

AUDITION MONOLOGUES

Choose among the following short monologues. Consult the character descriptions for more info.

CLARA: If I were even to consider it, you'd have to do everything I say without question. One wrong move could send you packing before the season begins. It won't be easy. If you're not willing to put in the work, it's not worth it for either of us.

CLARA: I can't get involved. Mr. Boyd would never look out for me. He'd drop me without a second thought. I've been thinking though, if I can get him in the Four Hundred, I could make a career of these new money types. Help them along for a season or two, move on. No personal attachments, and they'd pay better, although maybe not as much as Mr. Boyd.

ELI: (*running in with exuberance*) Who knew I was this amazing?!? I know it's not yachts or horses, but mail – mail is exciting! There must be a hundred yeses here. I knew I hired the right person. Success is in my grasp, I can feel it. (*a beat*) Why aren't you excited? Or do society women only get excited about new dresses and dukes or something.

(CLARA: How many footmen do you employ?)

ELI: Forty, fifty maybe. I think Simpson spends a lot of time figuring out what they should do.

(CLARA: That's because you don't need so many.)

ELI: We're in a recession and to whom much is given, much is required. What good am I if I don't provide a decent job for someone needing work? You should see how many laundresses I've hired. I believe there's one girl in charge of just washing my socks.

SIMPSON: Every clock *must* be synchronized. The grandfather in the billiard room is five seconds fast. (*The footmen exit*) I beg your pardon, Miss Rutherford. Please allow me to call a carriage for you. Mr. Boyd doesn't like you walking home this late. I have many drivers in the stable without a task.

MRS. PETERS: While I don't approve of you using that office, you *will* have fresh flowers. If you have a different preference in blooms, please let me know. (*CLARA protests.*) Mr. Boyd's bride will be using that office soon, we must keep up our standards now.

IONA: You expect me to fritter my summer away in Newport? Pah! What about my work at the orphanage? I'll just jump into the sea and swim back if I must. Why did we even come? These society types turn their noses up at you. You came from nothing and look at all you've done.

LULU: Poor Clara. Trying to do her job while looking after a child at the same time. So humiliating. I would never have expected her to look after my children. Well, it's her own doing. It must be easier to work for Eli, with no lady of quality around to remind her how far she's fallen.

FAYE: She's a piece of work. But you'd think that more ladies would need a social secretary with the season coming up. (*ELI enters*) Good afternoon sir, these Opal Snowflake Roses just arrived. Or perhaps some Orange Spice Lilies?

LILY: Oh Miss Rutherford, you were right. My dolls *love* to have mermaid tea parties! Theo's toy soldiers like the tea parties too. But don't tell him that.

LILY: When I grow up, I want to marry a prince and live in a castle. Anyone who is mean to me will get thrown into the dungeon or into the moat with the crocodiles. That's my plan.

THEO: I don't get to go to the beach today? At all? I can't believe they left without me. I was 20,000 leagues under the sea. They couldn't wait a few minutes?

VERA: After that, it was awful. When I think of those bad days, I wonder, if I had done something different, maybe... But that's when Uncle Eli found us, and everything changed in a moment. I feel like I should be happy all the time. He rescued us and he's so kind. But sometimes none of this feels real.

VALENTIN: Isn't food food? Or are these Americans too simple to appreciate fine cuisine? And why do I only cook for this family? I'm not a cook. I am a chef. Mrs. Boyd requests haggis for dinner at least once a week. Do you know how disgusting haggis is?

BETH: Listen to this. "Town Topics has learned that Mr. B. is going to be very picky in choosing a bride." It's a good idea. Mr. Boyd should try to marry well if he can. But why would Mr. Boyd say that? If ladies know he's picky, it'll be harder to marry well.

KATE: I don't think Mr. Boyd is that clever. He's not interested in anyone because he's in love already. (BETH: With you?) No, with Miss Rutherford! Now no one else will do. He picks out the flowers in her office. He doesn't like it when she walks home by herself. He even invited her to go the beach with the family today.

NIKOLAY: But no matter, dancing waits for no man. There may never be enough lessons, sir. But it's our duty to try.
(CLARA: Do I need to schedule more lessons?)

NIKOLAY: Not necessary. We both need time to recover in between. His nerves and my toes. And eyes. There are things that you wish you had never seen. (to ELI, *deliberately*). No offense.

RUTH: You need me to look at the accounts again? If anyone knew I assisted with your business affairs, we'd be dropped from the Four Hundred by morning. Good thing we didn't marry for love, then we'd really be in trouble.

HAZEL: Someone will need to rise to take Mrs. Astor's place since she's slowing down. Maybe it'll be you, Lulu. Your end of the season dinner party is always a success. But it's too bad that the social secretary can't help you now.

WESLEY: Now you're cooked, Boyd. You won't have a moment's peace until you walk down the aisle. They'll be clamoring for your attention. Take my advice, Boyd, don't let anyone push you into anything.

CHARLES: (*he laughs*) Eli thinks we read at the Reading Room! (*he laughs again*) The Reading Room is the club that gets a gentleman through a Newport summer. Men only. Fine cigars. Plenty of liquor. It's a long season.

MRS. ASTOR: It was gallant of you to help me in my time of need, but I don't require a single thing after our extensive dinner. A la Russe is all the fad now. I far prefer service a la Francaise, don't you?