

The Gift of the Gun

This play is free to download and perform. The only condition is that you must **email Alex at abroun@bigpond.net.au** and let him know **where and when you produced his script**, listing the **director, cast and theatre**. If you have any production photos send them along as well and they may just end up on this website.

a short play

by

Alex Broun

Jan 2008

Alex Broun

Phone: + 61 408 268 043
Email: abroun@bigpond.net.au

Alex Broun 2008 ©

Cast

WILLIAM 50s

BEN Late teens

Setting

Bare room in a deserted warehouse.

Time

Monday. 9am.

The Gift of the Gun.

A bare room. 9am.

In darkness music begins. A Chopin Etude.

A spotlight comes up on a child's mobile of bright coloured shapes. Red triangles and yellow rectangles, floating in space.

Lights come up on **WILLIAM**. He sits on a chair down left. He is well dressed in an expensive suit and shiny shoes.

To his right is a bare table. On it two objects : a yellow box and a red triangle. Beside it a plain black sound system. There is a door upstage.

The spotlight fades on the mobile. The music remains.

There is a knock at the door. The music is suddenly cut off.

WILLIAM: It's open.

THE DOOR OPENS SLOWLY AND BEN ENTERS. HIS FAIR HAIR IS SLICKED BACK AND HE WEARS A BRIGHTLY COLOURED RED SINGLET AND YELLOW PANTS. HE CARRIES A SMALL BACK PACK.

WILLIAM: Close the door.

BEN CLOSES THE DOOR.

WILLIAM: No problem finding the address ?

BEN: Place seems deserted. You must be the only one here.

WILLIAM: It's scheduled for demolition.

BEN: Whatever blows your mind. I'm Ben.

WILLIAM: My name is William. Come over here so I can look at you.

BEN PUTS DOWN THE BAG. HE WALKS SLOWLY TOWARDS WILLIAM. WILLIAM INDICATES FOR HIM TO WALK UP AND DOWN.

BEN WALKS IN FRONT OF WILLIAM. WILLIAM WATCHES HIM.

WILLIAM: Excellent.

BEN: Blonde enough for you ?

WILLIAM: Perfect.

BEN: Clothes alright ?

WILLIAM: You've done very well.

BEN: Not leaving anything to chance are you ?

WILLIAM: Best not to.

BEN: Any more special requests ?

WILLIAM: Not just yet.

PAUSE. BEN LOOKS AT WILLIAM.

BEN: So, having a good day ?

WILLIAM: So far.

BEN: (WANDERING AROUND ROOM) Do you live here ?

WILLIAM: Of course not.

BEN: It doesn't look too cosy. Is there a bathroom ? I might need to clean up afterwards.

WILLIAM: Unfortunately not.

BEN: How about some towels ?

WILLIAM: I do apologise.

BEN: It's alright. I've got some of my own. Keep them for little emergencies.

BEN OPENS UP HIS BAG. HE TAKES OUT SOME TOWELETTES.

HE HOLDS UP A SMALL CASSETTE PLAYER.

BEN: How about some music ?

WILLIAM: Not at the moment.

BEN PUTS THE CASSETTE PLAYER AWAY. HE STANDS.

BEN: So what will it be ? Giving. Receiving. Or are you just interested in some oral ? You look like you really like to suck dick.

WILLIAM: Absolutely not.

BEN: Oops. Didn't mean to offend you. I don't often have new clients. Too popular with my regulars. They get great service so they ask for me again and again. Hopefully you will too.

WILLIAM: A once off will be sufficient.

BEN: Don't be so hasty. Wait to see if you like me. (PAUSE) I don't usually go to someone's place. You never know what could happen. But Terio said you come highly recommended and you'd make it worth my while.

WILLIAM: You'll be well compensated.

PAUSE. BEN BEGINS TO UNBUTTON HIS PANTS.

WILLIAM: What are you doing ?

BEN: Don't you want to watch me.

WILLIAM: God no. No offence.

BEN: Most people say I've got a great body.

WILLIAM: You look very firm.

BEN: Would you like to touch me ?

WILLIAM: No, but thanks for offering.

BEN: I could lie on the table.

WILLIAM: That won't be necessary.

PAUSE.

BEN: Look, I don't mean to sound ungrateful. But could we get started. I've got to be back for one of my regulars at eleven.

WILLIAM: Certainly.

BEN: Well ? What would you like me to do ?

WILLIAM: Go to the table and lift up the red triangle.

BEN: Oh, so that's it. Toys.

WILLIAMS: Objects from my childhood.

BEN: Kinky.

BEN GOES TO THE TABLE. HE LIFTS UP THE TRIANGLE TO REVEAL A REVOLVER. BEN RECOILS IN HORROR.

BEN: Oh fuck. Fuck !

BEN RUNS FOR THE DOOR. HE TRIES THE HANDLE. IT IS LOCKED.

BEN: Jesus. Help me. Help me.

HE BANGS ON THE DOOR.

BEN: Help me - please !

WILLIAM: As you said the warehouse is deserted.

BEN SCRAMBLES FOR HIS BAG. WILLIAM STANDS.

BEN: Stay away from me. I've got a panic button. In two minutes they'll be security from the service all over the place.

WILLIAM: Please Ben - I'm not going to hurt you.

BEN: (SEARCHING THROUGH HIS BAG) You stay away from me.

(PULLING OUT BUZZER) Got it.

WILLIAM: There is no need to panic.

BEN: That's not how I see it.

WILLIAM: I'm standing still and I'm putting my hands above my head. (WILLIAM RAISES HIS ARMS.) There is only one revolver in the room and I am not intending to touch it. I am completely powerless.

BEN: Why should I believe you ?

WILLIAM: You are welcome to search me.

BEN DOES NOT MOVE.

WILLIAM: I am not going to hurt you. And as your manager said you will be extremely well paid for your services.

BEN, HOLDING THE BUZZER IN ONE HAND, MOVES SLOWLY TOWARDS WILLIAM.

HE PATS HIS POCKETS AND FEELS HIS PANTS.

WILLIAM: Nothing except the clothes on my back.

BEN STANDS BACK.

BEN: What the fuck is going on ?

WILLIAM: May I put my hands down ?

BEN: Okay, but keep them where I can see them.

WILLIAM: Thank you.

WILLIAM LOWERS HIS HANDS.

BEN: Is this like some weird S and M thing ?

WILLIAM: (HE SMILES) After a fashion. Try to look at me as just another client.

BEN: Pretty weird fucking client.

WILLIAM: Who is paying you very well for your services. Lift up the yellow box.

BEN: I'm not touching anything else.

WILLIAM: May I remove it then ?

BEN: How do I know it's not a bomb or something ?

WILLIAM: It's not. (PAUSE) Would you like to leave ?

BEN: Absolutely right.

WILLIAM: The key for the door is hidden somewhere in this room.

BEN: Where ?

BEN BEGINS TO SEARCH AROUND THE ROOM.

WILLIAM: Let me remove the box and then I'll tell you.

BEN: Tell me now.

WILLIAM: Not until I remove the box. (INDICATING BOX) May I ?

**PAUSE. BEN NODS. WILLIAM MOVES TOWARDS THE BOX.
BEN'S EYES FIX ON THE GUN.**

BEN: Stop !

PAUSE.

WILLIAM: Why don't you pick the gun up ? It might make you feel safer.

BEN: I've never held a gun in my life.

WILLIAM: Then now would seem a good time to start.

PAUSE. BEN GINGERLY PICKS UP THE GUN.

WILLIAM: How does it feel ?

BEN: Cold.

WILLIAM: It'll warm up.

BEN: Is the thing-a-me on ?

WILLIAM: Yes, the safety catch is on. Would you like me to show you how to take it off ?

BEN: Stay where you are. It's fine the way it is.

WILLIAM: As you wish. May I remove the box now ?

**BEN NODS. WILLIAM LIFTS THE BOX TO REVEAL THREE NEAT
PILES OF CASH. BEN IS DRAWN TO IT. WILLIAM STEPS AWAY.**

BEN: Shit.

WILLIAM: Touch it. It's yours.

BEN PUTS DOWN THE BUZZER. HE PICKS UP SOME OF THE MONEY.

BEN: This is for me ?

WILLIAM: All of it. Not bad for a morning's work.

BEN: You must be into some pretty weird shit. What do I have to do ? Let you stick a rat up my arse.

WILLIAM: Nothing as vulgar as that.

BEN: Then what the fuck do you want me to do ?

WILLIAM: I want you to give me a gift.

BEN: Listen mister, I don't think I'm selling what your buying.

WILLIAM: You're more than capable.

BEN: So what is this gift ?

WILLIAM: It's in your hand.

BEN: You want me to give you a hand job with the cash ?

WILLIAM: The other hand.

BEN LOOKS AT THE GUN. PAUSE.

BEN: (REALISING) You're fucking mad.

WILLIAM: I can assure you I am perfectly sane.

BEN: Not from where I'm standing.

WILLIAM: All my life there has been an absence of control. I have been perpetually at the mercy of others. The whim of chance, fate, circumstance. But through it all one piece of information has been a considerable source of comfort for me. The knowledge that there was one pivotal moment in my life that if I acted quickly enough, I could control. Completely. The time, the place and the mechanism of my death.

BEN: And you chose this room - and me ?

WILLIAM NODS.

BEN: But why do you want to die ?

WILLIAM: The reasons are not important. Suffice to say I have them. You don't need to know why. Indeed it's perhaps better if you don't.

BEN: I'm kind of involved here. What you're asking me to do is likely to cause a few bad dreams down the track.

WILLIAM: As I said this is one event that I can control. And I choose to keep my reasons private. That's what I want and on this day I am getting what I want. I'm not asking you to do something that far from your usual gamut.

BEN: Killing people is a little out of my ordinary work day.

WILLIAM: You carry out a service. Give people a bit of a thrill. I'm not asking for anything quite so ... grubby.

BEN: I think will be just a bit messy.

WILLIAM: I'm asking you to carry out a service.

BEN: You got the wrong boy. I give blow jobs.

WILLIAM: But that's not what I want.

BEN: Yes it is. You're asking me to give you the ultimate blowjob.

WILLIAM: Don't be vulgar. That's not how I want it.

BEN: Some clients like it if I talk dirty.

WILLIAM: I would be grateful if you could restrain from it.

BEN: Always want to give client satisfaction.

WILLIAM: And you can do that. Completely.

PAUSE.

BEN: You do understand you only get to do this once. I can't come back tomorrow.

WILLIAM: I'm well aware of the consequences.

BEN: This isn't like some test is it ? I'm not being filmed for some stupid reality TV show.

WILLIAM: I do understand that this must come as quite a surprise to you. Look at it rationally.

BEN: You're a fucking psycho.

WILLIAM: At this moment I would imagine you desire two things. The first would be to leave this room as soon as possible.

BEN: You're right there.

WILLIAM: The second would be to take that money with you.

BEN: The thought had crossed my mind.

WILLIAM: Now I'm going to tell you where the key is hidden and you will be able to leave. But first I need you to do one more thing for me ?

BEN: You want me to sing you a song Willy ?

WILLIAM: Please Ben.

BEN: You have someone else you'd like me to bump off ?

WILLIAM: This is for your protection.

BEN: What ?

WILLIAM: In the draw of the table you will find a pair of gloves and a cloth. I want you to put the gloves on.

BEN: Why ?

WILLIAM: Just do it ! (CHANGE) It's for your benefit.

BEN REACHES UNDER THE TABLE AND PULLS OUT THE GLOVES AND THE CLOTH.

WILLIAM: Thank you. After it's done you will wipe the handle of the gun with the cloth. You will then put the gun in my hand and wipe the door handle on the way out. No one will ever

know you were here.

BEN: Suicide ?

WILLIAM: Precisely.

BEN: Then why don't you just do it yourself ? Why do you need me ?

WILLIAM: Because that's not how I want it.

BEN PUTS ON THE GLOVES.

BEN: Okay. I've put on the gloves. Now, where's the key ?

WILLIAM: Reach under the table.

BEN FEELS UNDERNEATH THE TOP OF THE TABLE. HE PULLS OUT A KEY.

BEN: Thank Christ for that. See you later you sick fuck.

BEN HEADS FOR THE DOOR.

WILLIAM: Do you love your life Ben ?

BEN STOPS.

BEN: What do you think ?

WILLIAM: Look at what's sitting on that table. I'm offering you a new life.

BEN TURNS. HE LOOKS AT THE MONEY.

BEN: Maybe I'll just take the money anyway.

WILLIAM: I'll have you tracked down and killed within the hour.

BEN: You've really thought of everything.

WILLIAM: What is so abhorrent –

BEN: Ab – what ?

WILLIAM: Abhorrent. Awful. What is so awful about what I'm asking you to do ? How am I different from a thousand other Johnnies you've serviced ?

BEN: I've never called anybody a Johnny. Unless they wanted me to.

WILLIAM: And what about what I want ?

BEN: Look, I just never thought about killing anybody.

WILLIAM: You're a service man. I'm asking you to provide a service.

BEN: It's more than that.

PAUSE.

WILLIAM: Tell me, is there anything you like about your job ?

BEN SHRUGS.

WILLIAM: Anything. Anything at all

PAUSE.

BEN: Once I was with this guy, from Telly. He was like - famous. And afterwards he had this big smile on his face. I liked that. I made him happy.

WILLIAM: And if you did this it would make me very, very happy. Would it make any difference if I was lying here stuck full of needles, tubes coming out of every orifice ?

BEN: Yeah. That would be different.

WILLIAM: How would it be different ? I want to die Ben. Why can't I die when and how I chose ? Surely I deserve that dignity.

BEN: I just wish you hadn't involved me.

WILLIAM: And then you would miss out on the chance for a new life. We are the same - you and I.

BEN: No we're not.

WILLIAM: We both have a life we don't want. You're giving me a way out and I'm giving you a way out. No one loses.

BEN: Except maybe the wallpaper.

WILLIAM: Don't think about it anymore. Just do what I ask then pick up the money and leave. Begin your new life.

PAUSE. **BEN PUTS DOWN THE GUN.**

BEN: I think you should get somebody else.

HE STARTS TO LEAVE.

WILLIAM: But I chose you.

BEN STOPS.

WILLIAM: You're not here by accident Ben. I could've got hundreds of people to do this. Some would've gladly done it for kicks. You were handpicked for this occasion.

BEN: I was ?

WILLIAM: Terio didn't know exactly what I wanted you for but he knew I needed someone very special. I came to his office and I went through the catalogue. I chose you from all the other boys. Remember the parade.

BEN: When we all had to walk up that stupid catwalk ?

WILLIAM: I was there. Behind the glass. So I could see you in the flesh. So I knew I was making the right choice. And your clothes. They were handmade specifically to your measurements.

BEN: They do fit well.

WILLIAM: Everything had to be perfect for this one moment. I want it to be exactly how I imagined. That's why it has to be you. You're the one I chose. The one I want. The angel of my demise.

BEN: Angel ?

WILLIAM: I want to sit here nice and straight with my hands on my knees and close my eyes. I want you to stand here and put the gun to my head. I want to feel the steel point pressed against my temple and smell the sweet blend of your sweat mixing with your perfume. I want to taste the saliva building in my mouth. I want to hear the soft click of the gun cocking and then feel the explosion against my skin as the bullet enters my skull - a millisecond before my blood and brains are splattered against this wall. Then my nerve endings will be numb and the screaming inside my skull will finally stop. My angel will have given me my blessed

release. (PAUSE) Please Ben. Give me my parting wish. This final gift. I want there to be an end to it.

BEN: You really want to die that much ?

WILLIAM: Yes.

PAUSE.

BEN: Let's get it over with.

WILLIAM: Thank you.

BEN: Don't say anything else. I want to start forgetting this ever happened.

WILLIAM TAKES OUT A REMOTE. HE POINTS IT AT THE SOUND SYSTEM AND PRESSES A BUTTON. MUSIC: CHOPIN ETUDE.

WILLIAM SITS IN THE CHAIR. BEN MOVES OVER TO HIM. WILLIAM HOLDS OUT HIS HAND.

BEN: What ?

WILLIAM INDICATES THE GUN. BEN HANDS HIM THE GUN. WILLIAM TAKES OFF THE SAFETY CATCH. HE HANDS THE GUN BACK TO BEN.

BEN: Ready ?

WILLIAM SITS UP STRAIGHT AND PUTS HIS HANDS ON HIS KNEES. HE TAKES TWO DEEP BREATHS THEN CLOSES HIS EYES.

WILLIAM: Now.

BEN PUTS THE GUN TO WILLIAM'S HEAD. HE CLOSES HIS EYES AND PULLS THE TRIGGER. THE GUN CLICKS.

BEN OPENS HIS EYES. HE PULLS THE TRIGGER AGAIN AND AGAIN. THE GUN CONTINUES TO CLICK. BEN BEGINS TO LAUGH.

BEN: You are without doubt the sickest fuck I have ever met in my entire life. And believe me - I've met some sick fucks.

WILLIAM: I'm sorry I had to be sure

BEN: Okay, so what do we do now ?

WILLIAM PULLS A SINGLE BULLET FROM HIS POCKET.

WILLIAM: Now, we load the gun.

THE LIGHTS FADE.