

**NIDA**

# Audition Essentials

**MALE MONOLOGUES**

1. MARK ANTONY – JULIUS CAESAR by William Shakespeare

ANTONY

O, pardon me, thou bleeding piece of earth,  
That I am meek and gentle with these butchers.  
Thou art the ruins of the noblest man  
That ever lived in the tide of times.  
Woe to the hands that shed this costly blood!  
Over thy wounds now do I prophesy  
(Which like dumb mouths do ope their ruby lips,  
To beg the voice and utterance of my tongue),  
A curse shall light upon the limbs of men;  
Domestic fury and fierce civil strife  
Shall cumber all the parts of Italy;  
Blood and destruction shall be so in use,  
And dreadful objects so familiar,  
That mothers shall but smile when they behold  
Their infants quartered with the hands of war,  
All pity chok'd with custom of fell deeds;  
And Caesar's spirit, ranging for revenge,  
With Ate by his side come hot from hell,  
Shall in these confines with a monarch's voice  
Cry havoc and let slip the dogs of war,  
That this foul deed shall smell above the earth  
With carrion men, groaning for burial.

2. KING HENRY – Henry V by William Shakespeare

KING HENRY

Once more unto the breach, dear friends, once more,  
Or close the wall up with our English dead.  
In peace there's nothing so becomes a man  
As modest stillness and humility:  
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,  
Then imitate the action of the tiger;  
Stiffen the sinews, conjure up the blood,  
Disguise fair nature with hard-favour'd rage;  
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect;  
Let it pry through the portage of the head,  
Like the brass cannon; let the brow o'erwhelm it  
As fearfully as doth a galled rock  
O'erhang and jutty his confounded base,  
Swill'd with the wild and wasteful ocean.  
Now set the teeth and stretch the nostril wide,  
Hold hard the breath, and bend up every spirit  
To his full height! On, on, you noblest English!  
Whose blood is fet from fathers of war-proof;  
Fathers that, like so many Alexanders,  
Have in these parts from morn till even fought,  
And sheath'd their swords for lack of argument.  
Dishonour not your mothers; now attest  
That those whom you call'd fathers did beget you.  
Be copy now to men of grosser blood,  
And teach them how to war. And you, good yeomen,  
Whose limbs were made in England, show us here  
The mettle of your pasture; let us swear  
That you are worth your breeding; which I doubt not;  
For there is none of you so mean and base  
That hath not noble lustre in your eyes.  
I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,  
Straining upon the start. The game's afoot:  
Follow your spirit; and upon this charge  
Cry, "God for Harry, England, and Saint George!"

3. EDMUND - KING LEAR by William Shakespeare

EDMUND

Thou, Nature, art my goddess; to thy law  
My services are bound. Wherefore should I  
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit  
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,  
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines  
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? Wherefore base?  
When my dimensions are as well compact,  
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,  
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us  
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?  
Who, in the lusty stealth of Nature, take  
More composition and fierce quality  
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,  
Go to th' creating a whole tribe of fops,  
Got 'tween a sleep and wake? Well then,  
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:  
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund  
As to th' legitimate. Fine word "legitimate"!  
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,  
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base  
Shall top th' legitimate -: I grow, I prosper;  
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

4. LAUNCE - THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA by William Shakespeare

LAUNCE

Nay, 'twill be this hour ere I have done weeping. All the kind of the Launces have this very fault. I have received my proportion, like the prodigious son, and am going with Sir Proteus to the Imperial's court. I think Crab my dog be the sourest-natured dog that lives: my mother weeping; my father wailing; my sister crying; our maid howling; our cat wringing her hands, and all our house in a great perplexity; yet did not this cruel-hearted cur shed one tear. He is a stone, a very pebble stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog. Why, my grandam, having no eyes, look you, wept herself blind at my parting. Nay, I'll show you the manner of it. This shoe is my father. No, this left shoe is my father; no, no, this left shoe is my mother; nay, that cannot be so neither. Yes, it is so, it is so: it hath the worser sole. This shoe with the hole in it is my mother; and this is my father. A vengeance on't, there 'tis. Now, sir, this staff is my sister; for, look you, she is as white as a lily, and as small as a wand. This hat is Nan our maid. I am the dog. No, the dog is himself, and I am the dog. O, the dog is me, and I am myself. Ay; so, so. Now come I to my father: 'Father, your blessing.' Now should not the shoe speak a word for weeping; now should I kiss my father; well, he weeps on; now I come to my mother. O that she could speak now, like a wood woman! Well, I kiss her. Why, there 'tis: here's my mother's breath up and down. Now come I to my sister: mark the moan she makes. Now the dog all this while sheds not a tear; nor speaks a word; but see how I lay the dust with my tears.

5. ROO - SUMMER OF THE SEVENTEENTH DOLL by Ray Lawler

ROO

You selfish little bastard! You listen to me - we come down here for the lay-off, five months of the year, December to April. That leaves another seven months still hangin' - what d'yer reckon Olive does in that time? Knocks around with other blokes, goes out on the loose every week? No, she doesn't, she just waits for us to come back again - 'coz she thinks our five months is worth all the rest of the year put together! It's knowin' that that brought me down this time, broke and - and when I would have given anythin' to have stopped up there. But I couldn't let her down - and if I hear you mention either grapes or the Murray to her now, I'll kick you so far they'll have to feed you with a shanghai.

(BEAT)

Now remember what I said.

6. MAX - MYTH, PROPAGANDA AND DISASTER IN NAZI GERMANY AND CONTEMPORARY AMERICA by Stephen Sewell (adapted)

MAX

Look, mate, I don't know what's happening – I just arrived, right? And, all right, I know the Americans go on with all this flag-waving, patriotic bullshit and think the rest of the world hates them, but fuck, Talbot, they're right: the rest of the world does hate 'em – I hate 'em, and I want to live here! It's envy, isn't it? Everyone looks at what they've got and wants it...They just want the stuff, that's right, isn't it? And figure the reason they can't get the stuff, is because the Americans are stopping them. That's where we're at now, and now some prick's actually done something about it, and killed three thousand people, and the Americans are fucking mad as hell, because they know every single one of them is on that plane hurtling towards the Twin Towers and they don't like it and they're not going to stand for it, and they're going to get the pricks that're threatening them. Well, all power to George W – I don't want the fucking pricks to win, either. There were Aussies killed up there, mate, there were English, there were Scots, there were fucking Moslems, for fuck's sake! There was fucking everybody: everyone's hopes were up there in those two towers....It's a war, Talbot – It is a war. It's a war against terror and it's a war against ignorance, and it's a war against prejudice and pure dumb-arsed fuckwittedness, and we've got to win that war, otherwise we're fucked.

7. IAN - UP THE ROAD by John Harding

IAN

Hey, brother, how do I look? Or have you been watching me for a while. I never got to tell you about the places I've been or the people I've met. I've travelled a bit. Went to Coober Pedy, had a go at mining. First day on the job I fell down a shaft and broke my arm. Decided mining wasn't for me. Some way or another I ended up in Canberra.

You used to brylcreem my hair for me. I used to love the way you'd grab my ears like motor cycle handles and twist them? Vroom vroom. And that toy sheep we used to fight over. I was just talking with Auntie about it. Had a bit of a blue with Susie. She's been at my throat since I got back. They've all been having a go at me. They reckon it's easy. But they've never been off the bloody mission. They reckon I'm a coconut. She's a fiery woman.

It's bloody fresh up here, isn't it? Those boots of yours keep you warm? I got a big electric heater at home. I bought my own place now. What a whitefella, eh? A real house. Double brick. And I'm the only one in it. Well, you got the family up here. What've I got? I hate being alone. You all keep leaving me alone. Mum, dad, you. Now Uncle Kenny's gonna be up here. You'll be fucking right.

What the fuck's going on? They're punishing me. Are you punishing me too? I didn't want to leave, Nat. They all told me to go. They made me go away. Not do nothing. I fucking hated 'em. They did jack shit. Those cops killed you and they did jack shit. Are you ashamed of me for that, my brother? If it was me they'd killed, you would've rode your horse into the fucken station and torn those cunts apart. That's what I wanted to do. But they made me go away. I thought you were a king and they killed you like a fucken dog. I'm sorry, Nat, I'm sorry. You knew I'd be back. You knew I'd be back here with you.

It's fresh, eh? I love you, Nat. I love you, brother. (*sings*) Amazing Grace how sweet the sound / That saved a wretch like me / I once was lost but now I'm found / Was blind but now I see.

8. KONSTANTIN TREPLEV - THE SEAGULL by Anton Chekhov

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 twenty-five - 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 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 form that people only cling to 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 on stage 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.

THIS IS A TRANSLATION BY BENEDICT ANDREWS (CURRENCY PRESS). YOU MAY USE OTHER TRANSLATIONS OF THE SAME PIECE.

9. CORNELIUS - THE MATCHMAKER by Thornton Wilder

CORNELIUS

Isn't the world full of wonderful things. There we sit cooped up in Yonkers for years and years and all the time wonderful people like Mrs Molloy are walking around in New York and we don't know them at all. I don't know whether - from where you're sitting - you can see - well, for instance, the way (*pointing to the edge of his right eye*) her eye and forehead and cheek come together, up here. Can you? And the kind of fireworks that shoot out of her eyes all the time. I tell you right now: a fine woman is the greatest work of God. You can talk all you like about Niagara Falls and the Pyramids; they aren't in it at all. Of course, up there at Yonkers they came into the store all the time, and bought this and that, and I said "Yes, ma'am", and "That'll be seventy-five cents, ma'am"; and I *watched* them. But today I've talked to one, equal to equal, equal to equal, and to the finest one that ever existed, in my opinion. They're so different from men! Everything that they say and do is so different that you feel like laughing all the time. (*he laughs*) Golly, they're different from men. And they're awfully mysterious, too. You never can be really sure what's going on in their heads. They have a kind of wall around them all the time - of pride and a sort of play-acting: I bet you could know a woman a hundred years without ever being really sure whether she liked you or not. This minute I'm in danger. I'm in danger of losing my job and my future and everything that people think is important; but I don't care. Even if I have to dig ditches for the rest of my life, I'll be a ditch-digger who once had a wonderful day.

10. BIFF - DEATH OF A SALESMAN by Arthur Miller

BIFF

Now hear this, Willy, this is me. You know why I had no address for three months? I stole a suit in Kansas City and I was jailed. I stole myself out of every good job since high school. And I never got anywhere because you blew me so full of hot air I could never stand taking orders from anybody! That's whose fault it is! It's goddamn time you heard that! I had to be boss big shot in two weeks, and I'm through with it! Willy! I ran down eleven flights with a pen in my hand today. And suddenly I stopped, you hear me? And in the middle of that office building, do you hear this? I stopped in the middle of that building and I saw - the sky. I saw the things that I love in the world. The work and the food and the time to sit and smoke. And I looked at the pen and said to myself, what the hell am I grabbing this for? Why am I trying to become what I don't want to be? What am I doing in an office, making a contemptuous, begging fool of myself, when all I want is out there, waiting for me the minute I say I know who I am! Why can't I say that, Willy? Pop! I'm a dime a dozen, and so are you! I am not a leader of men, Willy, and neither are you. You were never anything but a hard-working drummer who landed in the ash-can like all the rest of them! I'm one dollar an hour, Willy! I tried seven states and couldn't raise it! A buck an hour! Do you gather my meaning? I'm not bringing home any prizes any more, and you're going to stop waiting for me to bring them home! Pop, I'm nothing! I'm nothing, Pop. Can't you understand that? There's no spite in it any more. I'm just what I am, that's all. Will you let me go, for Christ's sake? Will you take that phoney dream and burn it before something happens?

11. ROCHESTER – THE LIBERTINE by Stephen Jeffreys

ROCHESTER

Allow me to be frank at the commencement: you will not like me. No, I say you will not. The gentlemen will be envious and the ladies will be repelled. You will not like me now and you will like me a good deal less as we go on. Oh yes, I shall *do* things you will like. You will say 'That was a noble impulse in him' or 'He played a brave part there,' but DO NOT WARM TO ME, it will not serve. When I become a BIT OF A CHARMER that is your danger sign for it prefaces the change into THE FULL REPTILE a few seconds later. What I require is not your *affection* but your *attention*. I must not be ignored or you will find me a troublesome a package of humanity as ever pissed into the Thames. Now. Ladies. An announcement. (*He looks around.*) I am up for it. All the time. That's not a boast. Or an opinion. It is bone hard medical fact. I put it around, d'y know? And you will watch me putting it around and sigh for it. Don't. It is a deal of trouble for you and you are better off watching and drawing your conclusions from a distance than you would be if I got my tarse pointing up your petticoats. Gentlemen. (*He looks around.*) Do not despair, I am up for that as well. When the mood is on me. And the same warning applies. Now, gents: if there be vizards in the house, jades, harlots ( as how could there not be) leave them be for the moment. Still your cheesy erections till I have had my say. But later when you shag – and later you *will* shag, I shall expect it of you and I will know if you have let me down – I wish you to shag with my homuncular image rattling in your gonads. Feel how it was for me, how it is for me and ponder. 'Was that shudder the same shudder he sensed? Did he know something more profound? Or is there some wall of wretchedness that we all batter with our heads at that shining, livelong moment.' That is it. That is my prologue, nothing in rhyme, certainly no protestations of modesty, you were not expecting that I trust. I reiterate only for those who have arrived late or were buying oranges or were simply not listening: I am John Wilmot, Second Earl of Rochester and I do not want you to like me.

12. DOUGLAS – EUROPE by Michael Gow

DOUGLAS    What a great place. This area's like something out of Thomas Mann or Kafka. God it's exciting being in Europe. So alive, isn't it? So... pulsating. I've had a great morning. I saw your Roman mosaic. Went on a tour of that poet's house. Had a look at the inn where whatsisname wrote his opera. And I went to this great exhibition at the big gallery. There's some amazing things in there. Stuff I knew quite well. And that altar they've got! But there was this performance art thing. Incredible! There was this big pool full of fish, carp, I don't know, and this guy, nothing on, you were right, with all these crucifixes and beads in his hair, wading through the water, dragging this little raft behind him; he had the rope in his teeth. On the raft was this pile of animal innards with candles sticking out of it. Then these other people dressed as astronauts and red indians ran round and round the pond screaming and then they lit this fire and threw copies of the Mona Lisa into it. And then, I don't know how they did it but the water turned bright red. Just incredible. You must see it. It's great being here. Everything's so exciting. I've been keeping everything I get. Every little item, every bus ticket, gallery ticket, the train tickets. Every postcard. Every coaster from every bar, every café.

13. STEVE - THE RETURN by Reg Cribb

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 gettin' 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?

14. CHUNK - THE CALL by Patricia Cornelius

CHUNK

You've got it all wrong. It come to me like a whack on the back of the head, like the floor's suddenly given way. An epiphany, that's what I'm having. Ever heard of an epiphany, Aldo? It's like God's spoken, like lightning, some fucking big moment of enlightenment. And I'm having it. It's all crap. It's a big load of bull. A hoax. Someone major's pulling our leg, got us by the throat and is throttling us, got us boxed in, packed up. Nothing—means—nothing. You got it? Once you got that, you're living free. Who says how life's meant to be? Who says what's good, what you should or shouldn't do? Who in hell's got the right to measure a man's success? He did this, he did that, he got that job, he got paid a lot. Fuck off. He owns a house, a wife, two kids. So what? He's a lawyer, a doctor, he's made a success of his life. No success story for the likes of us. And you know what? I don't give a shit. Finally it's clear to me. It's all crap. And I'm free of it at last.

15. RUBEN – RUBEN GUTHRIE by Brendan Cowell

RUBEN

School school school school school.

Fuck, um – well my parents sent me to a boarding school. I mean how hard is it to have one kid asleep at night in your house how hard is it but no . . . *boarding school!*

Look, I gotta say I wasn't like 'this' at boarding school, I didn't like getting smashed on rocket fuel and talking about vaginas, honestly I had no interest in Alcohol at all.

I spent my money on magazines and electronics – fashion mostly.

By the time I reached Year Eight I had fifteen pairs of jeans.

So of course the rugby guys and the rowing guys and the wrestling guys would come in at night and they'd pin me down and get it out of their system – the *rage*.

'Nice shoes faggot – you got mousse in your hair let's put mousse in his anus!'

I'd be flipping through MAD magazine and just put the thing down and take it.

*Fine.*

But then this guy called Corey joined our school, and suddenly all that stopped.

Corey was older than me, bigger than me and a whole lot cooler than me. He drove a black Suzuki Vitara had five earrings and the word 'Fuck' tattooed inside his lip. My

mum was always saying 'bring Corey with you on the weekend' and she'd go all flushed and wear low-cut tops in the kitchen.

To this day I don't know why he chose me but he did.