

GRANDSTREET THEATRE FALL 2024
AUDITION PACKET
The Woman in Black & Moriarty, A New Sherlock Holmes Adventure

- * We are asking for TWO MONOLOGUES at your audition. You can choose two monologues from this packet, two monologues from another source, or one monologue from this packet and one monologue from another source.
- * Feel free to choose monologues that are exciting to you, even if they are not the gender you identify with.

SAM DAILY (from *The Woman in Black*)

You, Arthur, will be away from here tomorrow or the next day. You, if you are lucky, will neither hear nor see nor know of anything to do with that damned place again. The rest of us have to stay. We've to live with it. With whatever will surely follow. Sometime or other. Crythin Gifford has lived with that for fifty years. It's changed people. They don't speak of it, you found that out. Those who have suffered worst say least - Jerome, Keckwick. Jennet Humfrye gave up her child, the boy, to her sister, Alice Drablow, and Alice's husband, because she'd no choice. At first she stayed away - hundreds of miles away. But, in the end, the pain of being parted from him, instead of easing, grew worse and she returned to Crythin. She got rooms in the town. She'd no money. She took in sewing, she acted as a companion to a lady. At first, apparently, Alice Drablow would not let her see the boy at all. Jennet planned to take him away, that much I do know. Before she could do so, the accident happened, just as you heard. The boy ... the nursemaid, the pony, trap and its driver.

ACTOR (from *The Woman in Black*)

And so, imagine if you would, this stand an island, this aisle a causeway, running like a ribbon from the salt marsh through the sea, the only link between the gaunt, grey house and land. Imagine Arthur Kipps alone there now, a tiny figure, lost in the immensity and wideness of marsh and sky, dwarfed by a house, alone amid the mysterious shimmering beauty. He feels the key in his pocket, but does not go inside. Instead, he was away from the house towards the fragmentary ruins of some old church or chapel. To the west, on his right hand, the sun is already beginning to slip down in a great, wintry, golden red ball; to the east, sea and sky have darkened slightly to a uniform leaden grey.

ACTOR (from *The Woman in Black*)

It is a child's nursery. A bed in one corner, made up and all complete with pillows, sheets and counterpane, beside it, on the table, a tiny wooden horse and a nightlight. In the chest of drawers are clothes, underclothes, day clothes, formal clothes, play clothes, clothes for a small boy of six or seven. Beautiful, well made clothes in the style of sixty years or more ago. And toys, most neatly and meticulously ordered and cared for. Lead soldiers, arranged in regiments. A farm, set out with barns and fences. A model ship, complete with masts and sails of linen. A whip. A spinning top. A monkey made of leather. A cat of wool. A furry bear. A bald doll with a china head and a sailor suit. Pens and brushes, inks and dice, a miniature trumpet, a painted musical box from Switzerland, and a black doll with raggedy arms and legs.

KIPPS (from the Woman in Black)

This is a remarkable corner of the world, Mr. Keckwick. Sky, sky, and only a strip of land. This must be how those great landscape painters saw Holland, or the area around Norwich, don't you think? ... No clouds at all today, though I can imagine how magnificently that huge brooding area of sky would look with grey, scudding rain and storm clouds lowering over the estuary. ... It is quite startlingly beautiful, the wide, bare openness of it. This sense of space, the vastness of the sky - I would have travelled a thousand miles to see this. I have never imagined such a place! ... And that, I take it, is the Nine Lives Causeway! ... Ahead, the water gleamed like metal, lying only shallowly over the sand. A narrow track led directly forward, and I saw how, when the tide came in, it would quickly be submerged and untraceable. Then I looked up ahead, and saw as if rising out of the water itself, a tall, gaunt house of grey stone with a slate roof.

KIPPS (from The Woman in Black, speaking to Spider, a dog)

Well, Spider, have you ever seen a more worthless collection of papers? I do believe Mrs. Drablow kept every bill, receipt and Christmas card she ever had. There's even shopping lists, would you believe!

(Kipps takes a moment, then stretches. He crosses the stage and we hear the door slam. He calls for the dog.)

Spider! Spider - rabbits!

(He enters the old graveyard.)

Last time I was here, among these graves, I saw a woman. Where is she, Spider! Where is she, girl!

(He stoops to decipher an inscription.)

In Loving Memory ... something net ... Humfrye ... nineteen o-something ... and of her something ... something iel Drablow. Spider!

KIPPS (from The Woman in Black)

I became aware that I had interrupted the others in a lively conversation. "We are telling ghost stories - just the thing for Christmas Eve!" And so they were - vying with each other to tell the torridest, most spine chilling tale. They told of dripping stone walls in uninhabited castles and of ivy-clad monastery ruins by moonlight, of locked inner rooms and secret dungeons, dark charnel houses and overgrown graveyards, of cowlings and shriekings, groaning and scuttlings. This was a sport, a high spirited and harmless game among young people, there was nothing to torment and trouble me, nothing of which I could possibly disapprove. I did not want to seem a killjoy, old, stodgy and unimaginative. I turned my head away so that none of them should see my discomfiture. "And now it's your turn." "Oh no," I said, "nothing from me." "You must know at least one ghost story, everyone knows one," Ah, yes, yes, indeed. All the time I had been listening to their ghoulish, lurid inventions, the one thought that had been in my mind, and the only thing I could have said was "No, no, you have none of you any idea. This is all nonsense, fantasy, it is not like this. Nothing so blood-curdling and becreepared and crude - not so ... so laughable. The truth is quite other, and altogether more terrible. "I am sorry to disappoint you, but I have no story to tell." And went quickly from the room and from the house. I walked in a frenzy of agitation, my heart pounding, my breathing short. I had always known in my heart that the experience would never leave me, that is was woven into my very fibers. Yes, I had a story, a story of haunting and evil, fear and confusion, horror and tragedy. But it was not a story to be told around the fireside on Christmas Eve.

KIPPS (from The Woman in Black)

I went there and I had an experience I shouldn't care to go through again, though I confess I can't explain it. It seems to me, Mr. Daily, that I have seen whatever ghost haunts Eel Marsh. A woman in black with a wasted face. Because I have no doubt at all that she was what people call a ghost, that she was not a real, living, breathing human being. Well, she did me no harm. She neither spoke nor came near me. I did not like her look and I liked the - the power that seemed to emanate from her towards me even less, but I have convinced myself that it is a power that cannot do more than make me feel afraid. If I go there and see her again, I am prepared.

WATSON (from Moriarty)

To Sherlock Holmes she was always *the* woman. I have seldom heard him mention her under any other name. In his eyes she eclipsed and predominated the whole of her sex. He first saw Miss Adler from his box at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. I happened to glance at him at the time it was obvious that - quite uncharacteristically for a man who feared that emotion might ever interfere with his reason - he was smitten by her instantly. At the time, he had no occasion to speak with her - nor did he during our recent visits to the opera that season. But he would say, much later, after the case in question had reached its unexpected, shocking conclusion, that despite her beauty, or perhaps because of it, she was a woman destined for a tragic end.

HOLMES (from Moriarty)

Watson, I assume that you have never heard of Professor James Moriarty. And that is the genius of the man. He pervades London and no one has heard of him. That is what puts him on a pinnacle in the history of crime. I tell you Watson, in all seriousness, if I could beat the man, I would gladly sacrifice myself in the process. His career has been remarkable. At the age of twenty he wrote a treatise on the Binomial Theorem and had the Chair of Mathematics at Cambridge just two years later. But it turned out that he had tendencies of a criminal nature. Dark rumors gathered round him at the university and eventually he was compelled to leave. He was my mentor, and I worshipped him. But then the rumors began and he started avoiding me. It was said that he'd committed the most atrocious crimes, all for money. At first I refused to believe it. But then one day I was in his office, and I found a letter in his handwriting. He was blackmailing another professor for his indiscretions.

MRS. BARABAS (from Moriarty, Mrs. Barabas is an associate of Moriarty)

All right, so this girl, ya see, named Alice Adler is in me custody, as you might call it, inside the house, and I got the King's letters and they're in the safe. How d'ya like that? But ... but I'm still missin' the combination. She changed the numbers, the little witch. But don't go worryin' Professor, I got the best man in the business on it, Mr. Paddy Keys, and he'll have it open in minutes from now, it's guaranteed. I know you might think that Miss Adler still has the letters, but she does not! Ya see, I searched the bleedin' house from top to bottom, and she never left the house, so they gotta be there in the house. D'ya get it now? I won't disappoint you, Professor.

HOLMES (from Moriarty)

At that moment, I knew my calling. I would become a detective to stop such villainy and atone for my lack of courage. So oddly enough, it was Moriarty who made me what I have tried to become. But I should have stopped him from the beginning and I failed to do it! I have tried to track him down, Watson, but he remains invisible. And yet, he is the seed of all that is evil in our great city. He sits motionless like a spider in the center of its web, and he knows the quiver of every thread. He is the Napoleon of Crime! But we are on to him early on this one. And it is just possible if we move quickly we can stop him forever. Now listen carefully, I have a plan.

IRENE (from Moriarty)

It's not the letters themselves that are important. It's Moriarty. Yes, I had a ... friendship with Otto while I was on the Continent. We shared a bed. Does that shock you? I didn't know he was royalty, we just liked each other. I went back to London, he wrote me some letters, and some people found out about them. They tried to buy them from me, and when I said no, it turned into threats, so I thought it best to hide the letters, and I sent them to my sister Alice back in America. Then somehow these ... these people found out about them, and they went to her and tried to get the letters and they ... I supposed they got angry and they ... they killed her. They killed my sister. They killed my sister for a packet of letters! So I've spent the past several months trying to find out who they are and it's led me to the man I mentioned. His name is James Moriarty and he was a professor of mathematics. That's all I know.

MORIARTY (from Moriarty)

Well, well, well. Sherlock. My best student. How you have changed. You may think I've betrayed you, but no ... I merely took advantage of your naïveté. You were such an innocent. And so trusting. Now look at you. The light is gone. You look haggard with experience. It's distressing. You have been pursuing me and making lists of my confederates. Oh yes. I know everything. But so far you have only a handful of them and I intend to keep it that way. Don't forget, I taught you everything. You cannot stand in my way, nor can anyone else. You are all too "high-minded". You say I'm evil. But evil wins in the end! It cannot be stopped! Now ... any last words Sherlock? If you tell me now, I'll have them engraved on your tombstone.

WATSON (from Moriarty)

Never in our many years of association have I ever seen my friend Sherlock Holmes so distraught. He comforted Daisy and even shared, I believe, if only for a moment, her confusion over the existence of evil in the human heart. Then, within seconds, he embarked on the most remarkable investigation I have ever witnessed. He started out on his hands and knees, inspecting the floor and the rugs. Next he was up on a chair, surveying the sills and windows, catches, curtains, shades, he left nothing in the room unexamined. Smell, touch, taste, instinct, he was like a machine that was sorting information on little cards and filing them away in the hundreds of drawers inside his brain.

DAISY (from Moriarty, Daisy is a scullery maid)

Well ... lemme think ... the ringleader, he 'ad beautiful shoes. With them kinda holes at the toe in a sort o' pattern. And there was mud on the left one! It was yellow, and 'e sort o' scraped it against that table, right there. And the rest of 'em wore old ordinary shoes, like workmen, ya know. I just remembered, the number two fella, they called him Crowder, he lost his hat in the scuffle and he didn't notice and I saw me chance, so I kinda like rolled over on it and kept it under me. And sure enough, when they was ready to go, he looks around and can't find it and the big fella says "let's go!" And Crowder looks some more, then shrugs and leaves without it ... and I got it here! I thought it was the kind o' clue you'd like, Mr. Holmes!

HOLMES (from Moriarty)

Watson, we are heading into what promises to be the final battle of this unexpected struggle. If I don't survive - and it is unlikely - please remind your readers that I could not have accomplished any of the feats that you have so generously attributed to me over all these years without having you at my side at every turn. We have been as one from the very beginning, and now, after all our hundreds of cases, I am not aware that we have ever used our powers upon the wrong side, and that is no small legacy of which to boast. Meanwhile, I ask that you and Miss Adler remain friends in my absence. I have formed a strange ... attachment to her that I cannot explain, and I would be happy to know that you will be there whenever friendship is called upon.