

Totally Teen Women:

50 Monologues

by Deborah Karczewski

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Contents

1. Freak
2. In the Thpotlight
3. Face It
4. From the Depths of the Stall
5. Betrayal
6. Beauty Pageant Contestant
7. The Dot
8. Aftermath
9. Hospital Bed
10. Revelation
11. The Phone Call
12. Euthanasia
13. Revenge
14. Kong
15. Dilemma
16. Accusation
17. Final Exam
18. Misfit
19. Womens' Rights
20. Under the Bed
21. Transfer of the Slim Chick
22. Hero Horror
23. Adultery
24. The Dancer
25. Speeding Ticket
26. Divorce
27. Magic
28. Responsible Parenthood
29. The Baby-sitter
30. Guilt
31. Uncharted Territory
32. Pudgy's Pizza Playhouse
33. Camp

Totally Teen Women: 50 Monologues

4

34. The Foreign Exchange Student
35. Death
36. Driving Lesson
37. Anorexia
38. Homeless
39. There's Something Out There
40. Daddy's Birthday
41. 911
42. Family Vacation
43. In Memory
44. The Big Change
45. Cliques
46. Modern Art
47. The Last Lunch
48. Celebration
49. The History Report
50. The Makeover

INTRODUCTION

Totally Teen Women: 50 Monologues provides for high school women acting experiences that elicit the gamut of emotions. Simultaneously, these pieces not only fit the criterion of most auditions by being 2-5 minutes in performance length, but they are also complete short stories written for teens.

Having taught drama for many years, I have empathized with the frustrations of teen actresses. Most books of monologues offer excerpts that are unappealing or inappropriate for young women. The majority of fine roles have either been written for males or for mature women. The few truly exciting, female teen monologues have been hackneyed so often that drama coaches, judges, and auditioners are sick of them. Many good teen parts are in the form of scenes that cannot stand alone as soliloquies. Others contain word choices that make neophyte actresses and their parents uncomfortable. Even more discouraging is the fact that many monologues feel fragmented. Without having the benefit of play synopses, background information, or character descriptions, the monologues seem like disconnected bits of theater. Although some books of monologues give small prologues to the pieces chosen, this information aids the actress but not the audience. Most disconcerting of all is that the scripts available sound foreign to many young women. The speech patterns and subject matter are not those to which a modern teenager can relate.

Totally Teen Women is a medley of monologues for teen women about the the experiences that they know. Each piece could have happened to one of their friends. Every selection provides a variety of intense emotions, each in the language that teens speak. The stylistic genre of the monologues are as varied as the characterizations presented. *Totally Teen Women* includes tragedies, comedies, farces, horror stories and more. The characters speaking are deep, insightful, pained, ditsy, bright, malicious etc. Each piece is a mini-play, a short story on

Totally Teen Women: 50 Monologues

6

its own, with a beginning, middle, and end. Even though the monologue can be completed in brief minutes, its speaker is three-dimensional, its content evolves thoroughly, and its ending provides the impact required for a quick close of the curtain, the black of the lights, or the fade of the camera.

Totally Teen Women is about the time in a woman's life that is the most volatile, the most profound: her teen years. It is an exercise in the full range of emotional responses. It is a volume of ready-made audition pieces. It is a psychological study of young minds. It is a compilation of short stories, complete with figurative language and literary style. This book is for the drama coach, the English teacher, the psychology student, the actress, the avid reader, for anyone who enjoys living vicariously through peak moments in the lives of 50 teen women, desperately trying to communicate their ideas, share their feelings.

- *Deborah Karczewski*

End of *Freeview*