**A Streetcar Named Desire** **(Dramatic)**
Blanche: He was a boy, just a boy, when I was a very young girl. When I was sixteen, I made the discovery – love. All at once and much, much too completely. It was like you suddenly turned a blinding light on something that had always been half in shadow, that’s how it struck the world for me. But I was unlucky. Deluded. There was something different about the boy, a nervousness, a softness and tenderness which wasn’t like a man’s, although he wasn’t the least bit effeminate looking – still – that thing was there … He came to me for help. I didn’t know that. I didn’t find out anything till after our marriage when we’d run away and come back and all I knew was I’d failed him in some mysterious way and wasn’t able to give the help he needed but couldn’t speak of! He was in the quicksands and clutching at me – but I wasn’t holding him out, I was slipping in with him! I didn’t know that. I didn’t know anything except I loved him unendurably but without being able to help him or help myself. Then I found out. In the worst of all possible ways. By coming suddenly into a room that I thought was empty – which wasn’t empty, but had two people in it … the boy I had married and an older man who had been his friend for years … afterward we pretended that nothing had been discovered. Yes, the three of us drove out to Moon Lake Casino, very drunk and laughing all the way. We danced the Varsouviana! Suddenly, in the middle of the dance the boy I had married broke away from me and ran out of the casino. A few moments later — a shot! I ran out – all did! – all ran and gathered about the terrible thing at the edge of the lake! I couldn’t get near for the crowding. Then somebody caught my arm. “Don’t go any closer! Come back! You don’t want to see!” See? See what! Then I heard voices say – Allan! Allan! The Grey boy! He’d stuck the revolver into his mouth, and fired – so that the back of his head had been – blown away! It was because – on the dance floor – unable to stop myself – I’d suddenly said – “I saw! I know! You disgust me …” And then the searchlight which had been turned on the world was turned off again and never for one moment since has there been any light that’s stronger than this – kitchen -candle…

**Our Town (Dramatic)**

Emily: (softly, more in wonder than in grief)
I can't bear it. They're so young and beautiful. Why did they ever have to get old? Mama, I'm here. I'm grown up. I love you all, everything. - I cant look at everything hard enough. *(pause, talking to her mother who does not hear her. She speaks with mounting urgency)* Oh, Mama, just look at me one minute as though you really saw me. Mama, fourteen years have gone by. I'm dead. You're a grandmother, Mama. I married George Gibbs, Mama. Wally's dead, too. Mama, his appendix burst on a camping trip to North Conway. We felt just terrible about it - don't you remember? But, just for a moment now we're all together. Mama, just for a moment we're happy. Let's look at one another. *(pause, looking desperate because she has received no answer. She speaks in a loud voice, forcing herself to not look at her mother)* I can't. I can't go on. It goes so fast. We don't have time to look at one another. *(she breaks down sobbing, she looks around)* I didn't realize. All that was going on in life and we never noticed. Take me back - up the hill - to my grave. But first: Wait! One more look. Good-by, Good-by, world. Good-by, Grover's Corners? Mama and Papa. Good-bye to clocks ticking? and Mama's sunflowers. And food and coffee. And new-ironed dresses and hot baths? and sleeping and waking up. Oh, earth, you're too wonderful for anybody to realize you. *(she asks abruptly through her tears*) Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it? - every, every minute? *(she sighs)* I'm ready to go back. I should have listened to you. That's all human beings are! Just blind people.

**A View from the Bridge by Arthur Miller**

Catherine: It's only that I—He was good to me, Rodolpho. You don't know him; he was always the sweetest guy to me. Good. He razzes me all the time but he don't mean it. I know. I would just feel ashamed if I made him sad. 'Cause I always dreamt that when I got married he would be happy at the wedding, and laughin'—and now he's—mad all the time and nasty— (She is weeping.) Tell him you'd live in Italy—just tell him, and maybe he would start to trust you a little, see? Because I want him to be happy; I mean—I like him, Rodolpho—and I can't stand it! […] If I was a wife I would make a man happy instead of goin' at him all the time. I can tell a block away when he's blue in his mind and just wants to talk to somebody quiet and nice... I can tell when he's hungry or wants a beer before he even says anything. I know when his feet hurt him, I mean I know him and now I'm supposed to turn around and make a stranger out of him? I don't know why I have to do that, I mean.

**All my Sons by Arthur Miller**

ANN: I'll do nothing about Joe, but you're going to do something for me. You made Chris feel

guilty with me. Whether you wanted to or not, you've crippled him in front of 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'll 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. Larry is dead, Kate. I said he's dead. I know! He

crashed off the coast of China November twenty-fifth! His engine didn't fail him. But he died.

I know... I loved him. You know I loved him. Would I have looked at anyone else if I wasn't

sure? That's enough for you.

**THE GLASS MENAGERIE, by Tennessee Williams**

*Laura cherishes her glass figurines and does her best to avoid the painful reality of her existence. Her mother, Amanda, is determined to marry her off. She forces Laura to receive a gentleman caller, not realizing Jim was the boy Laura had a crush on in high school. Laura’s insecurity is revealed as she tries to persuade her mother to leave her be. Unlike the rest of the play, Laura seems to find strength in this moment to stand up to her mother to stop her from interrupting her speech. But in the end, she still obeys Amanda’s wishes.*

LAURA: Mom, I can’t do anything– No, Mom, please! I have to say this. I can’t go outside these

walls. There’s just too much pain! I can feel everyone staring at me–staring at this. (She points to the braced leg.) The noise it makes, it’s just so loud! That’s why I dropped out of high school! I felt everyone’s eyes staring at me, heard all the giggles they tried to suppress as I clomped and limped down the hall. Especially when I would enter the choir room! Jim would never want to be around me again. Sure, we talked sometimes, but he wouldn’t want to be around me any more than those few occasions–not around the limping girl who makes such a racket! Nobody would want to be near me. So I tuned out from the rest of the world before it could cause me any more pain than I have already suffered. And it seems that whatever crippled my leg– (Amanda opens her mouth as if about to interject.) –yes, Mom, you might as well admit that I’m crippled!–has crippled the rest of my being throughout time. It seems I just got worse and worse at school. And then at business college, in that confined typing room, that quick clacking of keyboards surrounded me as I stumbled and fat-fingered all the letters. It felt as if the professor was breathing down my neck, silently mocking me as I continued to fail. Until finally, all that pressure poured out of me–and into a toilet. Mom, secluded from the world in this home listening to phonograph records and dusting my glass collection–this is where I belong! I fail everywhere else in the outside world. Here, there’s nothing to fail at! I’ll never succeed at finding a husband or a job, so I might as well give up trying now and just be content in my bubble with at least having no additional failure for the rest of my life! I can’t see Jim! (Tears are welling in her eyes.) It would only result in the ultimate failure–rejection from the only person I have ever loved! Mom, I can’t! Just have dinner without me. Please, Mom

**A RAISIN IN THE SUN, by Lorraine Hansberry**

*This play focuses on the Youngers, an African-American family living on the South Side of Chicago in the 1950s. When the play begins, the family is about to receive an insurance check for $10,000 from their deceased father’s life insurance policy. Each member of the family has an idea as to what this money should be used for. Beneatha tries to convince her brother and mother to use the money for her medical school tuition.*

BENEATHA: When I was small… we used to take our sleds out in the wintertime and the only hills we had were the ice-covered stone steps of some houses down the street. And we used to fill them in with snow and make them smooth and slide down them all day… and it was very dangerous, you know… far too steep… and sure enough one day a kid named Rufus came down too fast and hit the sidewalk and we saw his face just split open right there in front of us… And I remember standing there looking at his bloody open face thinking that was the end of Rufus. But the ambulance came and they took him to the hospital and they fixed the broken bones and sewed it all up… and the next time I saw Rufus he just had a little line down the middle of his face…. I never got over that… What one person could do for another, fix him up – sew up the problem, make him all right again. That was the most marvelous thing in the world... I wanted to do that. I always thought it was the one concrete thing in the world a human being

could do. Fix up the sick, you know – and make them whole again. This was truly being God… It used to be so important to me. It used to matter. I used to care. Yes – I think [I stopped]. Because it doesn’t seem deep enough, close enough to what ails mankind! It was a child’s way of seeing things – or an idealist’s. You are still where I left off. You with all of your talk and dreams about Africa! You still think you can patch up the world. Cure the Great Sore of Colonialism – (loftily, mocking it) with the Penicillin of Independence - ! Independence and then what? What about the crooks and thieves and just plain idiots who will come into power and steal and plunder the same as before – only now they will be black and do it in the name of the new independence – WHAT ABOUT THEM?

**Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte**

JANE: I am glad you are no relation of mine: I will never call you aunt again as long as I live. I will never come to see you when I am grown up; and if any one asks me how I liked you, and how you treated me, I will say the very thought of you makes me sick, and that you treated me with miserable cruelty -- because it is the TRUTH. You think I have no feelings, and that I can do without one bit of love or kindness; but I cannot live so: and you have no pity. I shall remember how you thrust me back -- roughly and violently thrust me back -- into the red-room, and locked me up there, to my dying day; though I was in agony; though I cried out, while suffocating with distress, "Have mercy! Have mercy, Aunt Reed!" And that punishment you made me suffer because your wicked boy struck me -- knocked me down for nothing. I will tell anybody who asks me questions, this exact tale. People think you a good woman, but you are bad, hard-hearted. You are deceitful! You told Mr. Brocklehurst I had a bad character, a deceitful disposition; and I'll let everybody at Lowood know what you are, and what you have done. Send me to school soon, Mrs. Reed, for I hate to live here.

**Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen**

ELIZABETH: (With polite civility) “In such cases as this, it is, I believe, the established mode to

express a sense of obligation for the sentiments avowed, however unequally they may be returned. But I cannot - I have never desired your good opinion, and you have certainly bestowed it most unwillingly. I am sorry to have occasioned pain to anyone. (Pause) I might as well inquire why you chose to tell me that you liked me against your will, your reason, and even against your character? (Anger mounting) You could not have made me the offer of your hand in any possible way that would have tempted me to accept it. From the very beginning, from the first moment, I may almost say, of my acquaintance with you, your manners impressed me with the fullest belief of your arrogance, your conceit, and your selfish disdain of the feelings of others, were such as to form that groundwork of disapprobation on which succeeding events have built so immovable a dislike; and I had not know you a month before I felt that you were the last man in the world whom I could ever possibly marry.”

**The Importance of Being Earnest by Oscar Wilde**

LADY BRACKNELL: Well, I must say, Algernon, that I think it is high time that Mr. Bunbury made up his mind whether he was going to live or die. This shilly-shallying with the question is absurd. Nor do I in any way approve of the modern sympathy with invalids. I consider it morbid. Illness of any kind is hardly a thing to be encouraged in others. Health is the primary duty of life. I am always telling that to your poor uncle, but he never seems to take much notice . . . as far as any improvement in his ailment goes. Well, Algernon, of course if you are obliged to be beside the bedside of Mr. Bunbury, I have nothing more to say. But I would be much obliged if you would ask Mr. Bunbury, from me, to be kind enough not to have a relapse on Saturday, for I rely on you to arrange my music for me. It is my last reception, and one wants something that will encourage conversation, particularly at the end of the season when every one has practically said whatever they had to say, which, in most cases, was probably not much.