the screen. Pete McIntire asking me to hang out... and see a movie with him ... In a dark cinema, where he could totally like want to kiss me or something. And anyway, I was like you know... trying not to get too excited. Because this is Pete! Pete McIntire... So, I just like waited for like a whole minute, which was torture... But I didn't want to be too keen, so I was patient for like 65 agonising seconds... Then finally I wrote "Yeah I'm up for that". So, all casual like when I felt like screaming "Yes! Yes! Yes! I'll have your baby Pete McIntire!"

Anyway... Now this part is what I need your advice on... Because now it gets confusing.... Ok, so he wrote. "I can ask Steven to come and you can ask Stace" Boo! Double date... Harder to get a pash when we have our besties in tow. Anyway, I'm thinking "at least I will be on a date with Pete McIntire" ... But then I thought "Does he mean a double date like as in 'him and I' and 'Steven and Stacey?' ... Or a double date of 'Steven and me' and 'him and Stacey?' Does he like Stacey? ... He's never met Stacey... or has he? Are they secretly together? I mean she would have told me, right?... She tells me everything... But then why would he call her Stace if they've never met? Stace is a nickname and you only give people nicknames if you know them personally and generally like them... If you are friends... Or more than friends.... Do you think they are together, and Stacey hasn't told me because she knows I am totally in love with him and have been for months?

Anyway, then it got really, really confusing because I said. "Sure I'll ask her" I know! I showed so much restraint because I really wanted to scream at him "Are you cheating on me with my best friend? ... But I didn't I just said "sure." Then anyway, then he wrote "Thanks Jeannie, I love you."

What the actual...? I love you! Exclamation point. Spelt out. 'I L.O.V.E you.' Not just 'L.U.V'. That means something right? I mean it's got to mean something! And this relates to the RU reference from earlier. If he is the sort of guy to use letter abbreviations in his texting like RU, why would he use the actual word LOVE if he didn't actually love me... Like for real?

Okay. Then it gets really, really complicated because he put one love heart emoji and one laughing crying emoji. Does the laughing crying emoji cancel out the love heart, or is it the other way around? Because it changes the whole meaning if it does.

WHO'S AFRAID OF THE WORKING CLASS?: Andrew Bovell, Patricia Cornelius, Melissa Reeves & Christos Tsiolkas (AUS)

RHONDA: Carol says, "Problem with you, Rhonda, problem with you is that you're just too fertile. You just got to look at a man and you're up the duff." And we laughed but she's right, she's fucking right. Woman from Welfare says, "it must be hard. Must be hard for you, Rhonda, with all those kids. Looking after them, it must be hard". And I say "No. it's not hard." Though it is. I know it and she knows it. But I'm not going to give her the satisfaction. So I say, "No. Those kids, those kids are my blessings. Everyone of them a blessing. You understand. A blessing". Though it is ... hard. But it's like Carol says I only got to look at a man. Anyway, I'm down the pub playing the bandits when Carol, she's my neighbour, lives in the flat next door, Carol comes in and says, "Cops were over your place earlier". And I said, "Oh yeah, what do they want this time? If it's Nathan, you can tell 'em he's not there. Tell 'em he's pissed off." Without a word mind you and with the rent. Bastard. And I'm not taking him back, not this time. No fucking way. Better off alone. Well, that's what Carol says. But she doesn't get it, Family Services don't get it, but it's how I am. It's my life and I like having a man around. So I've had a few. They don't stick around. Anyway, Carol says it's not Nathan they're after, it's about your kids. And so I know there's trouble. Stacey's probably been picked up shoplifting or something.

Doesn't bother me 'coz I taught 'em how. So I go down to the station and they know me there. And I say, "Where are they? I want to see my kids." You can't see them", and I look at him and I say, "I'm their mother and I can see them whenever I bloody well like". And then he says it. Just a couple of words, he says it: "There's been an accident".

"What accident?" "A fire. There's been a fire. In a Brotherhood bin. A candle. The clothes. I'm sorry".

The man in the suit, he says, "They didn't suffer, the smoke, it would have... "*(she holds up her hand as if to motion him to stop talking)* And I say, "They suffered. You don't know how much".

LOVECHILD: Joanna Murray-Smith (AUS)

BILLIE: *You made sure! You! What was it you made sure of, exactly? Where were you? What did you secure for me? You have no idea! You wouldn't know the first thing about what was good for me, what I had, or missed, or lost! There are all kinds of liberties I might have had if my parents had been of my blood. I could have hated them and bitched about them and left and come back and left, I could have betrayed them and abandoned them and returned and fought – all those privileges of a blood connection. I could have pushed to be free of them because I would have known that I could never be free. We would have been blood. Temper or whim or anger – nothing could have budged that one fact. If it's not a blood tie, nothing's dependable. All those shifts of feeling are so much more dangerous, because there is nothing to stop you from walking away. There is nothing ... biological ... to beckon you back.*

That's a big strain to live with. Somewhere good manners came into it. I couldn't be a real child, because I might hurt them and frighten them and frighten myself. So don't tell me you 'looked into them'. You didn't look anywhere. You didn't know anything.

THE SEED: Kate Mulvany (AUS)

ROSE: There was a spray that Dad breathed in and now I don't have the eggs. They've all been destroyed by radiotherapy and even if they found one, I can't carry it. The tumour wiped out half my organs, my body can't support a baby. Grandda, I'm thirty and I've just started menopause.

I will never have children. [Beat] I will never have children. [Beat] I will never have children. And you know what? I don't think I deserve them anyway. When a friend tells me she is pregnant I smile and hug and kiss and ask her dumb questions. 'How far along?' 'Any names picked yet?' 'What are you craving?' But I don't let on what I'm craving. That despite my big smile and congratulations I'm green and I'm bubbling and I'm thinking, you bitch, I hope it fucking dies inside you, you bitch. And when a pregnant woman walks past me on the street I want punch her belly and walk away when she falls to the ground and just leave her there to deal with it. And when a husband tells me he's having his third boy I want to put my hand down his pants and rip his fucking cock off and squeeze it dry of any seed. And when I see a baby in a pram...[beat.] I just want to pick it up and smell its skin and hold it to my heart and stoke its little head and never let another person touch it for the rest of its life. Is that normal, Grandda? I don't know. And I never will. Because the seed stops here.

JERUSALEM: Michael Gurr (AUS)

[available at australianplays.org]

NINA: And what is that idea? That everyone gets the disease they deserve? Yes, I am interested in it. And I'm particularly interested in the fact that you never hear it from the parents of a child born with its brain hanging out of its head. Karma? What goes around comes around? There's something very nasty hiding in the idea of karma. It's another way of not thinking. People get what they deserve? Sounds like the Liberal Party with a joint in its mouth.

Beat.

All bad deeds are accounted for? Really? In my experience there are great numbers of very bad people leading very happy lives. It's a pretty false comfort, wouldn't you say, to think they'll all get a spank in Hell. To think they'll all come back as a piece of dogshit.

Beat.

Surely the point is what we do now. Who we become, how we behave. To leave all the judgement up to God or the karmic compost— that's a terrible impotence, isn't it? Adults, grown men and women, with a dummy in the mouth. And look closely at this, Malcolm, look at the people who glue themselves to these ideas. For the happy and healthy these ideas are a way of feeling smug. Fifty cents in the poor box and the knowledge that the poor will always be with us. And those who actually suffer? What are they saying? I am suffering because God wants me to? I think of those American slave songs, so uplifting, and I want to be sick. In my training they take you around the wards. There was a woman, both breasts long gone into the hospital incinerator. She tried to hold my gaze while the sutures were taken out. Until the hospital chaplain came sliding across the lino. And her pale fierce eyes slid him right back through the curtain.

Beat.

You see, I don't believe that justice is something you light a candle for. It's just the way you behave.

THE RETURN: Reg Cribb (AUS)

STEVE: No, no, no... ya can't turn back now. I'm startin' to see you as the voice of a very misunderstood section of our society. But you know... there's a million of me getting' round, mate. And they'll all tell ya they had a tough life. You know, beaten up by their dad, in trouble with the cops, pisshead mum, rough school. A million fuckin' excuses why they turned out to be bad eggs.

And I got all of the above... Oh yeah! Truth is, most of —em are just bored. They leave their shit-ass state school and live on the dole in their diddly bumfuck nowhere suburb. Before ya know it, ya got some girl up the duff and no money. She spends the day with a screamin' sprog and a fag in her mouth plonked in front of a daytime soap wearin her tracky daks all day, dreamin' of bein' swept away by some Fabio and she just gets... fatter. But... her Centrelink payments have gone up and all her fat friends are waitin' in line behind her!

It's a career move for —em. Gettin up the duff. And you... drink with ya mates, watch the footy and the highlight of the week is the local tavern has a skimpy barmaid every Friday. And ya know the rest of the world is havin a better time. Ya just know it. The magazines are tellin' ya that, the newspapers, the telly.

Everybody's richer, everybody's more beautiful, and everybody's got more... purpose. And ya thinkin', how do I make sense of this dog-ass life? And then one day ya just get hold of a gun. Ya don't even know what ya gonna do with it. It's like the sound of a V8 in the distance. It takes ya... somewhere else. [Pause.] I didn't see ya writin' any of this down. I'm spillin' my guts out in the name of art and you don't give a shit. What sort of writer are ya?

BOY SLAUGHTER: Maxine Mellor (AUS)

JIMMY: *(coughs harshly, coughing up blood. He wipes it with the back of his hand. He notices the audience.*

What are *you* looking at, eh? Just a scratch, that's all.

He slowly, heavily pulls himself to his feet.

We all need a bit of pain...It builds character. And if that's the case then I must be Steve Irwin or something, if pains builds character I mean.

Pain builds character...Dad said that. Said a lot of crap.

[imitating his Dad] Nothing like belting a bit of sense into the boy!
Called me boy...or dickhead. Which ever applied to the circumstance.

But me real name is Jimmy Slaughter. And I come from Blackbutt, Queensland. Dad's the local butcher. Some say he was the best butcher in Blackbutt which...I suppose is true, considering he's the only butcher in Blackbutt.

I remember once, when a new butcher's shop opened up just down the road from where we were. Run by some cheery, Christian family. Dad did all sorts of stuff to 'em but the icing on the cake was when he sent a parcel of dog turds to their door.

He got one for every person in their family and then he moulded them like clay so that they looked like people, and then he carved each person's name into them. The message was crystal clear...They soon closed up their shop and left.

It was probably the most beautiful thing I had ever seen him make. He put so much time and effort into it, he even let the turds bake in the sun so they had the right consistency for carving. He laid them all out on the back step, lined up like they belonged to some sicko-obsessive compulsive collector or something...

That's probably one of the better memories I have of Dad.

LOVE: Patricia Cornelius (AUS)

LORENZO: The moment I saw you I thought, you are beautiful, really beautiful, so beautiful, and small. Beautiful and small. I loved you. I saw you and I couldn't keep my hands off you. Wanted to touch you, pick you up, feel your beautiful little body in my hands. Something about how little you were, how I could hold you, how I could lift you right off the ground, made me feel a big man. And a good man, a really good man. I wanted to look after you. Never wanted that before.

Now look at you. Fuck. Look at you, you're nineteen and you look like an old crow. Fuck. Look at you. You used to have some pride in the way you looked, dressed up you looked beautiful. It felt good to be seen with you. Like, feast your eyes on this, and she's mine. Now who wants you, looking the way you look, who'd come near you? You're a slag, an old rag. Get up. Fucking get up would you, you fucking useless scrag. Get up!

THIS UNCHARTED HOUR: Finegan Kruckemeyer (AUS)

LUKA: I... have... just hit a dog. And... I guess I don't really know how to deal with that. I mean, I know it was just a dog and... not a kid or anything, thank god but, yeah, I don't know. I'm still quite shaken up.

I wasn't going too fast or not looking – I was concentrating, I was going at the speed limit. But, um...it came out too quickly, from nowhere, from off the footpath, and I didn't have time to brake, and so I hit it... yeah.

When I hit it, it didn't go under straight away. It went forward, and it hit the back of the car in front of me. And then... then I ran over it. That's when I ran over it.

I stopped the car. And I went back up the road. I walked up the middle of the road, and... and when I got to the dog it was flat. It was so flat and there was a bone poking out of its stomach, out of the soft part. And I picked up the dog.

It was dead, but I picked it up and I saw it had this broken leash around its neck. So, I found the pole with the other end of the leash on it. And I looked around at the shops near the pole, and I figured its owner must be in one of them.

And – I don't know- it seemed important to show them their dog, so I carried it in to all these shops. I must have looked like a fucking mess. People noticed me one at a time. This one woman, she turned around just as I was behind her... and...

She gave me the worst look. She really hated me. I thought it was her dog, but she just walked off. Maybe it was. It could have been. Maybe she didn't want to know it anymore. No – maybe she didn't recognize it. I'm not sure.

And then I looked at the dog, and I guess I looked at me holding the dog. And... it just all seemed so... like what did it matter whose it was. It wasn't anyone's dog anymore... because it was dead.

So, I went outside and – I don't know – I... I didn't know what to do. So, I just lay it down. I lay it down next to a bin, like it was rubbish, or like it was sleeping. Except it looked dead. It didn't look asleep.

I'm... I don't understand really how it all happened. I was just going to get coffee.

GORGON: Elena Carapetis (AUS)

LEE: Bedroom door smashes open, bangs the wall and he stands there, growling at me to do what he says, take those bloody bins out, do it now. Rims of his eyes all pink and the rims of his nose all wide. 'Stop sulking, don't look at the floor.' So I bend my gaze up to meet his twisted face and my jaw becomes steel. Push it all down into the pit of my guts and swallow the bitter water forcing up my throat. Meet him full in the face. My heart drops down to my guts and I sound like something else when I say 'Yes sir'. Shakes his head, walks out.

Head outside and I pass mum in the kitchen. Sitting at the table on her own. Not reading. Not doing a crossword. Not doing anything. Just sitting there.

Kick the gate and swing the blue bin out onto the night street. Stinks. Kid riding his bike talking on his phone clocks me and I'm sprung, looking like this. Doing this. I head back inside. Mum? Go back to drift training and it's shit. Take the bend, spin out, crash. Again and again and again. Wanna chuck it all through the window. Into the bin on the street that stinks. Dad's fault. Coulda let me do it in my own time. He coulda asked me nicer. Like I'm not the enemy. Coulda knocked on my door and teased me for being lazy. I woulda laughed. Woulda run out to do it quite happy. Woulda passed him on the way back to my room, sitting on the couch with mum, like he used to, he coulda put his arm around her, like he used to. Offered me a biscuit. The good ones. The ones with proper chocolate. We coulda been nice to each other for once. Shoulda told him to get out. Stop speaking to us like that. Not scared of you, mate, do it yourself for once. Shoulda stood up to him. But then he woulda... And I mighta... I was gonna do it.

Trucks don't come till tomorrow. Hate bin night.

GLORIA: Benedict Andrews (AUS)

JARED: At night when I can't sleep, I walk through the rooms. Feet quiet on the carpet. The refrigerator hums. Our house is a stage set and I'm the only living character. The others are puppets. Made of wood, cloth and porcelain. Faces painted on. They lie in their beds, attached to strings, snoring, mumbling, farting, until the string jerks and up they get to play their parts. That weird glow. Is it moonlight? Or glare from the city? Don't care anymore. I walk the halls. Open fridge. Drink juice. Pick at leftovers. Not hungry but do it anyway. All that stuff in plastic and foil. Half-eaten. Cold. Balcony. The city lights stop where the sea begins. Points of orange float in the black. Freighters anchored offshore. Out there I'd sleep. On a bunk. In a cabin. Rocked by swell. One day I'll leave and see the world by ship. I'll work hard, and when day is done, the throbbing of the engines will comfort my sleep. Down in the hull. Cocooned.

I walk through our cold, blue rooms. I'm the only real character. The others are puppets. Jerking in their sleep. Derek dribbles into his pillow. Snores. Like a tractor dragging machinery. How can she stand it? Her porcelain face on the pillow. Kiss her sleeping eyes. They open. Stare. We're statues. No. We're actors on the far side of the curtain, listening for the audience. That hum. We dare not move. The curtain billows. Her eyes click shut. She rolls over. On her strings.

I walk the silent rooms. Headphones. Computer. I'm a sniper taking out targets. Get a position on the roof, zoom in on a target. I place the shots where I like. Head or body. Leg if I want them to fall first. So I don't get bored. So each kill doesn't feel the same. Or porn. The clips where the girls talk to the camera as if the camera is you. I prefer this. When they're pretending to be with just me, not some guy or girl or gangbang. She talks to me as if I'm in the room with her. In front of her on the grey carpet. Crawling toward the sofa where she rips holes in her stockings. Teasing me about how I can't touch her, can't *really touch* her. *Bet you wish you could touch this perfect little pussy.* But she's wrong. I don't want that. I just want to watch her contort on the sofa until I fall asleep. I'll play the game or watch the girl until I'm asleep. Soon we'll wake, begin the day, play our parts. The house is quiet. Listen. This is how our house sounds at night—

Silence.

FAT PIG: Neil LaBute (US)

TOM: I'm weak. That's what I basically learned from our time together. I am a weak person, and I don't know if I can overcome that. No, maybe I do know. Yeah. I do know that I am, and I can't... overcome it, I mean. I think you are an amazing woman, I honestly do. And I really love what we've had here. Our time together... But I think that we're very different people. Not just who we are – jobs or that kind of thing- but it does play into it as well. Factors in. We probably should've realised this earlier, but I've been so happy being near you that I just sorta overlooked it and went on. I did. But I feel it coming up now, more and more, and I just think- No, that's bullshit, actually, the whole work thing. Forget it. (Beat) I'm just, I feel that we should maybe stop before we get too far. It's weird to say this, because in many ways I'm already in so deep. Care about you a lot, and that makes it super hard. But- I guess I do care what my peers think about me. Or how they view my choices and, yes, maybe that makes me not very deep, or petty, or some other word, hell, I don't know! It's my Achilles flaw or something. It doesn't matter. What I'm sure of is this- we need to stop. Stop seeing each other or going out or anything like that. Because I know now how weak I am and that I'm not really deserving of you, of all you have to offer me. I can see that now. Helen... things are so tricky, life is. I want to be better... to do good and better things and to make a proper sort of decision here, but I... I can't.

THE SEAGULL: Anton Chekhov (RUS)

KONSTANTIN: (*Picking the petals from a flower.*) She loves me – she loves me not, she loves me – she loves me not, she loves me – she loves me not. (*Laughs.*) See - my mother doesn't love me. Why should she? She's desperate to believe she's still the same woman she was a decade ago – the star of her day - but all of a sudden I'm 25 - the hard-to-hide evidence that she's no longer very young. When I'm not around she's still forty-something, but when I am around, she's joined the over fifty club and she hates me for it. Plus she knows I think the theatre's dead. A middle-class mausoleum. She still believes in it of course. Says she loves it – even imagines it serves a function - that she actually has some effect on people's lives. She can't see that it's a dead artform that people only cling onto out of nostalgia. It's got nothing to do with reality. With being alive now. May as well be television - it's equally as banal, deadly and meaningless. All we ever get is the same sentimental, self-congratulatory shit masquerading as reality. Or second hand ideas dressed up as cutting fucking edge. When I see actors onstage pretending to be real – pretending to eat, drink, walk, talk, love – wear *jackets* - I want to scream STOP. STOP TRYING TO MAKE ME FEEL YOUR FAKE FEELINGS. STOP TRYING TO TRICK ME. STOP TREATING ME LIKE A CHILD. YOUR REALITY IS NOT MY REALITY. YOUR DEAD WORLD IS NOT MY WORLD. When I see the same clichés - the same reheated lies over and over - I want to run screaming from the theatre and bury myself in life.

We have to start again. Learn to speak again. Learn to speak a radical new language. Or say nothing at all. (*Checks his watch.*) I love my mother, love her very much, but she leads a stupid life. As meaningless as the theatre she acts in. She's always splashed across some gossip magazine with that novelist of hers on her wing. It's embarrassing. I know it's vain to think like this but sometimes I wish she wasn't famous. I dream about having an ordinary mother. God, I sound like a character in a soapie - 'I dream about having an ordinary mother.' Do you know what it's like for me at one of those unbearable parties of hers? The place packed with so-called celebrities - trendy artists and writers, other actors - and me - the only nobody in the room. The Son. Expelled from university because of, quote, suspected criminal behaviour, unquote – what a joke, I was protesting fee increases - that's the real crime – consequently I'm unemployable - and poor. My dad grew up poor. His old man worked in a servo. Good actor. My dad. When the fashionable types at her parties ask me what I'm up to – 'so what are you up to at the moment?' – I can't answer. I'm struck dumb. I watch them measuring my insignificance, 'he's only her son. Poor guy.' It's torture.

A VIEW OF CONCRETE: Gareth Ellis (AUS)

NEIL: It's early Sunday afternoon, it's yesterday, right, nice day. I'm sitting in McDonalds, or KFC, it's a fast food joint, like take-away. Anyway, this friend, my friend Sharon, or Sharee or something, I don't know her very well, I know her from clubs. Anyway, moving on. She has this friend with her. A girl, this beautiful girl. She's from an island or something, in the Caribbean or America. So we get talking, and she likes to party, and I like to party, so we decide to party together, that night, Sunday night.

And she's beautiful. I mean she's even beautiful walking away, she's like – swish, swish, swish.

So I call this mate of mine, good mate, drug dealer. So I call him and I get some Three Four. You know what Three Four is? It's Three Four Methylene Dioxy Methyl Amphetamine. It's a drug, it's ecstasy, it's a party drug. MDMA.

So we take this MD and we go into the club. So we're in the club and she's like – swish, swish. But the DJ... See the DJ's playing this Trance, Hard Trance, like Industrial Trance, not Sci Trance, or just Trance, it's too hard. It's messing up her swish. So we bunt. We get the fuck out of there.

We go to this park. It's not a park, it's an oval, like a football oval. And we're there under the stars, they're city stars, they're not real stars, but they're still there through the fog, or smog, whatever. And we're sitting there, and I love her, I mean I love this girl, I love her. So we do some Meth, some Crystal Meth, it's like speed, but it's not speed, it's Meth, Methyl Amphetamine.

And I'm starting to get these hallucinations, so I tell her there are these little Pac-Men between us, and she sees them - see we're in tune. Then she says, they're getting bigger. And they are, bigger and bigger. So we get up, and run in different directions around the white line on the oval, away from the Pac-Men, the Pac-Men chasing us.

After about a minute of running as hard as I can, I've forgotten what I'm running for. And at that moment, we collide, me and Swish, and we kiss. Oh, we kiss. And then, the Meth drops down my throat. And if you know Meth, Meth is bad, Meth tastes real bad, and I hurl. And it's like an umbilical kiss. It's like a bird feeding another bird. And she's choking on this Grolsh, and I think she inhales, 'cos she just goes down. And she's like, dead, or dying, and I love her, but I can't help her, but I love her, but I'm off my face, so what can I do? What can I do?

So I take her phone and I dial triple zero. And I put the phone on her stomach, and I kiss her on the forehead, and I walk away. Into the night.

JUMPERS FOR GOALPOSTS: Tom Wells (UK)

LUKE: Sorry this has thrown me a bit. I mean I was already, got my top and I was like: oh my god I'm actually on a team. With a nickname. That's like, appropriate. Cos it's. Not really had one before, normally just, people in the past just went for sort of, Bender, whatever. But: a snog! That is, even better. Honestly. And it's, yeah.

First one, actually. I know: pathetic, like I'm all, but. I'm from Patrington, work in a library it's. Slim pickings, if I'm honest. Cos, can't snog a book, can you? My Mum said that. Well she said you can but, they don't snog back. Which is actually just, you know. The truth. Thing is: you know what it's, like you grow up, wait all these years and, I dunno, feel like I've watched everyone else just, people, other people, doing all the sort of proper rank squelchy teenage stuff. Not - I didn't watch watch but, they weren't sort of, you couldn't miss it. Always someone getting, getting pregnant or, you know, stumbling out of a toilet cubicle, jizz dangling off their eyebrow it's...

Year Nine: everyone got glandular fever. Not me. Felt like a right leper. But then you can't really join in can you? Can't really... Cos at the same time they're all going: that's gay, everything's gay and. Teachers even, ones who try and be bloody, whatever, cool they're all like: algebra, how gay is that? And what they mean is: that's a piece of shit, that's. That is a piece of shit. So I never really wanted to go sort of: oh I'm that too. Thought, best just, hang on a bit. But then you sort of, you've hung on a bit long and now it's weird, missed the boat, I dunno. Sort of, given up.

But, apparently not. Apparently you can just, get a job in the library, wait three years, suddenly there's like this, yeah, this bloody, fit lad. Borrowing a book. And at first you're thinking no way but then, I dunno. Keeps coming back and. Working and. Cos that's the thing about libraries isn't it? They're sort of, people forget but, they're sort of for lonely people. So, yeah, just the thought you were in there made me a bit like: maybe. But I was. To be honest I was sort of hoping when, if the time came I'd play it, play it cool but. But I wasn't expecting, so. Tonight so. So I suppose I haven't. In the end.