

SONGBIRD BY TRICIA KELLOWAN

SYNOPSIS: Drawing inspiration from Maya Angelou's "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings", this dark fantasy/mystery explores themes of marginalization, conformity, death, abandonment and connection in the poetic tale called "Songbird."

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

- **MARIA** – A young woman/ ghost. She is between 22 to 30 years old. To the world she seems mentally ill, but to the birds she is as unique as they are. She is haunted by the way she died. She searches for answers by repeatedly visiting her husband, MIKE, as she exposes the dynamics of their relationship. She also visits her lonesome mother who cannot hear or see her. She has a gift of connecting to birds and a weak level of hypnosis through humming. MARIA represents the caged bird.
- **MIKE** – A young man in his 20's - 30's; MARIA's husband. He is seemingly proper and slightly condescending. He is constantly visited by his dead wife MARIA who reminds him of their relationship. MIKE's true character is displayed as his communication with MARIA intensifies. MIKE represents the oppressor.
- **BIRD WOMAN/ROBYN** – MARIA's estranged twin sister. She has strong hypnosis powers using her melodic singing voice. She is the child that was sent away to a strange area where she learned to sing and communicate with birds. She is the leader of the BIRD CHOIR. She is usually connected to MARIA, hearing her humming sounds. BIRD WOMAN/ROBYN represents the free bird.
- **MOTHER** – MARIA and BIRD WOMAN/ROBYN's mother. She is in her 50's or 60's. She appears strong and loud mouthed, but she grieves constantly over her missing daughter MARIA. She also shows loving actions towards MARIA, but her true nature is revealed as she is visited by her estranged daughter BIRD WOMAN/ROBYN. She is afraid to face her fears and is secretly feeling guilt over the mistakes she made in the past. MOTHER cannot see or hear MARIA. MOTHER represents conformity.
- **ETHEL** – A woman in her 40's or 50's. MOTHER's caretaker. ETHEL is intent on keeping MOTHER away from BIRD WOMAN and constantly consoles her with medication when she has breakdowns. She is seemingly quiet but outwardly protective. ETHEL represents familiarity.

- ***BIRD CHOIR*** – The followers and choir members of BIRD WOMAN who can all sing and are capable of movement. They are heard throughout the play and eventually revealed in bird costumes. They have a special connection with MARIA as well. The BIRD CHOIR represents freedom.