

EMILY OF EMERALD HILL

By Stella Kon

EMILY:

I like to entertain at Emerald Hill. Once in a while we give a big formal dinner, hire cooks and waiters, set out tables on the lawn. Or quite often we have a smaller party like this, I do the cooking myself.

I set out the family silverware; it's engraved with a capital G for Gan, and a jeweled mountain, the Emerald Hill. The old wine-glasses have the symbol too. I put out the Nonya china, some of it my mother-in-law inherited from her mother – must be over a hundred years old.

In the old days my father-in-law used to entertain a lot at Emerald Hill. Every Sunday he held Open House: this long table would be spread with food, and anybody at all could drop in for a meal. All of us daughters-in-law had to elp in the kitchen, picking towgay, cutting vegetables for the popiah – my specialty was babi buah keluak. And sometimes in the evenings he would give a really big party, the whole house decorated with lights, a hired band playing in the garden. We daughters-in-law had to serve the table. My mother-in-law didn't really do much cooking herself, she had an excellent Hainanese boy as our cookie. But at these formal dinner she would stand and supervise as though she had done everything herself; and we daughters-in-law had to run back and forth under her eye.

EVERYTHING BUT THE BRAIN

By Jean Tay



ELAINE:

I said he tried to teach me relativity when I was six. I didn't say I actually learnt anything. We never went to Malacca by train again. My father thought it was a bad idea. Instead, I dreamt of trains, night after night after night.

After you've been on the train too long, you never want to get off. Because you're too scared of reaching the destination itself. The doors slide open and you stand there, petrified. Half of you is saying, you fool, you fool, get off, don't let it go. And the other half is wishing the train could go on forever, faster and faster. Because, according to the theory, time would begin to slow down as it approached the speed of light. And so the answer is staring me in the face. All I need is to get my father on this train, going at the speed of light, and we'll be okay. We'll go so fast, that time will slow down around us, and we'll live happily ever after.

DIARY OF A MADWOMAN

By Chin Woon Ping



MADWOMAN:

Come on, I'm not a ghost. I'm just a reptile in disguise. A reptile snake? This man was just pretending to be friendly, but I knew he had bad intentions from the moment he appeared. You can tell, from the eyes. He had funny eyes, the kind that strip you bare slowly, the kind that never really look you in the eye but are taking everything in, looking you all over, bit by bit, inch by inch. Eyes of marble, eyes of steel, eyes to pick, eyes to kill! Then he pretended to go away, but all he did was to just move further down, thinking I couldn't see him.

He went to another seat and pretended to be waiting for someone, but I could tell he was watching me. Even with his back turned, I knew he was watching me.

Then he pulled out an instrument from this pants pocket and put it to his ear. He was listening to me. Or, he was talking to me someone else who was watching me. Suddenly, to my surprise, I heard a ringing noise and saw someone else further away with the same instrument to his ear. They were all signaling each other, and I knew they were watching me.

MAMA LOOKING FOR HER CAT

By Kuo Pao Kun



GIRL:

And one night, Mama went away. All I could find was a letter she had left behind. It says she was going to commit suicide... I was shocked, I didn't know what to do. I told Father. He said nothing and did nothing. So I dashed out of the house. I dashed to the street. I walked and walked and walked. But where could I find Mama? I looked up at the HDB flats, dozens of them, in front of me. Could she be up there somewhere in this block? Or that block? Or that? Or that?... I walked and walked and walked... until I reached the pasar malam where Mama used to go and buy her daily supplies. And it was already daybreak. But, as I was looking at the gathering crowd, suddenly Mama appeared before me, looking the same as she has been any other day. I thought I was dreaming until she came over to me and held out a hankie to wipe my tears, and I knew she was real. And then she told me she was really frustrated and had really wanted to take her own life. She said she had gone to the riverbank. But, she said, just as when she wanted to jump in, she saw our faces in the water. She said we were all waving at her, asking her to stay. So she changed her mind and slowly walked back to the pasar... I was so happy I didn't know what to say.

Female's Monologues (AMERICAN Plays) – CHOOSE ONE

AT THE VANISHING POINT

By Naomi Iizuka

Ronnie Martson, a bacon packager at Fischers, a meatpacking plant, enters wearing a windbreaker, jeans, and work boots.

TIME

The Present

RONNIE MARTSON:

I got a cousin pete, I nearly ran him over the other day in my truck. I was on story avenue up where the road curves round real sharp, down by the greenway, where the pumping station's at, and you know how the cars, how they're always taking that turn a little too fast and some of em, they go skidding and they crash straight into that house that's right there with the brick that's all messed up from the cars that keep crashing into it, but that's all besides the point because I wasn't speeding. I never speed. I'm a good driver, I never had a ticket in my life not a one, except for some dumb-ass parking tickets I never shoulda gotten in the first place, and then they had the nerve to tow my truck and that made me so mad, but I didn't have nothing to do with that little a-hole falling down, I did not push him, I did not lay a hand on him, but that's a whole other story I don't want to get into on account of a pending legal action. Anyway this incident I'm talking about right now, this was all my cousin pete, it was all his fault. Pete's got about ten lugnuts loose in his head, no common sense, none at all. My sisters, they're all so like, o poor pete. Poor poor pete. And I'm like, to hell with pete. Pete pisses me off. Cause it ain't like he's slow, he ain't slow. He's just a screw-up is all. Always getting himself into some kind of trouble cause he doesn't use his head, he doesn't think. Pete volunteers now full time at the Edison house over on Washington. He's some kinda tour guide or something like that. He has this thing, see, he knows everything there is to know about Thomas Edison. You just ask him whatever you want to know, and he'll tell you. Pete used to work at Fischers, but then he got let go on the account of some situation I don't know the full details of. I work at Fischers too. A lot of my family do – well two of my sisters and my brother-in-law, and his dad, and my dad, and my dad's brother, pete's dad and pete's brother frank – anyway there I was, driving down story rounding that curve, and suddenly pete's right in front of me, he's just standing there all of a sudden running into the middle of the road, and thank god I got fast reflexes or I woulda run him over, so I slam on my brakes hard and I'm outta the truck in a flash, and I grab him and I'm up in his face shaking him and I'm like, what the hell is wrong with you I coulda run you over I coulda killed you just now. But pete he ain't even listening to me. He's babbling about

seeing something down by the point, down by where beargrass creek lets out into the river, and did I know that the dead live on as particles of free-floating energy in the atmosphere like an electrical current or a sound wave and that's what ghosts are and do I wanna see what he's talking about, come see, Ronnie, come and see. And I'm looking at him, and I'm thinking, this person, I'm related to this person. I'm related to him by blood and that just, that just disturbs me. And I look at pete and he's still talking and finally I'm just like: pete. You know what pete. I really don't need this right now. I just got off work and it was one of those days. The feed tube broke, then the chlorine pump gave up, then the ammo line went tits up for three hours, and then if that weren't bad enough, the goddamn power goes out, some kinda short, who the hell knows. It's out all along mellwood and Frankfort, all the way over to crescent hill. Fifty-nine condemned hogs. We dumped near five thousand pounds of meat, and now my carpal tunnel is acting up and I don't even want to talk about the smell, you don't even want to know about the smell. So right now, pete, it's really not a good time for you to share with me your thoughts about the afterlife.

ELEPHANT

By Margie Stokley

At 17, MICHELLE is bright and direct in her group therapy session. Applying lipstick, SHE addresses the audience as the group.

TIME

1998

MICHELLE:

Hi. My name is Michelle *(She does a crazy gesture and noise that somehow mocks suicide.)* Just kidding. No, really-thrilled to be here. What do you want to know? What do you want me to say...

(silence)

Oh, wait, that's right. This is not a conversation- it's a session. This is my time to share, with complete strangers how I feel... Well, I feel like talking about trees. How do you feel about them? Wait. Please, don't speak...let me. My fascination stems from this one tree. *(She silently moths "stems" again to emphasize the irony.)* Rough crowd. *(A pause)* Well, it's gigantic and right outside my bedroom window. Some nights I feel like it wants in. Want in to my perfect pint and white striped room. My room is perfect, Not because it's everything I want. It's just perfectly planned. The pillows, the balloon shades, the pictures, the bed, the window seat, my stuffed animals. I have even more animals under my bed. I have guilt about suffocating them...I feel...it doesn't matter. They don't match. *(A pause.)* They really don't. Well, it can't fall now because I just predicted it. What you think is going to happen – never does. It's a relief. You can't know it all. I just feel like in *my movie* that's what will happen. There'll be a huge thunderstorm with lightning, my tree will explode, and I'll be crushed. I can see myself split in half. I don't want to be surrounded by all those people who would need to be there if I got crushed. I am over groups. No offence.

MARGO VEIL: AN ENTERTAINMENT

By Len Jenkin

ROXANNE, a University of Kentucky college student, speaks to a movie actor she has met on a trip.

TIME

Night

ROXANNE:

You know...this world we live in...Look out there...Nighttime...Stripmall with a Laundromat, Dunkin' Donuts, tropical fish store, tank glows in the window, one huge angelfish gliding alone and slow in the green light. Turn and turn again under the cold stars. A vacant lot overrun by weeds, plastic trash bags torn open and my baby brother squats by a fire, stupid spider tattoo on his left cheek, blood under his fingernails, dirty piece of sting knotted around his neck. There's the Riverside Motel, naked people on the sagging beds, full of guilt and fear, fucking away their troubles in the dawn's early light. Tractor-trailer out of Memphis hauling chicken parts, driver with a tin funnel on his head doing ninety down the river road on a twelve percent grade. High beams on, white light burst through the motel rooms one by one, lighting the pale bodies like a photoflash. In the motel office doorway man in a Santa Claus suit is sitting on a milk crate. "What do you want for Christmas, little girl?" It's still July. I'm visiting my mother. She's in a home, somefuck suburb of Louseville. Highland park. She doesn't even know who the fuck I am.

NO ONE IS ALONE

Music and Lyrics by
STEPHEN SONDHEIM

Tranquil (♩ = 60)

poco rubato

No one here to guide you, —

p poco rubato

Now you're on your own. — On - ly me be - side you. —

— Still you're not a - lone. No one is a -

mp

lone, tru - ly. No one is a - lone.

dim. *poco rall.*

Some-times peo - ple leave you — Half way through the wood.

p a tempo *marc.* *poco rall.*

Oth - ers may de - ceive you. — You de - cide what's good. —

a tempo

You de - cide a - lone, But no one is a - lone.

mp

Peo - ple make mis - takes, Fa - thers, moth - ers,

Peo - ple make mis - takes, Hold - ing to their own,

Think - ing they're a - lone. Hon - or their mis -

takes. Ev - 'ry - bod - y makes One an - oth - er's ter - ri - ble mis - takes.

Witch - es can be right, Gi - ants can be good, You de - cide what's

mp *mf* *mp*

right, You de - cide what's good. Just re - mem - ber Some - one is on your side. —

poco rall. *a tempo*

poco rall. *a tempo*

Some - one else is not. While you're see - ing your side, —

marc. *a tempo*

May - be you for - got: They are not a - lone.

marc. *poco cresc.* *poco rit.* *mf*

No one is a - lone.

Hard to see the light now, — Just don't let it go. —

Things will come out right now. — We can make it so. Some - one is on

your side, — No one is a - lone. —

ANYTHING GOES

Words and Music by
COLE PORTER

Moderato

The piano introduction is in 4/4 time, marked *Moderato*. It begins with a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The melody starts on a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The bass line consists of a steady eighth-note pattern: G3, A3, B3, C4. The piece concludes with a *rit.* (ritardando) marking over a half note G4.

VERSE

The first system of the verse features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line has notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The lyrics are "Times have changed — And we've of - ten re -". Above the notes are chord symbols: Cmi. above G4, Ab above A4, and Cmi. above C5. The piano accompaniment is marked *p a tempo*. The bass line has notes G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3.

The second system of the verse continues the vocal line with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The lyrics are "wound the clock — Since the Pu - ri - tans got a shock —". Above the notes are chord symbols: G7 above G4, Cmi. above A4, D♭ above B4, Ab7 above C5, and D♭ above A4. The piano accompaniment includes a triplet of eighth notes in the bass line. The bass line has notes G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3.

The third system of the verse continues the vocal line with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The lyrics are "When they land - ed on Ply - mouth Rock; — If to -". Above the notes are chord symbols: G7 above G4, Dm7 above A4, G7 above B4, and C7 above C5. The piano accompaniment is marked *mf*. The bass line has notes G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3.

C7 Fmi. C7 Fmi.

day An - y shock they should try to stem, —

G7 Cmi. G7 Cmi. G D7 G7 G6

'Stead of land-ing on Ply-mouth Rock, Ply-mouth Rock would land on them. —

REFRAIN

G7 C Ami.

In old - en days a glimpse of stock-ing Was looked on as some-thing shock-

C7 Dmi.7 C Dmi.7 Fm6 C F6

ing, Now heav - en knows, — An - y - thing goes. —

C G+ C Ami.

Good auth-ors too who once knew bet-ter words Now on-ly use four-

C7 Dmi.7 C Dmi.7 Fm6 C Dm

ter words, writ- ing prose, An- y- thing goes.

C B7 E B9 B7

The world_ has gone mad to- day_ And good's bad to- day,-- And black's

E7 B7 Emi.

white to day,-- And day's night to day,-- When most guys to- day_ That wo-men

Emi. 7 Cdim. Ddim Cdim. G7

prize to - day, - Are just sil - ly gi - go - los; _____ So

C Ami.

though I'm not a great ro - man - ce - er I know that {you're} {I'm} bound to an -

C7 Dmi. 7 C Dmi. 7

swer when {I} {you} pro - pose, _____ An - y - thing

1. C F# C F# C F#dim. G7 mf 2. C F# C Dmi. 7 C

goes. _____ In goes. _____