

The Perils of Romance

A Monologue

Adapted from an Unfinished Play

By Joe Barnes

jjbarnes@rice.edu

Character

Elizabeth Wick

Female, 50s-60s, a widow

Elizabeth

I know you this will come as a shock to you. But I was a virgin when I married your father. Oh, I was a sophisticated girl in some ways. My parents not only subscribed to the New York Times. They read it. I had a degree in English literature from an expensive liberal arts college. My manners would pass muster at even the most fussy of upper middle class dinner parties. And, God help me, I was a romantic. Too much Elizabeth Barrett Browning, I suppose. Our wedding night came as something of a shock. Well, rather more than something of a shock. Your father turned out to be both brutal and brief. It is an unfortunate combination. We would eventually reach an uneasy accommodation in the bedroom, as we would in our marriage. But my faith in heterosexuality never really recovered from my honeymoon.