

## Mr Stripes

From *Comic Monologues for Women*, by Katy Wix

Well, what a sad day, what a sad, sad day. When Angela asked me if I would say something today, I was of course nervous... I didn't know Mr Stripes that well, and our paths only crossed towards the end of his life, but I took much away from our brief meeting... and just from talking to Angela and her children today it's clear that he was loved and cared for very much.

I suppose what first struck me about Mr Stripes was his wonderful black hair... beautiful black hair and those charming eyes of course, famed for them. I can just imagine him now – sitting on the roof, eating out of bins, chasing kids and playing with his ball. He will be sorely missed. And I hope that his brothers and sisters, um... (*Reading from piece of paper.*) 'Captain Kit Kat', 'Puddle Jumper', and 'Kiss Kiss', don't miss him too much as well.

*Clears her throat.*

When Angela asked me if I would do a poem I said "oh no, don't make me do that!", but I was of course joking, "it would be an honour", I said. Apparently Mr Stripes loved books and would often fall asleep on one... (*Little nod to Angela in congregation.*)

I wanted to read out the poem from that bit in *Notting Hill* – no, not Notting Hi... *Four Weddings and a Funeral* – when the loud gay man dies... but I didn't know what it was called and my internet's down... so I've penned a little something myself. So, here we go – a poem in memory of Mr Stripes. R.I.P. Thank you.

'Oh Mr Stripes,  
You were a one,  
Coming through the cat flap  
When your day was done.  
I looked in the mirror  
I'm sure that I did  
I even tried to  
Swerve and skid  
To avoid your little skeletal frame.  
You dashed. I crashed. Your bones were smashed.  
I'm surely to blame. I'm surely to blame.  
I'm sure you're in heaven  
Playing with some string.  
If only I hadn't needed to go to Birmingham that day then I wouldn't have been driving.'  
The end.

*Pause*

I couldn't find a way to make that bit about Birmingham rhyme.

So, apologies once again to Angela and family. I can only reiterate what a genuine error it was...

On a positive note – they managed to get the big side dent out of the car, so that's good.

Sorry. Thanks.

## **Ismene**

*From **Antigone**, by Sophocles*

*Adapted by Jan Silverman*

*(Ismene, the younger sister of Antigone, knows of her intention to break the law and bury their brother. She sympathizes with her but fears the death penalty Creon will declare.)*

### **ISMENE**

Dear Sister, please – you're all that I have left.

Remember our poor father's bitter fate

Discov'ring his own guilt and stabbing out

His weeping eyes. And then our mother chose

To hang herself, she couldn't find a way

To live with what she knew. Her gentle touch

Will never come again. Our brothers fought

And died, denying us the grace of their

Protection. We're alone! We're what remains

From Oedipus' misbegotten kin.

And we'll die too if we transgress the law.

Antigone, he means it, Creon means it!

He won't have mercy on us, any more

Than if we had been strangers. He's the king!

And we're but subjects. Leave the men to fight!

We're only women! What else can we do?

I'm praying to our dead ones to forgive me,

But I'll obey the edict of the king.

And you must too, Antigone, I beg you!

Your plan's ridiculous! You go too far.

Don't meddle in affairs beyond your power!

## The Grand High Witch

From *The Witches*, by Roald Dahl

Adapted by David Wood

*The Witches are holding their annual meeting at the Hotel magnificent, Bournemouth, under the cover name of The Royal Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. The meeting is presided over by the GRAND HIGH WITCH, who having removed her wig and mask – revealing a wizened, horrible, rotting face – proceeds to lay out her plan to ‘rub out’ all the children of England within a year.*

### GRAND HIGH WITCH

You may rrrree-moof your vigs, and get some fresh air into your spotty scalps. (*The Witches reveal their bald heads*) Vitches of Inkland. Miserrable vitches. Useless lazy vitches. You are a heap of idle good-for-nothings vurms! ...As I am eating my lunch, I am looking out of the vindow at the beach. And vot am I seeing? I am seeing a rrrrevolting sight, which is putting me off my food. Hundreds of rrrrotten rrrrepulsive children. Playing on the sand. Vye have you not got rrrrid of them? Vye? ...You vill do better ...My orders are that every single child in Inkland shall be rrrrubbed out, sqvashed, sqvirtd, sqvittered and frittered before I come here again in vun year’s time ...Who said that? Who dares to argue with me? (*She points dramatically at Witch Two*) It vos you, vos it not? ...Come here. (*She beckons. Witch Two, mesmerized, ascends the platform*)

A vitch who dares to say I’m wrrrong  
Vill not be with us very long!  
A Stupid vitch who answers back  
Must burn until her bones are black!

(*Staring at Witch Two, the GRAND HIGH WITCH gestures. Sparks fly. Smoke rises – Witch Two disappears*) I hope nobody else is going to make me cross today. (*She finds the smouldering remnants of Witch Two’s clothes and holds them up*) Frrrizzled like a frrritter. Cooked like a carrot. You vill never see her again. Now vee can get down to business ...I am having a plan. A gigantic plan! ...You vill buy sveetshops ...You vill fill them high vith luscious sveets and tasty chocs! ...You vill have a Great Gala Opening vith free sveets and chocs for every child! ...You vill be filling every choc and every sveet vith my latest and grrreatest magic formula. (*She produces a potion bottle*) Formula Eighty-Six Delayed Action Mouse-Maker! ...To cause delayed action, rrrroast in the oven vun alarm-clock set to go off at nine o’clock in the morning... Inject vun droplet of the formula in each sveet of choc, open your shop, and as the children pour in on the vay home from school...

(*She chants*)

Crrram them full of sticky eats,  
Send them home still guzzling sveets,  
And in the morning little fools  
Go marching off to separate schools.

## **Saint Joan**

*From **Saint Joan**, By George Bernard Shaw*

### **JOAN**

Yes, they told me you were fools and that I was not to listen to your fine words nor trust to your charity. You promised me my life but you lied. You think that life is nothing but not being stone dead. It is not the bread and water I fear: bread has no sorrow for me, and water no affliction. But to shut me from the light of the sky, and the sight of the fields and flowers, to chain my feet so that I can never again ride with the soldiers nor climb the hills; to make me breathe foul damp darkness, and keep me from everything that brings me back to the love of God when your wickedness and foolishness tempt me to hate Him. All this is worse than the furnace in the Bible that was heated seven times. I could do without my warhorse, I could drag about in a skirt. I could let the banners and the trumpets and the knights and soldiers pass me and leave me behind as they leave the other women, if only I could still hear the wind in the trees, the larks in the sunshine, the young lambs crying through the healthy frost, and the blessed church bells that send my angel voices floating to me on the wind. But without these things I cannot live; and by your wanting to take them away from me, or from any human creature, I know that your counsel is of the devil, and that mine is of God.