

Serious Female Monologues

from

Lost In Yonkers by Neil Simon

Character: Bella (35)

Bella grew up with an unnamed learning disability and, in some ways, is childlike. Still, love has found her and she wants to marry an usher at a local movie theater. She finally gets the courage to ask her stern mother and other family members for their approval. When they respond badly, Bella yells at them, telling them how much she longs to be in love with someone who will love her back. A very touching speech, not funny at all.

You think I can't have healthy babies, Momma? Well, I can...I'm as strong as an ox. I've worked in that store and taken care of you by myself since I'm twelve years old, that's how strong I am...Like steel, Momma. Isn't that how we're supposed to be?...But my babies won't die because I'll love them and take care of them...And they won't get sick like me or Gert or be weak like Eddie and Louie...My babies will be happier than we were because I'll teach them to be happy...Not to grow up and run away or never visit when they're older or not be able to breathe because they're so frightened...and never, ever to make them spend their lives rubbing my back and my legs because you never had anyone around who loved you enough to want to touch you because you made it so clear that you never wanted to be touched with love...Do you know what it's like to touch steel, Momma? It's hard and it's cold and I want to be warm and soft with my children...Let me have my babies, Momma. Because I have to love somebody. I have to love somebody who'll love me before I die...give me that, Momma, and I promise you, you'll never have to worry about being alone...Because you'll have us...Me and my husband and my babies...Louie, tell her how wonderful that would be...Gert, wouldn't that make her happy? Momma? Please say yes...I need you to say yes...please? (It is deathly silent. No one has moved. Finally Grandma gets up slowly, walks to her room, goes in, and quietly closes the door. Bella looks at the others)

Hold me....Somebody please hold me.

her mind! One, and everything under the sun will follow. Don't you see what she's learned here is only clearing the way for that? I can't risk her unlearning it, give me more time with her, another week to –