

Contemporary Monologues 2026:

Life after George by Hannie Rayson

ANA:

So. Dad, I have a sister. What a balls-up. Just as well you didn't know about it all that time. One more example of the women in your life taking care of business. I appreciate that, under the circumstances, this may sound petty – but I would just like to remind you of all the times you and Lindsay and Mum mocked me for being so prim. So uptight. 'Ana is such a blue-stocking.' 'It's her generation. They're all like that. Prudish!'

Do you remember when I knitted you that pair of purple socks for Christmas? Probably not. The first time I saw you wearing those socks was up there in the sand dunes. You were having sex with that poetess, Fredrica someone? I was playing on the beach when I saw my socks – up there – on the end of a pair of feet. When I crept closer, there you were. Fornicating with a South American. Honestly

So, with hindsight, given the complete cock-up you've made of your personal life, you would have to concede that your astonishing profligacy is not exactly the perfect blueprint for how one should live one's life.

(To the audience) I haven't been to the Island for years. When I was little, we used to play beach cricket here at dusk. This is Collie Beach. The two families – Duffy and his lot, and us, with different hangers-on. All these people used to come down from Melbourne and Sydney, to stay at the house in summer. Dad never wore any clothes on the beach. He didn't give a damn. It was really humiliating.

Company by Stephen Sondheim and George Furth

APRIL:

Right after I became an airline stewardess, a friend of mine who had a garden apartment gave me a cocoon for my bedroom. He collects things like that, insects and caterpillars and all that ... It was attached to a twig and he said one morning I'd wake up to a beautiful butterfly in my bedroom - when hatched. He told me that when they come out they're soaking wet and there is a drop of blood there, too - isn't that fascinating - but within an hour they dry off and then they begin to fly. Well, I told him I had a cat. I had a cat then, but he said just put the cocoon somewhere where the cat couldn't get at it... which is impossible, but what can you do? So I put it up high on a ledge where the cat never went, and the next morning it was still there, at least so it seemed safe to leave it. Well, anyway, almost a week later very, very early this one morning the guy calls me, and he said, "April, do you have a butterfly this morning?" I told him to hold on and managed to get up and look and there on that ledge I saw this wet spot and a little speck of blood but no butterfly, and I thought "Oh dear God in heaven, the cat got it." I picked up the phone to tell this guy and just then suddenly I spotted it under the dressing table, it was moving one wing. The cat had got at it, but it was still alive. So I told the guy and he got so upset and he said "Oh no - oh, God, no - don't you see that's a life-a living thing?" Well, I got dressed and took it to the park and put it on a rose, it was summer then, and it looked like it was going to be all right - I think, anyway. But that man - I really felt damaged by him - awful - that was just cruel. I got home and I called him back and said, "Listen, I'm a living thing too, you shithead!" (*pause*) I never saw him again.

Away by Michael Gow

MEG:

I saw the carton. I saw it in the hall. I saw it. It was near the telephone table, wasn't it? You saw it too, didn't you? You saw the box sitting there. You must have. It was sitting next to your vanity case. Everything else that was in the hall got packed in the car. You did see it. You were that last one out. You're the one who shuts the door, after you've made sure the stove's off and the fridge has been left open. You saw the carton and you left it there on purpose. You left it behind. And you knew what it was. You knew what was in it and you left it there. Why did you do that? Why would you do a thing like that? I want to know why you did it. Tell me why you deliberately left that box behind. We have a game we play every year. We sneak presents home, we wrap them up in secret even though we can hear the sticky tape tearing and the paper rustling; we hide them in the stuff we take away, we pretend not to see them until Christmas morning even when we know they're there and we know what's in them because we've already put in our orders so there's no waste or surprise. And Dad always hides his in a pathetic place that's so obvious it's a joke and we all laugh at him behind our backs but we play along! You knew what was in that box. You left it behind. I want to know why. What were you trying to do, what did you want to gain? Did you want to have something we'd all have to be sorry for the whole holiday? There's always something we do wrong that takes weeks to forgive. You have to tell me.

Strangers in Between by Tommy Murphy

BEN:

I need to talk. I just need to talk. Please. I'm your brother. Can't you trust me? I promise I won't hurt you. Put the bat down, mate... Come back. Mum's waiting for you to come back. You should see her hair but. She came home from the hairdresser and it was so big and curly. It was like she'd gone in and asked to look like Barnsie in Chisel. Dad and me laughed. Couldn't help it. I was ripped so I couldn't stop. Mum cried and I got paranoid but then she laughed and it was okay. We don't laugh much no more. She can't sleep. She has nightmares. Tim Hewson looks like he will get a contract with Maserati. The paper was right for once. After his dad's funeral he was straight on a plane to Europe. They'll pay him heaps. His dad was watching car racing when he died. People die all the time in Goulburn. That's all old people talk about, hey. A pipe bust open on me the other day. Shit poured on me and everything. Everyone laughed. I didn't snap. I'm not going to get into fights no more. There's heaps of Lebs in Goulburn. They're moving there from Sydney. It's dangerous. They fight in packs. If one gets you on the ground, ten cousins'll jump out of Holdens and kick the shit out of you. They live in the hills and prowls at night. A baby got taken from the hospital. It was hot ...on the road. Was worried my new tyres would melt. Nan might not move down the coast no more. There are Lebs there too. And junkies. Junkie Lebs. Terrorist junkie Lebs everywhere and the drought. Council's got to do something. More roundabouts. Ivan Milat's running for alderman but. Shooters Party and a Family First preference deal, they reckon. It's such a hot day. Come back. We'd drive straight to the pool. Straight down the highway. Straight through town. Straight to the pool. Dive in and swim to the other side.

Love Child by Joanna Murray-Smith

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.

Wild Honey by Michael Frayn based on a play by Anton Chekhov

ANNA PETROVNA:

How can you say that? How can you lie to me, on such a night as this, beneath such a sky? Tell your lies in autumn, if you must, in the gloom and the mud, but not now, not here. You're being watched! Look up, you absurd man! A thousand eyes, all shining with indignation! You must be good and true, just as all this is good and true. Don't break this silence with your little words! There's no man in the world I could ever love as I love you. There's no woman in the world you could ever love as you love me. Let's take that love; and all the rest, that so torments you – we'll leave that to others to worry about. Are you really such a terrible Don Juan? You look so handsome in the moonlight! Such a solemn face! It's a woman who's come to call, not a wild animal! All right – if you really hate it all so much I'll go away again. Is that what you want? I'll go away, and everything will be just as it was before. Yes...? (she laughs) Idiot! Take it! Snatch it! Seize it! What more do you want? Smoke it to the end, like a cigarette – pinch it out – tread it under your heel. Be human! You funny creature! A woman loves you – a woman you love – fine summer weather. What could be simpler than that? You don't realise how hard life is for me. And yet life is what I long for. Everything is alive, nothing is ever still. We're surrounded by life. We must live, too, Misha! Leave all the problems for tomorrow. Tonight, on this night of nights, we'll simply live!

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 what's-his-name 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.

Fool For Love by Sam Shepard

EDDIE:

And we walked right through town. Past the donut shop, past the miniature golf course, past the Chevron station. And he opened the bottle up and offered it to me. Before he even took a drink, he offered it to me first. And I took it and drank it and handed it back to him. And we just kept passing it back and forth like that as we walked until we drank the whole thing dry. And we never said a word the whole time. Then, finally, we reached this little white house with a red awning, on the far side of town. I'll never forget the red awning because it flapped in the night breeze and the air smelled like new cut alfalfa. We walked right up to the front porch and he rang the bell and I remembered getting real nervous because I wasn't expecting to visit anybody. I thought we were just out for a walk. And then this woman comes to the door. This real pretty woman with red hair. And she throws herself into his arms. And he starts crying. He just breaks down right there in front of me. And she's kissing him all over the face and holding him real tight and he's just crying like a baby. And then through the doorway, behind them both, I see this girl. She just appears. She's just standing there, staring at me and I'm staring back at her and we can't take our eyes off each other. It was like we knew each other from somewhere but we couldn't place where. But the second we saw each other, that very second, we knew we'd never stop being in love.

The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde

GWENDOLEN:

Oh! It is strange he never mentioned to me that he had a ward. How secretive of him! He grows more interesting hourly. I am not sure, however, that the news inspires me with feelings of unmixed delight. I am very fond of you, Cecily; I have liked you ever since I met you! But I am bound to state that now that I know that you are Mr. Worthing's ward, I cannot help expressing a wish you were –well, just a little older than you seem to be –and not quite so very alluring in appearance. In fact, if I may speak candidly...Well, to speak with perfect candour, Cecily, I wish that you were fully forty-two, and more than usually plain for your age. Ernest has a strong upright nature. He is the very soul of truth and honour. Disloyalty would be as impossible to him as deception. But even men of the noblest possible moral character are extremely susceptible to the influence of the physical charms of others. Modern, no less than Ancient History, supplies us with many most painful examples of what I refer to. If it were not so, indeed, History would be quite unreadable.

CECILY: -

You silly boy! Of course I'll marry you. Why, we have been engaged for the last three months. Ever since dear Uncle Jack first confessed to us that he had a younger brother who was very wicked and bad, you of course have formed the chief topic of conversation between myself and Miss Prism. And of course a man who is much talked about is always very attractive. I daresay it was foolish me, but I fell in love with you, Ernest. The engagement was settled on the 14th of February last. Worn out by your entire ignorance of my existence, I determined to end the matter one way or the other, after a long struggle with myself I accepted you under this dear tree here. The next day I bought this little ring in your name, and this little bangle with the true lovers knot I promised you always to wear. You've wonderful good taste, Ernest.. It's the excuse I've always given you for leading such a bad life. And this is the box in which I keep all your dear letters. I remember only too well that I was forced to write your letters for you. I wrote always three times a week, and sometimes oftener. The three you wrote me after I had broken off the engagement are so beautiful, and so badly spelled, that even now I can hardly read them without crying a little..

JACK WORTHING:

I beg your pardon for interrupting you, Lady Bracknell, but this engagement is quite out of the question. I am Ms. Cardew's Guardian, and she cannot marry without my consent until she comes of age. That consent I absolutely declined to give. It pains me very much to have to speak frankly to you, Lady Bracknell, about your nephew, but the fact is that I do not approve at all of his moral character. I suspect him of being untruthful. I fear there can be no possible doubt about the matter. This afternoon, during my temporary absence in London on important question of romance he obtained admission to my house by means of the false pretense of being my brother. Under an assumed name he drank, I've just been informed by my Butler, an entire pint bottle of my Apple Cider. Continuing his disgraceful deception, he succeeded in the course of the afternoon in alienating the affections of my only ward. He subsequently stayed to tea, and devoured every single muffin. And what makes his conduct all the more heartless is, that he was perfectly well aware from the first

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that I have no brother, that I have never had a brother, and that I don't intend to have a brother, not even of any kind. I distinctly told him so myself yesterday afternoon. My decision is unalterable. I declined to give my consent.

The Narcissist by Stephen Carleton

SATCHEL:

We're living on a fragile planet, Bronwyn. Every action we take has a consequence somewhere, somehow. That cigarette butt that gets casually stubbed and thrown into a gutter eventually finds itself in a water catchment, contaminating our rivers and oceans, before settling in the sea grass, poisoning dugongs, fish and turtles. The fish get fat and bloated, and they infect the dolphins. The dolphins get fat and bloated and poison the whales. The whales get fat and bloated and poison the Japanese. The Japanese get fat and bloated and run out of space to live. Soon enough the whole planet gets clogged with that little bit of waste it doesn't quite need, all from one cigarette butt. The same goes for alcohol. I woke up one morning after a night on the tiles and hit the bathroom scales. Beat. 125 grams. I'd put on 125 grams just by drinking half a dozen ciders and a schooner or two of beer. And that was with dancing. Two hours and fifty minutes worth of dancing. That's half a gram a minute. I realised if I kept that up, I'd weigh, like 200 kilos by the end of the year. It's the beginning of the end. If I can't manage my own waste, what hope is there for the planet? Now I'm looking for something else to give up. That's the thing now. You eliminate everything that tastes good or gives you pleasure in order to become the thinnest, worthiest person you can. It's Zen. It's about struggling to acquire perfection. Maybe I'll give up eggs. Or gluten. But it's my Saturn return, so maybe it has to be something more transcendental than diet. I feel like there's this incredible momentum happening in my life right now. I mean - three Most Eligible Baristas in a row. It's leading somewhere. Somewhere Big. I feel like I've been preparing for something. What with the personal training, the personal grooming, the personal hygiene, the public recognition. There's a very specific range of skills and attributes being developed here. Then on the way home, I started thinking. 'Big, Big ...' and it suddenly hit me. Beat. Big Brother: I'm going to audition for Big Brother Seventeen.

You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown Adapted by Clark Gesner from the comic strip by Charles M. Schultz

LUCY:

Linus, do you know what I intend? I intend to be a queen. When I grow up I'm going to be the biggest queen there ever was, and I'll live in this big palace with a big front lawn, and have lots of beautiful dresses to wear. And when I go out in my coach, all the people will wave and I will shout at them. And in the summertime, I will go to my summer palace and I'll wear my crown in swimming and everything, and all the people will cheer and I will shout at them.... What do you mean I can't be a queen? There must be a loophole. This kind of thing always has a loophole. Nobody should be kept from being a queen if she wants to be one. IT'S UNDEMOCRATIC! It's usually just a matter of knowing the right people. I'll bet a few pieces of well-placed correspondence and I get to be a queen in no time. I'll know what I'll do. If I can't be a queen, then I'll be very rich. I'll work and work until I'm very, very rich, and then I will buy myself a queendom. Yes, I will buy myself a queendom and then I'll kick out the old queen and take over the whole operation myself. I will be head queen. And when I go out in my coach, all the people will wave.

Nailed by Caleb Lewis

JOE:

I was fruit-picking mostly. Cutting cane. Whatever needed doing; whatever took concentrating: that was it. Days I'd work, Nights I'd drink. Try and drown you out; force you out of my memory. There musta been an ocean of booze inside of me but you're a strong swimmer, May. One night, there was this storm. The pub is shaking like a humpy. Tin roofs banging up and down; trying to take off. I went outside: Biggest storm I ever saw. It was beautiful. The sky was red. Moon's bloodshot and there's sheet lightning ripping up the night. Cane toads are singing to it, the crickets are chirping and the moths are flying in my face. I could feel my blood pumping to it. Gushing through my arteries, pounding in my temples like those Jap drums up in Broome. I sang right back at it. Got drenched out there screaming at it. Daring it to strike me down for all the things I fucked up, all the people I ran out on. Willing It to wash me away. I couldn't see no more - eyes're choked up with grit, leaking dirt, and swollen with crying. But I could smell Death coming. Sharp stink of ozone and the caramel of burning sugarcane. The ground is burning up. Giving birth to this mad zoo of animals fleeing ragtag into the night. Taipans and blacksnakes winding about my feet. Galahs shrieking. I saw a roo hop past me on fire; lighting up more cane as he crashed on through. I gave up out there, May. Smoke filled the night and I breathed in deep. Let it fill my lungs like sails and take me away. Hollit found me. Said an eagle circled overhead In the smoke and led him right to me. He dragged me out of that fire and got me breathing again. When I came to there was nothing left. All burned up. Just ash and me and the stink of cooked rat. I owe him everything. It's because of him I'm still here. Because of him and that eagle I came back for you.

The Seven Stages of Grieving – Wesley Enoch and Deborah Mailman

(NOTE: This monologue is intended for a First Nations performer)

WOMAN:

(The woman takes several handfuls of red earth from the grave, making a large pile on the floor.) Now I want to tell you a story. I'll tell you how it was told to me. Now it's very complex, I get it wrong sometimes, I'm no expert but I'll try to explain the best I can, so you'll have to stay with me. It's all got to do with family culture and language and stuff. Are you with me? This pile here is the land, the source, the spirit, the core of everything. Are you with me on that? *(The woman makes a circle around the pile.)* And this one here is about culture, family, song, tradition, dance. Have you got that? *(The woman makes eight smaller piles around the larger pile within the circle.)* You always have to marry within your own skin. If I was part of this pile here, that would mean this pile would be my mother...because you always follow the line of the woman. And this pile could be my father...or this one. Which makes this one and this one here my grandparents and cousins. Now if I was to marry, I couldn't marry from the same pile because that would be my brothers and sisters. But I could marry this pile here because they're my cousins, which makes this pile my children, because you always follow the line of the woman. Are you with me? I'll explain that again. This mob and this mob can marry because they're grandparents and cousins. You can't marry this mob because they're your brothers and sisters and you can't marry this mob because they're your brothers and sisters and you can't marry this mob or this mob because they're your children. Cause you always follow the line of the woman. You can't marry this one, this one or this one because that's like marrying your father. The only ones I could marry are...wait a minute. This mob and this mob can marry because they're grandparents and cousins. You can't marry this mob because they're your brothers and sisters and you can't marry this mob or this mob because they're your children. Cause you always follow the line of the woman. You can't marry this one, this one or this one because that's like marrying your father. The only ones I could marry are this mob or this mob. Are you with me? *(The woman gathers up the smaller piles and relocates them on the white fringing that defines the black performing area.)* Now imagine when the children are taken away from this. Are you with me? *(The woman flays her arm through the remaining large pile and circle, destroying it.)*

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Market of Lives by Duong Le Quy

(NOTE: This monologue is intended for an Australian Vietnamese performer)

PHUONG:

Where is everybody? Who can tell me why people say these things? Why my husband and no one else? Has he really been deceiving me? Does he really have a son with someone else? Did he murder someone? No! no! he's a virtuous and even-tempered man. He's never raised a hand against his child. Even my friends are envious of our relationship. But now what will they think? Who will offer me a word of comfort in this dark market? I can feel everyone laughing at me. Well, I'd like to ask all you wives, if you've ever loved your husband what do you do when his name is blackened? But still, there's no smoke without a fire... Oh, Cong! Is it true? No, no! Then why? Maybe they don't like you, and that is why they have made up these stories. Please! Rain! Wind, keep howling! Thunder! Rumble on! Everybody listen! My husband is a good man. No one knows this better than I do.

Flood by Chris Isaacs

FRANKIE:

A week passed and I didn't leave the house much. I was living off leftovers from the holidays. So when they ran out I needed to get groceries. I walked there. It was Tuesday, around eleven in the morning, so there wasn't anyone around or anything. I was standing at the teas and staring at all the choices, there's like a whole aisle now for tea. A whole fucking aisle. And I don't know what it was but while I was there deciding between Earl Grey or English Breakfast I heard the screams of the dust storm rumbling from the end of the aisle. I turned and I looked across and saw it: this big red roo, still, like it was caught in headlights, staring at me. There was a kangaroo in the tea and coffee aisle, and it wouldn't stop looking at me. When it knew it had my attention it straightened its back up and puffed out its chest and I felt this knot in my gut, it forced me to the ground leaning against the shelves. I closed my eyes and tried to take in the smells of the tea, but all I could smell was the eucalypt. And it calmed me. When I opened my eyes the roo was gone. I remember feeling so fucking alone.

Walking Into the Bigness by Richard Frankland

(NOTE: This monologue is intended for a First Nations performer)

RICHARD:

I remember my pop as a man with a glint in his eye and a joke on his lips. I used to sit with Grandad – Old Chris Saunders – cooking eels that we'd caught. His hands were huge. His back was straight and I thought that Pop Saunders was so tall he could touch the very stars themselves. We caught those eels with his old mate Ray. Ray drives us out in his car to Darlots Creek. Pop wades into the water and, using a bobbin -a bobbin is worms threaded onto a line – and then when you got a mob of worms, you put a couple of snails and wrap all those worms around it, then, you tease the eel with it. The eel is a greedy fella, he takes a good gulp of that bobbin, and then once he takes hold, you flip him up onto the creek bank. When they hit the creek bank old ray whacks 'em with a stick and puts 'em in a hessian bag. I fall asleep watching those two: splash, whack, splash, whack. I wake up and the car's rocking and we're chugging along a track heading back into town. I was only little then. My dad had died and pop filled the gap for a bit. I remember walking down the street with pop; whitefellas would call him Mr Saunders. He would wave at them as they drove past in their cars, he would doff his hat to the ladies he had a straight back, and to me he was so tall and strong I used to think he could shape clouds or pluck an eagle from the sky. Seemed like everyone knew him, everyone liked him, whitefellas calling my granddad 'Mr Saunders'.

FOB by David Henry Hwang

(NOTE: This monologue is intended for a Chinese performer)

GRACE:

Yeah. It's tough trying to live in Chinatown. But it's tough trying to live in Torrance, too. It's true. I don't like being alone. You know, when Mom could finally bring me to the US, I was already ten. But I never studied my English in Taiwan, so I got moved back to the second grade. There were a few Chinese girls in the fourth grade, but they were American-born so they wouldn't even talk to me. They'd just stay with themselves and compare how much clothes they all had, and make fun of the way we all talked. I figured I had a better chance of getting in with the white kids than with them, so in junior high, I started bleaching my hair and hanging out at the beach – you know, Chinese hair looks pretty lousy when you bleach it. After a while, I knew what beach was gonna be good on any given day, and I could tell who was coming just by his van. But the American-born Chinese, it didn't matter to them. They just giggled and went to their own dances. Until my senior year in high school – that's how long it took for me to get over this whole thing. One night I took Dad's car and drove on Hollywood Boulevard, all the way from downtown to Beverley Hill, then back on Sunset. I was looking and listening – all the time with the window down, just so I would feel like I was part of the city. And that Friday, it was, - I guess- I said "I'm lonely. And I don't like it. I don't like being alone." And that was all. As soon as I said it, I felt all of the breeze– it was really cool on my face- and I heard all of the radio – and the music sounded really good, you know? So I drove home.

Mr. Bailey's Minder by Debra Oswald

THERESE:

That's where you're dead wrong. I know about shame. You'd be amazed the amount of shameful shit you can fit in by my age if you get started early enough. Shoplifting when I was eleven. Smashing up bus shelters at twelve. Helping my boyfriend do break-and-enters by the time I was thirteen. Fourteen, got caught behind the service station doing blow-jobs for cash. One time, this friend of Mum's gave me a job at her hairdresser's. Unbelievably nice of this lady – she didn't have to help out little rough-head Therese. Talked about getting me into tech to do the apprenticeship. Giving me a chance. So what did Therese do? Ripped the nice lady off – cleaned out the till and then helped my friends trash the shop for fun. Out to impress my mates. Plus I was pissed off – like the world owed me something and I was gonna take what I deserved. You get an urge to smash things – like it's evidence you exist. Evidence you did something. Next day, I go back there and the lady's cleaning up the broken glass and crying and she's apologising to me about the job being off. I felt like scum – I even cried. She goes, 'Oh, you're so sweet, Therese.' I never had the guts to say anything. That was years ago but I can still feel my face burning just thinking about it. You're the first person I ever told about that.

The Producers by Mel Brooks

LEO BLOOM:

I would like to say something your honor, not on my behalf, but in reference to my partner, Mr. Bialystock....your honor, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, Max Bialystock is the most selfish man I ever met in my life...Not only is he a liar, and a cheat and a scoundrel, and a crook, who has taken money from little old ladies, he has also talked people into doing things, especially me, that they would never in a thousand years had dreamed of doing. But, your honor, as I understand it the law was created to protect people from being wronged. Your honor, whom has Max Bialystock wronged? I mean, whom has he really hurt? Not me. Not me. I was.... this man.... no one ever called me Leo before. I mean, I know it's not a big legal point, but even in kindergarten they used to call me Bloom. I never sang a song before. I mean with someone else, I never sang a song with someone else before. This man.... this man... this is a wonderful man. He made me what I am today...he did. And what of the dear ladies? What would their lives have been without Max Bialystock? Max Bialystock, who made them feel young, and attractive, and wanted again. That's all I have to say.

Melbourne Talam by Rashma N. Kalsie

(NOTE: This monologue is intended for an Indian performer)

JASMINDER:

This chair's so much better than my bed. I had picked my mattress off the street. Ranbeer allows only thin mattresses in the flat. My mattress is perfect for the room, but it is sagging now – maybe it's the moisture in the air. If I put it out in the sun it just might

come back to its original shape. Sleeping on the floor is not a problem – I am used to it. Sarabjit uncle, my father's younger brother used to come down from London to attend the weddings of our relatives. Uncle and his family were given the cots, whereas we slept on the floor. *Bebe*, my mother would say: *(as mother) They are our guests, Jassi- they are not used to hardships.* So I thought life was *easier* abroad. Sarabjit uncle had run away from home after fighting with my grandfather. Nobody knew where he was for ten years and then suddenly he returned with a suitcase full of gifts. *(He brings his blanket to the chair.)* Sarabjit uncle is the hero of our family. He has seen the whole world and he drives a BMW. Uncle owns a big business in London, but there have been all sorts of rumours about him- someone from our village had seen Sarabjit uncle at Heathrow airport. He claims uncle was cleaning toilets! I don't believe him – people are jealous of Sarabjit uncle's success. How can a janitor buy a BMW? Bauji, my father, retired as the head postmaster of Gurdaspur, but he can't afford a BMW. He drives a scooter. Bauji could have bought a small car if he didn't have to pay my fees. We were hoping the money we got from selling our farm would pay for the entire course, but I've run out of it in eighteen months. Fourth semester fees are due in five weeks.