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Honors Day

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From Broken to Villian

The topics I am looking at for my capstone is my growth as an actor from when I started acting to today, understanding a character fully, as well as integrating my interests in history and the mythology of the Universal Monsters. The things I have learned during this process is that it can be difficult to flesh out a character, let alone a female villain. It was hard to choose different monologues that show her strength yet defiance against society and their rules for women. We normally think of the female villain as this sexy yet intelligent creatures that usually seduce the male protagonist.

It's my job to make this female character have some of those qualities, yet have her grow from being broken and not knowing her place into being a villain in order to survive in the setting. I did some research about feminism in the 1950s, and found out that for over 15 years, our society tells women that their only fulfillment in life is to be wives and mothers and to look down on those who were “unfeminine”, which would probably mean women who were pursuing a career rather than a family. Additionally, by the end of the decade, the average marriage age for women dropped to down to about 20 years of age, the engagement age was 17 years old.

Another thing that was difficult was figuring out the setting of this monologue scene. Knowing that I wanted to have this character grow into this sort of villain that people can sympathize with. I was bouncing between ideas when my professor gave me the idea of a 1950s mental institution's padded cell. That was perfect for what I envisioned. Another thing she told me was

that this scene was supposed to be a sort of “limbo” or “purgatory” for her. So, in layman’s terms, I am delving into her brain and her thought process in these moments. With the history influences attached, I thought “Well, since we are in the 1950s? What event in American history was during this decade?”, and then it hit. The Red Scare, which was a fear of Communist spies infiltrating the US government and taking over.

Now, I bet you’re wondering how does the mythology of the Universal Monsters fit into this?

Well, the broken aspect is connected to the Bride of Frankenstein and her questioning of why she made and what was her purpose in life? The villain aspect is connected to Dracula. He is a villain in most eyes because he drains people of blood. He actually does this because he needs to survive, so that what he needs to do in order to live. With my character, she realizes that her fighting for her own voice in society is what she needs to survive this hellhole, no matter if people see her as a villain.

T.W. Rape, mutilation, anxiety, overdose, abuse.