

## Kathleen Turner

▶ The producers scheduled eight days for Kathleen Turner to record her memoir, *Send Yourself Roses*. “But people always underestimate how quickly I work,” chuckles Turner in her trademark smoky voice. “We did it in five.”

Admittedly, it took a while to get to the recording session. When she and coauthor Gloria Feldt finished the book in 2008, Turner was beginning her battle with rheumatoid arthritis. Making an audiobook was the last thing on her mind. In fact, she forgot about it until 2015, when comedian Amy Poehler, whose book *Yes Please* Turner had recorded parts of, asked, “What about your book?”

Turner laughs, “That’s when I finally looked into it.” Still, the audiobook had to wait until she finished performing in the one-woman play *A Year of Magical Thinking*, at Arena Stage in Washington, DC.

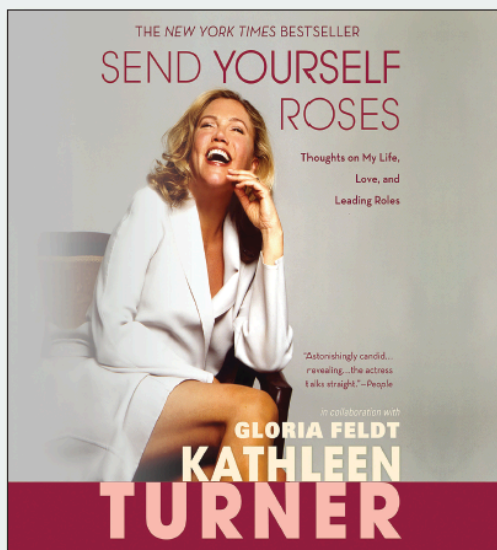
“It’s a one-hour-and-forty-one-minute monologue,” explains Turner. “Recording a book at the same time would have been too much. On stage, you have to guard your voice—it’s your most precious instrument. So, on weekends, with two shows on Saturday and two on Sunday, I carry around a little notebook in which I’ve written, ‘I am on voice rest. Only ask questions that I can answer with a nod or shake of my head.’ The funniest thing is that everybody starts to whisper to you. And I have to write, ‘No! You *can* talk!’”

At last, when recording day finally loomed, Turner realized that she hadn’t glanced at her book in years. “I got myself really worked up. I mean—what if it was awful?” Holding her breath, she peeked and discovered—“Whew!—she still liked what she’d written eight years before.

However, while she “loved the recording process, and [her] director and sound engineer,” Turner found the five days harder than expected. “I hadn’t realized how tough some parts would be to read aloud. My father’s death. Dealing with the arthritis. My marriage ending. The alcohol abuse.” She sighs. “I’d have to stop and get myself under control before I could start again.” Yet, offered the chance to rerecord the emotionally fraught passages, she declined. “I told them, ‘This is the truth. The other would be fake.’”

Finding the truth in a role is part of what Turner encourages when she conducts master classes. “I love to teach,” she says. So much so that, working with Professor Dustin Morrow, she recently completed a book about acting and the roles she’s played.

“Do you know, after this recording experience, I’d love to do more audiobooks. I might turn the new book into an audio production,” she muses. With her famously throaty laugh, she adds, “There’s so much you can convey with your voice, don’t you agree?”—*Aurelia C. Scott*



**SEND YOURSELF ROSES:**  
**Thoughts on My Life, Love, and Leading Roles**  
Kathleen Turner, Gloria Feldt  
Read by Kathleen Turner

In this heartfelt performance of her 2008 memoir, actor Kathleen Turner’s famously smoky voice is as enticing as always, if a bit more smoky than it once was. Turner-the-actor possesses timing, fearlessness, and strong characterization skills. All of those, plus absolute honesty, make *Send Yourself Roses* a moving and involving listening experience for her many fans, as well as young actors, for there’s a good amount of acting craft shared along with her personal story. And what a story it is—famous roles; fellow actors; marriage and efforts to conceive; social commentary; her battle with rheumatoid arthritis and substance abuse, and more. Turner is brave and interesting, and if her voice cracks with emotion occasionally, well, so much the better. *A.C.S.*

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