

When selecting a speech, all candidates should feel free to choose any of the speeches. We would always recommend that candidates select speeches which best demonstrate their strengths and abilities, choose characters with whom they feel a real connection.

For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide When The Rainbow Is Enuf

by Ntozake Shange

LADY IN RED

One thing I don't need
is any more apologies
I got sorry greetin' me at my front door
you can keep yours.
I don't know what to do wit em
I'm gonna haveta throw some away
I can't get to the clothes in my closet
for alla the sorries.
I'm gonna tack a sign to my door
leave a message by the phone
'if you called to say your sorry call somebody else!
I don't use em anymore'

You were always inconsistent
doin' somethin & then bein sorry
beatin' my heart to death!
Talkin' bout you sorry well,
I will not call,
I'm not goin' to be nice,
I will raise my voice,
& scream & holler
& break things & race the engine
& tell all your secrets about yourself to your face
& I won't be sorry for none of it

I LOVED YOU ON PURPOSE,I WAS OPEN ON PURPOSE!

I still crave vulnerability & close talk
& I'm not even sorry bout you bein sorry!
you can carry all the guilt & grime ya wanna
just dont give it to me!
I can't use another sorry

Wild Honey

By Michael Frayn (after 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.

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 realize how hard life is for me. And yet life is what I long for. 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!

Anna in the Tropics

by Nilo Cruz

SANTIAGO

You know, Ofelia, when I gamble I try to repeat the same motions... I try to repeat everything I did the day I won. And When I lose I try to take inventory of what I did wrong. I think to myself, Did I get up from bed with my left foot first? Did I forget to polish my shoes? Did I leave the house in a state of disorder? Was I unkind to someone and that's why luck didn't come my way? Lately, I've been in a fog and I don't know what to do.

Every time I lose, I feel that something has been taken from me. Something bigger than money. And I see a line of little ants carrying breadcrumbs on their backs. But the crumbs they are taking away are my pride and my self respect. My dignity.

Have I lost you too, Ofelia? Have I lost you?

Brand New Ancients

by Kae Tempest

See - all that we have here is all that we've always had.

We have jealousy
and tenderness and curses and gifts.
But the plight of a people who have forgotten their myths
and imagine that somehow now is all that there is
is a sorry plight,
all isolation and worry -
but the life in your veins
it is godly, heroic.
You were born for greatness;
believe it. Know it.
Take it from the tears of the poets.

There's always been heroes
and there's always been villains
and the stakes may have changed
but really there's no difference.
There's always been greed and heartbreak and ambition
and bravery and love and trespass and contrition -
we're the same beings that began, still living
in all of our fury and foulness and friction,
everyday odysseys, dreams and decisions . . .
The stories are there if you listen.

The stories are here,
the stories are you,
and your fear
and your hope
is as old
as the language of smoke,
the language of blood,
the language of
languishing love.

The Duchess of Malfi

By John Webster

Act 1, Scene 3

THE DUCHESS

The misery of us that are born great!
We are forc'd to woo, because none dare woo us;
And as a tyrant doubles with his words,
And fearfully equivocates, so we
Are forc'd to express our violent passions
In riddles, and in dreams, and leave the path
Of simple virtue, which was never made
To seem the thing it is not. Go, go brag
You have left me heartless; mine is in your bosom:
I hope 'twill multiply love there. You do tremble:
Make not your heart so dead a piece of flesh,
To fear, more than to love me. Sir, be confident:
What is't distracts you? This is flesh and blood sir;
'Tis not the figure cut in alabaster,
Kneels at my husbands tomb. Awake, awake, man!
I do here put off all vain ceremony,
And only do appear to you a young widow
That claims you for her husband, and like a widow,
I use but half a blush in't.

Angélique

By Lorena Gale

ANGÉLIQUE

How long can I wait? Each minute brings me closer to a living death.
And I'm alive. I am alive!

His touches burn, sear, scorch, igniting fire deep inside where pain and ice had been. And
I feel... heat, life, force power, Black and strong.

She envies that. Cold, passionless, bitch! Just like her bastard husband. Both sucking.
Sucking life. Denying life.

No! I am not a chair, a sack of grain or a calf to be fattened and sold for slaughter! I am
alive. And loved. And I can't wait...any longer.

Antigone

adapted by Merlynn Tong (after Sophocles)

ANTIGONE

It is for you Polynices
That I am punished.
I love you.
If you were my husband,
Or even a son I bore.
I wouldn't have dared
To fight the law.
Another husband I could find,
And bear more sons by him.
But a brother of parents
Who have both perished,
How can I find another you,
Polynices, it is for this
That I am doomed to death.
All Creon can see
Is that I've sinned.
And it must be condemned.
How did I offend the Gods?
What holy laws did I break?
What world do we live in,
Where piety is branded as blasphemy?
Now that everyone has turned away,
Who will fend for me?
If my death pleases the Gods
Then so be it.
I have transgressed and I succumb.
But if I have been wronged,
I wish upon my enemies,
Thunderbolts of the heaviest assault.
And no cure for their endless agony.
Look upon me,
My ancestors,
And remember my name.
Today your royal blood is spilled
For honouring the Gods,
For honouring you.

Welcome to Thebes

by Moira Buffoon

EURYDICE

I only fought because there had to be an opposition
We could not let the violence go on
Could not have another Policies
So I found myself-
It's literally like that
Found myself with others
Acting to oppose
Speaking
Words issuing from out my mouth
In torrents
A solace from the pain
I never dreamt that politics would be my path
I've always hated them
Hated standing there at Creon's side
Watching the ebb and flow of power from man to man
The little games of consequence
Experiments with human lives.
Politics is what I've always fought against.
But now I've won
I'm feeling sick
I've promised them pipe dreams, Ismene

Merchant of Venice

By William Shakespeare

Act IV, Scene 1

PORTIA

The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:
'T is mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown:
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,

Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice.

Snow in Midsummer

By Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig

DOU YI

Mother Cai, don't cry
Don't get angry or curse the sky
Maybe Dou Yi is not fit for this time.
My mother read me a story about a loyal official framed for murder.
As he howled a Heaven before his execution
Frost flew from the sky even though it was May.
If we still live on a planet that hates injustice
Snow will fall from the clouds and shield my remains.
May that snow be the last water that falls on New Harmony until
Justice is brought to Dou Yi.
Officers –
Do you see the white flag flapping overhead?
If I am innocent
Not a drop of hot blood will spill onto the green earth or stain my clothes
No matter how many bullets pierce this flesh.
My blood will fly towards the Blue Sky and
Stain the white flag flying above us.
This has happened before when wrongs were suffered by honest women.
Now it will happen here
Where the good suffer poverty and a short life
And the wicked live long and make lots of money.
Because officials are heartless and choose to
Close their eyes and fill their pockets

Cock

By Mike Bartlett

W

Oh come on. Mad? The Situation? Don't patronize me John. Following you? We have the same route to work, we always saw each other, you messed me around. thought we have something and you go back to him. I'm angry John, I'm really fucking angry. I'm not following you, we just can't stop looking at each other.

I mean I think here's still something

But you went back to him, I hope you're happy.

The problem is we can't stop looking.

I think you are really really scared.

Something happened when we slept together I could see what happened in your head that night, what you let yourself think for a moment that maybe it was okay, maybe it was allowed, and as I said before I'm just very honest and I have a feeling it's only a matter of time before the things that've been nudged out of place in your head find a new , a new pattern and realise that, John, you can do what you like. It's okay.

Rochdale

By David Yee

ATHENA

Do you have any idea where you are? Because you're not in Canada right now. You're not in Toronto the Good right now. You're not even on Bloor street no more, son. You're in motherfucking **Rochdale**. You're in the heart of the counter-culture.

And to my friend over there, the counter-culture means a lot of things. Means community. Means sticking up for one another. Means having one another's backs. Means railing against the system and, my brother, while I know you and I are different, we were made by the *same system*. It broke you like it broke me, and that's why we're here.

The counter-culture believes in peace. The counter-culture believes in protest. The counter-culture believes in the value of a *life*. What do *you* believe in?

See, the discussion I was having with my friend over there, that you so rudely interrupted, was about – among other things – the value of self-defense. My friend believes strongly in Dr. King's petitions of peace through non-violent protest. I'm not so convinced. I think love can solve almost any problem, yes. And while love might convince you not to shoot me, love will not *protect* me if I get shot. Do you understand the difference there?

Richard II

By William Shakespeare

Act 3, Scene 3

RICHARD II

We are amazed; and thus long have we stood
To watch the fearful bending of thy knee,
To NORTHUMBERLAND

Because we thought ourself thy lawful king:
And if we be, how dare thy joints forget
To pay their awful duty to our presence?
If we be not, show us the hand of God
That hath dismissed us from our stewardship;
For well we know, no hand of blood and bone
Can gripe the sacred handle of our sceptre,
Unless he do profane, steal, or usurp.
And though you think that all, as you have done,
Have torn their souls by turning them from us,
And we are barren and bereft of friends;
Yet know, my master, God omnipotent,
Is mustering in his clouds on our behalf
Armies of pestilence; and they shall strike
Your children yet unborn and unbegot,
That lift your vassal hands against my head
And threat the glory of my precious crown.
Tell Bolingbroke--for yond methinks he stands--
That every stride he makes upon my land
Is dangerous treason.

The Tempest

By William Shakespeare

Act 2, Scene 2

TRINCULO

Here's neither bush nor shrub, to bear off
any weather at all, and another storm brewing;
I hear it sing i' the wind: yond same black
cloud, yond huge one, looks like a foul
bombard that would shed his liquor. If it

should thunder as it did before, I know not
where to hide my head: yond same cloud cannot
choose but fall by pailfuls. What have we
here? a man or a fish? dead or alive? A fish:
he smells like a fish; a very ancient and fish-
like smell; a kind of not of the newest Poor-
John. A strange fish!

Legged like a man and his fins like
arms! Warm o' my troth! I do now let loose
my opinion; hold it no longer: this is no fish,
but an islander, that hath lately suffered by a
thunderbolt.

(Thunder)

Alas, the storm is come again! my best way is to
creep under his gaberdine; there is no other
shelter hereabouts: misery acquaints a man with
strange bed-fellows

Henry V

By William Shakespeare

Act IV, Scene 3

KING HENRY

If we are mark'd to die, we are enow
To do our country loss; and if to live,
The fewer men, the greater share of honour.
God's will! I pray thee, wish not one man more.
By Jove, I am not covetous for gold,
Nor care I who doth feed upon my cost;
It yearns me not if men my garments wear;
Such outward things dwell not in my desires:
But if it be a sin to covet honour,
I am the most offending soul alive.
No, faith, my coz, wish not a man from England:
God's peace! I would not lose so great an honour
As one man more, methinks, would share from me
For the best hope I have. O, do not wish one more!
Rather proclaim it, Westmoreland, through my host,
That he which hath no stomach to this fight,

Let him depart; his passport shall be made
And crowns for convoy put into his purse:
We would not die in that man's company
That fears his fellowship to die with us.
This day is called the feast of Crispian:
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when the day is named,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.

Henry IV, part 1

By William Shakespeare

Act 3, Scene 2

PRINCE HAL

Do not think so; you shall not find it so:
And God forgive them that so much have sway'd
Your majesty's good thoughts away from me!
I will redeem all this on Percy's head
And in the closing of some glorious day
Be bold to tell you that I am your son;
When I will wear a garment all of blood
And stain my favours in a bloody mask,
Which, wash'd away, shall scour my shame with it:
And that shall be the day, whene'er it lights,
That this same child of honour and renown,
This gallant Hotspur, this all-praised knight,
And your unthought-of Harry chance to meet.
For every honour sitting on his helm,
Would they were multitudes, and on my head
My shames redoubled! for the time will come,
That I shall make this northern youth exchange
His glorious deeds for my indignities.

Measure for Measure

By William Shakespeare

Act 4, Scene 2

ISABELLA

To whom should I complain? Did I tell this,
Who would believe me? O perilous mouths,
That bear in them one and the self-same tongue,
Either of condemnation or approval;
Bidding the law make court'sy to their will:
Hooking both right and wrong to the appetite,
To follow as it draws! I'll to my brother:
Though he hath fallen by prompture of the blood,
Yet hath he in him such a mind of honour.
That, had he twenty heads to tender down
On twenty bloody blocks, he'd yield them up,
Before his sister should her body stoop
To such abhorr'd pollution.
Then, Isabel, live chaste, and, brother, die:
More than our brother is our chastity.
I'll tell him yet of Angelo's request,
And fit his mind to death, for his soul's rest.

All My Sons

By Arthur Miller

CHRIS

It take 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. Man for man. 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. (pause) And then I came home and it was incredible. I... there was no meaning in it here. The whole thing to them was a kind of a ... bus accident. I went to work with Dad, and that rat-race again. I felt... what you said... ashamed somehow. Because nobody was changed at all.

Gruesome Playground Injuries

By Rajiv Joseph

DOUG

You know what, Kayleen? Jesus Christ, you know, I came to your house last year and your dad was there, and I know he hates my guts, he always has, and he's like *She is where she is. I don't know where the girl is.*

He said he didn't care and he didn't care to know.

And I was about to just leave, but I didn't. I didn't and I said to that son of a bitch...

(Turns to the funeral home and shouts at it)

You remember, asshole? You dead piece of shit!? You remember what I said to you?

I said to him, you are fucking *worthless*.

You have a daughter and she is a gift from God. She is the most perfect being to ever walk this earth and you don't even know it. And she loves you because you're her stupid father. But you've never loved her back, you've just damaged her and fucked her up, and never even bothered to notice that she's this angel.

So fuck you, cocksucker.

(beat)

And then I told him I hoped he'd die alone.

Which he did.

So I feel a little guilty about that now.

(beat)

I can take care of you, Leenie.