

# DESIRE

(Part 2 of The FAST LOVE Trilogy)

a play in two acts

by

Alex Broun

(C) Sydney  
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email: [abroun@bigpond.net.au](mailto:abroun@bigpond.net.au)

“You shut your mouth

How can you say

I go about things the wrong way ?

I am human and I need to be loved

Just like everybody else does.

- **The Smiths**

**“How soon is now ?”**

"Surface surface surface"

- **Bret Easton Ellis**

**"American Psycho"**

## **Characters**

LARA

GERALD

PATRICK

KATE

## **Time**

The present.

## **Scene**

Sydney, Australia.

Various locations around the inner city.

## **Notes on the Music**

Each scene is named after a specific song by either U2 or The Smiths. It is hoped the lyrics of these songs will give the audience, actors and directors a key to a greater understanding of each scene. Except when in the nightclub (Act 1: Scenes 4,5,6 and 7) it is possible that a portion of each song could be played immediately before the scene it gives its name to.

# **DESIRE**

was first performed by

**The New Mercury Theatre**

at

**The Crossroads Theatre**  
Sydney, Australia

**On April the 8<sup>th</sup>, 1994**

with the following cast:

<b>PATRICK:</b>	<b>Morgan Smallbone</b>
<b>LARA:</b>	<b>Christine Stephen-Daly</b>
<b>KATE:</b>	<b>Dee Smart</b>
<b>GERALD:</b>	<b>Christopher Mayer</b>

The production was directed by the author and designed by **Greg Perano**.

## Character Breakdowns

- LARA -** 21, very attractive but her face betrays the traces of someone who has started to lose their soul. Her "model" good looks and "up to date" clothes do not hide the fact that underneath is an "empty" young woman looking for something or someone to fill up the emptiness she feels. Lara is dissatisfied with her life and beginning to question the way she lives, uncertain that there is not a better way.
- GERALD -** 29, LARA's boyfriend. Handsome, overtly sexual and very fashionably dressed with a rugged charm and a super smooth exterior. The surface however only hides a much darker more complex interior.
- PATRICK -** 23, GERALD's flatmate. Intense, passionate and intelligent but also insecure, he has a boyish, naive quality. Patrick desperately wants to fit in, to be accepted as part of the scene but this goes against all his instincts.
- KATE -** 22, LARA's former schoolmate. Exuberant, vibrant and very witty. A failed relationship in the past Kate is looking for a new start in a new city. She is also flirting with the idea of a different way of living.

**Act 1**

SPOTLIGHT. **KATE**, FLICKING THROUGH A FASHION MAGAZINE.  
AS SHE SPEAKS SLIDES ARE SHOWN: ADVERTISING IMAGES AND GLOSSY  
PHOTOGRAPHS OF WOMEN AND MEN - SEPARATELY AND TOGETHER.

**KATE:** Why do we do it ? (SHOWING PHOTOS) Why do we spend our whole lives trying to look like this, or this, or even that ? What makes us spend every waking moment desperately striving to be beautiful ? For most of us it's impossible. We weren't born with perfect olive skin, crystal blue eyes and upward curving breasts or long dark locks, washboard stomachs and a tight bum that looks incredible in footy shorts. We don't perfect teeth, perfect figures or perfect muscles. We have hair that really isn't black or brown, eyes that are often so red you've forgotten the colour, that is if you can get past the rings underneath, pudgy little stomachs, disappearing chins, acne, rotten teeth, cellulite thighs, nobbly knees, love handles, third eyebrows, saggy tits, burst capillaries, big noses, pointy ears and fat arses. Not to mention the hair you have but don't want if you're a girl and the hair you don't have but want if you're a guy. We aren't ever going to look like that so what keeps us on the relentless quest for perfection ? Is it insecurity or vanity, self love or self hate, the desire to fit in or the desire to stand out, the need to be accepted or the wish to be admired ? Do we do it so that special person will fall in love with us or do we do it so everybody will love us ? Do we do it because we're mad or because we're sane, because we're sad or because we're happy, because we're bored or simply because we can ? Or do we do it because we're never satisfied ? Because no matter how much you've got you can never have enough. Anyway what's wrong with improving your appearance, making the best of what you've got, looking your optimum. Nothing, except sometimes, somewhere in all this obsession with surface, something gets lost. The image no longer reflects the reality. At some point the body takes over from the soul, and when that happens it's easy to forget where you came from and just who that beautiful person in the mirror really is.

AS **KATE** FINISHES AN IMAGE OF A GIRL SITTING AT A TABLE,  
SMOKING A CIGARETTE APPEARS ON THE SCREEN.

THE LIGHTS FADE ON **KATE** AND LIGHTS COME UP ON EXACTLY THE SAME  
IMAGE - BUT NOW RECREATED ON THE STAGE.

**1. "Ask"**

An inner city pub. Night.

THE GIRL'S NAME IS **LARA**.

SHE SITS AT THE TABLE, DRINK BESIDE HER, SMOKING A CIGARETTE.  
SHE IS WAITING FOR SOMEONE, OR SOMETHING. IN THE BACKGROUND

WE CAN HEAR JAZZ MUSIC. LIGHTS COME UP ON:

GERALD WORKING BEHIND THE BAR. PATRICK SITTING ON A STOOL IN FRONT OF IT, DRINKING A CIDER.

GERALD: The first thing you've got to realise is that they want it as much as you.

PATRICK: You think so ?

GERALD: I know so. I mean you hear all that shit about girls not liking it as much and girls being harder to arouse but listen, I know - they want and they need it. Just like you and me.

PATRICK: I don't know.

GERALD: You've got to stop thinking it's all your fault - it's not. I mean sometimes you're doing everything right and the girl's the one with problems. Like I slept with this girl once and we did it for hours - and I mean hours - and she still didn't come. Now that's not my fault is it ? It's hers. I wake up later and she's having a wank. She starts screaming: "Gerald ! Gerald ! I'm coming !" What does she want me to do ? Stand up and applaud ?

PATRICK: Who knows ?

GERALD: Attitude Patrick. It's all attitude. Stop begging for it and go out and get yourself some. You know your problem. No confidence. You've got needy eyes. No one goes for that. Believe in yourself. You are attractive. Girls are interested.

PATRICK: Not lately.

GERALD: That's because you're not projecting the right image. You're all insecure. How long's it actually been ?

PATRICK: Not sure.

GERALD: Come on. You can tell me.

PAUSE.

PATRICK: Six months.

GERALD: Six months ! Shit. You sure it's still working ?

PATRICK: Yes.

GERALD: Have you checked ? Maybe it's fallen off. The longest I've ever been without it is three weeks. The longest three weeks of my life.

PAUSE. LARA DRINKS.

PATRICK: So what happened to her ?

GERALD: The girl who couldn't ? We hung around together for a

GERALD: (CONT) bit, went out a few times, but in the end I just lost interest. I mean the sex had become non-existent and when it's all said and done, a fuck's better than a friend.

PATRICK: Is it ?

GERALD: You tell me. You see Patrick, what it's all about is recognising a need and then taking steps to satisfy that need. You don't need a friend do you ? You need a fuck. Am I correct ?

PATRICK: Well ...

GERALD: Am I correct ?

PATRICK: Maybe.

GERALD: Alright, so there's the need. Now we've got to take steps. Steps to satisfy. First of all we need an attractive young lady.

PATRICK: But -

GERALD: No buts Patty boy. You know what the man says - just do it , and do it now.

PATRICK: (LOOKING AROUND THE EMPTY PUB) There's no one around tonight.

PAUSE.

GERALD: (GESTURING TO LARA) What about her ?

PATRICK: Lara ?

GERALD: What's wrong ? You don't think she's attractive ?

PATRICK: Of course I do.

GERALD: What then ?

PATRICK: Gerald. She's your girlfriend.

GERALD: I don't have a girlfriend.

PATRICK: Well, you two are together.

GERALD: When we feel like it. What does that matter ?

PATRICK: (AFTER A PAUSE) Let me get this straight. Are you telling me to -

GERALD: Listen, I'm a man of the Nineties. I'm not possessive. I don't get jealous. There she is - take steps.

PATRICK: But she's your girlfriend.

GERALD: I just told you. I don't have a girlfriend.

PATRICK: Does Lara know that ?

GERALD: We have an understanding.

PATRICK: But Lara doesn't even like me.

GERALD: How do you know that ? Have you asked her ?

PATRICK: No but I can tell.

GERALD: How can you tell ? You're pretty good looking.

PATRICK: Sure.

GERALD: You could do with a new set of clothes but you're not too bad. I know lots of young ladies -

PATRICK: Lara is not lots of young ladies.

GERALD: True, but that doesn't mean she don't fancy you. Many's the occasion I've heard her say -

PATRICK: What have you heard her say ?

GERALD: "Patrick's looking good tonight". Things like that.

PATRICK: Bullshit.

GERALD: She has. And what about that time she kissed you ?

PATRICK: That was just a joke.

GERALD: Was it ? Low self esteem Patrick, low self esteem. The chances we miss in life due to low self esteem.

PATRICK: Gerald, I'm not you.

GERALD: But you could be. (PAUSE) So what's the problem ?

PATRICK: What do you think ?

GERALD: Alright, so she's had some lovers previously, one of them which happens to be me, but you're no Saint either.

PATRICK: I can't believe we're even discussing this.

GERALD: Look matey, what's important is the present. Living for today, not yesterday. I'm talking about right now. She's free tonight - take steps.

PATRICK: Why are you doing this ?

GERALD: I see a solution - I suggest it.

PATRICK: Gerald - I'm you're flatmate.

GERALD: And I'm giving the all clear.

PATRICK: You really wouldn't mind ?

GERALD: Not one bit. So what are you waiting for ? All she can say is no.

PAUSE.

PATRICK: Some other time maybe.

GERALD: Hopeless. Absolutely bloody hopeless. Well, can't say I didn't try. Better get some more beers. Back in a sec.

**GERALD EXITS. PAUSE. PATRICK STANDS. HE WALKS SLOWLY OVER TO LARA. HE STOPS A FEW FEET AWAY. LARA LOOKS AT HIM.**

PATRICK: Hi

LARA: Hi.

PAUSE.

PATRICK: What are you up to ?

LARA: The usual. And you ?

PATRICK: Not much.

PAUSE. **PATRICK LOOKS AT LARA.**

LARA: Is there anything wrong ?

PATRICK: Have you got the time ?

LARA: No, sorry.

PATRICK: Just thought you might.

LARA: Why don't you look at your watch ?

PATRICK: Oh, it's not working.

LARA: Right.

PAUSE. **GERALD RETURNS WITH BEERS.**

PATRICK: I might ask Gerald.

LARA: Bye.

**PATRICK GOES BACK TO THE BAR.**

GERALD: Change your mind huh ? Well, what did she say ?

PATRICK: Not a lot.

GERALD: Come on, how'd you go ?

PATRICK: I got to go to work anyway.

GERALD: Night shift again eh ? Does wonders for your social life.

PATRICK: (FINISHING DRINK) Don't remind me.

GERALD: Have fun.

**PATRICK STARTS TO LEAVE.**

GERALD: Oi.

**PATRICK TURNS. GERALD PICKS UP PATRICK'S WALLET WHICH HE LEFT ON THE BAR AND THROWS IT TO HIM.**

GERALD: Someone's got to look after you.

**PATRICK EXITS. GERALD CONTINUES WORKING. LIGHTS CHANGE.**

## 2. "Half a Person"

**LARA'S** house, the next morning.

SPOTLIGHT UP ON **KATE**, STANDING BESIDE THE FRONT DOOR. SHE IS WEARING TWO COATS, SEVERAL JUMPERS, BULKY TRACKSUIT PANTS, A COUPLE OF HATS, OLD BOOTS AND MONEY BELT. THERE IS A LARGE SUITCASE IN EACH HAND AND A HUGE BACK-PACK ON HER BACK.

SHE CHECKS THE ADDRESS. WITH SOME DIFFICULTY SHE KNOCKS ON THE FRONT DOOR. PAUSE. SHE KNOCKS AGAIN.

KATE: Lara. (CALLS) Lara.

**LARA** ENTERS, PUTTING ON A DRESSING GOWN. SHE OPENS THE DOOR.

KATE: Lara ?

LARA: Kate ? Is that you ?

KATE: Of course it's me. Who else would look like this ?  
(THEY EMBRACE) How are you Larry ?

LARA: I'm alright. What happened ?

KATE: One of my bags busted. Had to put all the clothes on.

LARA: I meant last night.

KATE: I missed the bus. I was on the phone and I when I came out - it was gone. Had to get the train instead.

LARA: Who were you talking too ?

KATE: Just Michael.

LARA: Michael ?

KATE: Had to say goodbye. I tried to ring but no one answered.

LARA: I was at the Bentley Bar. Waiting for you.

KATE: Oops.

LARA: Forget it. You're here now.

KATE: That's right. I'm here. (CALLING) Sydney ! I love you !

LARA: You only just got here.

KATE: So what ? I'm already in love.

LARA: You'll get used to it.

KATE: I hope so.

LARA: Come inside. Take all those clothes off.

KATE: Yeah I better. I'm starting to feel like Gregor Samsa. Eeeh eeheh.

LARA: Who ?

KATE: You know ? The cockroach guy.

THEY GO INSIDE. **KATE** DROPS HER BAGS AND STARTS TAKING OFF HER EXCESS CLOTHING.

KATE: I can't believe it. I'm actually here. How long's it been ?

LARA: Long time.

KATE: What you been up to ? You working ?

LARA: Just at a cafe - down the road.

KATE: No modelling ?

LARA: Now and then.

KATE: How glamorous.

LARA: Pays the rent.

KATE: Doing any painting ? (PAUSE) Can't afford the paint eh ?

LARA: Something like that.

KATE: Is there anything wrong ?

LARA: Just have woken up yet. How long you planning on staying ?

KATE: Not sure. Might be awhile. If that's alright of course ?

LARA: Not a problem. You got any money ? Sydney's pretty expensive.

KATE: Yeah I noticed. I got a cab here. 450 dollars - really ?

**KATE FINISHES REMOVING THE EXTRA CLOTHES. SHE IS NOW IN PANTS, SANDSHOES AND A COMFORTABLE TOP.**

KATE: Ta - da !

LARA: (ACTING SURPRISED) Kate.

KATE: Lara. (THEY EMBRACE AGAIN.) You look so beautiful.

LARA: Thanks.

KATE: So, come on - how do I look ?

LARA: Great.

KATE: You're just saying that.

LARA: Love the pants.

KATE: You don't like my pants ?

LARA: They're just a bit ... Melbourne.

KATE: Yes they are aren't they ? Well then - they're gone.  
First thing I'm going to do is get myself some new clothes.

LARA: We can go down to Crown Street if you like.

KATE: I like. So tell me ? How's your love life ?

LARA: Okay.

KATE: Anyone special I should know about ?

LARA: Not really.

KATE: No one ? That's not like you.

LARA: Yeah. What about you ?

KATE: Oh well, you know. Bit of this, bit of that.

PAUSE.

LARA: You want to tell me about it ?

KATE: Tell you about what ?

LARA: It's all a bit strange. Don't hear from you in months.  
Then that phone call. Two days later, here you are.

KATE: Can't a girl act on impulse ?

LARA: It just seemed a bit sudden.

KATE: You know me. Act first, think later. (LOOKING AROUND)  
Who else lives here ?

LARA: Just another girl. Imogen.

KATE: She still asleep ?

LARA: Wouldn't be home yet.

KATE: (CHECKING WATCH) It's ten o'clock in the morning.

LARA: Give her an hour or two. There was a big Rave last night. Dusk till dawn. "Funk Inc."

KATE: "Fucking" ? It's called "Fucking" ? You're kidding ?

LARA: "*Funk Inc.*".

KATE: Oh, right. Why weren't you there ?

LARA: I don't go anymore. I always end up getting really bored.

KATE: I don't know how they stay awake all night.

LARA: Drugs. (PAUSE) Well? Are you going to tell me or not ?

KATE: Sydney's so humid isn't it ?

LARA: Katie.

KATE: How about a coffee ?

**PATRICK ENTERS. HE KNOCKS ON THE DOOR.**

KATE: Saved. (GOING TO DOOR) Tall, dark, handsome.

LARA: Shut up.

KATE: Great arse - I mean, eyes.

LARA: Shut up.

**KATE OPENS THE DOOR>**

KATE: Bourke Street mental asylum. Are you seeking admission ?

**PATRICK IS CONFUSED.**

PATRICK: Is Lara there ?

KATE: No one here but us loonies.

LARA: (APPEARING) Patrick.

PATRICK: Hi.

LARA: What are you doing here ?

PATRICK: Just walking past. Thought I'd say hello.

LARA: You better come in.

PATRICK: (TO KATE) If that's alright ?

KATE: Enter and be damned.

**PATRICK MOVES INSIDE.**

LARA: You went to Funk Inc. did you ?

PATRICK: No. I was working. I do Night Shift at this Private Hospital.  
Just finished.

KATE: Don't you mean mental asylum ?

LARA: This is my friend Kate. She's from Melbourne.

KATE: (SHAKING HANDS) But don't hold that against me.

LARA: We used to live together.

PATRICK: Which part ?

KATE: Who cares ?

PATRICK: I like Melbourne.

KATE: Why ?

THERE IS AN UNEASY SILENCE.

LARA: I was just going to make Kate a coffee. (EXITING) You  
want one Patrick ?

PATRICK: No thanks.

SILENCE.

LARA: So ? What are you up to ?

PATRICK: I was just on my way down to The Tropicana.

KATE: The Tropicana ?

LARA: (RETURNING) Cafe. Down the road.

KATE: The one George Michael sang about. (SINGS) "Club Tropicana  
drinks are free, Women and sunshine - "

LARA: Kate. (KATE STOPS) Chill.

KATE: Sorry. (SHE SITS)

LARA: You were saying Patrick ?

PATRICK: (SLOWLY) I was wondering if you'd like to come with me.  
If you're not doing anything.

LARA: To the Tropicana ?

PATRICK: For a cup of coffee.

PAUSE.

LARA: Look I'd love to but Kate's just got in. I was planning on taking her down to Crown Street.

QUICKLY, ALMOST OVERLAPPING.

PATRICK: Oh.

LARA: Sorry.

PATRICK: That's alright.

KATE: I don't mind.

LARA: No. I can't leave you.

PATRICK: I understand.

KATE: I'm alright really.

LARA: Not on your first day.

PATRICK: Of course.

KATE: Maybe I could come for a coffee too ?

LARA: That's an idea.

PATRICK: Forget it.

KATE: Or I could unpack or something.

LARA: You sure ?

PATRICK: (LOUDLY) No. (SILENCE.) I better get some sleep anyway.

LARA: Okay. Some other time maybe ?

PATRICK: Sure.

KATE: Bye.

**PATRICK HEADS FOR THE DOOR.**

LARA: What about tonight ?

PATRICK: (STOPS) Tonight ?

LARA: Yeah. Kate and I'll probably be going up to Kinsela's. Why don't you meet us there ?

PATRICK: Kinsela's ?

KATE: Sounds good to me.

LARA: Downstairs. About ten-thirty.

PATRICK: Ten-thirty.

LARA: Not to early is it ?

PATRICK: No, that's fine.

LARA: I guess we'll see you there then.

PATRICK: (LEAVING) Okay. Bye.

KATE: Bye.

PATRICK: (STOPS) Ten thirty.

LARA: Ten thirty.

**PATRICK EXITS.**

KATE: Bundle of nerves isn't he ?

LARA: Sweet though.

KATE: He likes you.

LARA: Just as a friend. He lives with the guy I'm seeing.

KATE: So there is someone ?

LARA: Always is. What did you think ? He's single.

KATE: Not my type.

LARA: No ? Not insane enough ?

KATE: Absolutely. Now, where's that coffee ?

THEY EXIT. LIGHTS CHANGE.

### **3. "What She Said." (or "You just haven't earned it yet baby !")**

Street cafe, later.

THE LIGHTS COME UP ON **LARA** AND **KATE** SITTING ON MILK CRATES AT A LOW TABLE, BOTH WEAR SUNGLASSES. **KATE** IS WEARING NEW CLOTHES AND HAS A STACK OF SHOPPING BAGS NEXT TO HER.

KATE: Great place. Can't they afford seats ?

LARA: Slum it baby.

KATE: Cool sunnies.

LARA: Are you sure you bought enough ? Maybe we should go back. I think there was a couple of shops you missed.

KATE: Excellent. New city, new look

LARA: How much money did you say you had ?

KATE: After this little spree - not a lot.

LARA: What are you gonna do ?

KATE: I can work. I'll get a job.

LARA: Haven't you heard? There are no jobs. It's called a recession.

KATE: Hey, I'm from Victoria. We invented the recession.  
I'll find something.

PAUSE. THEY SIP THEIR COFFEES.

LARA: Why Katie ?

KATE: The recession ? I'm not sure. Something do with fiscal flow.

LARA: Why did you come here ?

KATE: You know - follow the yellow brick road.

LARA: Katie.

KATE: We are inquisitive.

LARA: Wouldn't you be ?

KATE: Of course not. (PAUSE) I don't know. Things had become you know, stale in Melbourne. I mean - I'm a single girl these days, I need some excitement, some adventure. I thought - Sydney. That's the place to be when your single isn't it ? Melbourne is definitely happy couples' land, but Sydney - single. I liked the sound of that.

PAUSE.

LARA: Michael right ?

KATE: Am I that easy to see through ?

LARA: Honestly ? Yes. What's he done now ?

KATE: Larry this isn't the place to have this conversation.

LARA: No excuses.

KATE: Look, it really is a three-in-the-morning-cask-of  
-cheap-red job okay ?

LARA: Not okay. I won't introduce you to any cute guys.

KATE: That's playing dirty. (PAUSE.) He's getting married.

LARA: To who ?

KATE: Anka. That's right - Miss Sweden. My one true love. We used to lie in bed on Sundays and discuss Edvard Munch, and then he runs off with a air hostess. There's a message in there somewhere.

LARA: Look, I know you loved him and everything but it has been over a year.

KATE: And I'm not over him yet ? How Melbourne of me. I just couldn't sit there and watch him walk down the aisle. I had to get out.

LARA: You're gonna have to get over him one day.

KATE: Why ? I thought I could become some weird kind of nun and retreat to a far off land where I'd build a secret shrine to him and worship there daily till the day I died. The Holy Order of St Michael the Bastard. I wouldn't eat either. Except on Tuesdays. (PAUSE) Hey Oprah, don't judge me too hard. I know I have to get over him and that's why I came to Sydney. The centre of sin. It's a positive step. It's time to shed the past and live it up. I'm gonna cram in as much wild living as I can as quick as I can. So watch out Sydney - here I come. Who knows ? I might even meet someone new. (NOTICING SOMEONE) I mean look at him. There isn't actually a shortage of adorable men in Sydney ?

LARA: Don't get your hopes up. They're all gay.

PAUSE.

KATE: So what do you say ?

LARA: What do you want me to say ?

KATE: Say you will aid in my corruption.

LARA: Alright. I will aid in Kate's corruption.

KATE: Thank you.

LARA: I think I'm going to regret this.

KATE: You betcha !

**GERALD** ENTERS, WEARING SUNGLASSES. **KATE** SEES HIM.

KATE: Now he looks like the perfect place to start. Oops ! He's coming over. Is my hair okay ?

LARA: (SEES **GERALD**. DRY) Perfect.

**GERALD**: Morning ladies.

LARA: Kate this is Gerald.

KATE: (OFFERING HAND) Nice to meet you.

GERALD: And you.

LARA: Kate's up from Melbourne. She's staying with me for awhile.

GERALD: Escaping the rain eh ?

KATE: Amongst other things. (PAUSE.) Well, I might get another cappucino. Anybody else want anything ? Latte, Eccocino ?

LARA: I'm fine.

KATE: Gerald ?

GERALD: No thanks.

**KATE EXITS.**

GERALD: Don't I get a kiss ?

**LARA KISSES HIM ON THE CHEEK.**

GERALD: What's the drama ?

LARA: No drama. What happened to you last night ? Thought you were coming over.

GERALD: Business ? Had to make a few deliveries.

LARA: I waited up for you.

GERALD: Shoot me.

**HE GIVES LARA A HUG. THEY KISS.**

LARA: Guess who came around to see me this morning ?

GERALD: Elvis.

LARA: Patrick.

GERALD: How exciting.

LARA: You don't know anything about it do you ?

GERALD: Can't say that I do. What took place ?

LARA: I'm not sure but I think he asked me out.

GERALD: Lucky you.

LARA: Gerald.

GERALD: So what did you say ?

LARA: If you've forgotten - he happens to be your flatmate.

GERALD: It's a free country.

**PAUSE.**

LARA: (TO GERALD) What are you up to ?

GERALD: What are you offering ?

LARA: Sometimes I don't understand you.

GERALD: That makes two of us. (PAUSE) Hey, no mystery here. What you see is what you get.

KATE: (RETURNING) I hope I'm not interrupting anything.

GERALD: Not at all. I better get going. Things to do, places to see. Kate. Hey nice dress, colour suits you.

KATE: You think so ?

GERALD: I do. Matches your eyes. Ciao. ( EXITS.)

KATE: Bye. (TO LARA) "Heathcliff - I am yours." Who is he ?

LARA: I told you. Gerald.

KATE: I know that. But what's his status ?

LARA: He's my boyfriend.

KATE: Your boyfriend ? It might've been my imagination but wasn't he just flirting with me.

LARA: Don't let it go to your head. He's compulsive.

KATE: And he lives with the other one ? Mr. Intensity.

LARA: Patrick ? Yeah.

KATE: But if you're with Gerald then why is Patrick asking you out?

LARA: You tell me.

KATE: And I thought my life was confusing. So ? What's next ?

LARA: Can you still afford a haircut ?

LIGHTS CHANGE.

**4. "There is a light and it never goes out"  
(Or "The Last of the Famous International Playboys")**

That night, Kinsela's.

MUSIC - LOUD AND THROBBING. LIGHTS - STROBE AND NEON.

SPOTLIGHT UP ON GERALD, STANDING IN FRONT OF A DOOR. AS HE SPEAKS, SLIDES: CLUBS, CLUBBERS, DOORMEN, REJECTS - THE LAND OF THE NIGHT.

GERALD: I stand at the door and they come up to me. I can pick them out straight away. Its not hard. The bad haircut, the insecure stance and the clothes... They're simply trying too hard. They look at me with this lost, lonely expression on their face and mumble something stupid like "Can I come in ?" or "How much ?" "Sorry, members only" and they trudge off to the next club where exactly the same things gonna happen again. Sometimes they come in groups, straight off the Spastic bus, pissed and screaming, real classy. Animals always move in packs. This is when it can get tricky. One of them might take offence at the knockback and encouraged by his swarming mates decide to take out his outrage on the door staff. I just call over Tux and Johnny. Poor suckers. I don't get involved. I just watch as the blows connect and the bodies crumple. Doesn't takes too long. Of course we try to avoid it. Not good for our image. But sometimes it has to be done, when the boys from the 'burbs bus in. What they don't realise is there's nothing inside for them ? Just music they've never heard of, drinks that cost four times as much as they usually pay, and girls who would rather spit on them than start a conversation. They think it's a good place to "pick up". Listen, I know, girls come here to enjoy themselves. To dance, see their friends and wait for the man of their dreams. Last thing they want is Keith from Caringbah slobbering on their new black dress. It's tough but then to keep them in we gotta keep the Keiths of this world out. That's how you survive in the land of the night. Sometimes, but this is very, very rare - when we're having a slow night, I let a few of them in. Charge 'em some ridiculous entry fee. Keep most of it myself. They think I'm Santa Claus. They got let in to Kinsela's. Their life is made. They usually come out about an hour later, bored or their money's already gone, saying "Thanks a lot" and "See you next week". But guess what ? I never do. The spell is broken, the mystery has gone. Such is life on the door. Sometimes, when I feel like a bit of a change, I move inside to cover the Upstair's bar. I miss the power of the door, but inside - you're closer to the action.

**GERALD EXITS THROUGH THE DOOR. MUSIC BUILDS.**

LIGHTS COME UP ON **LARA** AND **PATRICK** STANDING ON THE EDGE OF THE DANCE FLOOR. **LARA** IS SMOOTH AND RELAXED, **PATRICK** SOMEWHAT UNCOMFORTABLE. AFTER AWHILE:

PATRICK: (SHOUTING OVER MUSIC) Do you want to go next door ?

LARA: What ?

PATRICK: (LOUDER) Do you want to go next door ?

LARA: What ?

PATRICK: (STILL LOUDER) I said: "Do you want to go next door ?"

LARA: I can't hear you.

**LARA LEADS PATRICK OVER TO THE LEFT. THE MUSIC DROPS IN VOLUME.**

LARA: Now, what did you want ?

PATRICK: I was just asking if you wanted to go next door.  
But we're here now.

LARA: We are. Do you want to sit down ?

PATRICK: If you want to.

LARA: I don't mind.

PAUSE. THEY SIT AT A SMALL TABLE DOWNSTAGE.

PATRICK: Would you like a drink ?

LARA: Not right now, thanks.

LARA TAKES OUT A CIGARETTE. SHE LIGHTS IT.

PATRICK: Where's Kate ?

LARA: Had to go visit her Uncle in Killara.

PATRICK: Killara. (PAUSE) Kill - Lara ? (LAUGHS)

LARA: Yeah.

PAUSE.

PATRICK: I've never been here before on Saturday.

LARA: You usually work do you ?

PATRICK: Yeah. Took the night off.

LARA: You did ? You shouldn't have done that. I wouldn't have asked you if I knew you had -

PATRICK: It's alright. I wanted to.

LARA: What do you do again ?

PATRICK: I do night shift, at an old people's home. You work at that really cool cafe in Victoria Street don't you ? L'otel.

LARA: When I have to.

PATRICK: Sure you wouldn't like a drink ?

LARA: Not just yet.

PAUSE

PATRICK: I usually I come on Tuesdays. The music's heaps different to this.

LARA: Yeah ?

PATRICK: I prefer Tuesdays. What kind of music do you listen to ?  
Acid ? Funk ?

LARA: Whatever's on the radio.

PATRICK: Which station ?

LARA: Don't really care.

PATRICK: Sure. (PAUSE) It's funny isn't it ? I mean I've known you for  
over a year - and yet we've never really talked before. I  
don't know anything about you.

LARA: Not much to know.

PATRICK: Yes there is.

LARA: Trust me.

PAUSE. **LARA** LOOKS AROUND.

PATRICK: You seem a bit distracted.

LARA: Do I ? Sorry. Just got a lot on my mind. (PAUSE.) So, what  
about you ? What do you listen to ?

PATRICK: Lots of things.

LARA: Who's your favourite ? (PAUSE) Come on, you can tell me.

PATRICK: Well, it's kind of embarrassing. Everybody hates them.

LARA: Who ?

PATRICK: The Smiths.

LARA: They're alright.

PATRICK: You know them ? They've broken up now of course but  
when they were together they were brilliant. It's the lyrics.  
Morrissey, he's incredible. He really captures something.

LARA: What ?

PATRICK: It.

LARA: "It" ?

PATRICK: Life.

LARA: Right. (PAUSE) I only know one of their songs.

PATRICK: Which one ?

LARA: "This ... Happy Man".

PATRICK: "This Charming Man." That was years ago. Their first single.  
(PAUSE, SINGS) "Will nature make a man of me yet."

LARA: (LAUGHS) What's that ?

PATRICK: A line. From the song.

LARA: "This Charming Man" ? I didn't recognise it.

PATRICK: It's all about this boy whose bike gets a puncture, "on a hillside desolate." Anyway this man comes along, "this charming man", in a big car with leather seats. He gives the guy with the bike a lift. Then he makes an offer.

LARA: What kind of an offer ?

PATRICK: The man's gay.

LARA: Which one ?

PATRICK: The one in the car.

PAUSE.

LARA: What does the other guy do ?

PATRICK: I don't know. The song ends.

LARA: Coitus interruptus ?

PATRICK: Yeah. (PAUSE) Why do you like it ?

LARA: I don't know. It's got a good chorus.

PATRICK: (SINGS) "I would go out tonight but I haven't got a stitch to wear."

LARA: Yeah. I know how he feels.

PAUSE.

PATRICK: Something like that happened to me once.

LARA: You didn't have anything to wear ?

PATRICK: No. The man. In the car.

LARA: When ?

PATRICK: With one of the Brothers. At school. He said : "Come to my room. I've got something to show you."

LARA: I'll bet he did. Did you go ?

PATRICK: Yes.

LARA: And he put the hard word on you ?

PATRICK: Yes.

LARA: But you escaped ?

PATRICK: (AFTER A PAUSE) Yes. It's different from the song, but the same. In a way. (PAUSE) I don't know why I'm telling you all this. It must be pretty boring.

LARA: No it's interesting. Weird but interesting.

**KATE ENTERS FROM LEFT, WITH NEW CLOTHES AND NEW HAIRCUT.**

LARA: There's Kate. (CALLING) Kate.

**KATE STARTS TO EXIT.**

LARA: (STANDING, DESPERATE) Kate !

**KATE STOPS AND TURNS. SHE COMES OVER.**

LARA: Say something about her hair. (TO KATE) You made it.

KATE: Finally. (TO LARA) Do I look okay ?

LARA: You look beautiful. How was it ?

KATE: Oh fine. We drank twenty year old port and listened to excerpts from "The Ring Cycle".

LARA: You're late - again.

KATE: Blame Uncle Wagner. How are you Patrick ?

PATRICK: Okay. I like your hair. It's very... shiney.

KATE: You told him to say that didn't you ? Where do you get a drink around here ?

LARA: At the bar. Upstairs.

KATE: Anybody else want anything ?

PATRICK: I wouldn't mind a cider.

KATE: What about you Larry ?

LARA: I'll come with you.

KATE: No I'll get it. You stay and chat to Patrick. What's your pleasure ?

LARA: Stolli and lime, but you'll need some help.

KATE: I said I'll be fine. I'm not totally blind - yet. (EXITS)

LARA: Thanks.

**KATE EXITS RIGHT. PAUSE. LARA LOOKS AT PATRICK. PATRICK SMILES. LARA SMILES BACK. SHE SITS.**

LIGHTS CHANGE.

### 5. "Handsome Devil."

Kinsela's. Upstairs' Bar, a few minutes later.

**GERALD MOVES BEHIND THE BAR.**

**KATE ENTERS AND APPROACHES THE BAR. FROM DOWNSTAIRS WE HEAR THE POUNDING OF DANCE MUSIC.**

GERALD: What can I do you for ?

KATE: Stollie and lime, a cider and a glass of red wine thanks.

GERALD: Hope you're not going to drink those all by yourself.

KATE: I might. Actually I've got some friends downstairs.

GERALD: Luck you. (HE GETS THE DRINKS.) Hey aren't you Lara's friend ?

KATE: Kate. That's me.

GERALD: I didn't recognise you.

KATE: You like ?

GERALD: I like. What's the occasion ?

KATE: New city. Want to make a good impression.

GERALD: Mission accomplished. For good is it ?

KATE: My hair ? Maybe. See how the mood takes me.

GERALD: You moving to Sydney permanently ?

KATE: Oh that. Who knows ? Wish me luck.

**GERALD RETURNS WITH THE DRINKS.**

GERALD: Here we are. Three shots of poison.

KATE: Dunke schern.

**KATE HANDS GERALD SOME MONEY. GERALD GETS HER CHANGE.**

GERALD: So who did you say you were here with ?

KATE: I didn't. Lara of course. She's downstairs. With Patrick.

GERALD: Is she ?

KATE: These are for them.

GERALD: (RETURNING WITH CHANGE) I should've clicked.

KATE: (PICKING UP DRINKS) I'll see you later then.

**KATE STARTS TO LEAVE.**

GERALD: Hey Kate. Don't rush off. It's pretty quiet tonight. Stay and have a chat.

KATE: I've got to take these downstairs.

GERALD: What's your hurry ? I'm sure they've got lots to talk about. Keep me company. (KATE HESITATES.) Come on. It's my Birthday.

KATE: Is it ?

GERALD: It's tomorrow actually. But why don't we start celebrating a bit early. Sit yourself down. I'll get you another one. On the house.

KATE: (RETURNING) Well, guess I can't desert the birthday boy.

GERALD: That's my girl.

**KATE SITS ON A STOOL. GERALD GETS A BOTTLE OF RED WINE.**

KATE: There I go again. My big weakness.

GERALD: What's that ?

KATE: Can't say no.

GERALD: (RETURNING WITH BOTTLE) That's a fairly leading statement.

KATE: It's not meant to be.

GERALD: No ?

KATE: No.

**PAUSE. GERALD POURS THE WINE.**

GERALD: "Rerd vin". That's what they call it. In Sweden.

KATE: Swedish. Really ? I did German.

GERALD: Honours ?

KATE: Primitive. This is very kind of you.

GERALD: Just my way of saying welcome.

KATE: Aren't you the one supposed to be getting presents ?

GERALD: (LEANING IN) Maybe we can work something out later on.

KATE: (BACKING AWAY) I just saw something interesting. In the Ladies.

GERALD: I'll bet you did.

KATE: Not like that. There was this piece of graffiti. Above the mirror.

GERALD: And what did it say I wonder ?

KATE: "Desire yourself." In big red capitals. But I guess you wouldn't have seen it.

GERALD: Seen it. I wrote it.

KATE: You did ?

GERALD: It's one of my key philosophies in life. The big secret.

KATE: To what ?

GERALD: Everything.

PAUSE.

KATE: "Don't believe this." That's what someone else has written. Underneath.

GERALD: Fascinating.

KATE: In tiny black texta. Wonder who ?

GERALD: Patrick probably.

KATE: Mr. Intensity.

GERALD: (LAUGHS) You've met.

THEY BOTH LAUGH. PAUSE. **GERALD MOVES CLOSER.**

GERALD: So tell me. Do you desire yourself ?

KATE: (LIGHTS A CIGARETTE) Where is everybody tonight ?

GERALD: Big Dance party last night. They're all still recovering.

KATE: Oh yeah. "Fuck it".

GERALD: Close. "Funk Inc.".

KATE: That's it. In Alexandria wasn't it ? Dusk till dawn

GERALD: One day in town and already she's up with what's happening.

KATE: Hey I'm hot..

GERALD: I'll bet you are.

PAUSE.

KATE: Actually, Lara told me.

GERALD: Now don't you believe everything Lara tells you.

KATE: Why not ?

GERALD: You'll find out.

**GERALD MOVES AWAY. PAUSE.**

KATE: So, did you go ?

GERALD: To "Funk Inc.". For awhile.

KATE: And ?

GERALD: It was fair. The sound system was a bit muddy.

KATE: You're into that technical stuff are you ?

GERALD: Use to work as a Roadie. In Adelaide.

KATE: You come from there do you ?

GERALD: No, Perth.

KATE: You get around.

GERALD: Life's too short to waste time.

KATE: Barman. Roadie. You've had some interesting jobs.

GERALD: I've done okay. The one I enjoyed most was working as a Roughneck, on an Oil Rig.

KATE: Rubberneck ?

GERALD: Roughneck. You work in a team, handling the shafts.

KATE: The shafts ?

GERALD: Huge iron pipes, about eight inches wide and thirty feet high. You connect them up to the drill and they push it down, penetrating deeper into the earth.

KATE: Sounds dangerous.

GERALD: Yeah, it is a bit. But you know what they say? Work hard.

KATE: Play hard. Well I better get downstairs.

**KATE PICKS UP THE DRINKS AND STARTS TO EXIT.**

GERALD: Hold up. Got something for you.

KATE: Another present ?

GERALD: Come on. I'm not going to bite you.

**KATE RETURNS.**

GERALD: Now, close your eyes and put out your hand. (**KATE HESITATES.**) Go on. Do it.

**KATE DOES SO. GERALD PUTS A SMALL WHITE PILL ON HER PALM.**

GERALD: Open.

KATE: What's this ?

GERALD: A tab. You must call them something else in Melbourne.  
Happy Fuel, Smiley Power. X, Eccies.

KATE: Oh Ecstasy.

GERALD: Affirmative.

KATE: I've never taken - I mean, how much ?

GERALD: On the house.

KATE: Free ? You can't do that.

GERALD: I just did.

**KATE LOOKS AT THE PILL UNEASILY.**

KATE: (CONFUSED) Right. Well ...

GERALD: Stick out your tongue. Come on.

**KATE DOES SO. GERALD PUTS THE PILL ON HER TONGUE. HE HANDS HER THE RED WINE.**

GERALD: Best drink in town.

KATE: Oh right drink. Here goes.

**KATE TAKES A SIP OF WINE AND SWALLOWS TENTATIVELY.**

GERALD: Beautiful. Now try not to drink too much. Spoils the effect.

**PAUSE. KATE WAITS FOR THE EFFECT.**

KATE: I'm not feeling anything.

GERALD: Oh you will. You will.

KATE: I hope so - I mean, of course. (PICKING UP DRINKS) I better get downstairs. You'll be here later won't you ?

GERALD: All night.

**KATE STARTS TO EXIT.**

GERALD: And gorgeous, the service station is always open.

KATE: Sorry ?

GERALD: Come back and see me when that starts to wear off.

KATE: I will.

**KATE EXITS. GERALD SMILES. LIGHTS CHANGE.**

## 6. "Interesting Drug."

**Kinsela's. Downstairs, some time later.**

**LARA AND PATRICK SIT AT THE TABLE. LONG PAUSE.**

**LARA PICKS UP HER CIGARETTE PACKET. SHE OPENS IT. THE PACKET IS EMPTY. SHE THROWS IT ON THE TABLE.**

LARA: Shit. No cigarettes. No Stolli and lime.

PATRICK: She's must've got help up.

LARA: It's been nearly half an hour..

PATRICK: She's probably talking to Gerald.

LARA: I'll bet she is.

PATRICK: Do you want me to go and find her ?

LARA: Forget it. Didn't really want the bloody drink anyway. I

PAUSE.

PATRICK: (STANDING) I'll see what -

LARA: Just sit down Patrick.

**PATRICK SITS. AN UNCOMFORTABLE SILENCE.**

LARA: Can I ask you something ? It's about Gerald.

PATRICK: What about him ?

LARA: You remember this morning ? When you came over and asked me out for breakfast.

PATRICK: Coffee.

LARA: Did Gerald know about it ? (PAUSE) Patrick. Did Gerald put you up to it ?

PATRICK: I really wanted to see you.

LARA: And ?

PATRICK: Gerald said he wouldn't mind.

LARA: How considerate of him ? Didn't it strike you as kind of odd?

PATRICK: Why ?

LARA: I'm supposed to be Gerald's girlfriend.

PAUSE.

PATRICK: Gerald ... Gerald said he doesn't have a girlfriend.

LARA: Then what am I ?

PATRICK: Gerald said you two are together. When you feel like it.

LARA: When we feel like it ? What does that mean ?

PATRICK: That's what he said.

LARA: So you wouldn't be breaking in on anything then ? Great. (PAUSE)  
Tell me, what do you think of Mr. Gerald Burrows ? Honestly.

PATRICK: What do you mean ?

LARA: I mean, do you like him ?

PATRICK: I live with him.

LARA: I know that but do you like him ?

PATRICK: I never really thought about it. Why ?

LARA: Never mind. What about Kate ? Do you like her ? She's available.

PATRICK: Not really my type.

LARA: No ? (**PATRICK SHAKES HIS HEAD.**) And what is your type ?

PATRICK: You.

PAUSE. **PATRICK LEANS CLOSER TO LARA.**

SUDDENLY **KATE** BURSTS IN FROM THE RIGHT, RED WINE IN HAND. SHE IS ACCOMPANIED BY A LOUD BLAST OF MUSIC. SHE IS SOMEWHAT INTOXICATED AND VERY ECSTATIC.

SHE CONTINUES TO DANCE, SINGING TO HERSELF AS SHE DOES, OBLIVIOUS TO **LARA** AND **PATRICK**. **LARA GOES TO KATE.**

LARA: Kate. Kate !

**KATE** CONTINUES TO DANCE.

LARA: (GRABBING HER) Kate. Where are our drinks ?

KATE: (RECOGNISING **LARA**) Lara ! (SEEING **PATRICK**) And Patrick ! What are you two doing here ?

LARA: Waiting for you. You were going to get some drinks, remember ?

KATE: There's only one drink. The best drink in town.

PATRICK: What's wrong with her ?

LARA: Ask Gerald.

KATE: Oh Lara. I love you.

**KATE GIVES LARA A BIG HUG.**

LARA: You'll get over it.

KATE: And Patrick. Oh Patrick, I love you too.

**KATE GIVES PATRICK A BIG HUG ALSO.**

PATRICK: Thanks.

KATE: I'd like you to meet my most favourite person in the whole world, apart from you two of course. Horatio !

LARA: Kate. There's no one there.

KATE: What ? (**KATE TURNS**) Oh no. He's gone ! (**CALLING**) Horatio. Horatio. Endelay - endelay ! Arriba !

**KATE WANDERS AROUND THE STAGE SEARCHING, CALLING OUT FOR "HORATIO", UNDER CHAIRS, ON TOP OF TABLES ETC.**

PATRICK: Who's Horatio ?

LARA: Who cares ? And don't encourage her.

KATE: Oh no. I can't find Horatio. He's from Spain and he's black. When we dance, oh when we dance ... Well, you know what they say about black men.

PATRICK: What ?

LARA: Patrick.

KATE: Once you go black - you never go back

LARA: How's Gerald ?

KATE: Who ? Oh Gerald. He's such a nice guy. He gave me a little something but it hasn't had any effect, yet I can't feel anything.

LARA: As we can see.

KATE: Oh Patrick, little Patrick.(**GOING TO HIM**) Isn't he cute Larry ? He's the cutest thing in the entire world.

LARA: I wouldn't have thought he was your type.

KATE: Tonight, everybody in the world is my type. Give me a kiss Patrick. Give me a kiss.

**PATRICK GOES TO GIVE KATE A TENTATIVE KISS. KATE GRABS HIM AND KISSES HIM PASSIONATELY.**

KATE: Oh I'm in such a good mood. Sydney is beautiful. This place is beautiful. My hair is beautiful.

LARA: The drugs are beautiful.

KATE: Drugs ? Who me ? I haven't had any drugs. Well, maybe just a little teensy-weensy one. (SHE FINISHES HER RED WINE.) Oh no ! My beautiful drink's gone.

LARA: At least you got one.

KATE: "Rerd vin." That's what they call it - in Sweden. Just ask Gerald. Tell him Anka sent you.

PATRICK: Do you want me to get you another one ?

KATE: No. I couldn't bear it if you went. I love you too much. (SHE HUGS **PATRICK** AGAIN. ) And Lara, I love you too.

SHE DRAGS **LARA** INTO THE EMBRACE.

LARA: I love you too Kate.

KATE: No you don't. Not as much as I love you.

LARA: Yes I do.

KATE: No you don't.

LARA: Do.

KATE: Don't.

LARA: Alright I don't.

KATE: No you don't. Because I love this girl more than Anybody else in the entire world. Except for Patrick of course. And Horatio. And Gerald.

LARA: You forgot the table.

KATE: The table ? (EXAMINING THE TABLE) Oh wow, what an amazing table. Look at it. Feels its texture.

LARA: Great.

**KATE** CRAWLS UNDER THE TABLE.

KATE: Oh wow, this is amazing. Hey guys, come under here. Come under here !

**PATRICK** STARTS TO MOVE.

LARA: (TO **PATRICK**) Don't you dare.

SUDDENLY **KATE** NOTICES HER GLASS. IT'S EMPTY.

KATE: Oh no. Rerd vin. I need Rerd vin.

LARA: You need Valium.

PATRICK: I'll get you one.

KATE: No. Don't go. I've got to go and check on that boy.

LARA: Which one ?

KATE: Why Horatio of course. (SHE KISSES PATRICK) Au revoir, my little sexy chicks. Ciao.

PATRICK: Ciao.

LARA: It's been a pleasure.

**KATE MOVES RIGHT. THE MUSIC LEAPS IN VOLUME. KATE LOOKS OFF.**

KATE: (OVER MUSIC) Horatio ! Stop dancing with that slut !  
(EXITING) Endelay - endelay ! Arriba !

THE MUSIC SUBSIDES. PAUSE.

LARA: Drugs. Gerald one - Kate nil.

PATRICK: What's she on ?

LARA: I'll give you one guess. Let's get out of here. This is going to get ugly.

PATRICK: What's wrong ?

LARA: When you're straight people on drugs are very boring.

PATRICK: Where do you want to go ?

LARA: Anywhere. Just not here.

PATRICK: We could go to my house. If you like. I've got that Smiths' song on tape.

LARA: Fine. But let's just go.

THEY START TO EXIT LEFT.

PATRICK: (FEELING HIS POCKETS) Shit !

LARA: What is it ?

PATRICK: Ah ... I've just got to go and see Gerald about something.

LARA: Gerald ? Why ?

PATRICK: I've just forgotten my key.

LARA: I'll meet you outside. Don't be long.

**PATRICK EXITS RIGHT. LARA EXITS LEFT. LIGHTS CHANGE.**

## 7. "Desire"

**Kinsela's. Upstairs' bar, a few moments later.**

**GERALD** WORKS BEHIND THE BAR. THE DANCE MUSIC CONTINUES FROM BELOW. **PATRICK** ENTERS.

GERALD: Patty boy. Fancy seeing you here. Not working tonight matey ? So how's tricks ?

PATRICK: Can I borrow your keys ?

GERALD: Sure, no problem. Cider ?

**GERALD** GETS **PATRICK** A DRINK.

PATRICK: I just want to borrow your keys.

GERALD: Leave yours at home again eh ?

PATRICK: I think I lost them.

GERALD: I've said it before and I'll say it again. Hopeless. Absolutely bloody hopeless.

**GERALD** PUTS THE DRINK ON THE BAR.

PATRICK: Just give me the keys, please.

GERALD: My we are in a rush. What ? You score ? (**PATRICK** DOES NOT RESPOND. We are a dark horse. So who's the lucky girl ? Anybody I know ?

PATRICK: It's Lara, but we -

GERALD: (OPENING BOTTLE) Lara. Well ain't you the fast worker ? Not even twelve o'clock and already you're taking her home. See ? I told you she likes you.

PATRICK: We're just going to listen to some records.

GERALD: I'll bet you are. Anyway what would I care ? It was my idea.

PATRICK: Can I have the keys now ?

GERALD: What's your hurry ? Don't be too keen. She doesn't like that.

PATRICK: Lara wants to go.

GERALD: Straining at the ropes is she ?

PATRICK: She's a bit pissed off about Kate.

GERALD: Just being neighbourly.

PATRICK: Can I have the keys or not ?

GERALD: Hey - take it easy junior. Don't worry. I'm not cutting in. She's all yours.

**GERALD** HOLDS OUT THE KEYS. **PATRICK** GOES TO GRAB THEM. **GERALD** PULLS THEM AWAY.

GERALD: Be smart. If you go home now all you will do is listen to records. Have a couple more drinks. Relax. You won't get anywhere if you're all tensed up.

PATRICK: I don't want to get anywhere.

GERALD: Sure, sure. Anyway I need to talk to her for a sec.

PATRICK: What about ?

GERALD: Send her in. Only be a mo.

PATRICK: Why ?

GERALD: I just need to talk to her.

PATRICK: What about ?

GERALD: Kate of course.

PATRICK: Lara's already seen her. That's why she wants to go.

GERALD: Then she'll know what I'm talking about won't she ?

**PAUSE. PATRICK EXITS. GERALD PUTS HIS KEYS AWAY. PAUSE. LARA ENTERS, FOLLOWED BY PATRICK.**

LARA: What ?

GERALD: Nice to see you too.

LARA: Gerald I'm not in the mood.

GERALD: Just wanted to have a word with you that's all.

LARA: I'm listening.

GERALD: Your friend. I gave her a tab.

LARA: I noticed.

GERALD: I'm just a little concerned. Has she had some before ? From what I hear she's acting pretty strangely. Maybe I should've just given her half.

LARA: That's your problem. Not mine.

GERALD: She's your friend. Not mine.

LARA: What's that supposed to mean ?

GERALD: Maybe you should stick around. Keep an eye on her.

LARA: You gave her the Eccies. You look after her.

GERALD: My pleasure.

LARA: Let's go Patrick. (THEY BEGIN TO EXIT.)

GERALD: But I think you're forgetting something. I can't look after her. I'm stuck behind the bar. (PAUSE) And who knows what could happen to a poor defenceless young girl from Melbourne deep in the bowels of Kinsela's.

**PATRICK AND LARA ARE SILENT.**

GERALD: Tell you what. Why don't you two hang around ? Have a drink. That way you can mind the bar and I can pop downstairs from time to time and see how she's doing. Make sure she's not being molested on the dance floor.

LARA: I really don't feel like drinking.

GERALD: Come on. Just one. Situation should've stabilised by then. I was just talking to Patty boy and he said he wouldn't mind one. In fact I've already opened the bottle.

LARA: Patrick.

PATRICK: I didn't ask for it.

GERALD: Our little secret, hey Patrick ? Come on Larry. Loosen up. Enjoy yourself.

LARA: Quite hard in the present company.

GERALD: Stay back - she bites. (PAUSE.) Well, what's it to be ? One for the road or Kate on the rampage ?

PAUSE.

LARA: Alright. We'll stay.

GERALD: That's my girl. One Stolli and lime coming right up.

**GERALD GOES TO GET DRINKS.**

PATRICK: (TO LARA) Lara.

LARA: (TO PATRICK) What else can I do ? Can't trust him to look after her. Don't worry. I'll fix Mr. Burrows.

**GERALD RETURNING WITH DRINK.**

GERALD: Here we go.

**PATRICK GOES TO SIT DOWN.**

LARA: Not there Patrick. Here. Next to me.

**PATRICK SITS NEXT TO LARA.**

GERALD: So Kate's gone off the deep end eh ? Horatio's just been up here. Told me all about it. Seems Kate's taken quite a liking to him.

LARA: Speaking of Kate. Shouldn't you go check on her ?

GERALD: In a sec. (LAUGHING) Horatio. She's out of luck there.

PATRICK: Why's that ?

GERALD: Because Horatio, my dear friends, is a stark raving queen. Hey, maybe she's trying to convert him ?

**LARA PLAYS WITH PATRICK'S HAND. PATRICK PULLS IT AWAY.**

PATRICK: (TO LARA) So how do you know Lara ?

LARA: I'm Lara.

PATRICK: I mean Kate. How do you know Kate ?

LARA: We went to Art College together in Melbourne.

PATRICK: You're from Melbourne too are you ?

LARA: No, Brisbane.

GERALD: But she went to Art College in Melbourne.

LARA: For awhile.

PATRICK: What did you study ?

LARA: Painting.

GERALD: Yeah she's got some at her house. She showed them to me. Not bad. Not bad at all.

PATRICK: I'd like to see them.

LARA: Anytime.

PATRICK: What style do you paint in ?

LARA: I don't know. Lara-style.

GERALD: Style's not the right word is it ?

LARA: (TO PATRICK) Any style's just fine. Anyway style, technique, method. Whatever it was I didn't have it.

PATRICK: You don't know that.

LARA: Yes I do.

PATRICK: You mean you don't paint anymore.

GERALD: Sad, isn't it ?

LARA: I sort of lost motivation.

PATRICK: No passion ?

- LARA: Story of my life. I put twenty cents into one of those love testers one day. You know the ones that go from Red Hot to Frigid ? A card came out. It said "passionless". "You are passionless".
- GERALD: I don't know about that. I've seen you passionate on a number of occasions.
- LARA: Maybe it's just my surroundings. Maybe they're dragging me down. Maybe I just need a little inspiration.
- PATRICK: Maybe.
- GERALD: I don't think Patrick's very inspirational.
- LARA: Oh, I don't know about that. (SHE LOOKS AT GERALD).
- PATRICK: Have you ever been to the Museum of Contemporary Art ? I like the photography.
- GERALD: Brings tears to his eyes.
- LARA: How refreshing ? I like a man who can show his emotions.
- GERALD: Please. Not on a full stomach.
- PATRICK: What about you Lara ? What do you like ?
- LARA: I'm a bit old fashioned. I like the Impressionists. Sometimes they even bring a tear to my eye.
- PATRICK: Who's your favourite ?
- LARA: Don't really have one.
- GERALD: You don't mind Monet. I remember, you've got that Waterlilies print on your wall. Right above the bed. I like to watch it as the sun comes up. Watch the colours change. Very nice. Very nice indeed.
- LARA: Gerald - the art lover. We should go.
- GERALD: You haven't finished your drinks yet.
- LARA: We've got better things to do.
- PATRICK: I didn't really want it anyway.
- GERALD: That's not like you Patrick. You usually don't mind a few. (TO LARA) You got to watch him. When he gets a few under his belt, look out.
- PATRICK: What are you talking about ?
- GERALD: You remember.
- LARA: Patrick forget it. He's just winding you up.

GERALD: What was her name ? Simone, Sally ... Samantha. That's it.

LARA: Let's go.

PATRICK: What about her ?

LARA: Patrick.

PATRICK: What about her ?

GERALD: Take it easy. I'm not having a go at you. It's just a funny story. You see he was going out with this girl called Samantha.

LARA: Look, I'm not really interested.

GERALD: Sure you are. It's all between friends. Bit of a laugh. Now he was pretty keen on her but as things seem to go with Patrick she found somebody else and gave old Patty boy the flick. The next night Pat's up here drowning his sorrows when who should show up but Samantha. Now Patrick's had a few by now so he decides to go over and give her a piece of his mind, not that he's got too much to spare. "You bitch" he says, heard it from here. Well old Samantha doesn't like that too much. She whips around, quite taken aback, and says "What's your problem ?" And then Patrick says "Put it this way. If I yelled out now 'Hands up who's slept with Samantha ?' there wouldn't be too many guys with their hands down." Classic ! (**GERALD STARTS LAUGHING.**)

PATRICK: It wasn't like that.

GERALD: Sure it was.

LARA: Forget it. It doesn't matter.

PATRICK: She lied to me. She said I meant something to her. Said I was really important. And then I find out she's been sleeping with all these other guys on the side.

GERALD: Still, "Hands up who's slept with Samantha ?"

PATRICK: I was drunk.

GERALD: You don't say.

LARA: Patrick. Don't get so upset.

PATRICK: I'm not !

GERALD: Yeah calm down. I didn't mean any offence. I was just telling a story. Didn't think it was such a big deal.

PATRICK: You know how I feel about that.

LARA: It's okay. We've all done stupid things when we were drunk.

GERALD: Exactly. Now, what was really funny was what he did next.

LARA: There's more ?

GERALD: Now as you can understand Samantha wasn't too Impressed by Patrick's little outburst, so she storms off in search of the new boyfriend.

PATRICK: Gerald please.

GERALD: Moments later she returns with - The Neckless Wonder. I mean this guy is big. "Why don't you step outside jerk?"

PATRICK: (SOFT) Gerald.

GERALD: Patty boy doesn't flinch. He just looks back with glazed eyes and says "Why not ? I'm gonna be dead anyway." Now this seems a bit of an odd thing to say so the boyfriend pipes up "What's wrong with you mate ?" Then Patrick says it. The master stroke. "I've got AIDS." You should've seen Samantha's face. Went the colour of weak piss. And her boyfriend's wasn't much better.

LARA: Patrick, did you really -

GERALD: Wait, it gets better. Patty boy wasn't finished yet. Not by a long shot. He calmly finishes up his cider, looks them both in the eye and hits them with his parting shot: "See you at the Crematorium".

LARA: You didn't.

GERALD: The complete truth. They were just like walking corpses the rest of the night. Watching their lives flash before their eyes, regretting the error of their ways. Of course I put them straight before they went home. Told them it was all a product of Patrick's over fertile imagination. Relief from Samantha. Anger from the boyfriend. Patty's been dodging them ever since. (**GERALD LAUGHS.**)

**LARA LOOKS AT PATRICK. PATRICK STANDS AND WALKS OUT.**

LARA: Patrick. Wait. (PATRICK EXITS.) Patrick !

GERALD: Let him go. He always bungs on like that. Just trying to get some attention. Have another drink.

**PAUSE. LARA LOOKS AT GERALD.**

LARA: Happy now ?

GERALD: What ? Not my fault he gets pissed and makes a fool of himself. (PAUSE) What am I ? A fucking mind reader ?

**LARA TURNS AND STARTS TO EXIT.**

GERALD: Enjoy yourself. (**LARA TURNS AND SMILES. SHE EXITS.**) Lara. Where are you going ? Lara !

KATE: (ENTERING, DRINKING RED WINE) What's all the excitement?

GERALD: Pat's had a few too many. Causing problems, as usual.

KATE: Likes a drink does he ? Hey, just like me. Don't you just love my hair ? Where's Larry ?

GERALD: Gone with him.

KATE: She went home without me ? I've been deserted.

GERALD: I'll look after you darling.

KATE: Call me Anka.(EMPTYES GLASS) Another Rerd vin please.

GERALD: I got a better idea. (TAKING OUT PILL.) Go you halves.

KATE: No, no, no, no, no, no, no - okay.

HE HANDS HALF TO **KATE**. THEY TAKE THEM.

GERALD: Beautiful.

KATE: I'm such a good customer. I think I deserve a kiss.

GERALD: Why not ? (THEY KISS.)

KATE: Hmm. Yummy. What are you doing later ?

GERALD: Might kick on.

KATE: Mind if I tag along ?

GERALD: What about Horatio ?

KATE: Fuck Horatio.

GERALD: No thanks.

THEY KISS AGAIN. LIGHTS FADE. END ACT ONE.

**Act 2.****1. "How Soon Is Now?"(Or "I'm Driving You're Girlfriend Home")**

Patrick's room at the Warehouse, about half an hour later.

IN DARKNESS WE HEAR THE SOUND OF A WINDOW BEING BROKEN.  
AFTER AWHILE A CANDLE IS LIT.

AS THE LIGHTS COMES UP WE SEE **PATRICK** KNEELING ON A  
MATTRESS NEXT TO THE FLAME. HE IS WRAPPING A CLOTH AROUND  
HIS BLEEDING HAND.

LARA: (OFF, CALLING) Patrick ? Patrick. (ENTERING) There you  
are. What's going on ? There's a window smashed  
downstairs and glass all over the place.

**PATRICK** HOLDS UP HIS HAND.

LARA: What happened ?

PATRICK: I lost my keys remember ?

LARA: You smashed the window ?

PATRICK: I didn't mean to. I was climbing in and I accidentally hit it.

LARA: Accidentally ?

PATRICK: I was a bit angry.

LARA: A bit angry ? I'd hate to see you when you were very  
angry. What's Gerald going to say ?

PATRICK: Who cares what Gerald says ? (PAUSE.)

LARA: We should go to the Hospital. Get that stitched up.

PATRICK: It's not that bad.

LARA: There's a lot of blood. I remember once my dad cut -

PATRICK: It's not that bad !

LARA: Just trying to help. (PAUSE)

PATRICK: How's the window ?

LARA: Not too good. I don't think it'll make it.

PATRICK: Pretty stupid wasn't it ?

LARA: Not one of your better moments. I'll say one thing  
for you Patrick. Life with you is never dull.

PATRICK: Why did you follow me ?

LARA: Couldn't just let you walk off by yourself.

PATRICK: What about Kate ?

LARA: What about her ? She'll be okay. I don't think she'll hurt anyone. Except herself.

PATRICK: Sorry.

LARA: It's okay. Forget it. What's done cannot be undone.

PATRICK: (SINGS) "Not here, not in London,  
What's done can never be erased"

LARA: What's that ?

PATRICK: Just another song.

LARA: Patrick the rock star.

PATRICK: No. (PAUSE)

LARA: Why do you live with him?

PATRICK: Gerald ?

LARA: You remember ? That charming guy at the nightclub.

PATRICK: In one way I kind of admire him.

LARA: You do ?

PATRICK: But in another - I hate him.

LARA: Why do you stay here then ?

PATRICK: Nowhere else to go.

LARA: He knew you didn't want him to tell that story.

PATRICK: But I shouldn't let him get to me. I live with him. I should know what to expect. So should you.

LARA: Should I ?

PATRICK: You're his girlfriend remember ?

LARA: Gerald doesn't have a girlfriend remember ?

PAUSE. SUDDENLY LARA BEGINS TO LAUGH.

PATRICK: What's the matter ?

LARA: It is kind of funny. "I've got AIDS."

PATRICK: Don't laugh.

LARA: Sorry. (SHE KEEPS LAUGHING.)

PATRICK: Lara.

LARA: That poor girl.

PATRICK: She deserved it.

LARA: (GOING TO **PATRICK**) And you shouldn't worry about it so much. Everybody else has done things just as bad.

PATRICK: Like what ?

LARA: Well, couple of years ago I went home to Brissy for Christmas right ? We had this big party for all the family. Mum found me kissing my cousin in the garden shed. He was only seventeen. You see - incest. That's worse than what you did. Easy.

PATRICK: Why were you kissing him ?

LARA: He said he needed some lessons. Seemed like a good idea at the time. I was pretty out of it.

PATRICK: Sounds like we've got the same problem.

**LARA AND PATRICK ARE CLOSE. THEY KISS. LARA PULLS AWAY.**

PATRICK: What's wrong ?

LARA: It just feels ...

PATRICK: Gerald right ?

LARA: I know it's crazy but -

PATRICK: But what ? After what he just did to me.

LARA: I can't explain it. I know I shouldn't feel like I do but there's still -

PATRICK: He's not faithful to you. Why should you be faithful to him ?

LARA: How do you know that? (PAUSE) They're all bimbos anyway.

PATRICK: Whatever you say.

LARA: Give me a break Patrick. It takes time to build up feelings for someone. You can't just turn them on and off like that.

PATRICK: Unless your Gerald.

LARA: I just don't understand him. He got you to ask me out right ?

PATRICK: I never said that.

LARA: I'll bet he did though. And then when we turn up together he does his best to ruin our night, like he's jealous or something. I mean what's going on in his head ?

PATRICK: Not much. You know what Gerald would say: "You tell me".

LARA: You're very clever Patrick.

PATRICK: Yeah, yeah.

LARA: You know you are.

PATRICK: Sometimes I think I think too much.

LARA: (STROKING PATRICK'S HEAD) I can just imagine what's going on inside your head. All those gears cranking and grinding. Must be painful.

PATRICK: (SINGS) "Won't somebody stop me, from thinking, from thinking all the time."

LARA: I wish there was something I could do for you.

PATRICK: There is.

THEY ARE VERY CLOSE ONCE MORE. LARA BACKS OFF AGAIN.

PATRICK: What's wrong ?

LARA: Nothing's wrong. It's me.

PATRICK: No it isn't. It's me.

LARA: I do like you but ...

PATRICK: Not in that way.

LARA: I'm sorry.

PATRICK: I don't want you to feel sorry for me. Hey I'm used to it. "Women only like me for my mind."

LARA: That's not true. You're quite cute.

PATRICK: Then what's wrong ?

LARA: You should go for Kate. You two would be good together.

PATRICK: Kate ?

LARA: Yeah. You know what she calls you ? Mr. Intensity.

PATRICK: Oh god and she's only just met me.

LARA: There's nothing wrong with being intense. Better than being nothing at all. You should go for her. You're both the same.

PATRICK: Weird ?

LARA: No. You know, smart.

PATRICK: Is that why you're with Gerald ?

LARA: What do you mean by that ?

PATRICK: You're both the same.

LARA: Thanks very much. (PAUSE)

PATRICK: What do you see in him ?

LARA: You tell me.

PATRICK: You like Gerald because he ...

LARA: Because he what ?

PATRICK: Because he projects the right image.

LARA: Image ?

PATRICK: Like some guy in a jeans ad.

LARA: An ad ? Patrick what are you talking about ?

PATRICK: You know, he looks cool. Acts distant. Wears the right clothes. Works at the right place. People look up to him. And he's got that belt.

LARA: I like Gerald because of his belt ?

PATRICK: Well ... yes.

LARA: Is that what you really think of me ? I go out with people because of their belts.

PATRICK: You know what I mean ?

LARA: Oh fuck off Patrick.

PATRICK: Lara, you're not really interested in who people are, are you ? What's going on underneath their skin ?

LARA: And you are I suppose ? You just don't want me for the way I look.

PATRICK: I want you.

**PAUSE. LARA KISSES PATRICK.**

LARA: See ? You're not even wearing a belt.

THEY KISS AGAIN. LIGHTS FADE.

## **2. "Even better than the Real Thing."**

Kate's room. Several hours later.

**GERALD SITS IN AN ARMCHAIR, BEER IN HAND, EYES CLOSED.**

**KATE IS DANCING ON A MATTRESS, LYING ON THE FLOOR. SHE IS STILL EXTREMELY "MERRY".**

KATE: (SINGING) "Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you.  
Happy Birthday dear Gerald, Happy Birthday to you."

SHE FLOPS ON TO THE MATTRESS:

KATE: Sorry about my naked boudoir. I haven't had the chanceto spice it up yet. (STARTING TO TAKE CLOTHES OFF) Oh Gerald, I'm just feeling so comfortable. (SEEING GERALD) Gerald. What are you doing ? Don't sit over there. Come over here. With me.

GERALD: (WAKING) What's the rush ?

KATE: (FEELING SKIN) Oh Gerald, my skin is so soft. I love it. It's all over my body.

GERALD: That's nice.

KATE: Come on, come and lie down. On the bed. Feel my skin. Don't you want your Birthday present ?

GERALD: (GOING THROUGH POCKETS) Speaking of presents. I think I might just have a couple left over.

KATE: (CRAWLING TO **GERALD**) You're such a naughty boy.

GERALD: And you're such a lucky girl. (HOLDING UP PILL) Here.

KATE: No. I don't want it. I've had enough chemicals. Now I want some physicals.

GERALD: You're not making immoral suggestions are you Kate ?

KATE: Right first time, honey chunks. Hey, I just thought of something.

GERALD: Congratulations.

KATE: Shouldn't I be overcome with guilt ?

GERALD: Why ? Life's too short.

KATE: Because of Lara silly billy. I love her. And you're her man.

GERALD: What about Lara ? She doesn't matter.

KATE: Well that's true. I mean, she went off with Patrick right ? Hubba hubba.

GERALD: Just between you and me - nothing'll happen there.

KATE: It won't ?

GERALD: He's too over the top. He'll scare her off.

KATE: Mr. Intensity.

GERALD: That's the one.

KATE: Modern romance. That's bullshit. (CLIMBING ON TOP OF **GERALD**) It's all about lust !

GERALD: Hey relax. We'll get there.

KATE: Oh Gerald. I love your masquerade.

GERALD: Who ?

KATE: The way you hide your true self. You act so cool, when I know inside you're heating up.

GERALD: Boiling.

KATE: Oh yes, I know the sort of man you are. The rules you live by.

GERALD: You have no idea.

KATE: No. You're right. How could I ? Men like you don't exist anymore. Men with secrets. Men with hidden depths. Men with mystery. Men who keep control.

GERALD: Something like that.

KATE: But Gerald sometimes you have to forget all that. You have to surrender to the animal within. The raging beast aching for his next conquest. So come on Gerald - get animal.

GERALD: Roar.

KATE: Meow. You know what Michael used to call me ? His little sex kitten.

GERALD: How many tabs did you have ?

KATE: Only the ones you gave me.

GERALD: Must've been pretty good stuff.

KATE: And now I'm ready for more. Are you ready to give it to me Mr. Good Stuff ?

GERALD: (STANDING) All good things come to those who wait. (LOOKING OUT THE DOOR) You got the time ?

KATE: Who cares about the time ?

GERALD: What time was it when we left Kinsela's ?

KATE: Gerald - give up these earthly pursuits. Submerge yourself in more spiritual realms.

GERALD: Just wondering.

KATE: Then don't. Give me your mouth.

SHE KISSES HIM.

GERALD: I think I need another tab. (HE TAKES ONE)

KATE: (COLLAPSING ON BED) Oooh I'm feeling so horny. Aren't you feeling horny ?

GERALD: Incredibly.

KATE: Maybe I should've gone home with Horatio. I'll bet he's huge.

GERALD: You wouldn't have had much luck their.

KATE: I don't know about that. I've had men on their knees.

GERALD: So's Horatio.

KATE: He has ?

GERALD: Uh - huh.

KATE: Maybe I could've converted him.

**GERALD LAUGHS.**

KATE: Oh Gerald ! How can you be so cruel ?

GERALD: You ain't seen nothing yet.

KATE: Oh Gerald. What's holding you back ? Let yourself go.  
Let passion reign.

GERALD: You're a real wild child aren't you Kate ?

KATE: Oooh, I want you so bad.

GERALD: Just got to finish my beer.

KATE: But you're so hot.

GERALD: You'll get over it.

KATE: (LOOKING UP) Hey, maybe we should check if Lara's home ?  
We don't want her interrupting anything.

GERALD: Why Kate. You surprise me. I don't think she's in.

KATE: That's right she went home with Patty. Hey, I've got some  
oil. (SHE CRAWLS ACROSS TO HER BAG) Patty and Larry.  
Larry and Tatty. Parry and Tara.

**KATE SEARCHES THROUGH HER BAG. PAUSE. GERALD STANDS AND  
BEGINS TO TAKE OFF HIS CLOTHES. KATE FINDS THE OIL.**

KATE: Found it.

GERALD: Never mind the oil.

KATE: (TURNS) Why not ?

GERALD: We don't need it.

LARA: Why Gerald, what has brought about this sudden change ?

GERALD: I don't know. Drugs probably.

**GERALD LEAPS ON TO THE BED. HE GRABS KATE AND THEY BEGIN TO  
WRESTLE. SUDDENLY WE HEAR A DOOR CLOSING OFFSTAGE.**

KATE: Oops. Someone's home.

GERALD: Forget it.

KATE: It could be Lara ?

GERALD: So what ? The action has begun.

KATE: I'll just close the door.

GERALD: Don't worry. She'll probably want to watch.

**KATE GETS UP AND GOES TO THE DOOR.**

KATE: (WHISPERING) Sssssh. She's got big ears.

**KATE CLOSES THE DOOR MOST OF THE WAY. SHE WATCHES THROUGH THE GAP. LARA ENTERS, SMILING BROADLY.**

KATE: It's her. Oooh, what's she so happy about ?

**GERALD COMES OVER TO THE DOOR. HE SEES LARA. LARA EXITS.**

KATE: She looks like the cat who got the cream. Now I want some.(SHE STARTS KISSING **GERALD**.) Now where were we?

**GERALD BREAKS AWAY. HE BEGINS DRESSING.**

KATE: What's wrong ? Do you want to use the oil ?

GERALD: I gotta go.

KATE: But you can't go. I'm all warmed up.

GERALD: Just remembered. Gotta help a friend move in the morning.

KATE: You'll be home by then.

GERALD: Gotta pick up the truck first. I better get some sleep.

KATE: You can sleep here - afterwards.

GERALD: (HE IS DRESSED.) Some other time maybe. See ya.

KATE: Stay. Just for a bit. Please.

GERALD: Sorry. Later.

KATE: Gerald. Don't I even get a kiss goodbye ?

**GERALD KISSES HER ON THE CHEEK.**

GERALD: And listen - we're still friends right ?

KATE: Right.

**GERALD EXITS. KATE ALONE, HOLDING OIL.**

KATE: What did I say ? (PAUSE) Shit. What do I now ?

BLACKOUT.

SPOTLIGHT - **PATRICK.**

AS HE SPEAKS, SLIDES: BODY PARTS, ORGANS, MEDICAL DIAGRAMS, DOCTORS, PEOPLE - HAPPY, SAD.

PATRICK: Do you know those times in your life when you should feel a certain way but you just don't ? Like something really good happens and you know you should be happy but you're not. You just feel nothing. Blank. This is one of those times. Some part in my emotional mechanism has stopped working. Somewhere between the head and the heart, the link between the place where you receive the signals and the place which determines the response, has been damaged. My human computer has gone down. Imagine if it was permanent. You went through life responding incorrectly, to everything. Imagine that. Your dog dies - you feel happy. You win Lotto - you feel sad. You'd run into people on the street and they'd say "Hey Patrick, why are you so happy ? Your mother just got run over by a bus." And you'd reply "I know, isn't it great ?" I could be the first sufferer of a brand new disease. "Emotive Oppositive Response Syndrome". Or "EORS" for short. But there's still hope. One day on the desperate search in to the human form they'll discover what causes emotions and find a cure. A tiny gland underneath the pancreas, next to the liver - the "Feelings Gland", which releases emotional secretions - "Sad fluid" and "Happy juice." Maybe then they'll be able to unlock the mysteries of the human emotional system. Who knows one day they might even be able to control it ? You might be able to go into hospital and have a "Sadoectomy" or a "Joy Implant". Man and woman will finally have won the battle against their greatest foe - their emotions. You'll be able to feel anyway you want by the swallowing of a simple pill. Come to think of it they already have them. They're called drugs. Mood changing chemicals. Hey they don't call it "Ecstasy" for nothing. But what if they did pioneer a pill, side affect free, totally legal, completely safe - that could change the way you feel, instantly. Would you take it ? Would I ? I don't know. Maybe you can't live in a state of one hundred percent total neverending bliss. But I bet if any of us were given the chance to ease the uncertainty we would, wouldn't we ? Another question. I'm very good at questions. It's answers I have the problem with.

LIGHTS CHANGE.

### 3. "Unhappy Birthday."

Patrick and Gerald's Warehouse. The living room, next day.

**GERALD SITS IN AN ARM CHAIR, PLAYING WITH A ZIPPO LIGHTER. PATRICK ENTERS. HIS HAND IS BANDAGED.**

GERALD: Morning champ. Or should I say - afternoon ? Big night was it ? (PAUSE) Aren't you going to wish me a Happy Birthday ? Where are my presents ? (PAUSE) No presents eh ? Oh well, unfortunately I've got one for you.

**GERALD HOLDS OUT A SLIP OF PAPER. PATRICK TAKES IT.**

PATRICK: What is it ?

GERALD: It's the bill. For your little break and enter last night. Bloke came by first thing. Gave me a quote. Must have hurt.

PATRICK: Thirteen stitches.

GERALD: Nasty. (PAUSE) You're a bit quiet this morning. Hangover ?

PATRICK: Not really.

PAUSE.

GERALD: So fill me in, what transpired ?

PATRICK: I didn't have my keys.

GERALD: I meant with Lara. How'd you go ?

PATRICK: (AFTER A PAUSE) Not too good.

GERALD: Really ? Talk me through it. Give us the blow by blow account. (PAUSE) Come on Patrick. You're among friends. You left Kinsela's and ...

PATRICK: When she got here I was upstairs, my hand was bleeding ...

GERALD: I'll bet it was - and ?

PATRICK: We talked for a bit and she was trying to get me to go to the hospital.

GERALD: But you didn't want to go ? And then ?

PATRICK: We talked for a bit more, then we put some cardboard over the window and we went to the hospital.

PAUSE.

GERALD: That's it ? You just went to the hospital ?

PATRICK: Thirteen stitches.

GERALD: I heard she got home pretty late.

PATRICK: They were busy. Saturday night.

GERALD: I see. (PAUSE) Well then, I guess I owe you an apology. My little plan didn't work after all.

PATRICK: Plan ?

GERALD: To get you and Lara together. The story.

PATRICK: What are you talking about ?

GERALD: Well I knew you wouldn't be game enough to try anything, so I sort of got the ball rolling.

PATRICK: You humiliated me.

GERALD: Yeah, I'm sorry. I forgot how sensitive you are. I thought the story would give you a bit of substance. Make you more mysterious. You know, get her interested. And it seems my plan worked - to a point.

**PATRICK STARTS TO EXIT.**

GERALD: Unfortunately, you lacked the follow through.

**PATRICK STOPS AND TURNS.**

PATRICK: You are so full of crap.

GERALD: Oh here we go. Another tanty. Temper temper.

PATRICK: You didn't tell that story to help me. You did it to make a fool out of me and you enjoyed every second.

GERALD: Now who's telling stories ?

PATRICK: That's the truth Gerald.

GERALD: Not my fault your hypersensitive.

PATRICK: I wasn't being hypersensitive. You knew what would happen.

GERALD: I had no idea. Anyway why would I want to make you look stupid ? As if you needed any help.

PATRICK: I have my theories.

GERALD: Storm in a teacup, that's what it is. Exaggeration.

PATRICK: I'm not exaggerating !

GERALD: Yes you are. Like you always do. Blowing it all out of proportion. Lara didn't mind my "story". In fact she quite enjoyed it. She followed you didn't she ?

PATRICK: Only to get away from you. And that's not what you wanted.

GERALD: You're not being very sensible Patty boy. If I didn't want you and Lara to get together then why would I have suggested it in the first place ?

PATRICK: Maybe you're so sick you wanted to watch.

GERALD: Maybe Patty boy, maybe. But now well never know. Unfortunately you ain't got the balls. And that's your life matey. For that I am sorry.

PATRICK: You are so full of shit.

GERALD: Smash a few more windows. You'll get over it. (PAUSE)  
Matter of fact I picked nothing would happen. I said so to  
Kate. Told her you'd blow it. Too over the top. Mr. Intensity.  
I said you'd scare her off. And guess what ? You did.

PAUSE.

PATRICK: Alright Gerald, if you did want to bring us together, then  
congratulations are in order. You'll be very happy to know -  
you succeeded.

GERALD: You just said -

PATRICK: I lied. We did go to the hospital but before we did Lara and  
I slept together. That's right. Me. Patrick. I slept with Lara.  
Lara. Up there, in my room and it was one of the best things  
I've ever done.

GERALD: You slept with Lara ? Don't make me laugh.

PATRICK: I did Gerald. And I feel fucking fantastic.

GERALD: You're bullshitting.

PATRICK: No - I'm not.

PAUSE. **GERALD GOES TO PATRICK.** PAUSE. HE SHAKES HIS HAND.

GERALD: Well let me be the first to congratulate you.

PATRICK: Drop it Gerald.

GERALD: How many times you do it ? Any interesting positions ?

PATRICK: I said drop it. Can't you just once say how you're really feeling ?

GERALD: I feel fucking fantastic.

PATRICK: No you don't. I bet you want to smash my head all over  
that wall.

GERALD: Why would I want to do that ?

PATRICK: Because you're jealous. Because you're angry. Because  
you feel something. Because you care for Lara and she  
slept with me.

GERALD: Hey, you're getting a bit excited here Patty boy. You're in  
not in love with her, are you ? That's a ticket to nowhere.

PATRICK: Say it. Say you care about Lara.

GERALD: She was just a fuck, that's all. It doesn't affect me one  
iota. Like I said, I'm a man of the nineties. I'm not  
possessive. I don't get jealous. But you keep going on  
like this - I will get upset.

PATRICK: (GRABBING GERALD) Say it !

GERALD: Patrick, you're pushing your luck. (PATRICK RELEASES HIM) Matter of fact I'm quite glad about you and Lara. Evens the score.

PATRICK: Evens what score ?

GERALD: Well, last night - me and Kate. And I can tell you, she was quite a surprise packet. Went right off. They're like that - the plain ones. They don't get as much you see, so they're more eager to please. Deuce. Your serve. (HE SITS. PAUSE.)

PATRICK: You and Kate ?

GERALD: You know what they say ? Beggars can't be choosers.

PATRICK: You don't care about Lara do you ?

GERALD: A man of the double zeroes. What's mine is yours.

PATRICK: You're worse than I thought. And to think I use to envy you.

GERALD: That's nice.

PATRICK: But now I don't. In fact I feel sorry for you. Because if you don't feel anything for Lara, then you don't feel anything at all. You can't. Because you won't put the tiniest part of your precious little fucking ego on the line. You won't take the slightest risk that someone might say no to the all mighty Gerald. Well congratulations Gerald. You've controlled you're emotions so much they've ceased to exist. You're already dead Gerald. Stone cold dead.

**GERALD IS SILENT. EVENTUALLY:**

GERALD: And who the fuck are you to talk ? So you've got it all worked out huh ? You've got the master plan ? Well I can tell you something matey, you can have it. Because I don't want to be anything like you. You feel sorry for me. That's a laugh. Look at you. Breaking windows in the middle of the night. Running out of nightclubs blubbering. Is that courage ? Is that guts ? Is that putting yourself on the line ? Well if it is Patty boy I don't want it, because if I've got a choice between you and me - I'm picking me. I wouldn't ever want to be a wimpy, snivelling little shit like you. You've got nothing. No class. No style. No control. Take a look Patrick. Take a good look at both of us. Now you tell me who's winning ?

**PATRICK STARTS TO EXIT. HE STOPS.**

PATRICK: You know the worse thing ? I always thought you were my friend. (EXITS)

GERALD: See you later Keith.

**GERALD ALONE. HE PLAYS WITH THE ZIPPO LIGHTER. LIGHTS FADE.**

#### 4. "Numb" (Or "Running to Stand Still.")

Lara and Kate's house, a short time later.

IN DARKNESS WE HEAR THE SOUND OF SOMEONE GROANING.

THE LIGHTS COME UP ON **KATE** SITTING IN THE ARMCHAIR. SHE LOOKS EXTREMELY DISHEVELLED. SHE IS WEARING HER SUNGLASSES.

**LARA** STANDS BEHIND HER, MASSAGING HER FOREHEAD. **KATE** GROANS, IN HER HAND IS A CUP OF COFFEE.

LARA: Any better ?

KATE: Just don't stop.

LARA: So, how was your night ?

KATE: Don't ask. I have never felt so embarrassed in my life.

LARA: You were pretty O.T.T.

KATE: O.T.T. ?

LARA: Over the top.

KATE: I'm not sure if I dreamt it or if it was real but I think I can remember dancing with this really big black guy.

LARA: Horatio.

KATE: And taking these little white pills.

LARA: Gerald.

KATE: And being very very happy.

LARA: Ecstasy.

KATE: Ecstasy ? More like "Insanity". Do you always feel this bad the next morning ?

LARA: Depends on how much you drank. That's the thing about drugs. The down always matches the up. And vice-a- versa. Didn't Gerald tell you that ?

KATE: I drank so much red wine.

LARA: You mean "Rerd vin" ?

KATE: I want to die. Do you hear me: I want to die. (TO COFFEE) Ah coffee. My saviour. (SHE TAKES A SIP.) Wo ! How much coffee did you put in this ? I'll be up for the next week.

LARA: Too much ?

KATE: Don't worry. I need it. I bet you're real glad I came to stay.

LARA: Of course I am. But from now on, one condition. No more Ecstasy.

KATE: Okay by me. I mean what's the point of having a good time if you can't remember it in the morning. At least now I understand what all the fuss is about. I was off my face. It was like I was in a William S Burroughs novel. One amazing night - and four years to live it down.

LARA: Don't worry. No one even noticed. They were all off their face too.

KATE: How comforting. And how about you ? How was your night ?

LARA: Very ... eventful.

KATE: Really ? Why ?

LARA: Well, while you were being hyper downstairs - me, Gerald and Patrick were having our own little drama upstairs.

KATE: What happened ?

LARA: Well Gerald told this really stupid story about Patrick and Patrick got all upset and stormed out.

KATE: Where was I during all this ?

LARA: "Endelay. Endelay. Arriba."

KATE: Oh yes. The Matador routine. Sorry I asked.

LARA: Anyway Patrick went back to the warehouse and he didn't have his key, so he smashed the window and broke in.

KATE: And I was O.T.T. ?

LARA: That's when I found him. He was bleeding all over the place.

KATE: Patrick sounds a bit - temperamental.

LARA: He's alright.

KATE: So what was the story ? Must've been pretty hot stuff.

LARA: It was really stupid. Just something Patrick did when he was drunk.

KATE: Why'd he get so upset then ?

LARA: Well it was personal and you know Patrick.

KATE: A slight case of over reaction by Mr. Intensity.

LARA: No. It wasn't his fault. Gerald knew it would upset him. That's why he told it.

KATE: And why would Gerald do that ?

LARA: I'm starting to realise that's what Gerald's like. He enjoys hurting people.

KATE: Did I miss something ? Don't you think you're being a bit tough on him ? He was probably just joking.

LARA: Ever since we started going out together I've always felt like something was missing. Now I know there was.

KATE: All in one night ?

LARA: Well - yes. (PAUSE)

KATE: Look - about Gerald. I think there's something you should know. I'm going to regret this.

LARA: What is it ?

KATE: Well, I don't really remember that much about last night but what I do remember is that after you and Patrick disappeared Gerald and I ended up here. Alone, together.

LARA: What happened ?

KATE: Well - nothing. And that's what I'm talking about.

LARA: Did Gerald try and -

KATE: Just listen okay. Now I know this doesn't sound too good but basically I threw myself at him. I knew you two were involved but I just couldn't help myself.

LARA: Of course not. You were on Ecstasy.

KATE: But that's not the point. Don't you see ? Gerald didn't take me up on my offer. Now credit where credit's due Larry. What do you think this tells us ?

LARA: You tell me.

KATE: He really cares about you.

LARA: Why are you telling me all this ?

KATE: One, because I can't keep a secret and two because I don't want you to stuff up something that could be really good. Like me and Michael did.

LARA: Really good ? No, I don't think so.

KATE: Yes, I think so. If you'd just stop playing games who knows what might happen.

LARA: I'm not the one playing games.

KATE: Aren't you ? That's exactly what Michael used to say.

LARA: You're in lecture mode this morning.

KATE: I'm just speaking from experience Larry.

LARA: Katie, I've never said this before but ...

KATE: Hit me.

LARA: You never should have been with Michael. It was never going to work. You should've broken up with him years ago.

PAUSE.

KATE: Well better late than never. You weren't there. Lara. You don't know how hard I tried to make it work. Every time Michael would ring up and say -

LARA: You shouldn't have bothered. Just like I shouldn't bother with Gerald.

KATE: (AFTER A PAUSE) Gee, I'm so glad I came to Sydney. Why are we friends ? We're totally different. We've got nothing in common. Maybe we never did.

LARA: Because we see through each other's bullshit.

KATE: Then why won't you listen to me ? I don't want you to make the same mistakes as I did.

LARA: I'm not going to. You don't know everything about Gerald, alright ? He's not the same as other people.

KATE: He eats glass for breakfast. He's allergic to kryptonite.

LARA: He doesn't ... feel.

KATE: You mean like on the soles of his feet. Like he can walk on fire.

LARA: I mean anything. Gerald doesn't feel anything. It's like he thinks he's a guy in a jeans ad or something.

KATE: Larry, what are you talking about ?

LARA: Patrick may be crazy but at least he feels something.

KATE: Patrick feels immaturity.

LARA: No he doesn't. He feels ... oh fuck it !

KATE: What is wrong with you this morning ?

LARA: Nothing. I don't know.(PAUSE)It's me. Me. I'm what's wrong.

KATE: I thought we were talking about Gerald.

LARA: We are. But don't you see ? I'm just the same as him. I don't feel anything either.

KATE: Lara, what brought all this on ?

LARA: I slept with Patrick last night.

KATE: (AFTER A PAUSE) You slept with Patrick ? Last night ? (LARA NODS) Was this before or after the hospital ?

LARA: Before.

KATE: They were right.

LARA: Who ?

KATE: Everyone in Melbourne. They said "watch out when you get to Sydney, they're all a bunch of hypocrites." They were right. Sydney will eat itself.

LARA: I'm not a hypocrite.

KATE: Okay, you're an emotional cripple then.

LARA: Please Katie. I need you to understand this.

KATE: I'm trying. Failing but trying.

LARA: I didn't mean to sleep with him.

KATE: It was an accident ? Right. The "accidental root."

LARA: He was there and he was all upset, and then he said I only liked Gerald because of his belt.

KATE: His belt ?

LARA: And suddenly I realised he was right. I saw myself clearly for the first time in ages and I realised he was absolutely right. I'm incredibly shallow.

KATE: No you're not.

LARA: Yes I am.

KATE: So you slept with him ? This isn't making any sense.

LARA: I started kissing him and it just happened.

KATE: And it was fantastic right ?

LARA: No. It was pretty ordinary. We were both so nervous. But there was something I've never had with Gerald.

KATE: A ribbed condom ?

LARA: A connection. While we were ...

KATE: Doing it.

LARA: I don't know. Just for a moment, I looked into his eyes - and there was a flicker. Something. I mean with Gerald it's totally different. It's all just physical. Nothing else. What am I trying to say ?

KATE: How am I supposed to know ? Too much of a good thing, that's your problem Lara.

LARA: It isn't good. Why won't you understand ?

KATE: Why are you getting so upset ?

LARA: Because I can ! Don't you remember all those guys ? In Melbourne. "The neverending parade". That's what you called it. I've become a machine Katie. A machine. Lara Tracey Stephens - The Sex Machine. Lips, hands, skin. Sex is just a function. A task I perform. It has no effect. I used to think that was just the way it was, but now I know it doesn't have to be like that. Fucking is just fucking you know ? It's all surface. It doesn't mean anything unless something's going on inside.

KATE: This is not a new revelation Lara.

LARA: I know. But I'm only just starting to see it. That's why I feel like I do with Gerald. So ... empty.

KATE: And I thought I was meant to be having the crisis. (PAUSE)  
Have you considered that maybe it's not him? Maybe it's you.

LARA: No !

KATE: Maybe Gerald's trying to make a connection and you're the one stopping it. Maybe all those guys in Melbourne -

LARA: But Patrick likes me.

KATE: Maybe because you opened yourself up to him. Maybe that's why he made a connection. Maybe Gerald does love you and you're the one who doesn't want to know about it.

LARA: I can't believe you're defending him.

LARA: Seeing through each other's bullshit, right ? I know what I know Larry. Okay Gerald's got his faults. He may have trouble expressing his feelings. Everybody does. Except me of course.

LARA: It's not that he can't express them. He won't let himself feel.

KATE: And what do you feel ? You're away from him for five minutes and you're having it off with his flatmate.

LARA: Kate - Gerald planned it. That's what he wanted.

KATE: Then why did you do it ?

LARA: I don't want just sex anymore. I want someone to care about me.

KATE: Don't cry Larry. I hate it when you cry. Gerald does care.

LARA: About not getting hurt. I got more out of being with Patrick last night than I've ever got out of Gerald.

KATE: You're not talking about a lover. You're talking about a friend.

LARA: I'm talking about both.

PAUSE. **KATE** STARTS TO EXIT.

KATE: And I thought I was screwed up. You know this trip to Sydney has actually been good for me. I've realised I'm not as stuffed up as I thought I was.

LARA: Where are you going ?

KATE: For a walk. I can't handle this.

LARA: Don't go. I need to talk.

KATE: I don't think I'm going to say what you want to hear.

LARA: Why don't you understand ?

KATE: But I do Lara. I do.

LARA: You're putting Gerald in front of me ?

KATE: He's not the one fucking around.

**KATE EXITS. LARA ALONE. LIGHTS FADE.**

### 5. "Shakespeare's Sister."

The roof of Gerald and Patrick's Warehouse.

**PATRICK STANDS ON THE EDGE, LOOKING OUT. WE HEAR THE SOUNDS OF WIND AND FROM BELOW, DISTANT TRAFFIC**

**KATE ENTERS, EATING A CHOCOLATE ECLAIR. SHE WATCHES PATRICK. PAUSE.**

KATE: Well, what are you waiting for ? Jump.

**PATRICK TURNS. HE LOOKS OUT AGAIN.**

KATE: (MOVING UP TO **PATRICK**) Mind if I join you ? (OFFERING ECLAIR) You want some ? (PAUSE) Talkative today aren't we?

PATRICK: What are you doing here ?

KATE: Nice to see you too. I was coming over to see you guys and I saw you up here. Thought you might want to talk. For awhile there I almost didn't make it. I think I might need oxygen. You're not planning on doing anything stupid are you ? (PAUSE) Nice roof. I used to know a roof just like this once. "Did you Kate ?" "Yes Patrick, I did." I almost jumped off it. Hey, don't sound so interested. (PAUSE) I was at Art school, with Lara, and there was this big old building that overlooked the quadrangle. After Michael, my ex, and I broke up I climbed up on to the roof. I stood on the edge for hours, gazing downwards. Just like you. (PAUSE) I could've done it. One little step, easy. You wouldn't hear anything on the way down, just the wind whistling past your ears. Above you, the sky moving further away. Beneath you, the earth coming ever closer. They say you die before you hit the ground. The shock or something. You don't even feel your body make contact. You just slip effortlessly into another world. Cool, dark and silent. Like a midnight swim in a warm ocean. No more women, no more men, no more love, no more sex. Just peace, empty and eternal. No more wanting.

PATRICK: What stopped you ?

KATE: I got hungry. When home and had some tomato soup.

PATRICK: Do you ever regret it ?

KATE: Of course not. Not when I can have so much fun talking to you ?(PAUSE) Anyway what are you so down about ? I thought you'd be celebrating.

PATRICK: Celebrating ?

KATE: You and Lara. Hubba hubba.

PATRICK: She told you.

KATE: No secrets in this town. So what's wrong ? You should feel great.

PATRICK: That's just it. I don't. I feel like shit. Empty. I guess this is how Gerald feels.

KATE: Oh really ?

PATRICK: I think I liked her for all the wrong reasons. I'd convinced myself that that was all I needed, to sleep with Lara. If I did all my problems would be gone. I'd feel better. And now ...

KATE: You don't ?

PATRICK: I'm still me. I'm still here. I'm just the same.

KATE: Lara's not. I think you had a big effect on her.

PATRICK: I did ?

KATE: We just had this very heavy conversation and Miss Stevens was getting quite metaphysical.

PATRICK: What did I do ?

KATE: I think "you touched her soul."

PATRICK: I didn't mean to. (PAUSE) How do you feel ?

KATE: Okay. Bit hungover.

PATRICK: Didn't change your life then ?

KATE: The Ecstasy ? I wish.

PATRICK: Sleeping with Gerald ?

KATE: I didn't sleep with Gerald. Who told you that ?

PATRICK: He did. No secrets in this town.

KATE: Gerald told you I slept with him ? What is wrong with you people ? Why would Gerald tell you that ? I mean, quite honestly - I don't think I'm that much to brag about. Jesus, what else did he tell you ?

PATRICK: Nothing. I think he was a bit pissed off.

KATE: Because he slept with me ?

PATRICK: Because I slept with Lara.

KATE: You told him ? Shit ! What did he do ?

PATRICK: Congratulated me.

KATE: You people are sick.

PATRICK: I know.

PAUSE.

KATE: I can't believe he said that. And I just had a huge fight with Larry because I was sticking up for him - the bastard.

PATRICK: Why were you sticking up for him ?

KATE: According to Lara: he won't let himself feel. I mean so what? It's not that easy to go around caring for people you know ? I mean you can get hurt. It has been known to happen.

PATRICK: So what's the option ?

KATE: Not caring. It mightn't be as interesting but its a whole lot safer, sometimes.

PATRICK: So that's how we should live then ? Not caring. You honestly believe that ?

KATE: All I'm saying is I know how Gerald feels. Or doesn't feel, as the case maybe. Anyway if things are so bad what's stopping you.

PAUSE.

PATRICK: Yeah. Maybe you're right.

**PATRICK FAKES TO JUMP. KATE GRABS HIM.**

KATE: Don't say that. You're Mr. Intensity. You're meant to be intense.

PATRICK: Maybe I don't want to be intense anymore. Maybe I want to be like Gerald. Maybe I don't want to feel.

KATE: I don't think it'd suit you.

PATRICK: It'd be a lot easier.

KATE: Oh stuff this - I'm jumping. Hey, what are you waiting for ?

PATRICK: "For in that sleep of death what dreams may come when we have shuffled off this mortal coil must give us pause. "

KATE: Oh Christ, now he's quoting Hamlet. I really am going to jump.

PATRICK: You can't ?

KATE: And why not ?

PATRICK: You haven't finished your Chocolate Eclair ?

KATE: Good point. Anyway don't listen to me. I care so little I've come to Sydney to escape my ex's marriage. What a hypocrite. Hey, I'm starting to fit in.

THEY SIT ON THE EDGE.

PATRICK: (SINGS) "When I'm lying in my bed, I think about life and I think about death and neither one particularly appeals to me."

KATE: The Smiths. I knew you were a Smiths fan.

PATRICK: You don't like them ?

KATE: I hate 'em. H - A - T - E. Hate 'em. (SINGS) "I'm ugly, I'm lonely, everything's fucked, we're all gonna die, but worst of all - I can't sing."

PATRICK: They're not that bad.

KATE: Yes they are. Why don't you listen to something a little more upbeat ? Like Joy Division. Or Mahler.

PATRICK: I haven't got any.

KATE: Don't worry. You can borrow my old ones. (PAUSE) So what are you going to do ?

PATRICK: About Lara ? I don't know.

KATE: Wouldn't it be nice if we could just hit a switch and Shazam - we could be free of all this shit.

PATRICK: Yeah, but no more happiness either. Take away the pain and how do you know what's good ?

KATE: It could be better.

PATRICK: "Ay, there's the rub." And that's the struggle. Being emotional in a non-emotional world. Making some kind of commitment. Taking risks.

KATE: That's a big ask. It's pretty scary.

PATRICK: I know, but it's the only chance we've got. The question is : Can we ? Will we ? There's only one way to find out. Surrender. Desire.

PAUSE

KATE: You don't believe in casual conversation do you ?

PATRICK: No.

KATE: I have this strange feeling I should be recording this conversation for future reference.

PATRICK: (SHOUTS) To care or not to care - that is the question. But what's the answer ?

KATE: Vegemite.

PATRICK: Incorrect. Answer please Kate. Time starts now. Tick, tick, tick -

KATE: It doesn't really matter. I might try to be like Gerald, like this incredible ice maiden, but sooner or later the real me would emerge. It's called the dag factor. (PAUSE) What about Lara? Which way's she going ?

PATRICK: You tell me.

PAUSE. **KATE STANDS.**

KATE: Okay. Enough of this crap. Time to play a game.

PATRICK: A game ? What's it called ?

KATE: "Do whatever you want to do most in the entire world" or something like that. I used to play it when I was a kid. Come on. What else are you gonna do ? Sit here all day and be depressed.

PATRICK: Yes. (STANDS) How do you play ?

KATE: Easy. You just close your eyes and shout out the thing you most want to do in the entire world. Then you go and do it.

PATRICK: What if you want to climb Mount Everest ?

KATE: Some things take longer than others.

PATRICK: Did you get this out of some drama book ?

KATE: Doesn't matter where I got it. Come on. You first. Close your eyes and shout.

**PATRICK CLOSSES HIS EYES. PAUSE.**

PATRICK: I'm embarrassed.

KATE: Patrick, don't worry. No one's going to hear you. I'll start you off. Ready. Set. Shout.

PATRICK: (SHOUTS) The thing I most want to do in the entire world is ...

KATE: Don't stop, is ...

PATRICK: (SHOUTS) Stand up to Gerald.

KATE: Good.

PATRICK: (SHOUTS) And - go and see Lara.

KATE: Hey that's cheating. One at a time. Okay, my turn. (CLOSING EYES) Ready. Set. Shout. (SHOUTS) The thing I most want to do in the entire world is ... go to Melbourne and ruin Michael's wedding !

PATRICK: That's not very nice.

KATE: I know. God it'd be satisfying though. Anyway on with the game.

PATRICK: Now what do we do ?

KATE: Now we go and do what we just said. And guess what ? We can't do mine, so we have to do yours.

PATRICK: You never told me that.

KATE: My game, my rules.

PATRICK: But I don't want to.

KATE: Of course you do. It's what you most want to do in the entire world. Come on.

PATRICK: You mean right now ?

KATE: There's only one rule in this game : he who hesitates - loses.

PATRICK: I don't like this game.

KATE: I do. This is going to be fun. Come on. Lets go. Look at that glum face. And I thought I was a pessimist.

PATRICK: You ? You're an optimist.

KATE: Oh well, someone's got to do it. Patrick ? You know what I really desire ?

PATRICK: What ?

KATE: My chocolate eclair. Only problem is - I feel too ill to eat it. We're beggars at the feast Patrick. Get ready to beg. Arriba, arriba. Endelay !

THEY LEAVE THE ROOF.

**SPOTLIGHT. LARA.**

SHE SITS ON THE FLOOR LOOKING THROUGH A LARGE FOLIO CONTAINING SOME OF HER OLD ARTWORK : PAINTINGS AND SKETCHES. AS SHE TALKS SHE DISPLAYS HER PAINTINGS.

LARA: When I was seven years old I used to have this Primary School teacher called Mrs. Belcastro. We used to do "Painting to music" Symphonies, latest hits, even Latin American. Mrs. Belcastro always used to compliment me on my work. I would paint bright blue skies and big yellow suns. Below them they'd be shiny green grass and huge trees made up of

LARA: (CONT) chocolate brown trunks and forest green leaves. And flowers, my paintings were always full of flowers. Daisies, roses, carnations, sunflowers, and some that weren't even invented yet. Ruby red, aqua marine, violet, mauve, crimson, gold. All shapes, all colours, filling the frame. Mountains of multi coloured flowers. (PAUSE) The paintings I painted at Art School were not so colourful. Murky landscapes with cloudy skies, street scenes with dirty shopfronts, and portraits of darkened faces with sorrowful eyes. Images of my self were even less flattering. Whatever happened to that smiling seven year old girl with laughter in her eyes and flowers on her brush ? When did I stop being her and when did I become me ? What happened to all those colours ? Maybe if I could go back in time, trace my life through all its twists and turns, I might be able to find the specific moment when I changed, when I lost my mountains of flowers and descended into landscapes of doom. But what then ? Would I suddenly be born afresh, colourful and vibrant ? I don't know if I have it in me to start again. I feel like I'm half asleep all the time. What I'd like to do most of all is wake up. "My spirit is fading." So what do we do, these descendants of smiling seven years old ? How do we recapture our lost selves ? Who do we ask ? Where's the golden key ? I guess in the end you have to decide: the grey cruise to oblivion or the rocky road to a new beginning. (PAUSE) You decide for me. I need a cigarette.

**6. "Stop me if you've heard this one before."  
(Or "That joke isn't funny anymore.")**

Lara and Kate's house. The living room, a short time later.

**GERALD** ENTERS. HE STANDS AT A DISTANCE WATCHING **LARA** THROUGH HIS SUNGLASSES. PAUSE.

GERALD: Lara Lara Lara. When oh when will you see the error of your ways.

**LARA** TURNS AND SEES **GERALD**. SHE CLOSSES THE FOLIO.

LARA: What do you want ?

GERALD: That's not a very pleasant welcome for the birthday boy.

LARA: Happy birthday. Now what do you want ?

GERALD: Just dropped by to say hello.

LARA: Well you've said it now. Goodbye.

GERALD: What is the source of all this hostility ?

LARA: Look I'm not feeling very well. I'll call you later okay.

GERALD: I wonder why.

PAUSE. **GERALD** MOVES TOWARDS HER.

LARA: Why do you always wear those stupid glasses ?

GERALD: Makes the world look better. You're not in a very good mood this afternoon.

LARA: Look I told you. I'm not feeling too good. I'm also busy.

GERALD: What are you doing ?

LARA: Just busy.

GERALD: (REFERRING TO FOLIO) What you got there ?

**GERALD TRIES TO OPEN THE FOLIO. LARA STOPS HIM.**

GERALD: Come on. There's no secrets here. I thought it might be my Birthday present. Haven't got one yet.

LARA: I didn't get you one either. I forgot. Sorry.

GERALD: No hard feelings.

LARA: So how does it feel Gerald ? The big 3 - 0.

GERALD: Fabulous.

LARA: Getting on a bit.

GERALD: Oh, there's still a bit of life left in me. (GRABBING THE FOLIO) "Lara's Paintings". Mind if I have a look ?

LARA: Yes I do. Please leave.

GERALD: We need to have a little chat.

LARA: There's nothing to talk about.

GERALD: Sure there is.

**GERALD FLICKS THROUGH THE ARTWORKS.**

LARA: Look Gerald, would you just give me back my paintings and go ?

GERALD: They're safe with me. Sit yourself down. Well have a talk. (**GERALD LAUGHS AT ONE OF THE PAINTINGS.**) Oooh. Flowers. How sweet.

LARA: (REACHING FOR THE FOLIO) Don't. Just go.

GERALD: I said take a seat. (FIRMLY) Sit - down.

**PAUSE. LARA SITS.**

GERALD: I sense some tension between us. I think we need to get to the bottom of it.

LARA: I'm not in the mood for any of your bullshit.

GERALD: I'm not here to talk bullshit.

LARA: Well that'd be a change.

GERALD: I just want to make sure we know were we both stand.

PAUSE. **LARA** TAKES OUT A CIGARETTE SHE LIGHTS IT. **GERALD** GRABS THE CIGARETTE AND SMOKES IT.

GERALD: Thanks. Thought you'd given up. (BLOWS SMOKE IN **LARA'S** FACE) So, how was your night ?

LARA: Yes Gerald. It's true. I fucked Patrick.

GERALD: Let's not beat about the bush.

LARA: And I'm glad I did.

GERALD: Ferocious is he ?

LARA: Different.

GERALD: Better ?

LARA: Much. (PAUSE.) It's over Gerald.

GERALD: It's just a stage you're going through.

LARA: This time I mean it.

GERALD: You've said it before, you'll say it again.

LARA: You wanted it to happen with me and Patrick. You pushed us into it. Why ?

GERALD: I thought you had better taste.

LARA: Why Gerald ?

GERALD: Maybe it was getting too easy. Maybe I wanted to prove something to myself.

LARA: What ?

GERALD: That you were the slut I always thought you were.

LARA: Fuck you. How many girls have you slept with since we started going out ?

GERALD: So you got even. You happy now ?

LARA: You told him to ask me out.

GERALD: So I did. So what ?

LARA: Then why did you tell that story about him ?

GERALD: No reason. Bit of a laugh.

LARA: I thought we were going to tell the truth Gerald.

GERALD: I am.

LARA: Didn't work out the way you planned did it ? You thought I'd knock him back. Give your precious little ego a bit more of a boost.

GERALD: Not at all.

LARA: So how did it make you feel ? Trapped behind the bar, watching me and Patrick together, laughing.

GERALD: Hysterical.

LARA: Watch out Gerald, watch out. You might just feel something like a genuine emotion if you're not careful.

GERALD: Hardly.

LARA: Anything's better than nothing Gerald. So how do you feel now?

GERALD: My heart is broken.

LARA: Does it hurt ?

GERALD: Don't flatter yourself.

LARA: Aren't you jealous at all ?

GERALD: Jealous of Patrick ? Why ?

LARA: Because I slept with him.

GERALD: It doesn't mean anything to me. So you fucked Patrick. So what ? Lucky you. Let's forget it. It's finished. I'm sure you won't be looking for a repeat performance. It's me you want. Always was, always will be.

**GERALD GOES TO KISS LARA. LARA STOPS HIM.**

LARA: Hardly.

GERALD: Just relax. Go with it. You know you want to. Make you feel better.

**HE KISSES LARA. LARA PUSHES HIM AWAY.**

LARA: Gerald don't ! It doesn't work anymore.

GERALD: What about all those nights ?

LARA: Are you so insensitive that you can't even tell how someone's feeling when you're fucking them ?

GERALD: You enjoyed every second of it.

LARA: Part of me did, but another part of me was dying. Screaming out for it to stop.

GERALD: Drop the hysterics. I saw your face. I looked into your eyes.

LARA: And you saw nothing. It was just sex Gerald. Sex. Nothing more. There were no feelings. No emotions. It was just physical. Cold, safe and dead. Like doing the washing up.

GERALD: Who's been putting this crap in your head ? It's Patty boy isn't it ? This isn't Lara talking.

LARA: Patrick didn't put anything in my head. He just helped me to see you for what you are.

GERALD: And I'll help you to forget.

LARA: Stay where you are Gerald. You're not getting off this time.

GERALD: You've never had any complaints before.

LARA: Yes I have. I've just never said them out loud. Sit down Gerald. This is a conversation we should've had a long time ago.

GERALD: (SITTING) What do you want Lara ?

LARA: I want you to tell the truth. How do you feel about me ?

GERALD: I don't know.

LARA: How do you feel about me ?

GERALD: I said I don't know. I like you, alright.

LARA: Like me ? You like me. How nice.

GERALD: Yeah, I like you. What else do you want me to say ?

LARA: How about admire, respect, want.

GERALD: That's what I meant. All those things. I meant all those things.

LARA: Then why have you never told me ?

GERALD: You know why.

LARA: No I don't. What am I meant to do Gerald ? Get attached to you while you're desperately trying not to care ?

GERALD: You tell me.

LARA: Can't you stop playing games for one second ? How can I care about you Gerald if you won't let yourself care about me ? Don't you understand ? It's not a one way street. If you don't give it, you don't get it. I'm not going to take all the risks. I'm not going to do everything.

GERALD: All good things -

LARA: When Gerald ? When were you going to try ? Next week, next year, next century ? It doesn't work like that . You've only got one chance. You don't come back next week and play for the major prize. This is it. You've got to take it while you can.

GERALD: We are full of surprises.

LARA: How do you think I feel Gerald ? There was a time I could've loved you. That's right - love. But you were too busy looking in the mirror too notice.

GERALD: It's not my fault.

LARA: Then whose is it ? These last couple of days, I'm not sure what's happening to me but I feel like I've woken up from a long, deep sleep. I'm seeing things clearly for the first time in ages and what I see is that I don't want you in my life. This time - it's over.

PAUSE. **GERALD TAKES OFF HIS SUNGLASSES.**

GERALD: You're serious aren't you ?

LARA: Yes Gerald, I am. (PAUSE.)

GERALD: Alright, I'll -

LARA: No Gerald, no. It doesn't matter what you do now. Too much has happened. I can't feel anything for you anymore. It is over.

PAUSE. **GERALD PUTS ON HIS SUNGLASSES AGAIN.**

GERALD: (SOFT) It's only just begun.

**LARA REACHES FOR HER PAINTINGS. GERALD GRABS HER WRIST.**

GERALD: You're - all - just - the - same. You want you're paintings do you ? Here you go. (HE THROWS THE PAINTINGS IN THE AIR.) Is that what you feel is it ? Well you want to know how I feel. ? I feel bored, that's how I feel. I feel so fucking bored. I just want something to happen.

LARA: Gerald ...

GERALD: So it's all my fault huh ? No it's not. You want to know whose fault it is ? Why I never felt anything. It's yours. Because you don't want me to. You're all fucked. All of you. You're confused. You tell me how I'm meant to act ? You made me like this. This is what you wanted. And now you've changed your mind. Well fuck that. I know you. You say you want that - but you don't. You want this. You want Gerald. Just the surface.

LARA: Why are you so scared of being yourself ?

GERALD: Because maybe you wouldn't like me. I know you Lara. This is what you want. Gerald. It's what we both want. We're just the same. Two of a kind. Together, forever - until death do us part. You want the truth Lara ? When you look at me - you're looking at a mirror.

**GERALD STARTS TO KISS LARA. AT FIRST LARA STRUGGLES.**

LARA: No, don't Gerald. I don't want to.

GERALD: Sure you do. Want to play rough do we ?

LARA: I said no !

GERALD: Now now. That's no way to talk to the man you love.

**LARA STARTS TO STRUGGLE HARDER, BEATING GERALD WITH CLOSED FISTS. GERALD FORCES HER DOWN ON TO THE GROUND. HE RIPS AT HER CLOTHES.**

**PATRICK APPEARS UPSTAGE, FOLLOWED BY KATE.**

PATRICK: Gerald, what are you doing ? Get off her.

**PATRICK PULLS GERALD OFF LARA. GERALD MOVES TOWARDS PATRICK. KATE COMFORTS LARA.**

GERALD: Like to watch eh Patty boy ?

**GERALD PUSHES PATRICK.**

KATE: Gerald, I think you should just leave.

GERALD: (GOING TO **KATE**) Thanks for last night Kate. It was great.

PATRICK: Leave Gerald, while you still can.

GERALD: What are you gonna do about it Patty boy ?

**GERALD MOVES BACK TOWARDS PATRICK. PATRICK STANDS HIS GROUND.**

LARA: Just get out Gerald. Just fucking get out !

GERALD: (TO **LARA**) There's plenty more where you came from.

**GERALD MOVES TOWARDS THE GIRLS. SUDDENLY HE STOPS AND LOOKS AT THEM. PAUSE. HE ADJUSTS HIS SUNGLASSES AND EXITS IN SILENCE.**

KATE: What a prick. (TO **PATRICK**) I think you got your wish.

THE LIGHTS FADE.

## 7. "One"

Bus Depot. Two weeks later.

BRIGHT SUNSHINE. **LARA ALONE, WITHOUT SUNGLASSES. BESIDE HER, KATE'S SUITCASES. PATRICK ENTERS, HOLDING A POSTCARD.**

PATRICK: Has she gone yet ?

LARA: She's just getting her ticket. You find somewhere ?

PATRICK: A little flat. Just got to move all my stuff. How are you ?

LARA: Okay.

THEY EMBRACE. **PATRICK** HOLDS UP POSTCARD. **LARA** LAUGHS.

LARA: Where is he ?

PATRICK: Arizona. "Harleying" across the desert.

LARA: He sure knows how to run doesn't he ?

PATRICK: Nowhere left to hide in Australia.

KATE: (ENTERING) Patrick, you made it.

PATRICK: Just. Hi.

KATE: Thanks for coming.

LARA: Doesn't the bus go at half past ?

KATE: Yeah. What time is it now ?

LARA: (LOOKING AT WATCH) Twenty five past.

KATE: Oodles of time. (TO **PATRICK**) Goodbye.

PATRICK: You're making a quick exit.

KATE: There's a certain hostess' husband I have to congratulate. Who's the postcard from ?

PATRICK: Guess.

KATE: What does he want ?

PATRICK: (SHOWING CARD) A rock, in the middle of the desert.

KATE: How appropriate.

LARA: You sure you don't want to stay for another week ? It's no problem.

KATE: Got to face him sometime. Don't want to end up a rock too. (TO **PATRICK**, INDICATING CARD) Get rid of that.

LARA: Better get this on the bus. (EXITS WITH SUITCASE)

PATRICK: (TO **KATE**) Good luck.

KATE: You too, Mr. Intensity. Hey, you like Melbourne. Why don't you come don with Lara and visit me sometime? I think I've done Sydney

LARA: (RETURNING) Katie - the bus is leaving.

KATE: Alright. I'm going already. (TO **PATRICK**) Bye. And stay away from those roof tops okay ?

PATRICK: I'll try.

**KATE** PICKS UP HER OTHER BAG AND EXITS.

PATRICK: (INDICATING POSTCARD) What do you want me to with this ?

LARA: Patrick, to tell you the truth, I don't really care. See you soon.

PATRICK: Sure.

**LARA** EXITS. **PATRICK** LOOKS AT THE POSTCARD. PAUSE. HE IS ABOUT TO RIP IT UP BUT HE STOPS. HE SMILES AND PUTS THE POSTCARD IN HIS POCKET. **PATRICK** EXITS. LIGHTS FADE.

A SPOTLIGHT GOES UP ON **GERALD** UPSTAGE, DRESSED IN LEATHER JACKET AND SUNGLASSES. WE HEAR **GERALD'S** RECORDED VOICE.

GERALD: (VOICE OVER) San Carlos Lake, Thursday. Dear Patty boy, I'm in Arizona on my way to good old Texas. You should see the desert out here. Unbelievable. Most of the time I'm on my own. Just me and the Harley, and that's the way I like it. Still I'm making up for it when I get into town. Couple of nights ago I was in San Diego. (LIGHTS START TO FADE) This absolutely gorgeous Puerto Rican girl just threw her self at my feet. What a body. What a night. Next day I hooked up with one of her friends. I think I'm going to like America. Bet you wish you were me. Your old buddy, Gerald.

BLACKOUT.

END PLAY.