

To Be, To Act, To Live:  
The Fruits of Labor Cultivated During Graduate School

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**ABSTRACT**

This document contains written and visual materials compiled for the completion of the Master of Fine Arts Degree in Drama from The University of Virginia.

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**CHAPTER 1**

Transcription of Filmed Introduction.....1  
Artistic Statement.....2

**CHAPTER 2**

Biography.....4  
Resume.....6  
Headshot.....7

**CHAPTER 3**

Journal of Portfolio Creation.....8  
Portfolio Materials.....13

**CHAPTER 4**

Filmed Supplements.....21

**REFERENCES.....22**

## CHAPTER 1

### TRANSCRIPTION OF FILMED INTRODUCTION

So, something to know about me is that I live with this duality. This yin and yang of playfulness and professionalism. And the playfulness stems from childhood—being in a room with all of the toys and stuffed animals, um, you know, telling a story that just comes out of nowhere, right? The red power ranger has a rivalry with this mutant ninja turtle, this t-rex stuffed animal is in love with the Barbie doll, the Ken is fighting the stegosaurus, right? Like, all of these crazy things that just pop in your head and you just run with it. And now that I'm in theatre... it's, it's like the kid, me, was the playwright, the story I created is the play, and all of the toys on the floor and on the bed, and all that, are the characters, and we as the actors are those characters, right?

And then the, the yin, the, the professionalism; I got that from having a, a stepdad that was a police officer, from ROTC in high school, the, the discipline, being on time; and two, two values that come to mind for me are respect and reliability. And being a trustworthy community member in the theatre and in life in general, and I think those are the key things I bring to a theatre space.

## ARTISTIC STATEMENT

Before committing to becoming an actor, I wanted to be a teacher. I wanted to pass along knowledge and values to younger people to better prepare them for the future. I've always been the type of person to put others before myself. But I could never figure out what grade or subject I thought I would be good at teaching. Additionally, I've always loved telling stories. When a story is truly engaging you can't help but fixate on every minute detail. Though it may be surprising to most people that a quiet, timid, and self-conscious kid like me became an actor, it all made sense when I realized acting could become the combination of my urge to teach and desire to be a storyteller.

Truthfully, my reasons for getting into acting were kind of self-serving. I wanted to be seen, to let people know that I was there, and to be remembered for something. I do still want all those things, but very early on, those reasons began to feel too self-indulgent to be sustainable over the course of a career. I was quickly forced to figure out my deeper reason, my what and why outside of those selfish reasons, for performing. It was during a Theatre History class that I found my reason. We were reading *Ars Poetica* by Horace, and this passage stood out to me: "A bard will wish to teach or to please, or, as a tertium quid, do both of these," (Horace, 80). A present-day translation is: "an artist should try to teach or to entertain, or in conjunction, do both." From that line I realized that I was underestimating what other people could receive through my study of this art form.

Now, as an actor, the plays I perform provide the structure and flow that I was lacking in my own personal storytelling, and the lessons being taught are a broad spectrum of life lessons that can have varying effects on anyone if they are paying attention. Over time, I came to feel that I could help teach audiences those life lessons as a character in a story, especially when they are embedded in stories by great playwrights like William Shakespeare, August Wilson, Dominique Morisseau, and Rajiv Joseph, just to name a few. These lessons, derived from different times, cultures, races,

experiences, and styles, are not only entertaining to watch but can have a powerful impact on an audience.

I recently finished a production of *The Meeting*, by Jeff Stetson. It is about a fictitious meeting between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr that takes place a week before Malcolm X is assassinated. Portraying Malcolm X in this piece has been a great honor and an amazing learning experience for me and audiences alike. The play excels at balancing how iconic the two figures were while reminding us that they were still just men. A vital part of performing this piece is relaying to the audience how prominent the concept of love is and how it plays a part in their respective movements, how death and fear are constantly looming around them, and, as men, how they find ways to bring humor into the conversation. My goal was to de-mystify the icon so audiences could see Malcolm X as a regular human being. He was not just an iconic activist, he was a husband, a father, and a community member who hadn't even reached the age of forty. To bring him into that realm made him more relatable to me and the audience. *The Meeting* is a play that entertains us while making us recall events from the past, ask questions about the present, and ponder about the future. Our production sparked such engrossing conversation that the talkbacks would sometimes last longer than the show.

For me, it has always been easier to learn from something that is entertaining. I think that was why Horace's quote stuck so strongly with me from the moment I read it. Since then, my purpose has become to have the audience learn something from me, or be entertained by something I've done or, ideally, learn something while being entertained by the show. I want to inspire new thoughts, a change of perspective, or an emotional understanding that lingers with the audience past the doors of the theatre. That is my what. That is my why.

## CHAPTER 2

### BIOGRAPHY 1

James Stringer Jr. is a Louisville-born actor who received his bachelor's degree from the University of Louisville. He is a 3rd Year MFA candidate in Acting at the University of Virginia. Some of his most recent credits include *Sense and Sensibility, How to Live on Earth, Death of the Author* (UVA Drama); and *Little Women* (Virginia Theatre Festival). Some of his favorite credits include *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley, A Christmas Carol* (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park); *Julius Caesar, Richard II, Much Ado About Nothing* (Kentucky Shakespeare); *Fences, Baltimore, King Lear, and The Meeting* (University of Louisville).

### BIOGRAPHY 2

James Stringer Jr. is a Louisville, Kentucky-born actor finishing graduate studies in Acting at the University of Virginia. With a sports-heavy background, James's focus has turned to theatrical movement and stage combat. James currently holds a pass with recommendation in rapier and dagger by the SAFD, 2022, and is preparing to test in unarmed and broadsword combat. He hopes to continue to expand his knowledge of stage combat and pursue a career as a fight choreographer. Some of his favorite fight scenes are from movies such as *Troy, The Three Musketeers*, and practically anything with Jet Li and Jackie Chan.

### BIOGRAPHY 3

James Stringer Jr., born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky, is no stranger to hard work. While pursuing his undergraduate degree at the University of Louisville, James was working the third shift to put himself through school. His most common response to the question, "when do you sleep?" was, "I don't sleep, I take naps." Since graduating

from Louisville, James has toured children's theatre, completed an internship at the Cincinnati Playhouse, participated in historical re-tellings, been cast in multiple Shakespeare productions, dabbled in experimental and immersive theatre, and is now finishing his MFA program in Acting at the University of Virginia. If you had told him he would have done all that back when he was a teenager, he wouldn't have believed you. James would like to thank his ever-supportive family, his mentor and professors that gave him a chance, his friends who would wake him up in morning classes when he would be dozing off after working so late, and everyone else who had a hand in him getting to this point. James would not be here without every single person he has come across on his journey and is grateful to all of them.



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**REGIONAL THEATRE**

<i>The Meeting</i>	Malcolm X	Idaho Repertory	<i>Dir.</i> Baron Kelly
<i>Little Women</i>	John Brooks/Parrot	Virginia Theatre Festival	<i>Dir.</i> Aubrey Snowden
<i>Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley</i>	U/S Mr. Bingley	Cincinnati Playhouse	<i>Dir.</i> Eleanor Holdridge
<i>Cyrano</i>	Christian/Others	Cincinnati Playhouse	<i>Dir.</i> Katie Baskerville
<i>A Christmas Carol</i>	Undertaker/Others	Cincinnati Playhouse	<i>Dir.</i> Blake Robison
<i>Julius Caesar</i>	Octavius Caesar	Kentucky Shakespeare	<i>Dir.</i> Matt Wallace
<i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>	Balthasar/Watch	Kentucky Shakespeare	<i>Dir.</i> Matt Wallace
<i>Richard II</i>	Bagot/Groom	Kentucky Shakespeare	<i>Dir.</i> Amy Attaway

**EDUCATIONAL THEATRE**

<i>Sense and Sensibility</i>	Edward Ferrars	University of Virginia	<i>Dir.</i> Marianne Kubik
<i>How to Live on Earth</i>	Don/Omar	University of Virginia	<i>Dir.</i> Matthew Davies
<i>Death of the Author</i>	Bradley	University of Virginia	<i>Dir.</i> Colleen Kelly
<i>Baltimore</i>	Bryant	University of Louisville	<i>Dir.</i> Nefertiti Burton
<i>King Lear</i>	Duke of Albany	Commonwealth Theatre & University of Louisville	<i>Dir.</i> Jennifer Pennington
<i>Fences</i>	Lyons	University of Louisville	<i>Dir.</i> Baron Kelly
<i>Polaroid Stories</i>	Orpheus	University of Louisville	<i>Dir.</i> Laura Early

**EDUCATION/TRAINING**

M.F.A. in Drama, Professional Actor Training Program – University of Virginia

B.S. in Theatre Arts – University of Louisville

Additional Training: Tectonic Theater Project Residency (UVA) with Jeffrey LaHoste and Dimitri Joseph Moise; Arvold Casting Residency (UVA) with Erica Arvold and Richard Warner; Masterclass (UVA) with Kathleen Turner

**SPECIAL SKILLS**

Stage Combat: Pass with recommendation in Rapier and Dagger by SAFD, 2022; bowling (professional); basketball (amateur); tennis (amateur); Dialects: RP, Jamaican; burp on command; flare nostrils.

**HEADSHOT**



## CHAPTER 3

### JOURNAL OF PORTFOLIO CREATION

I'm quite often told that I have a caring or trusting face, that my smile oozes positivity, my presence has a quiet confidence, and that I give off a warm and safe feeling that makes people feel comfortable. So, I guess it is somewhat fitting that most of the characters I have played so far have those qualities in them as well. Some are more awkward, some are more stoic, some are more charming, but all of them are characters you want to root for. They are the hero, the love interest, the honorable king, or the endearing nerd. I love playing characters that the audience wants to see win, and you can feel their supportive energy coming from the house. I know those character archetypes very well. That is why I have chosen *not* to portray any of them in my monologues for this thesis.

I want the monologues in my portfolio to be, if nothing else, a demonstration of my growth and versatility as an actor during my time in graduate school. The purpose is to find out if I have developed an understanding of different mentalities, logics, desires, etc., to portray characters that are unlike me and are unfamiliar to me onstage. The comedic characters, the intense characters, the unapologetic characters, the menacing characters; this felt like a great opportunity to test where I am now, at the end of this graduate school experience, with new and challenging characters.

The characters in these monologues have a level of freedom that I have yet to explore as an actor. They have power, a drive propelled by their own desires, a swagger, or a higher level of energy that I want to dive into. Two of them are viscerally offensive compared to the cautiously defensive characters I'm used to playing. The other lets his imagination get the better of him. Since this document will be archived in the UVA library, I can view these pieces in the future to determine if my growth has continued to progress the way I hope it will. It will serve as a check-in of my understanding and portrayal of these characters and my continuing development as a versatile actor. For

these purposes, the monologues I have selected are Angelo from *Measure for Measure* by William Shakespeare, Dennis from *This is our Youth* by Kenneth Lonergan, and Launcelot Gobbo from *The Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare. For the sake of a stronger understanding of where I currently am and a direction for the future, I have chosen to challenge myself with these characters.

In the *Measure for Measure* monologue, the challenge is to play someone whose logic is contradictory, hypocritical, and advantageous only for himself. He tries to manipulate and change everything around him after being thrust into temporary power by the duke. But you can't play a character that way, especially because you can't play a character truthfully if you are too busy judging them. So how do I control my own prejudices against Angelo and play someone so different from myself? The best course of action was to pay extra attention to the goals and tactics in each beat while savoring the power that Angelo holds.

Throughout this piece, Angelo is asserting his dominance. In the first beat, he is doing this with his position of power and influence as the interim duke. In the next beat, he is asserting his dominance as a man; it is more primal, driven by his lust and desire for Isabella. Angelo has the line, "And now I give my sensual race the rein:" (Shakespeare, 798) which is a clear signal of a beat shift, and it alludes to Angelo wearing multiple masks. Here, he shifts from the mask of a law-manipulating interim duke that he had been wearing in the first part of the monologue to the mask of a man full of lust and desire. The shift in masks influences his expression, his tone, and his physicality to show the difference in his approach. He switches again to become, in my imagination, a devilish fisherman. He has Isabella's brother as the bait and is menacingly holding it out there waiting for her to bite. Then he returns to the mask of the interim duke as the monologue concludes. This type of character puts me in unknown territory and that is the challenge I am hoping for as an actor. Angelo is focused solely on himself; that is his drive. Whereas my personal drive is focused on how I can make myself better so I can help others get better. If I can learn how to navigate between the polar

opposite of myself, Angelo being the South Pole compared to James being the North Pole, then I'm sure that the characters who live in between will become easier for me to understand and handle in the future.

Dennis from *This is our Youth* is in that in-between that I mentioned. Angelo is a character that is extremely far from my "type," while Dennis is one that is still a stretch, but a bit closer to home. The challenges for this piece are the character's edge and how he controls the room through belittlement and intimidation. Just like Angelo, there is a certain level of power that Dennis has in this piece. The difference is that Angelo has his power even before speaking, whereas Dennis must regain his and remind people of his power. It doesn't take very long to get it back, but that difference is crucial when you are talking about positions of power.

It could have been very easy to fall into the trap of being angry and screaming throughout the monologue. Instead, I found a sense of enjoyment that Dennis was getting out of placing himself above the others. Something like that requires a physical, mental, and vocal control that would not be conveyed through screaming my head off. There had to be some nuance to Dennis. This character needed some swagger, some New York-gangster-collecting-money-kind-of-attitude. Those gangsters have this ability to control the room, and their shiftiness makes it difficult for the person listening to predict what will happen next. Is this going to be just insults and threats, or will I be able to walk out of the room in one piece? That's what I want the other character to think about while I am berating them.

Being a laid-back Kentucky boy, that New York mentality is a big shift. My personal energy is more relaxed, consistently calm, and inviting. From my one visit to New York, I observed the New Yorker energy to be more forward and slightly aggressive. From my time portraying Malcolm X in *The Meeting* by Jeff Stetson, I learned that my "in" to physical assertiveness was shifting my weight to the balls of my feet so I could feel that urge for forward momentum. During my MFA training at the University of Virginia I learned about Patsy Rodenburg and the Three Circles of Energy (Rodenburg,

15-24). From her work I have discovered that what I perceive to be my Second Circle is perceived to be First Circle to those around me. This meant I had to become more comfortable with expanding my energy and presence into my Third Circle to portray Dennis in a way to showcase the different levels I wanted him to have. Combining the forward physical adjustment with Third Circle energy gave Dennis a stronger dynamic in the monologue.

Looking back on the monologues from Angelo and Dennis, their movements were controlled and had weight. The thought for the last monologue is to have something that really moves around the space with a different energy. If I can play around with something a bit more sporadic, I can show how I handle varying degrees of movement. Getting the opportunity to deepen my knowledge about stage movement, more specifically stage combat, was one of the reasons I decided to go to graduate school. I have tried almost every sport that I know of at some point in my life and have been able to adapt to the different playstyles in, and out of, all of them. Theatre has been an interesting challenge because it is like playing a different sport with every play. We as actors are constantly crafting different walks or changing how we sit or gestures for each character in each play. That is why I specifically chose Launcelot Gobbo's monologue from *The Merchant of Venice*. The purpose of this piece is to focus on the shifting, literally and figuratively, between Gobbo, his conscience, and the fiend, while navigating the dramatics and comedy of Shakespeare.

At one point or another we all have had the angel and devil on our shoulders trying to influence how we handle a situation. My goal is to physicalize that back and forth while Gobbo is stuck in the middle of their game of tug-of-war. The use of speed, distance, physicality, and urgency is meant to show how much they are trying to influence Gobbo to listen to them, while also creating a level of stress for Gobbo when he gets his chance to talk. This monologue is meant to highlight my mastery of heightened language and my ability to juggle a range of character physicalities.

One specific example of my physical capabilities and control of language is when

Gobbo goes from directly addressing the audience, to playing the conscience, to playing the fiend, back to Gobbo, back to the conscience, and finally settling in as Gobbo for a while. Keeping up the vocal and physical speed to create urgency, maintaining the distinction between each character's physicality and voice shows my ability to handle multiple characters at one time. It's also a credit to the stage combat work I have done and the body control that has come out of that work.

These three characters are vastly different from most of those I have played thus far. This was a fierce test in terms of improving my versatility in performing monologues as an actor. Knowing what you do well and knowing what you need to improve on are vital skills to have. I chose these monologues to challenge myself to expand what it is I can do in a short time frame and serve as a building block to maintaining these characters over the course of a full performance. Six months from now, a year from now, and so on, the James that was seen in these filmed pieces will be even stronger, more versatile, overall... he will be better.

**PORTFOLIO MATERIALS**

The following play script excerpts are the monologues and scenes which were prepared, performed, and filmed specifically for this portfolio. The three monologues and two scenes will be archived with this document.

**Monologue: Angelo from *Measure For Measure* by William Shakespeare (Shakespeare 2012, 798)**

ANGELO:

Who will believe thee, Isabel?

My unsoil'd name, th'austereness of my life,

My vouch against you, and my place i'the state,

Will so your accusation overweigh,

That you shall stifle in your own report,

And smell of calumny. I have begun;

And now I give my sensual race the rein:

Fit thy consent to my sharp appetite;

Lay by all nicety and prolixious blushes,

That banish what they sue for; redeem thy

Brother

By yielding up thy body to my will;

Or else he must not only die the death,

But thy unkindness shall his death draw out

To lingering sufferance. Answer me to-morrow,

Or, by the affection that now guides me most,

I'll prove a tyrant to him. As for you,

Say what you can, my false o'erweighs your true.



**Monologue: Dennis from *This is Our Youth* by Kenneth Lonergan (Lonergan 1999, 19)**

DENNIS: Yeah, and I always smoke pot with you, all of you, my pot, all the time, like hundreds and hundreds of dollars' worth. So why shouldn't I make some money offa you? You fuckin' guys like gripe at me all the time, and I'm providing you schmucks with such a crucial service. Plus, I'm developing valuable entrepreneurial skills for my future. Plus, I'm providing you with precious memories of your youth, for when you're fuckin' old. I'm like the basis of half your personality. All you do is imitate me. I turned you on to The Honeymooners, Frank Zappa, Ernst Lubitch, boxer shorts, sushi! I'm like a one-man youth culture for you pathetic assholes. You're gonna remember your youth as like a gray stoned haze punctuated by a series of beatings from your dad, and like, my jokes. God damn. You know how much pot I've thrown out the window for you guys in the middle of the night when you're wandering around the street like junkies looking for half a joint so you can go to sleep, because you scraped all the resin out of your pipes? And you bitch about the fact that along the way I turn a little profit? You should thank God you ever met me.

**Monologue: Launcelot Gobbo from *The Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare (Shakespeare 2012, 393-394)**

LAUNCELOT GOBBO: Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow and tempts me saying to me 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,' or 'good Gobbo,' or good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away. My conscience says 'No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo,' or, as aforesaid, 'honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels.' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: 'Via!' says the fiend; 'away!' says the fiend; 'for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind,' says the fiend, 'and run.' Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says, very wisely to me, 'My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,' or rather an honest woman's

son; for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste; well, my conscience says, 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience. 'Conscience,' say I, 'you counsel well; Fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well.' To be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and, to be run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnal; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: 'I will run, fiend; my heels are at your command; I will run.'

**Scene: Fred from *Of Good Stock* by Melissa Ross (Ross unpublished, 142-146)**

JESS. Last night I dreamed that I was big and full and. I had to go to the bathroom. And I kept saying "The baby is sitting on my bladder." And then I woke up and I had to pee but other than that I was/completely empty.

FRED. We couldn't have it. First trimester/they said.

JESS. I *know* I'm just saying./It *would've* been.

FRED. Don't do that to yourself.

JESS. You ever think sometimes god makes mistakes? Like. Maybe he forgot. Maybe after he said. Fuck! It wasn't Jess who was supposed to get pregnant – it was *Tess*. Jess was *only* supposed to get *cancer*. There was a memo. Well Holy Crap. What do I do now???

(*Beat.*) You think God says Fuck. And Holy Crap?

FRED. Probably. I would if I were God. I'd say whatever the fuck I want. (*Beat.*) We could still do it. Once you're through/with chemo.

JESS. I can't.

FRED. They said we could give it a try/if you.

JESS. What if it comes back?

FRED. That's not a/reason to.

JESS. By the time I'm in the clear we won't exactly be in our. Optimal/childbearing years.

FRED. I'm just saying we can try! See/what happens!

JESS. Look *you* don't know what it's like to lose your mom as a kid. You don't. And while there's still a. Risk of that happening I. I can't do that/to somebody else.

FRED. OK OK.

JESS. I can't ignore that. Possibility. For my own selfish need to have a. To leave something behind if I. Fuck if I. If I *die*./I can't do that.

FRED. You're not going to die.

JESS. I might! I might still die! I'm not out of/the dark yet.

FRED. We can't go there.

JESS. If you want to talk about this??? If you *really* want to talk about it??? *Death* has to be a part of/the conversation!

FRED. That's not thinking positively!

JESS. I could die a month from now. I could die six months/from now.

FRED. So could I! Any of us could/die at any moment!

JESS. It is not the same! And how dare you pretend that it is! (*Pause*.) I can't be with you. Really truly present. With you. Again. Until you accept *that*/part of me.

FRED. That you are gonna die???

JESS. That I *could* die!

FRED. I don't I. (*Beat*.) I can't. (*Beat*.) I'm sorry/but I

JESS. Well then how can you ask me to share it with you? Huh? If you want to talk about it? Then you have to accept. All of it. And understand that. Some of it actually has nothing to do with you. Some of it. Some of it is *mine*. And I need you to understand/that if I.

FRED. I know that. I do.

JESS. That if I. Flinch when you touch me? It isn't because I don't *love* you. It isn't because I don't *want* you to touch me. It isn't about *you* at all. It's because. (*Beat*.) It's because. It's. When you touch me I'm. (*Beat*.) I am vividly reminded of what's. *Missing*.

FRED. (*Beat*.) There is absolutely nothing/missing.

JESS. There is *absolutely* something missing! And it's. It's. It's something that's *mine*. OK? It's a loss that's *mine*. And I'm sorry that it hurts you. Because you are the absolute last person I would ever want to hurt. And I'm sorry that you feel isolated from it. But. Sometimes? *I feel isolated./And alone.*

FRED. You don't have to be.

JESS. I *feel* like I'm. (*Beat.*) Like I'm. Something scarred./Something sick.

FRED. Honey.

JESS. Something. Something. Falling apart and. *Broken*. And and. *Fragile*. And. I *hate* feeling like that. And. (*Beat.*) And there is nothing you can say that will change it. Or./Take it away.

FRED. I know that.

JESS. Do you? Because every time I look at your face. All I can see is your worry and. And your fear. And it's. Unbearable for me to see that. (*Beat.*) I don't want to see you see me like this.

FRED. Like what?

JESS. Like how I am now. I look like I've. Like I've been. Through a war. (*Beat.*) When you look at me? All I can think is how. Is how. *Guilty* I feel that you're/That you're.

FRED. Hey. Would you.

JESS. That you're stuck. With *me*.

FRED. (*Beat.*) Look at me.

JESS. (*Shakes her head no.*) I can't.

FRED. Come on. Jess. Look at me. (*She doesn't. Pause.*) All I see. When I look at you. Is a beautiful fifteen year old girl I knew. A long time ago (*Beat.*) and all I can think is. How lucky I am. That I somehow convinced the truly extraordinary Jess Stockton. To marry me. (*She looks at him. Really looks at him. She begins to quietly cry.*)

JESS. (*A confession.*) I'm not. I'm not ready. To die.

FRED. You're not/going to die.

JESS. Please don't.

FRED. You are not going to die. *Tomorrow*. OK? Will you just. Will you let me have. *That*.

**Scene: Avery from *The Flick* By Annie Baker (Baker 2014, 118-130)**

ROSE: Could one of you give me a ride home tonight? My sister borrowed my car.

VERY: Oh. Um. My dad is picking me up.

ROSE: Sam? Sam.

VERY: But. Um. I guess I could ask him if he'd take you back to Boylston.

ROSE: Sam. What the fuck.

SAM: Why'd you show Avery how to use the projector. What the fuck is wrong with you.

VERY: Uh. I'm gonna go to the bathroom.

ROSE: I didn't know you / wanted—

SAM: Yes. Yes you did. I've been working here for almost twice as long as you and you know Steve only promoted you first because he thinks you're hot. And three months ago I asked you if you would train / me and you said—

ROSE: Okay. Okay. You're right. I'm sorry.

SAM: Do you know how humiliating it is to be working with like twenty-somethings who are rising in the ranks of your shitty job faster than you are?

ROSE: I'm sorry. It's— I was stupid. I wasn't thinking. I just— I can train you too. Then if I get sick you can / take turns—

SAM: No. No way. I'm not interested anymore. No fucking way.

ROSE: Okay. So. What. Are you gonna like hate my guts now?

SAM: Oh god.

ROSE: What's going on?

SAM: I feel sick. I feel like I'm gonna...Oh my god.

ROSE: Sam.

SAM: I just... I can't stand it. I can't do it anymore. It's making me nauseous. It's making me sick. I'm like breaking out in fucking rashes.

ROSE: I have no idea what you're talking about.

SAM: You don't? Really? I like— I fucking love you. I don't even know why. You're like... I see all these things that are wrong with you. But it's like— It's really bad. It's really bad. It's not like a— It goes way beyond the word "crush" or like— I want to like—I can't sleep. I mean, I haven't really slept for the past year and a half. And then when I do sleep I dream about you and you're like talking to me. Or like fucking some other guy. Or standing in front of me in like a motel room like brushing your teeth. It's never been like this before. I walk down the street and all I'm thinking is: Rose. Rose. Rose. It's like the fucking soundtrack to my life. Just your name is like... I've pictured saying this to you. I've pictured saying it so many times.

ROSE: So what do you want?

SAM: What do you mean?

ROSE: Like what do you think is going to happen now?

SAM: I don't know. I guess I just...I guess I needed to get it off my chest.

ROSE: But is this the kind of thing where you want the person to love you back or you actually secretly don't want them to love you back?

SAM: That's a good question.

ROSE: Because it sort of seems like it has nothing to do with me. Like me me. You know?

SAM: That's not how I wanted it to seem. Be. That's not how I wanted it to be.

ROSE: Like— Like even right now. It's like you're performing or something.

SAM: I'm not performing. I'm not performing.

ROSE: So turn around and look at me.

SAM: Do you like me back?

ROSE: Oh my god. Would you please just turn around?

Sam. You're seriously not going to turn around and look at me? You don't know me. Like for whatever reason you like me... I'm not like... I'm not like like that at all. Trust me. Okay?

EVERY: Oh my god. Someone took a... Someone took a shit on the floor of the men's

bathroom and they—And they spread it all over the— It's all over the walls and it—I just puked. I just puked on the floor of the bathroom. I feel like I'm gonna—

SAM: You gotta sit down. You gotta sit down and put your head between your knees. You gotta breathe. Take deep breaths.

AVERY: Oh god.

SAM: I'm gonna take care of it. You just take it easy.

ROSE: I'll help.

SAM: No. No. You stay here and you watch him and you get him water. I'm gonna take care of it. AVERY: You're gonna have to— Now my puke is all over the place. I'm so sorry. Are you still mad at me?

SAM: It's fine. I'm not mad at you.

AVERY: It's everywhere. Why would somebody do that?

SAM: This happens. This kind of thing happens in movie theaters. I'm gonna deal with it.

AVERY: But you have such a sensitive sense of smell!

SAM: Avery. Don't worry about it. I'm totally cool with puke. I'm totally cool with shit. I'm gonna take care of it. I'm taking care of it!

ROSE: You want a cup of water?

AVERY: Yeah. That would be great.

ROSE: Avery. Please don't tell Sam about what happened the other night.

AVERY: Of course. I mean. You don't either.

ROSE: I won't.

AVERY: Can I still fill in for you on Thursday night?

ROSE: I'll make it work. Sometimes I worry that there's something really, really wrong with me. But that I'll never know exactly what that is.

AVERY: Uh. No. You're fine.

ROSE: Really?

AVERY: Yeah.

ROSE: I'll get you some water.

## CHAPTER 4

### FILMED SUPPLEMENTS

As a supplement to this written thesis, a filmed personal introduction as well as the following filmed scenes and monologues are available for review.

#### **Personal Introduction**

James Stringer Jr.

#### **Monologue**

Angelo, *Measure for Measure* by William Shakespeare.

#### **Monologue**

Dennis, *This Is Our Youth* by Kenneth Lonergan.

#### **Monologue**

Launcelot Gobbo, *The Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare.

#### **Scene**

Fred, *Of Good Stock* (unpublished) by Melissa Ross.

#### **Scene**

Avery, *The Flick* by Annie Baker.



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