

EXTRACT

SHRUNKEN IRIS

Kamarra Bell-Wykes

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SHRUNKEN IRIS
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Shrunken Iris was first commissioned by and performed as part of the 'Primetime' program in the 2002 Next Wave Festival at the North Melbourne Town Hall with the following cast:

LEXI 1:	Susan (Jub) Clarke
LEXI 2:	Kamarra Bell-Wykes
COUNSELLOR, BOBBY, FATHER:	Ben
DIRECTOR:	Jadah Milroy
PRODUCTION MANAGER:	Naretha Williams
SOUND ENGINEER:	
LIGHTING DESIGNER:	

CHARACTERS

ALEXIA, mid 20's, Aboriginal

KIM (Alexia's inner voice), mid 20's, Aboriginal

Prologue

VO: Alexia held her mother's hand tightly as they stood at the crowded, claustrophobic station. She was pretty sure it was her mother but she couldn't be completely certain.

The hand she held was the same standard grey worn by all these city reptile. Alexia tried to distinguish some difference between the giants that towered above her. A frantic search for her mother's green eyes twinkling down from an overcast sky or the glint of her black skin amongst the monotonous white features, but they bled together so only a murky haze remained.

When no colour broke through the mass of faces, Alexia feared they would burst with their weight and drown her in grey rain.

A sudden explosion of colour penetrates Alexia's vision like a surreal 3d image. Her eyes blurred and she had to blink to focus.

As the rosella arched through the atmosphere his wings cut through time and space and the force of Alexia's reality tore at his feathers, which only moments before, had told his tales in the beauty of their array. The bird screamed with pain.

The tortured sound of a rosella is heard

As Alexia reached out to catch a drop of his blood she wondered if she was to blame. Could she be the cause of this cruelty? This pain?

She promised herself that she would never forget; she wanted this moment burnt on her soul like an unstitched scar, to keep that blood, as a constant reminder, like an unwashed stain.

But all this escaped her with the realisation that she was now, completely, alone. She suddenly noticed the grey water at her feet and how it rose deeper. Her little heart beats scarlet.

Scene 1- Three Whole days

Inner city train station. Lexi is looking up the train tracks; she is in bad way. Scratching viciously at her leg.

KIM: Bit itchy there?

LEXI: Yeah, but at least the scratch distraches, disgrats...

KIM: Distracts.

LEXI: I said that...at least the scratch discats me from the lesions on my tongue.

KIM: Those sores are a red welting reflection of your mind and if you could see your face, you look like you went into chemical warfare without your mask. Shameful really.

LEXI: I did, it was...

KIM: It is. You're a loyal soldier Lexi, you know you can never win but you won't leave the battlefield even if you do pretend to go AWOL for a while. Just have a taste and stop prolonging the inevitable I can't bear to see you like this. Plus you're not much fun to be with.

LEXI: No, just shutup. It's been three days now, three whole days.

KIM: Three days, day 3, numero tre. We're entering the third lap ladies and gentlemen. Hi, my name is Lexi and I've been clean for three days, three whole days, whoop dee fucken doo...

LEXI: Just shut up. Fucken itch.

KIM: What are we doing here?

LEXI: What normal people do at train stations....waiting for the train.

KIM: Yeah but what are *you* doing here?

Pause

KIM: You realise you're on the wrong platform.

LEXI: No I'm not. Platform 3, Fernwood. 11:54 last train out.

KIM: Fern – fucking –would? Would what? That's what I'd like to know. What are you going there for?

An announcement is heard over the PA.

VO: Attention passengers, the 11:54 Fernwood train has been delayed due to a fault in the tracks. A later service has been scheduled but will not arrive until 12:54. We apologise for any inconvenience.

KIM: That'd be right. There goes that then. No such thing as coincidence.

LEXI: He said there's another train.

KIM: In an hour! Hey, Bobby's got the mint. Go and cadge some money so we can ring him.

LEXI: I don't want him to see me like this.

KIM: Like he gives a fuck. We all look the same when he's hitting it from the back.

LEXI: I'll get better first, then I'll go see him, tell him how I feel. When he sees I'm clean he'll realise we can do this. We'll go away together and start over.

KIM: Where are you going to take him, Fernwood? Just what the world needs another fucked up Fernwood family!

Kim suddenly cracks up laughing as realisation hits

KIM: That's why you're going there, isn't it? To get better.

You think they're going to help you?

I can see it now.

2am. There is a knock at the door; 'David' she screams to her darling husband (who's sleeping as always in the spare room), 'go see who it is.'

David opens the door, trusty axe in hand to find a breathing corpse calling him 'dad'.

The next day down the pub with his mates he'll recall how its heroin-brittle bones didn't break but rather deteriorated. It took hardly any effort at all.

LEXI: You're sick you know that. What do you know about them anyway?

KIM: Only what I've seen.

LEXI: I wasn't going to go there tonight. I'll camp under the stars and then have a wash down the river in the morning, I haven't done that in ages. Not since me and mum used to go up to Auntie Shelly's. Us kids would have so much fun.

When we swam in the river, we swam with the fish, weaving in and out of one another, creating shimmering patterns of scales and skin, scales and skin.

KIM: The only patterns you create now are track marks.

She speaks like a prissy sales clerk

KIM: Bruise. No bruise. Bruise. No bruise.



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