

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



# Inside Out

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by Mary Rachel Brown

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EXTRACT

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# **Inside Out**

*When you think you know someone*

**By Mary Rachel Brown**

Characters:

Sue in her 40's, Simon's mother

Simon, 19

## Scene 1 – What’s real?

*The set consists of a couch and three porcelain ducks that hang on the back wall of the stage.*

*As the audience enter Simon is on stage drawing on the walls with chalk. Blackout. In the dark we hear the sound of a chalk line travelling towards the front of the stage. The lights come up as Simon reaches the edge of the stage with the chalk in hand; the momentum of his arm continuing briefly to draw a line in thin air. He writes the word truth on the wall. He addresses the audience; with great charm. He presses record on a hand held dictaphone; he speaks into it as he walks round the stage following the line of chalk he has drawn.*

### SIMON

Truth: the quality of being true, honest, sincere and loyal. Truth, the protagonist of this story, this reflection of a reflection of what is real. Truth always wins over speculation. The rumours about me are false, I am the hero of this story, so stay with me. As sure as you are sitting in front of me, inside me. There is truth in what I say. And the truth is that I am a lover and I am forgotten, or remembered wrong. I don’t know which. But stay with me because my heart is true.

*He takes a photo of himself.*

### SIMON

Reality test! Truth as in correct, right as in good, sound, sane. Right as in 90 degrees angle, not to be confused with angel. The L jumps round and robs you of the angel; she used to be an angel. My mother, the angel with an angle, a viewpoint that I am not on track. Mothers hey? They are always causing trouble in the plot. Mothers, Can’t live with them, can’t be born without them. It’s a real checkmate situation.

*He takes a photo of the audience.*

### SIMON

Truth; the weapon against nightmares? Or the murderer of Dreams? Which one is it? Trust my eyes, I found a slipway into seeing the truth. Remember what I told you. Stay with me, my heart is true. Don’t ruin things for me; this is worth an A+.

*Sue enters, Simon spins round to talk before she has a chance to speak.*

### SIMON

Art school project. To disrupt a normal environment by placement of incongruous objects. To relocate the anticipation of normal behaviour. It’s called a ‘happening’. To intentionally distort the course and perception of anticipated reality.

*He places the dictaphone to her mouth.*

### SUE

Jesus!

*Simon takes the dictaphone back to his mouth.*

SIMON

She thinks I draw with the hand of God.

*Sue takes the Dictaphone back to her mouth.*

SUE

Question for your tutors 'What is the line between abstract art and a messy room?'

*Simon retrieves the dictaphone.*

SIMON

Just have to take some photos, then I'll wash it off. It will wash off.

SUE

In what respect do they call this art?

*Simon starts taking photos.*

SIMON

I told you, it's a happening, to disrupt the normal -

SUE

What are the other students doing?

SIMON

This and that, stuff (*Beat*) you know.

SUE

No, not really.

SIMON

Some kids are appearing nude at MacDonald's to order a burger. One girl is sitting at the railway station dressed in a wedding dress, just sitting there waiting. One girl is taking pictures of herself as tries to lose 5kg in one week. Want to know why?

SUE

Why?

SIMON

Because she's fat. And she wants to screw the lecturer. I don't want to screw him so I'm just drawing the lines, connecting the dots, you know. Lecturers love this weird shit, makes them feel sexy. Half the teachers can't draw or paint so they don't feel inferior marking this sort of shit.

SUE  
Shit ?

SIMON  
A+ shit, but shit.

SUE  
Shit in my living room!

SIMON  
Don't complain a friend of mine once got so drunk and drug fucked that he did a shit in the washing machine, thought it was the toilet, but this the funny thing, he actually got a chair to climb up on to the washing machine, you would think at that stage something would be saying this is not the normal procedure for taking a dump, but no, he -

SUE  
Don't tell me that sort of thing Simon, God, what sort of drugs had he taken? I hope you don't -

SIMON  
All I am saying is count yourself lucky. It's just a little chalk on the walls. I told you it washes off. Christ! Would you rather I went and ordered a Big Mac naked?

SUE  
Possibly.

SIMON  
Mum, you love me, just go to the love bank, do a withdrawal and deal with it, ok?

SUE  
The 'love bank'? -

SIMON  
Made it up, clever huh? *(Beat)* Hey got an idea!

SUE  
Oh God!

SIMON  
Stand against the wall.

SUE  
Why?

*Simon leads her to the wall.*

SUE  
Remember last time I got implemented in one of your art school projects?

SIMON

This is different, trust me.

SUE

Trust you? Remember that naked man covered in blue paint hugging me, I had a white top on. I was completely covered in blue –

*Simon stands Sue up against the wall.*

SUE

I took that top to the dry cleaners, the paint would not –

SIMON

Lift your right arm a bit.

SUE

What was he doing, naked and covered in all that paint?

*Sue lifts her arm.*

SUE

Like this?

SIMON

Perfect.

*Simon draws Sue's outline against the wall.*

SUE

I feel like I am part of a crime scene, like I have been shot or –

SIMON

Maybe you're the killer –

SUE

Yes, I went and shot the head of the head of your bloody art department. I had that ruined top in one hand and a gun in the other and I -

SIMON

Stop wriggling

SUE

Or maybe it was a crime of passion, for instance, I shot my French lover because I was having an affair with an Italian lover who had lots of money and wanted to take me away, away to Venice but the French lover said no and got all French about it and the Italian lover was so full of passionate rage that he presented me with a gun and –

SIMON  
Stay still.

*Simon finishes drawing.*

SIMON  
Perfect.

*Sue moves out of position and looks at her silhouette on the wall. Simon is taking photos. Sue examines her silhouette.*

SUE  
When you were four you drew all over the wall in my best red lipstick. Do you remember?

SIMON  
Nup.

SUE  
We scrubbed and scrubbed, it wouldn't come off, we had to repaint. *(Beat)* Am I really that short?

SIMON  
You're perfect mum.

*Beat.*

SUE  
*(Beat)* What's the assignment called?

SIMON  
"What's real?" Only joking, it's called a happening. Stupid. Really stupid assignment. Don't you think? We all know what's real, why waste time making art out of it? That's why we have art, to escape reality.

SUE  
Maybe you should write that down, as part of the project.

SIMON  
I'd fail. I don't want to fail. Don't want to fail.

SUE  
You've never failed an assignment before.

SIMON  
I know. *(Beat)* Sometimes it's so loud I can't sleep.