

OUR TOWN - AUDITION MONOLOGUES

STAGE MANAGER – There are a lot of things to be said about a wedding. There are a lot of thoughts that go on during a wedding. We can't get them all into one wedding, naturally, - especially not into a wedding at Grover's Corners, where weddings are mighty short and plain. In this play I take the part of the minister. That gives me the right to say a few things more. Yes, for a while now the play gets pretty serious. Y'see some churches say that marriage is a sacrament. I don't quite know what that means, but I can guess. This is a good wedding. The people here are pretty young, but they come from a good State, and they chose right. The real hero of this scene isn't on stage at all. And you all know who that is. And don't forget the other witnesses at this wedding: the ancestors. Millions of them. Most of them set out to live two-by-two. Millions of them. Well, that's all my sermon. 'Twan't very long anyway.

EMILY WEBB – 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 Crawford Notch. 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 let's be happy – Let's look at one another! I can't! I can't go on! It goes so fast. We don't have time to look at one another. I didn't realize. So all that was going on and we never noticed! Take me back – up the hill – to my grave. But first: Wait! One more look! Oh, earth you're too wonderful for anyone to realize you! Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it – every, every minute?

GEORGE GIBBS – I'm celebrating because I've got a friend who tells me all the things that ought to be told me. I'm glad you spoke to me like you did. But you'll see. I'm going to change. And Emily, I want to ask you a favor. Emily, if I go away to State Agricultural College next year, will you write me a letter? The day wouldn't come when I wouldn't want to know everything about our town. Y' know, Emily, whenever I meet a farmer I ask him if he thinks it's important to go to Agricultural School to be a good farmer. And some of them say it's even a waste of time. And like you say, being gone all that time – in other places, and meeting other people. I guess new people probably aren't any better than old ones. Emily – I feel that you're as good a friend as I've got. I don't need to go and meet the people in other towns. Emily, I'm going to make up my mind right now – I won't go. I'll tell Pa about it tonight.

MRS. GIBBS – Myrtle, did one of those second-hand furniture men from Boston come to see you last Friday? Well, he called on me. First I thought he was a patient wantin' to see Doctor Gibbs. 'N he wormed his way into my parlor, and, Myrtle Webb, he offered me three hundred and fifty dollars for Grandmother Wentworth's highboy, as I'm sitting here! He did! That old thing! Why it was so big I didn't know where to put it and I almost gave it to Cousin Hester Wilcox. If I could get the Doctor to take the money and go away some place on a trip I'd sell it like that. Y'know, Myrtle, it's been the dream of my life to see Paris, France. It seems to me that once in your life before you die, you ought to see a country where they don't talk in English and don't even want to.

MR. WEBB – George, I was remembering the other night the advice my father gave me when I got married. Yes, he said “Charles,” he said “start right off showin’ who’s boss. Best thing to do is to give an order about something, even if it doesn’t make sense, just so she’ll learn to obey,” he said. Then he said, “If anything about her irritates you, her conversation or anything, get right up and leave the house; that’ll make it clear to her.” And oh yes, he said “Never let your wife know about how much money you have, never.” So I took the opposite of his advice and I’ve been happy ever since.

DR. GIBBS – George, while I was in my office today I heard a funny sound – and what do you think it was? It was your mother chopping wood. There you see your mother – getting up early; cooking meals all day long; washing and ironing; - and still she has to go out in the backyard and chop wood. I suppose she just got tired of asking you. She just gave up and decided it was easier to do it herself. And you eat her meals, and put on the clothes she keeps nice for you, and you run off and play baseball, - like she’s some hired girl we keep around the house but that we don’t like very much. Well, I knew all I had to do was call your attention to it.

MRS. WEBB – I don’t know why on earth I should be crying. I suppose there’s nothing to cry about. This morning at breakfast it came over me. There was Emily eating her breakfast as she’s done for seventeen years – and she’s going out of my house. I suppose that’s it – And Emily! She suddenly said, “I can’t eat another mouthful.” And she put her head on the table and she cried. Oh, I’ve got to say it – You know, there is something cruel about sending girls out into marriages like that. It’s – it’s cruel, I know; but I just couldn’t get myself to say anything – I went into it blind as a bat myself. The whole world’s wrong, that’s what’s the matter.

SIMON STIMSON – Yes, now you know. Now you know: that’s what it was to be alive. To move around in a cloud of ignorance; to go up and down trampling on the feelings of those – of those about you. To spend and waste time as though you had a million years. To be always at the mercy of one self-centered passion or another. Now you know – that’s the “happy” existence you wanted to go back to. Ignorance and blindness!

LOUELLA SOAMES – Perfectly lovely wedding! Loveliest wedding I ever saw. Oh, I do love a good wedding, don’t you? Doesn’t she make a lovely bride? Don’t know when I’ve seen such a lovely wedding. But I always cry; don’t know why it is, but I always cry. I just like to see young people happy. Don’t you? Oh I think it’s lovely! Aren’t they a lovely couple? Oh, I’ve never been to such a nice wedding. I’m sure they’ll be happy. I always say; Happiness – that’s the great thing. The important thing is to be happy.