

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



Shift Swapping

by David Ryding

EXTRACT

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Characters

Claire

Early to Mid thirties. The oldest of the group by an obvious age difference

Mel

Mid Twenties. Reeking of living in London, with a slight English accent, replaced with a broad suburbs voice in the flash backs

Meghan

Early twenties. The youngest and the one who exhibits the most personal development between the flashbacks and now.

Sarah

Mid twenties. Gorgeous and self-confident.

There is also a taped voice over

Act One

The voice over does an extremely slow fade in

VOICE OVER; (*Crackley and long winded*) Well uhm (*to someone else*) What did you say you wanted again? No I don't think they have that. No, I'm sure it was only a special deal or something. So what else do you want? Okay (*Back to the speaker*) Okay can I get two two piece feeds, one with a drumstick and the other with a wing, an extra large chips, a coleslaw and two cans of...uh...shit...don't you guys do Coke anymore? Better have two lemonades then. Oh! And one of those kids chicky meals as well. And an extra bun and gravey too. Nah make that two (*answering some one unheard*) what was that? Okay sure (*Back to the speaker*) make one a three piece feed with all drumsticks. Do you remember all that?

Tight spot lights up on MEL and CLAIRE in distinctive, unflattering fast food outfits. MEL has head phones on. They talk over the voice over until indicated

CLAIRE I can't believe she did it

MEL I'm more amazed she got caught. How dumb can you be?

CLAIRE Well I think she just raised the benchmark.

MEL The what mark?

CLAIRE The bench...forget it.

MEL Has anyone heard from him?

CLAIRE What do you reckon?

MEL thinks about this

MEL I don't know. He's either hiding or bragging.

CLAIRE True.

MEL He's that sort of guy

CLAIRE Stupid prick

MEL Hes like all those guys they've all (*Speaking into Microphone*) got a two piece feed with a wing, a three piece feed with all drumsticks, two lemonades, coleslaw, two extra buns, a dickhead wasting my time with gravey and a chicky meal. Do you want the toy with that chicky meal?

VOICE OVER Uhm...no.

MEL (*sugar sweet*) Drive through please.

CLAIRE Fucking private school guys.

MEL That's why you don't!

CLAIRE If you can help it

MEL and CLAIRE laugh

MEGHAN enters in Chicken Spot uniform. This is neater and tidier than the others are

MEGHAN sits expectantly

MEL and CLAIRE playfully ignore her

MEGHAN Well?

MEL *(Condescendingly)* Hmmmmmm?

MEGHAN Come on!

CLAIRE Can you hear something, Mel?

MEL No *(pauses to listen)* No. No

MEGHAN Yeah, funny

SARAH We thought so.

CLAIRE Hilarious

Pause

MEGHAN Come on then!

SARAH What?

MEGHAN You've only told me half the story

MEL True and you're next earth shattering revelation is?

MEGHAN Come on, just tell me!

MEL Hmmm...

CLAIRE Well her Dad busted everyone.

MEGHAN *(exhale of surprise)* Noo

MEL *(Rattling it off as old news)* Yeah, yeah, the whole party was thrown out, she's been grounded and not allowed to go to Schoolies after

exams. There we go, same old thing. See wasn't that interesting now was it?

MEGHAN No way! No leavers? No WAY!

MEL Yes/

CLAIRE Way!

CLAIRE and that's not the worst thing either

MEGHAN What?

MEL Yeah, get this, she's been told that Hi welcome to Chicken spot, would you like to try our new Hawaiian dream pack?

Okay, that'll be five fifty, drive through please

MEGHAN What she been told?

MEL What?

MEGHAN What has she been told?

MEL That...what were we talking about?

CLAIRE Can't remember

MEGHAN Come on and tell me!

MEL nah tell you another time

MEGHAN What?

MEL It's upper school business.

CLAIRE True

MEL Don't want to damage your innocence now do we

CLAIRE We are responsible for your upbringing

MEGHAN That's crap!

MEL Ohhh potty words! What are they teaching you kids these days?

MEGHAN I'm not a kid!

MEL Sure; Junior

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CLAIRE Yeah, don't fucking swear! I don't know who teaches you these things

MEL Shit heads!

MEGHAN You are. Please. I tell you everything.

MEL We know!

CLAIRE and MEL laugh

MEGHAN waits expectantly

MEGHAN Are you going to tell me what happened?

MEL Now that's an interesting question. No

MEGHAN You can't tell me half the story and not the other half of the story. How am I meant to/

MEL Tell all the rest of the kids? Well, you're not! I'm only telling you cause...

MEGHAN really wants this answer

MEL Just cause.

CLAIRE Just tell her already. It isn't such a big deal

MEL You're no fun.

CLAIRE Yeah, yeah

MEL Well...what were we talking about again?

CLAIRE Shouldn't Sarah be here?

MEL Ha ha. You're funny

CLAIRE Ha ha. Where is she?

MEL Late

CLAIRE Meghan ?

MEL She's right there.

CLAIRE Shut up Mel. Meghan, do you know where Sarah is?

MEGHAN No

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MEL Meghan, do you know who Sarah is?

MEGHAN Ha ha

MEL No need to get snippy

CLAIRE Where the fuck is she?

MEL Not up my Hi welcome to Chicken spot, would you like to just drive straight through. (*Shouting*) Arsehole!

CLAIRE Mel!

MEL It's okay, I had the button off

MEGHAN Didn't Sarah swap shifts with someone?

MEL Not me. Who else does she talk to?

Awkward pause

MEL She's not here...

MEGHAN yet...

MEL... ... is she

CLAIRE If this keeps up I'll have to sack...

The others laugh at the unlikeliness of this

CLAIRE Shut up

Simultaneous

MEL Shuted

MEGHAN Shuted

CLAIRE Meghan why are you here?

MEGHAN Because I was on time.

CLAIRE Everyone's a comedian. There's someone at the counter.

They all peer at the person

MEGHAN I thought I was on fryers

CLAIRE That's what monkey boys here for

MEL He scares the customers