



www.teachyourselfacting.com

teachyourselfacting

Full text of play available from <http://www.amazon.co.uk>

(Timberlake Wertembaker Plays 1 by Faber and Faber)

N.B. This is an extract from a scene, not strictly a monologue. But we don't think anyone will object if you just pause for a beat marking the two short interjections from Tereus - the speech still makes perfect sense.

PHILOMELE from The Love of The Nightingale by Timberlake Wertembaker

Scene 15

I was the cause, wasn't I? Was I? I said something. What did I do?

Pause

Something in my walk? If I had sung a different song? My hair up, my hair down? It was the beach. I ought not to have been there. I ought not to have been anywhere. I ought not to have been.... at all.... then there would no cause. Is that it? Answer.

(Tereus: What?)

My body bleeding, my spirit ripped open, and I am the cause? No, this cannot be right, why would I cause my own pain? That isn't reasonable. What was it then, tell me, Tereus, if I was not the cause?

Pause

You must know it was your act, you must know, tell me, why, say.

Pause

It was your act. It was you. I caused nothing.

Short pause

And Procne is not dead. I can smell her on you.

Pause

You. You lied. And you.

What did you tell your wife, my sister, Procne, what did you tell her? Did you tell her you violated her sister, the sister she gave into your trust? Did you tell her what a coward you are and that you could not, cannot bear to look at me? Did you tell her that despite my fear, your violence, when I saw you in your nakedness I couldn't help laughing because you were so shrivelled, so ridiculous and it is not the way it is on the statues? Did you tell her you cut me because you yourself had no strength? Did you tell her I pitied her for having in her bed a man who could screech such quick and ugly pleasure, a man of jelly beneath his hard skin, did you tell her that?

Pause

And once I envied her happiness with her northern hero. The leader of men. Take the sword out of your hand, you fold into a cloth. Have they ever looked at you, your soldiers, your subjects?

(Tereus: That's enough.)

There's nothing inside you. You're only full when you're filled with violence. And they obey you? Look up to you? Have the men and women of Thrace seen you naked? Shall I tell them? Yes, I will talk.

[To return to lists of speeches, exit this page](#)