

## AUDITION MONOLOGUES

MARK HOLLOWAY

It's crazy, isn't it? I can barely believe I've kept it going this long... I'm sure if you were here, you'd be more shocked than I am. Never in a million years would I have thought... nevermind. There's no point in getting all mushy about it. It's been a while since I've visited, so I just wanted to update you on this little dream of yours. It's still little, haha! I mean, not like you had big dreams for it, or anything... what am I even saying? (gradually losing composure) Uh... Nia's all grown up now! Sort of. She's set to graduate this year, and she's got all these friends, even though she's the youngest out of all of them - I've told you about them, right? The Wells twins, Matteo, Aaron... they all love the store. It's become a home for them; for all of us. It started out as your dream, your safe place, but now— now it's home for them too. (firmly, but on the verge of a breakdown) So I *have* to protect it. (beat, regains composure) Anyways, the store is... doing well. We're facing a bit of a challenge right now, but I'm sure it will all work out. ... I love you. Hope you're having fun up there.

NIA HOLLOWAY

No— dad, no. Listen to me. You not hearing me say something does *not* mean I never said it! And even if I didn't— I am an adult! I can make my own decisions about things I care about, what my priorities are, who I want to love, and how I want to spend my time. That goes for *all* of us. You don't have to protect us anymore; we aren't those snot-nosed little teenagers you hired six years ago. You... you care so much about this store, and I do too, but... I think it's time to move on. We all love this store; we grew up here, it was home to good times, laughs, and great memories. I just don't think... I don't think you should let it stop you from continuing on with your life. I don't remember much about mom, but I'm sure... I'm sure she would want you to let go too.

NORA WELLS

Mom, *stop*. Do you... Do you have even the *slightest clue* what Noah and I have been through because of you? You don't. There's no way you could, because you're never here! You consistently make bad decisions and then run from them, and Noah and I are left to deal with the fallout! Dad left because of you, and then you married that horrid man— and when he turned out to be not what you expected, you buried yourself in your work! I can't— I don't know how else to get you to understand that every missed meal, skipped parent-teacher conference, and inconveniently scheduled work meeting chipped away at Noah until there was almost nothing left, and he *still* holds out hope for you. He loves you mom, I love you— but we can't keep going like this. We don't want your money, we want to see you and spend time with you. You have to prove that we matter to you. ...At this point, Mr. Holloway was more of a parent to us than you ever were.

NOAH WELLS

How can you even say that, Nora? Our family is... far from perfect, I know, but that's— she's still our *mom*. She does her best. She works hard, she always has! I know she isn't the kindest, or the most honest, or very caring... (painfully) and she barely talks to us, avoids coming home, never recognizes our accomplishments, and sometimes it honestly feels like she can't stand looking at us because we remind her of dad... but she... she works hard to provide for us, so that has to mean something. Right? (beat) Okay. I see where you're coming from. But I can't just give up like you. I mean— it's mom. I love her... even if she doesn't.

MATTEO

Huh? No, I'm good! Totally fine, haha! What gave you that idea? I barely even think about my parents. My grandparents love me— they raised me like I was their own, so I never had any doubt in my mind about being wanted... nope. Never. Besides, if my parents are still out there, living their perfectly happy, unburdened life, never giving a thought to the son they left behind, why would I think about them? That... that wouldn't be fair. And I don't like it when things aren't fair. Plus, we've got the store! I'm surrounded by people who love and care about me, so... Yeah. I'm okay. For sure. Don't worry about it!

IMANI

(scoffs) Yeah, as if. Matteo... he would never see me that way. (kind of dreamy) I don't think he understands just how kind he is. (back to reality) But I, uh... I get overlooked a lot. It's always been like that; at school, in relationships, at home... Don't get me wrong, my family is great! We just... we aren't very close. I think that's why I like being at the store. I know I make fun of it, and I've only been a few times, but with you guys, I really feel seen, even if all the dust really makes my allergies act up. I don't have to pretend or do anything crazy to be part of the group. I've always tried really hard at school, hoping that one day, something I do will be enough to get a reaction from my family, but uh... Ugh, just forget about it. This is depressing. You better not tell anyone I like him, got it?!

AARON

But... this is where we met, Nia. This store brought everyone together and it has so much history— it means so much to all of us. Without it, I never would have found everyone, or found you— and now because there's one problem, one thing in the way, you're just going to drop everything? How can you be okay with just giving up?! (beat) ...I'm sorry. I didn't mean to yell, I just— okay, listen. I know I don't usually say much. I'm quiet, and not the best at communicating, but I feel things really deeply, and there are certain things that I'm sure of. I know that I love this store, and that it's worth fighting for. I'm certain that the friendships we formed here are worth protecting. And... I know, without a doubt in my mind... that I love you, thrift store or not.

## ZAVIOR

Don't tell anyone I said this, but... if I'm being 100% honest— I could not care less what happens to that old store. I mean, come on, the place *is* falling apart! I haven't been there that much, but I've seen parts of the carpet rotting, entire chunks of the shelves missing— and I'm pretty sure I saw a few mice in the back room. I know it means a lot to the four of you guys, but Imani and I— well, I don't know how she feels, but I definitely understand why the city wants to shut it down. (mockingly) "What's your problem, Zavior? Why are you even here then?" Well, I'm glad you asked! I... I care about you guys. About the friendship we have, about Mr. Holloway. He's done so much for me, even though I haven't known him for very long. My dad isn't... he's not exactly a model citizen. So I guess it really meant a lot to have a role model like him even in my life... ew, this is so cheesy! Bottom line is, I don't give a rat's behind about the store, but if saving it means we keep the home we've built, I'll do whatever it takes.