

AUDITION MONOLOGUES - MALE

From *ZASTROZZI* by George F. Walker
Playwrights Canada Press

ZASTROZZI

You are looking at Zastrozzi. But that means very little. What means much more is that Zastrozzi is looking at you. Don't make a sound. Breathe quietly. He is easily annoyed. And when he is annoyed he strikes. Look at his right arm. It wields the sword that has killed two hundred men. Watch the right arm constantly. Be careful not to let it catch you unprepared. But while watching the right arm, do not forget the left arm. Because this man Zastrozzi has no weaknesses. No weakness at all. Remember that. Or he will have you. He will have you any way he wants you.

I am Zastrozzi. The master criminal of all of Europe. This is not a boast. It is information. I am to be feared for countless reasons. The obvious ones of strength and skill with any weapon. The less obvious ones because of the quality of my mind. It is superb. It works in unique ways. And it is always working because I do not sleep. I do not sleep because I have nightmares and when you have a mind like mine, you have nightmares that can petrify the devil. Sometimes my mind is so powerful I even have nightmares when I am awake and because my mind is so powerful I am able to split my consciousness in two and observe myself having a nightmare. This is not a trick. It is a phenomenon. I'm having one now. I have this one often. In it, I am what I am. The force of darkness. The clear sane voice of negative spirituality. Making everyone answerable is the only constant I understand. Mankind is weak. The world is ugly. The only way to save them from each other is to destroy them both.

From *Leo* by Rosa Laborde
Playwrights Canada Press

RODRIGO

Not so close. Just in case. It's dangerous. Dangerous. If anyone ever knew... They can't know.

I've always been "different". Somehow. My parents call me an original. When other kids were just playing I was discovering the origins of the game and why we loved to play it. What is the reason? Why? I had to know. I have to know. "You are not a horse," my father always says, "refuse to wear blinders." Give me a problem and I will come up with the best possible solution, based on facts, always on facts and on history – because when you know that which came before and only when you embrace your limitations can you possibly hope to make effective decisions that will enable you to become closer to the idea of perfection that will save you from the – GOD! I'm an essay of myself. I can't just – I have no solution for me – I don't know... every year I grow up a little more "different". If my parents knew, you think they'd still call me an original? And smile when they say it?

From *Papers* by Alan Stratton
Playwrights Canada Press

CHARLES

For six years I have sat at that typewriter. I have stared at a blank sheet of paper. And it has stared back. I have sat and sat and stared and stared and nothing has happened. Nothing! Periodically, out of desperation, I have ripped it out and replaced it with another. And another. And started again. And again. And again. Staring at this blank piece of paper. And it staring back. I sit and I stare and I sit and I stare, listening to the radiator and the relentless tick tick ticking of the clock, while the hours turn to weeks turn to months turn to six years, my God and me sitting in the dark staring at a goddamn piece of paper that is driving me out of my mind! And everyone is asking, "What are you working on?" "How's it coming?" And me saying anything to shut them up. Anything to make the questions go away. But they don't. Every day they get louder. And how do I tell them my voices have left me? How do I tell myself that? That – my God - they may never come again. Writing is who I am. If I don't write, what am I? And I sit and I sit and I sit trying to forget the clock that tells me life is short, it's drifting away, it's slipping away like water, I can't hold it, and every day is another day gone and time is running out and I may never write again.

From *The Night No One Died* by Shawn Overton
Dramatic Publishing

KISSINGER

But what would you say, Simon, if I told you that the answer lies not in this room at all but in the subtle difference between the air in our current surroundings and that of the adjoining hall? There are, in fact only two odors which permeate this room that would have been absent from the other as this young woman passed through. Shoe polish, the scent of which I carried into this room myself, and dust, which the well-trafficked and scrupulously cleaned hallway is quite free of. Ah, but my dear Simon. You are still neglecting one vital piece of information. Sound. Please recall the mystery began with a series of quick sneezes, the first was delivered as she crossed from the hallway, through the doorway, and into this room. The final clue comes when we apply the sense of time to this puzzle. As everyone knows, a sneeze requires nearly three seconds from the initial inhalation of contaminants to form. At the average indoor adult female foot speed of one and a half meters per second, this would put her approximately eight and two-thirds steps from the doorway at the time allergic reaction began. You have it backwards, Simon, for it is not the two scents unique to this room that matter at all, but rather the single scent which can be found in the hallway, not in here. *Clivia miniata*, that is our culprit! A Kaffir lily, one of which rests on a small round table that would have been mere inches from this young lady at the time the chain of events began!

From *It's No Desert* by Dan Stroeh
Backstage Books (Watson-Guptil Publications)

DAN

So I return to the campus in the fall – and chemo-free, with my head slowly getting less cloudy, but things are still hard. My desire to return to acting is almost overwhelming, but it seems hopeless. The first mainstage that goes up is *The Glass Menagerie*. And I audition. Don't get called back. And I realize, you can't cast an actor with a limp opposite a character whose most distinguishing feature is her limp. I live in constant pain; everything I do *hurts*. I can't dance. I can't fence. I can't bend over to pick up a book or tie my shoes. I can't walk smoothly – I can't run. I can't even sit on the floor, not gracefully at least, and not if I want to get up again. This institution that has buttressed my life is being pulled away. And the walls are tumbling down. I have always said that things were okay – as long as I can keep going, things are okay. Now, I don't have anywhere to go, I don't have anything to do. There is this hole somewhere in me that only theatre fills – only *acting* fills – and now it seems like it will always remain empty.

I stop referring to myself as an actor. I know I need somewhere to go, and I turn to the page. Being off chemo means that I'm functioning better and better and so I dive into what is to become my new passion: I start writing as much as I possible can. The more my head clears, the more I write, and the more I write, the more in love with it I become. And suddenly, the world inside that I had only glimpsed while on chemo starts to pour and flow all over the page.

From *Watchin* by Mark-Leirin Young.
Playwrights Canada Press

HOUSE MANAGER

Hello. I'm your front-of-house manager and I really must apologize to you for the delay this evening. The show will be beginning shortly... While we're waiting I may as well tell you a little about the work. As you probably know it's about a king whose wife is raped by two gentlemen – perhaps gentlemen isn't the word I'm looking for – who cut off both her hands and removed her tongue in order she won't identify them. Eventually, however, the husband discovers the ruffians' identity, bakes them into a pie and serves the boys to their parents. It's a Shakespearean tragedy. That means everybody dies. It's not a very good play actually, but I'm sure you'll enjoy it... And while we're waiting I'll introduce you to some of the people involved in the show. Fred Jenkins, our lighting board operator. Susan Wong, who does our sound. I'd like to introduce you to the author, but he couldn't be with us this evening. That was a joke.

From *Soap Opera* by David Ives
Grove Press

MADMAN

No! No! Don't do it! Desist! Forfend! Don't touch that toolbox! Leave! Run away! Flee to the ends of the earth, but for God's sake forsake the Maypole! I know – you thought this would be the happiest day of your life. I thought so too, but look at me now. A tragic victim of the technological pixilation of our age. A sacrifice to seamless design. A love slave of the machine. (*He throws off the the coat and reveals a shabby Repairman uniform.*) I too attained the toolbox. I too bore the bowtie and cap. I rose to the top of the Maypole pole. Drawn on by HER! (*Referring to the Maypole washing machine.*) And I didn't even have the Ocean IT-40 with automatic lint control and gyroscopic spin. Even the IT-20 was too much for me. And you know they're working on the Super_IY-90? How clean can we be? Oh heaven. Heaven.... But, she doesn't need us. She doesn't need fixing. All she wants is us on our knees before her, adoring her. You'll never work a day in her life but you'll never be happy. You'll never lift a wrench but you'll never know peace. Weave yourself an endless handkerchief and start weeping your way down it, because she's got you now. She won't rest until she's got all of you. Every inch of you. She'll swallow you up, I tell you. She is the Great White Whale!

From *Spring's Awakening* by Frank Wedekind
Applause

MORITZ

It's better this way. I don't belong. Let the rest of them knock their heads together. I'll close the door behind me and step out in the open. Pay for the privilege of being kicked around? I never pushed before. Why now? I've signed no contract with the Almighty. People will make of this what they want. I've been driven to it. I don't hold my parents responsible. All the same, they must have been prepared for the worst. They were old enough to know what they were doing. I was an infant when I came into the world, or no doubt I'd have been smart enough to become someone else. Why should I suffer because everyone else was already there? One would have to be the perfect fool...if someone makes me a present of a mad dog I give his mad dog back, well, I'm human and... One would have to be the perfect fool. One is born entirely of chance. And if, after mature consideration – oh, it's enough to make one want to shoot oneself! At least the weather's being considerate. It's been looking like rain all day, but it's fine after all. An unusual peace reigns. In all Nature, not a discordant note. Earth and sky – one transparent cobweb. Everything feeling fine. The whole landscape's sweet as a lullaby. "Sleep, princeling, sleep, as Fraulein Snandulia sang. I mustn't cry again today. I mustn't think of my funeral. The mist dissolves. Life is a matter of taste.