

Cynthia's Choice

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A FIRST LIGHT monologue

By Michele Clarke

Contact:  
Michele Clarke  
(203) 912-0560  
mclarke15@gmail.com

Find FIRST LIGHT on NPX at <https://newplayexchange.org/plays/3047867/first-light>.

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

CYNTHIA        mid 40s, accomplished, guarded

## SETTING

Cynthia's home office. Right now.

*CYNTHIA stands in the middle of a home office  
(can be a bare stage).*

CYNTHIA

See that pile of blue storage bins? With the two trash bags full of stuff on top?

That's my childhood.

8mm movies. Loose pictures wrapped with elastic bands. Envelopes full of brittle brown negatives. So many family albums...

There's three generations in there. But I'd have to go through the recent stuff to get to the good memories.

(beat)

A lot of what's in there is covered in mildew. Because the basement was always damp. Everything was stashed up under the stairs in a cubbyhole my dad made when he built the family room. He even raised the floor by putting 2x4s on their side underneath it. But it was still damp.

(beat)

Mildew takes its time.

But eventually it grows all the way across photos, negatives... anything it can find.

And whatever it attacks slowly disappears. Photos are almost impossible to restore if it's bad enough.

It's like a death sentence for memories.

(beat)

It's been four years and that tower is still sitting there.

I tried to hide it behind the door. But it's so big it sticks out.

I still can't go near it. It's like there's an energy surrounding it that will burn me.

(beat)

I'm not even sure why I worked so hard to get it all-- when my brother was selling everything at a yard sale after our mother finally died.

I got my cousin to convince him to give it to me. I said I'd digitize it all so everyone could have them.

But it's just been sitting there. And no one's asked for them.

Maybe I'm not the only one who feels this way.

(beat)

I can't keep this stuff here. I see it all day.

Maybe that's why it's not getting any easier.

I thought it would get easier.

(beat)

I'm done living with ghosts. I need to have Steven move all of this to the garage.

It's damp in the garage.

*CYNTHIA exits.*