

EXTRACT

THE BED PARTY

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NOTE ON THE SCRIPT

This is an unedited manuscript as provided to us by the playwright. We distribute it in good faith; however it may contain layout inconsistencies or typographic errors.

Cast of Characters

- JASMINE:** A woman in her early 30s. Jasmine is fiercely loyal, loving and thoughtful. She has a playfulness that only those close to her are privy to.
- FINN:** A woman in her early 30s. Finn is a mouthy, jaded, dyke who protects herself with her quick wit. She is pragmatic, understanding, ethical and open-minded (if a little hot under the collar).
- TARA:** An Indian-Australian woman in her early 30s. Is a bisexual woman experimenting with heterosexuality. Though naïve at times, Tara is smart, sarcastic and resourceful.
- BRI:** A woman in her early 30s. Is a clever, passionate, well-read, radical lesbian feminist. She is disgruntled by conformity and the queer community's interest in it. Bri is prone to speaking without thinking but at her core is kind, generous and really tries to accommodate ideologies that differ from hers.
- GEORGE:** A French woman in her early 30s. George is cut from the same political cloth as Bri but is a little more romantic. She's an idealist with a penchant for alternative medicines, ideas and frameworks. She's a bit of a kook but has a rational side as well.
- KELLY:** A woman in her early 30s. Deeply troubled by capitalism and conservatism but nonetheless enslaved by the normative narrative of motherhood. She wants to procreate and is not interested in reflexivity on this topic.
- THE BED:** A mattress, a meeting place, a fortress, a sanctuary, a place to speak, a place to sleep, a place to fuck, a place to dream.

TARA is specifically imagined as Indian-Australian, however, colour-conscious casting for the rest of the roles is also encouraged. Please engage in dramaturgy of the script if casting an actor with a specific ethnicity or cultural background. As the personal is political for these women, their subject position would be raised in the world of the play. Casting a range of actors with non-normative bodies is also encouraged. Where possible, actors with a lived experience of a lesbian or bisexual identity should be considered for these roles.

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

An early Sunday morning in a share-house bedroom in Sydney, 2016.

The bedroom is in a general state of disarray. Reminiscent of Tracey Emin's artwork My Bed. The length of the bed is against the wall. A cupboard stands opposite the bed. Torn posters cover the walls. Various clothes and belongings are strewn on the floor. Jewellery, empty beer bottles and dirty wine glasses litter the bedside table.

If performed on a stage, a corridor runs alongside the bedroom. Certain action can take place in the corridor. If performed in an actual bedroom all action is limited to the bed/bedroom.

JASMINE and FINN walk into the bedroom after a night out together.
JASMINE and FINN put down their bags and take off their shoes.

JASMINE: Fuck!

FINN: Fuck?

JASMINE: I left my ring on the bar!

FINN: Jasmine!

JASMINE: I know!

FINN: Why was it on the bar?

JASMINE: I was spinning it.

FINN: I swear, you play with your jewellery more than you wear it.

JASMINE: I know. Damn. I liked that ring.

FINN: Me too. [Beaf] Well that'll teach you to spin your ring.

JASMINE: Spin me.

FINN: Spin you?

JASMINE: Spin me. Like this.

JASMINE takes FINN's hand and twirls her. Pulls her towards her as though they are to start a waltz. There is heat but the kiss lingers in the air. Neither acts on it.

FINN: Oh. I see. Like this.

FINN spins JASMINE. They return to each other's embrace. They laugh.

JASMINE: Hey?

FINN: Yeah.

JASMINE: Did you have a yo-yo when you were a kid?

FINN: Yeah.

JASMINE: Were you any good?

FINN: I could walk the dog. Why?

JASMINE: This boy at Redfern Station today was playing with a yo-yo.

FINN: And?

JASMINE: He was really good.

FINN: How interesting.

JASMINE: Finn, you don't understand. He was so ridiculously good that I... I wondered if it had a motor. He was walking the dog – I think – and, and... a million other tricks I don't know the name of. He kept it moving while doing the most outrageous things with it. And when it did stop, he could start it spinning again with a flick of his wrist, he didn't have to wind it back up and drop it down. The bit that tripped me out, though, was that no one was watching. He was captivatingly skilled and, and... no one was captivated.

FINN stares at JASMINE with a tenderness laced with carnality.

FINN: Your wrist makes me spin.

JASMINE: Are you even listening to me?

FINN nods.

JASMINE: I'm having a very real existential crisis here about people's attention.

FINN: And I'm having an equally real existential crisis about wanting you to kiss me.

JASMINE: Is that right?

JASMINE *kisses FINN tenderly. JASMINE takes the lead and JASMINE and FINN begin to fuck. However this is staged, it is clear to the audience that JASMINE is topping FINN. It is also clear there is heat between these women.*

FINN: [Moans] Jasmine.

TARA *walks in, rummages on the bedside table until she finds a packet of cigarettes, helps herself, lights up, sits down at the end of the bed smoking, ashing into an empty beer bottle. FINN and JASMINE continue to fuck for a few drags of TARA's cigarette before realising she's in the room.*

JASMINE: Tara?

FINN: Jesus, Tara, can't you see we're busy?

JASMINE *and FINN pause their fuck but don't entirely disentangle their bodies, hoping TARA will leave and they can resume.*

TARA: I can see Jasmine's busy, I can see you... well... not doing an awful lot.

FINN: Fuck off, Tara. I won't have any bottom judgement from you; you lazy shit.

TARA's *phone beeps. She looks at it anxiously but ignores it.*

TARA: Come on, you can get off later. I need you.

FINN: No, you needed my cigarettes. You've got them. Now go.

FINN *says this but knows that JASMINE will do anything for TARA and realises that this means their fuck is over. She's shitty but has gleaned that TARA isn't okay so tries to temper her frustration. JASMINE lets go of FINN. FINN reassembles herself does up buttons etc. JASMINE wipes her hand on her shirt. They position themselves cross-legged on the bed to hear what TARA has to say.*

JASMINE: Are you okay, hon?

TARA: Yeah.

JASMINE: I'd really rather you smoked outside.

TARA *continues to smoke. TARA and JASMINE exchange looks; JASMINE more pleading than annoyed, TARA more entreating than defiant. TARA's phone beeps again. TARA ignores it.*

TARA: Jasmine?

JASMINE: What's wrong?

TARA: What if I'm actually gay?

JASMINE: What do you mean?

TARA: There were blue hydrangeas in a vase in the bathroom, and all I could think about was litmus tests, year eight science, and Miss Lawrence's legs, in that order. What did blue mean again? pH seven or something right? Do you think it means I miss women?

FINN: I'll go make tea.

FINN leaves the stage.

JASMINE: Grant.

TARA's phone beeps again. She turns it over.

TARA: What?

JASMINE: *Mrs* Grant.

TARA: Come again?

JASMINE: She got married when we were in year ten, remember? She changed her name, the stupid normative dupe. And, Tara? [*Beat*] You're clearly not gay.

FINN returns with the tea. She stands in the doorway and hears TARA deliver her next line.

TARA: But... in high school I always felt like...

JASMINE: I remember.

TARA: And I still...

FINN: [*Interrupts*] The hydrangea is blue if the soil is acidic and pink if the soil is basic. The opposite of litmus paper. And sometimes I'm not even convinced you're *bisexual*. You just like watching *Orange is the New Black*. That's a trash addiction. It's not a sexuality.

TARA: God you're a jerk.

FINN: It's just that...

TARA: [*Interrupts*] It's not trash.

FINN: It really is.

TARA: Fuck off Finn, it's a great show. And of course I'm bi, don't patronise me. I'm not in the mood.

TARA clearly isn't coping. FINN realises she's being insensitive and tries to comfort TARA.

FINN: You're right, I am a jerk... What's happened, Tara?

TARA: I... Well... I... [BRI enters] Hi Bri.

BRI looks upset but keeps it at bay. She jumps on the bed, grabs FINN's tea out of her hand, takes a sip and returns it.

FINN: Hey stranger.

JASMINE smiles warmly at BRI. TARA tries to. BRI sees TARA's face.

BRI: Shit. What's up?

TARA: Nothing.

BRI: Really?

TARA: Really.

BRI: Horseshit.

TARA: I just... I... [*Attempts to start the story but can't, sighs, lies.*] I had a bad night. I think I'm premenstrual.

BRI: You and me both. I feel like someone is punching my uterus. And it's a full moon.

BRI takes TARA's hand and squeezes it. BRI and TARA look inside each other for a few beats. TARA composes herself. She's not ready to tell the story and is grateful BRI has arrived to provide a distraction.

TARA: What are you doing here at this time of night?

FINN: You mean morning.

BRI: I've left Kel, can I move back in?

TARA: Where did you leave her?

BRI: Not funny.

JASMINE: Again?

FINN: Where are you going to sleep? George has your room now.

BRI: I thought maybe I could sleep in the living room, just for a while.

TARA: Doesn't bother me. It won't be for long. You guys always work things out.

BRI: Yeah, I'm not so sure this time.

JASMINE: Bri, you know you don't need to ask. And clearly you still have a key.

BRI: [*Beat, smiles her gratitude.*] How's it going with George, anyway? She fitting in?

FINN: She takes her chakras very seriously but otherwise she's lovely.

BRI: Don't shit on chakras! Mine tell me things all the time.

TARA: Oh, and last week she brought home a cat.

BRI: What do you mean? Like from a pet store?

FINN: No, a neighbourhood cat.

JASMINE: They met on one of her walks.

TARA: She said it followed her home.

JASMINE: They talked the whole way.

FINN: They just clicked, you know?

TARA: So much in common.

FINN: They'd known each other in a past life, you see.

JASMINE: She named her Meow-sy.

TARA: We were all introduced to Meow-sy and she had her heart set on us letting her move in.

BRI: Did you?

TARA: Hell no, we made her ring the number on the collar and take her back.

BRI: So, it wasn't a stray? She stole someone's cat?

TARA: They clicked, Bri! It was karmic.

FINN: Yeah, it was like conscious new coupling or something. She said the actual owners...

TARA: Wait, she doesn't like the term owners, remember?

FINN: Right. She said the other people who love Meow-sy should understand their bond.

BRI: So, apart from stealing—and renaming—people's cats, George is cool?

JASMINE: You'll like her, Bri. She's really loving. Really...

BRI: Loopy?

JASMINE: Whimsical.

TARA's phone beeps again. She ignores it and lights another of FINN's cigarettes.

BRI: [To TARA] What happened tonight?

TARA continues to smoke anxiously for a few beats.

FINN: [Answers for TARA] She went out with an arse.

BRI: Oh.

TARA: I didn't know he was an arse. He's a... he's a TV star.

JASMINE: Tara, a contestant on *Sale of the Century* is not a TV star.

BRI: Ugh, revolting, so he thinks he's smart too?

FINN: I think TV star is an oxymoron. No one watches TV anymore.

TARA: People still watched TV when *Sale of the Century* was a thing. Anyway, he's had actual acting jobs. *Sale of the Century* is just his hook. He has a screenshot from the show as one of his profile pictures. Thinks it'll get him more dates or something.

BRI: Who would do that? Does he think it's funny? Can I see it?

TARA winces at her unchecked messages, she quickly fiddles with her phone trying to find the profile. She hands BRI the phone. BRI laughs.

I guess it *is* kind of funny.

TARA: I thought so too.

GEORGE *runs in, a little tipsy.*

GEORGE: I'm in love!

TARA: [*Spits her tea*] You're what now?

GEORGE: Love, you know, sonnets and butterflies and chills and nerves and oxytocin.

TARA: God lesbians are weird.

FINN: I'm impressed. Science *and* hyperbole.

BRI gets out of bed and helps herself to some PJs from FINN and JASMINE's wardrobe. BRI undresses and changes while they're talking then gets back into bed with them.

GEORGE: We found this picturesque little laneway bar, and we ordered Champagne — like, real Champagne! — and they brought it out in these crystal glasses. And we sat on the windowsill. And the waiters thought we were adorable. And I felt like we were in a movie.

TARA: I never want to see this movie.

FINN: Champagne? Then it *is* love.

JASMINE: Where is she then? What are you doing here?

GEORGE: She said she wants to take things slowly.

FINN: I'm sorry, George.

GEORGE: Oh... you think?

TARA: Am I missing something? I mean. Slow sounds nice... right?

JASMINE: Lesbians don't know the meaning of slow.

TARA looks confused.

FINN: It's true. I once signed a mortgage with a woman before I'd even met her.

TARA: You did not.

FINN: Yeah, but only because I don't believe in owning property. I was totally tempted. If lesbians are interested, they're choosing-baby-names on a first date kind of interested.

BRI shoots FINN daggers.



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