

# Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead

By: Tom Stoppard

ROSENCRANTZ (*cutting his fingernails*): Another curious scientific phenomenon is the fact that the fingernails grow after death, as does the beard.

GUIL: What?

ROSENCRANTZ (*loud*): Beard!

GUIL: But you're not dead.

ROSENCRANTZ I didn't say they started to grow after death! (*Pause*) The fingernails also grow before birth, though not the beard.

GUIL: What?

ROSENCRANTZ: Beard! What's the matter with you? (*Reflective*) The toenails, on the other hand, never grow at all.

GUIL (*bemused*): The toenails never grow at all?

ROSENCRANTZ: Do they? It's a funny thing - I cut my fingernails all the time, and every time I think to cut them, they need cutting. Now, for instance. And yet, I never, to the best of my knowledge, cut my toenails. They ought to be curled under my feet by now, but it doesn't happen. I never think about them. Perhaps I cut them absent-mindedly, when I'm thinking of something else.

# Prodigal Son

By: John Patrick Shanely

JIM:

Why is this your school? Huh? Why am I always wrong? Why do I always have to listen to you when you have zero to say? Because I'm young? All my life I've been young so I never get a turn. This school's lost if you ask me. You're lost. Everybody talks to me like I'm the one like I should change. Why should I change? I've never even gotten to find out who I am and you want me to change! That's crazy! You tell me I'm bad before I even get to be anything. What the hell is that? Original sin or something? I read Plato I read him at a park bench in the Bronx. Let me tell you something. Plato he wasn't afraid. Diosneyes, he wasn't afraid. Socrates wasn't afraid of anything. They were men! Why are you the head master and I'm the student? Do you understand? I have to earn your respect but you don't have to earn mine, what is that? It's you that wants the A before you even start but when I say I want the same thing, I'm not right? Not gonna cry! I'm gonna find my place in this world, count on it! This school's been a miracle for me but not because of you. Because somebody; Mr. Hoffman, finally saw me! And more then that, somebody, a grown person decided I was good before I was good. And you want to throw me out of that? Then you know what I say? I've never met your god, and I don't want to.

# Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike

Play by Christopher Durang

NINA: Hello. Oh, it's so thrilling to meet you. My aunt and uncle said to me you mustn't go bother them, and plus she's never ever there, but then we had our binoculars out and we saw your car drive up, and I thought, I can't believe she's here! I can meet Masha Hardwicke. A woman who has achieved fame and success in theatre and in motion pictures. I LONG to make theatre my life, and you're an idol to me. And I'm only here for three days, and I hoped I could meet you, but then I didn't dare think it would actually happen. But it has.

MASHA: *(sort of friendly)* Yes, you're meeting me. Hello. Hello.

NINA: And today is my name day, can you imagine? Americans like to say "birthday," but I like to say "name day" because I love the plays of Anton Chekhov and Irina in *Three Sisters* is always saying "it's my name day."

MASHA: Ah, well. It's lovely to meet you. You're so very pretty and luminous, and full of youthful hope and enthusiasm. I wonder if it makes it hard for older people to be around you.

NINA: I'm sorry, what?

# A Doll's House, Part 2

Play by Lucas Hnath

EMMY.

No, see, I think you're very wrong,  
and that you've made a lot of assumptions  
and that you don't know what you're doing,  
you think you do, but you—and it's not your fault,  
but I need to correct you—

NORA.

correct me—?

EMMY.

Torvald did something really stupid.  
I know that he's still, technically speaking, married to you.  
And I'm not saying that none of this is his fault.  
There's fault on his part, for sure.  
But basically, what happened,  
when you left, people noticed,  
and of course they noticed,  
and people would ask, "Where's Nora?"  
And Torvald, I'm sure you could guess,  
he was pretty upset about it, felt pretty private about it,  
didn't want to talk about it—it was embarrassing—people ask him  
where you are and he'd have to say you left him—it would be awkward,  
both for him and for the person asking,  
so at first when people asked, he'd say that you had gone away,  
left town, visiting family,  
something like that.  
And then another month or two passes,  
and someone somewhere says something or makes the assumption  
that it's worse than that,  
and that you hadn't recovered  
and you were  
no longer alive.  
And that's what people assumed,  
and Torvald—now he's so far in  
and to explain the truth—I know it's a weak thing he did —  
so he said nothing.  
And by saying nothing  
he was sort of saying something  
which is that you  
had died.  
You see?  
It's a problem. You being here, doing what you're doing.

# LOST GIRL

by Kimberly Belflower

WENDY

The first time I saw him, I saw his shadow first.

I was pretending to be asleep

but I wasn't asleep.

It was around the time I stopped thinking that staying up late was a victory.

The first time I kissed him, it felt more like flying than flying did.

The last time I kissed him was the last time I saw him.

The last time I saw him, he said he'd be back.

He said I should wait.

And I did.

I do.

Because he said I should.

I didn't know the last time would be the last time.

If I had known, I...

When he flew away from my window for the last time, it started to snow.

It was never winter there –

It was part of the magic, somehow.

He said,

"It's only winter when I go away."

And he was right.

# Red

By: John Logan

KEN: (*Explodes.*) Bores you?! Bores you?! – Christ almighty trying working for you for a living! – The talking-talking-talking-jesus-christ-won't-he-ever-shut-up titanic self-absorption of the man! You stand there trying to look so deep when you're nothing but a solipsistic bully with your grandiose self-importance and lectures and arias and let's-look-at-the-freaking-canvas-for-another-few-weeks-let's-not-freaking-paint-let's-just-look.

You know, not everything has to be so IMPORTANT all the time! Not every painting has to rip your guts out and expose your soul! Not everyone wants art that actually HURTS! Sometimes you just want a freaking still life or landscape or soup can or comic book! Which you might learn if you ever actually left your hermetically-sealed submarine here with all the windows closed and no natural light – BECAUSE NATURAL LIGHT ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU!

But then nothing is ever good enough for you! Not even the people who buy your pictures! So who is good enough to own your art?! Anyone?!

Or maybe the real question is: who's good enough to even see your art? . . . Is it possible that no one is worthy to look at your paintings? . . . That's it, isn't it? . . . We have all been weighed in the balance and have been found wanting.

You say you spend your life in search of real human beings, people who can look at your pictures with compassion. But in your heart you no longer believe those people exist. . .

My friend, I don't think you'd recognize a real human being if he were standing right in front of you. (*Pause. ROTHKO's stern and uncompromising Old Testament glare make KEN uneasy. KEN's resolve starts to crumble. He moves away.*) Never mind.

# LOST GIRL

by Kimberly Belflower

WENDY

Why does everyone have to be happy, anyway?

When did that become the goal?

Maybe I don't like being happy.

I don't trust it.

As soon as you feel happiness, it's already gone

And who knows if you can ever get it back.

There's this pressure

When I'm happy

To remember every detail –

Everything that led up to that exact happiness

So I can follow the steps and make it happen all over again.

And then I do that –

I follow the steps.

And it's never quite the same.

Even when it's good

It's not as good

Or if it's as good

It's a different kind of good.

I always end up disappointed.

And after a while

I guess I got used to that disappointment.

It's nice to be used to something.

So I'm sorry if you think being sad is a problem.

But for me, happiness is the problem.

It aches and it breaks and it leaves.

Sadness, though.

Sadness stays.

It's sturdy, and it's strong.

It burrows into your shoulder –

It stays all night.

# A Midsummer Night's Dream

by William Shakespeare

HELENA

Lo, she is one of this confederacy!  
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three  
To fashion this false sport, in spite of me.  
Injurious Hermia! most ungrateful maid!  
Have you conspired, have you with these contrived  
To bait me with this foul derision?  
Is all the counsel that we two have shared,  
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,  
When we have chid the hasty-footed time  
For parting us,--O, is it all forgot?  
All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?  
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,  
Have with our needles created both one flower,  
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,  
Both warbling of one song, both in one key,  
As if our hands, our sides, voices and minds,  
Had been incorporate. So we grow together,  
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,  
But yet an union in partition;  
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem;  
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;  
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,  
Due but to one and crowned with one crest.  
And will you rent our ancient love asunder,  
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?  
It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly:  
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it,  
Though I alone do feel the injury.

# A Midsummer Night's Dream

by William Shakespeare

PUCK

My mistress with a monster is in love.  
Near to her close and consecrated bower,  
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,  
A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,  
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,  
Were met together to rehearse a play  
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial-day.  
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,  
Who Pyramus presented, in their sport  
Forsook his scene and enter'd in a brake  
When I did him at this advantage take,  
An ass's nole I fixed on his head:  
Anon his Thisbe must be answered,  
And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy,  
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,  
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,  
Rising and cawing at the gun's report,  
Sever themselves and madly sweep the sky,  
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly;  
And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls;  
He murder cries and help from Athens calls.  
Their sense thus weak, lost with their fears  
thus strong,  
Made senseless things begin to do them wrong;  
For briers and thorns at their apparel snatch;  
Some sleeves, some hats, from yielders all  
things catch.  
I led them on in this distracted fear,  
And left sweet Pyramus translated there:  
When in that moment, so it came to pass,  
Titania waked and straightway loved an ass.

# Cymbeline

by William Shakespeare

IMOGEN

O, for a horse with wings! Hear'st thou, Pisanio?

He is at Milford-Haven: read, and tell me

How far 'tis thither. If one of mean affairs

May plod it in a week, why may not I

Glide thither in a day? Then, true Pisanio,--

Who long'st, like me, to see thy lord; who long'st,--

let me bate,--but not like me--yet long'st,

But in a fainter kind:--O, not like me;

For mine's beyond beyond--say, and speak thick;

Love's counsellor should fill the bores of hearing,

To the smothering of the sense--how far it is

To this same blessed Milford: and by the way

Tell me how Wales was made so happy as

To inherit such a haven: but first of all,:

How many score of miles may we well ride

'Twixt hour and hour?

# The Comedy of Errors

Play by William Shakespeare

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Why, mistress, sure my master is horn-mad.

ADRIANA

Horn-mad, thou villain!

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

I mean not cuckold-mad;

But, sure, he is stark mad.

When I desired him to come home to dinner,

He ask'd me for a thousand marks in gold:

"Tis dinner-time," quoth I; "My gold!" quoth he;

"Your meat doth burn," quoth I; "My gold!" quoth he:

"Will you come home?" quoth I; "My gold!" quoth he.

"Where is the thousand marks I gave thee, villain?"

"The pig," quoth I, "is burn'd;" "My gold!" quoth he:

"My mistress, sir" quoth I; "Hang up thy mistress!

I know not thy mistress; out on thy mistress!"

LUCIANA

Quoth who?

DROMIO OF EPHESUS

Quoth my master:

"I know," quoth he, "no house, no wife, no mistress."

So that my errand, due unto my tongue,

I thank him, I bare home upon my shoulders;

For, in conclusion, he did beat me there.

# Three Sisters

By Anton Chekhov

MASHA. I want to confess my sins, dear sisters. My soul is yearning. I'm going to confess to you and never again to anyone... I'll tell you this minute [softly]. It's my secret, but you must know everything.... I can't be silent... [a pause]. I'm in love, I'm in love... I love that man.... You have just seen him... Well, I may as well say it. I love Vershinin.

OLGA [going behind her screen]. Stop it. I'm not listening anyway.

MASHA. But what am I to do? [Clutches her head.] At first I thought him strange... then I was sorry for him... then I came to love him... to love him with his voice, his words, his misfortunes, his two little girls...

OLGA [behind the screen]. I'm not listening. Whatever silly things you say I won't hear them.

MASHA. Oh, sister, you are silly. I love him -- so that's my fate. It means that that's my lot... And he loves me... It's all terrifying. Yes? Is it wrong? [Takes IRINA by the hand and draws her to herself] Oh, my darling... How are we going to live our lives, what will become of us?.. When you read a novel it all seems trite and obvious, but when you're in love yourself you see that no one knows anything and we all have to settle things for ourselves... My darlings, my sisters... I've confessed it to you, now I'll hold my tongue... I'll be like Gogol's madman... silence... silence...

# School Girls; Or the African Mean Girls Play

By: Jocelyn Bioh

ERICKA

Listen you don't know CRAP about my life okay?!-

PAULINA: -Oh really?-

ERICKA

-NOTHING! I wasn't rich. I didn't have friends.

PAULINA: Whatever.

ERICKA

You think those white kids wanted anything to do with me?

You think there were any other black kids in Portsmouth?! I was always alone!... And my father... was here. With his Cocoa factory... And his wife and children. Living this perfect life... Not even thinking about me... Ashamed of me... His white daughter.

PAULINA: Oh please.

ERICKA

And you think my life was easy? My mother is all I had-.... And you try watching your mother and talk to me about how easy that is... Did you ever stop to think that I might be jealous of you?!

PAULINA: (sucks teeth loudly)

ERICKA

That you know where you come from?... That you have a family? I'm sorry that you don't see how lucky you are.

# School Girls; Or the African Mean Girls Play

By: Jocelyn Bioh

PAULINA

Wow! Miss Ghana 1966! In the flesh! I can't believe it.

ELOISE Oh thank you dear. Paulina, you said?

PAULINA

Yes. Paulina Sarpong. I am in my last year here at Aburi..

ELOISE How lovely.

PAULINA

We were not expecting you until tomorrow.

ELOISE Oh, well I was just so anxious to see what Aburi had to offer, I couldn't wait.

PAULINA *(here's her chance - very rehearsed and polished)*

Well, I believe that it has always been my calling to do something influential. If I was chosen to be Miss Ghana, God will use me as a vessel to show the world how beautiful our country is and change the stereotypes of how Africans are perceived.

ELOISE Thank you... for that.

PAULINA

You're welcome.

HEADMISTRESS FRANCIS Eh, Paulina, please tell Miss Amponsah more about your achievements here at school.

PAULINA

Ah yes, well, I am very involved: I'm on the debate team, the table tennis club and am I am the lead soloist in the show choir. I'm also in a long term relationship with a Ghana Black Star soccer player.

ELOISE Sure.(to Paulina) How tall are you love?

PAULINA

Oh I can be any height you need me to be with right pair of high heeled shoes.

# Three Sisters

By Anton Chekhov

IRINA:

When I woke up to-day and got up and dressed myself, I suddenly began to feel as if everything in this life was open to me, and that I knew how I must live. Dear Ivan Romanovitch, I know everything. A man must work, toil in the sweat of his brow, whoever he may be, for that is the meaning and object of his life, his happiness, his enthusiasm. How fine it is to be a workman who gets up at daybreak and breaks stones in the street, or a shepherd, or a schoolmaster, who teaches children, or an engine-driver on the railway.... My God, let alone a man, it's better to be an ox, or just a horse, so long as it can work, than a young woman who wakes up at twelve o'clock, has her coffee in bed, and then spends two hours dressing.... Oh it's awful! Sometimes when it's hot, your thirst can be just as tiresome as my need for work. And if I don't get up early in the future and work, Ivan Romanovitch, then you may refuse me your friendship.

# Fever/Dream

By Sheila Callaghan

CLAIRE:

Would a “thank you, Claire” have been so difficult? Or how bout a “good job, Claire!”  
Nooooooo... it’s “push that around, Claire.” “Clean up that mess, Claire.” Doesn’t loyalty mean anything to anyone? I’m versatile. I’m committed. Everything runs more smoothly with me around. So how is it that I’m invisible? Maybe if I’m invisible enough, people will start to notice what a good job I’m doing. Oh, I’m fired? After all the work I did for you? I tried so hard. I never asked anything from anyone. All I wanted was a thank you... THANK YOU CLAIRE THANK YOU CLAIRE for being wildly entertaining when we nearly expired from boredom... THANK YOU CLAIRE for not leaking my horrible lies to anyone who would listen... THANK YOU CLAIRE FOR PURING FIVE HUNDRED AND TWENTY SEVEN SELTZERS THAT I NEVER EVEN DRANK!!” You can’t treat employees like they’re invisible and expect them to stay loyal! You need to THANK your people.

# Women Who March on Washington

By: Christine Kallman

CAM (they/them):

This is what I love about my job.

Out here I always feel totally content.

I suppose I should be afraid, although I've never had anyone follow me out here.

I've been threatened, you know. Followed at night.

More times than you can imagine.

*( Pause. CAM listens and hears the grouse again.)*

We hear it in springtime. The male grouse makes the sound by rotating their wings.

In some species, behavior is not so gender-specific. Birds, butterflies, a lot of insects have both male and female characteristics.

But I'm not going to try to make a lot of arguments comparing human and animal behavior.

I used to do that.

Used to have detailed arguments.

But you know, people are just going to believe what they want to believe.

# The Rose Tattoo

Play by Tennessee Williams

ROSE:

When my girl friend was teaching me how to dance, I asked her, "how do you know which way the boy's going to move?" And she said, "You've got to feel how he's going to move with your body!" I said, "How do you feel with your body?" And she said, " By pressing up close!" That's why I pressed up close! I didn't realise that I was - Ha, ha! Now you're blushing! Don't go away! - And a few minutes later you said to me, "Gee, you're beautiful!" I said, "Excuse me," and ran to the lades room. Do you know why? To look at myself in the mirror! And I saw that I was! For the first time in my life I was beautiful! You'd made me beautiful when you *said* that I was!

# You on the Moors Now

Book by Jaclyn Backhaus

JANE:

I TELL YOU I MUST GO!

Do you think I can stay to become nothing to you? Do you think I am a robot? A Machine without feelings? And can bear to have my morsel of bread snatched from my lips and my drop of living water dashed from my cup? Do you think

-BECAUSE I AM POOR

-BECAUSE I AM OBSCURE

-BECAUSE I AM PLAIN

-BECAUSE I HAVE TINY HANDS

That I am SOULLESS? HEARTLESS? You think wrong! I have A SOUL AND A HEART BIGGER THAN ANY OF THOSE YOU HOST, and if God had gifted me with

-WEALTH

-BEAUTY

-ESTEEM

-LARGE HANDS

I would have made it as hard for you to leave me as it is now for me to leave YOU! And this speech is MORTIFYING BUT ALSO GREAT BECAUSE I am not speaking from a place of custom nor of convention nor of mortal flesh. This is my spirit and your spirit. And we are equal. And BECAUSE OF THIS, I AM GOING. AND YOU CAN'T STOP ME.

# Linda

By Penelope Skinner

Bridget:

I had this weird moment when I was sitting in the room waiting to go in.

I was in my costume and there was these other girls there.

They'd made themselves look pretty and they were all skinny and good-looking and doing Corelia or Ophelia and I was there with a stupid beard on and at first I felt like and idiot, you know?

But then I started feeling like I actually was him

And they were my daughters.

And I thought about what it must be like to have a daughter.

And about how Mom is like

How she didn't have an easy life but she's still done amazing things and I remembered all the stuff I said to her this morning and how there isn't a person in the world who I love like I love her.

I love her so much it hurts.

And I started feeling what it must be like to have your own daughter turn on you like I did this morning.

To have the people you love most betray you for reasons you cannot understand because you've only done your best.

And after that I couldn't really concentrate on the audition because all I could think about was getting home and telling Mom I love her.

More than anyone.

# Afternoon of the Elves

Adapted by: Y York

Sara Kate: Look, I didn't have to invite you here today, and I didn't have to show you this. I thought you might like to see an elf village for a change. If you don't believe elves built this, that's your problem. I know they did.

Hillary: I never saw elves in my backyard.

Sara Kate: Well, of course not.

Hillary: What do you mean?

Sara Kate: (sincere, kind) Elves would never go in your backyard, no offense, Hillary, but your backyard would not offer any protection. See, elves need to hide, they hate it when people see them. In the olden days, it didn't matter so much, but now, there's too many people, and too many bad ones; elves can't risk being seen by a bad person.

Hillary: (worried) Why? What would happen?

Sara Kate: There's no telling, but it would be very terrible. They know they're safe here, there's a million places to hide in this yard.

## **Little Women**

By: Kate Hamill

JO

I ain't a lady! And if turning up my hair makes me one, I'll wear it in two tails till I'm twenty. I hate to think I've got to grow up and be Miss March, and wear long gowns, and look as prim as China Aster. It's bad enough to be a girl, anyway, when I like boys' games and work, and manners. I can't get over my disappointment in not being a boy, and it's worse now than ever, for I'm dying to go and fight with Papa, and I can only stay at home and knit like a poky old woman.

# **She Kills Monsters**

By: Qui Nguyen

TILLY

Are you judging them? I know they're geeky, I'm geeky, we're all geeks. I'm sure you care about that stuff. Everyone else does, or did. I mean until I got hit by the car and then suddenly, wow, I'm the most popular girl in school. So we play this. We play it because it's awesome. It's about adventures and saving the world and having magic. And maybe - I guess - in some small teeny capacity, it might have a little to do with wish fulfillment. Kelly gets to walk without crutches, Ronnie gets to be super strong... Me? I get the girl.

# John Proctor is the Villain

By: Kimberly Belflower

NELL

that's funny

my family says stuff like that about me all the time

like my mom says it to my aunt on the phone, she's like

"Nell's just a lot"

"Nell is so dramatic these days"

"Nell, you're too much for me right now"

I dunno like

I think it's just

when people say stuff like that

They always kinda mean the same thing you know?

like

what they really mean is just

"Nell's a girl"

# peerless

By: Jiehae Park

L:

It's me.

I got your text.

That's weird.

That's weird.

That's so freaking weird

She's so freaking Dirty and weird but that's *weird*. Where are you

Because listen

I think

I think

I think she may have like

Magical Powers

I'm serious

Seriously

Because listen

Gabby

Gabby

Gabby told me she sees her one afternoon

In the parking lot of Lee's apartment complex

With this RAT

With this RAT in her HAND

And she was like

singing

and holding it

like a baby

A little rat baby

And when she was done with her rat baby song She lit a cigarette and walked

Didn't smoke it just lit it

Stuck it flame-up in the dirt

And walked

And that night

That night

Lee's mom's making dinner

Like meatloaf

Or fish

I don't know

Anyway

she was making this dinner and her uniform her apron

caught *fire*

and she threw it off and

the kitchen

caught *fire*

and they had to leave

they opened up all of the

doors and the windows to air out the

Anyway

they're back

they come back

and the smoke is gone

and there's no more fire

and no more smoke

and it's cold cause all of the doors and the windows and the kitchen *the kitchen*

*(beat.)*

the whole kitchen floor is covered in rats.

*(She shudders.)*

She did it, Lee thinks

Gabby said that Lee thinks

It was her

So

I've been thinking

I thought

I think

She never says anything

*never* you know?

So those things that she *told you*

those things that she *knew*

about you and me

Maybe she *sees* things

Well maybe

Just maybe

There's

Something

She

Knows.

Because here's the thing.

I heard about your breakup (he probably deserved it)

The whole school heard (he totally deserved it)

You're like really loud (it's ok though I love you)

Here's the thing.

You'll never guess who asked me after AP Euro if that meant you needed a Hoopcoming date.

*(She pauses. For drama.)*

Call me.