

Audition Monologues

Monologue 1:

You remember, overseas, I was in command of a company? Well, I lost them. Just about all. It takes a little time to toss that off. Because they weren't just men. For instance, one time it'd been raining several days and this kid came to me, and gave me his last pair of dry socks. Put them in my pocket. That's only a little thing, but that's the kind of guys I had. They didn't die; they killed themselves for each other. I mean that exactly; a little more selfish and they'd've been here today. And I got an idea, watching them go down. Everything was being destroyed, see, but it seemed to me that one new thing was made. A kind of... responsibility. Human to human. You understand me? To show that, to bring that onto the earth again like some kind of a monument and everyone would feel it standing there, behind him, and it would make a difference to him... And then I came home and it was incredible. There was no meaning in it here, because nobody was changed at all.

Monologue 2:

The man was a fool, but don't make a murderer out of him. Listen, you gotta appreciate what was doin' in that shop in the war. It was a madhouse. Every half hour the Major callin' for cylinder heads, they were whippin' us with the telephone. The trucks were hauling them away hot, damn near. I mean just try to see it human, see it human. All of a sudden a batch comes out with a crack. That happens, that's the business. A fine, hairline crack. All right, so he's a little man, your father, always scared of loud voices. What'll the Major say? Half a day's production shot. So he takes out his tools and he... covers over the cracks. Alright, that's bad, it's wrong, but that's what a little man does. If I could have gone in that day I'd a told him—Junk 'em Steve, we can afford it. But alone he was afraid. But I know he meant no harm. He believed they'd hold up a hundred percent. That's a mistake, but it ain't murder.

Monologue 3:

Dad came to work that day, and the night foreman came to him and showed him the cylinder heads... they were coming out of the process with defects. There was something wrong with the process. So Dad went directly to the phone and called here and told Joe to come down right away. But the morning passed. No sign of Joe. The Army was screaming for stuff and Dad didn't have anything to ship. So Joe told him, on the phone, he told him to weld, cover up the cracks in any way he could, and ship them out. Dad was afraid. He wanted Joe there if he was going to do it. But Joe can't come down... He's sick. Sick! He suddenly gets the flu! Suddenly! But he promised to take responsibility. Do you understand what I'm saying? On the telephone you can't have responsibility! In a court you can always deny a phone call and that's exactly what he did. They know he was a liar the first time, but in the appeal they believed the rotten lie and now Joe is a big shot and your father is the patsy. Now what're you going to do? Eat his food, sleep in his bed? Answer me. What're you going to do?

Monologue 4:

I had a terrible night. I never had a night like that. It was more than a dream. I was fast asleep and... Remember the way he used to fly low past the house when he was in training? When we used to see his face in the cockpit going by? That's the way I saw him. Only high up. Way, way up, where the clouds are. He was so real I could reach out and touch him. And suddenly he started to fall. And crying, crying to me. Mom, Mom! I could hear him like he was in the room. Mom! It was his voice! If I could touch him I knew I could stop him, if I could only. I woke up and it was so funny. The wind it was like the roaring of his engine. I came out here, I must've still been half asleep. I could hear that roaring like he was going by. The tree snapped right in front of me... and I like... came awake. See? We should never have planted that tree. I said so in the first place; it was too soon to plant a tree for him.

Monologue 5:

I'm not going to do anything about it. I'll do nothing about Joe, but you're going to do something for me. You made Chris feel guilty with me. I'd like you to tell him that Larry is dead and that you know it. You understand me? I'm not going out of here alone. There's no life for me that way. I want you to set him free. And then I promise you, everything will end, and we'll go away, and that's all. I know what I'm asking, Kate. You had two sons. But you've only got one now. And you've got to say it to him so he knows you mean it. Larry is dead, Kate.

Monologue 6:

Jim's a successful doctor. But he's got an idea he'd like to do medical research. Discover things. You see? Research pays twenty-five dollars a week minus laundering the hair shirt. You've got to give up your life to go into it. Chris makes people want to be better than it's possible to be. He does that to people. My husband has a family, dear. Every time he has a session with Chris, he feels as though he's compromising by not giving up everything for research. As though Chris or anybody else isn't compromising. It happens with Jim every couple of years. He meets a man and makes a statue out of him.

Monologue 7:

Oh, no, he'll come back. We all come back, Kate. These private little revolutions always die. The compromise is always made. In a peculiar way. Frank is right... every person does have a star. The star of one's honesty. And you spend your life groping for it, but once it's out, it never lights again. I don't think he went very far. He probably just wanted to be alone to watch his star go out... One year, I simply took off, went to New Orleans; for two months, I lived on bananas and milk, and studied a certain disease. And then she came, and she cried. And I went back home with her. And now I live in the usual darkness; I can't find myself; it's hard sometimes to remember the kind of man I wanted to be. I'm a good husband; Chris is a good son... He'll come back.

Character Descriptions

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Character Descriptions:

Joe Keller: A successful factory owner whose charm and warmth mask deep moral blindness. Devoted to his family, Joe justifies his past choices as necessary for survival, refusing to see the wider human cost of his actions.

Kate Keller: Joe's wife and the emotional center of the household. Fiercely protective and deeply superstitious, Kate clings to denial as a way to survive her grief, guarding the family's illusions at all costs.

Chris Keller: The Kellers' surviving son. Thoughtful and idealistic, Chris believes in personal responsibility and social justice, struggling to reconcile his moral principles with his loyalty to his parents.

Ann Deever: Former fiancée of the Keller's missing son, Larry. Calm, practical, and emotionally resilient, Ann represents acceptance of loss and the courage to move forward, even when doing so threatens long-held lies.

George Deever: Ann's brother. Passionate and outspoken, George arrives driven by anger and a fierce sense of justice, determined to defend his father's name and confront those who escaped responsibility.

Dr. Jim Bayliss: A neighbor and physician. Friendly but quietly disillusioned, Jim once dreamed of a greater life in medical research and now embodies the cost of settling for comfort over ambition.

Sue Bayliss: Jim's wife. Sharp, practical, and unsentimental, Sue distrusts idealism and values stability above moral struggle, often clashing with Chris's worldview.

Frank Lubey: A kindhearted neighbor who believes in superstition and astrology. Frank avoids conflict and supports comforting illusions, even when they prevent healing.

Lydia Lubey: Frank's wife and George's former sweetheart. Warm, grounded, and content, Lydia represents emotional stability and the life George might have had if he had let go of resentment.

Bert: A child in the neighborhood who has an obsession with Joe's past in jail, now referring to Joe as a detective. Full of childlike wonder and innocence.

Note: Some roles may be gender-bent; names/lines will be adjusted accordingly.