

Miss Julie
Monologues

Miss Julie. Yes – enormously – but I've hated him too. I must have done so without realising it. But it was he who brought me up to despise my own gender, made me half woman and half man. Who is to blame for what has happened – my father, my mother, myself? Myself? I have no self. I haven't a thought I didn't get from my father, not an emotion I didn't get from my mother – and this last idea – that all people are equal – I got that from him, my fiancé whom I called a wretched little fool because of it. How can the blame be mine, then? Put it all on to Jesus, as Christine did – no, I'm too proud to do that, and too clever – thanks to my learned father. And that about a rich person not being able to get into heaven, that's a lie, and Christine has money in the savings bank, so she won't get there either. Whose fault is it all? What does it matter to us whose fault it is? I shall have to bear the blame, carry the consequences –

Jean. (*deeply cut, speaks with strong emotion*) Oh, Miss Julie! Oh! A dog may lie on the Countess's sofa, a horse may have its nose patted by a young lady's hand, but a servant! (*He changes his tone.*) Oh, now and then a man has strength enough to hoist himself up in the world, but how often does it happen? But do you know what I did? I ran down into the millstream with my clothes on. They dragged me out and beat me. But the following Sunday, when my father and all the others had gone to visit my grandmother, I managed to fix things so that I stayed at home. And then I scrubbed myself with soap and hot water, put on my best clothes, and went to church, in order that I might see you. I saw you, and returned home, determined to die. But I wanted to die beautifully, and pleasantly, without pain. Then I remembered it was dangerous to sleep under an elder bush. We had a big one, in flower. I stripped it of everything it held, and then I lay down in the oat-bin. Have you ever noticed how beautiful oats are? Soft to the touch like human skin. Well, I shut the lid and closed my eyes. I fell asleep and woke up feeling really very ill. But I didn't die, as you can see. What did I want? I don't know. I had no hope of winning you, of course – but you were a symbol to me of the hopelessness of my ever climbing out of the class in which I was born.