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# THE MAKING OF ELIZABETH

by Deborah Mulhall

EXTRACT

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## Characters

*(in order of appearance)*

Lizzie	<i>A young woman under 25 years of age. Uneducated but with street smarts</i>
Amanda Harrison	<i>Mother to Henry Harrison</i>
Valeria Hillsborough	<i>Friend to Amanda Harrison</i>
Henry Harrison	<i>From 30 to 40 years of age, brilliant linguistics professor</i>
Freddy Hillsborough	<i>Under 30. Son of Valeria Hillsborough</i>
Chas Pickering	<i>Old school friend of Henry Harrison and translator for the Prime Minister's Dept.</i>

## Setting

A street in Sydney; the home of Henry Harrison in Paddington and the Members area at Randwick racecourse.

## SCENE 1.

### MARKETS SOMEWHERE IN SYDNEY

*Lizzie is busy trying to sell her mix of handbags, some imitation designer, some her own work. She may have these in a supermarket trolley or in some large, cheap plastic carry-alls.. A youngish man and a woman, who appears to be his mother, are looking at the bags. Another woman stands slightly apart.*

MRS HARRISON:

Look Val, these are rather lovely. Beautiful hand work.

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:

Amanda, please, it's rubbish. You can tell from a hundred miles away they are just cheap imitations.

MRS HARRISON:

But dear, this isn't a copy. The work is lovely and quite original.

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:

Do you really think you are going to find anything decent at a street stall for heaven's sake? And look at her - hardly a reliable dealer, is she. Well, at least not for anything reputable.

LIZZIE:

This is stuff I made meself. One orf originals. Beautiful. You won't be sorry. Won't fall apart or nuffin'.

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:

When I want a bag I get a real Chanel. I would never buy something from a street market.

LIZZIE:

Oooh, anyone 'd fink this was junk. Top quality this is.

HARRISON:

Do you like this one mother?

MRS HARRISON:

I think it is very pretty. Lovely work.

HARRISON:

How much for this ... Er...

MRS HARRISON:

Oh Henry, no, really. You took us to lunch and there is no need...

HARRISON:  
Please Mother.

MRS HARRISON:  
Well, it is ... pretty.

HARRISON:  
Then you shall have it.

MRS HARRISON:  
Henry, there isn't time. We should have left at least 15 minutes ago.

HARRISON:  
Well, you didn't. So whilst you are waiting for a taxi, I'll get you the bag.

MRS HARRISON:  
But Henry, think, I can't take a parcel to a concert at the Opera House!

HARRISON: (*realizing this means carrying a handbag home*)  
That's all right. I'll look after it for you.

MRS HARRISON:  
It is quite nice. Very well. Come on Val, we'll wait over here.

(*They move to the side and VAL begins to make a series of calls on her phone saying such things as "Why haven't you answered? All I ever get is your message bank" etc*)

HARRISON:  
How much?

LIZZIE:  
Forty bucks.

HARRISON:  
Twenty.

LIZZIE:  
It's not friggin' Bali. Thirty five.

HARRISON:  
Twenty five.

LIZZIE:  
Don't be such a cheapskate. Who's it for, anyway? Yeeeww?

HARRISON:  
My mother's birthday was three days ago...

LIZZIE:

And ya forgot. Youse blokes are all the same. Look at the friggin' handwork on this! Materials alone cost me thirty and then it was hours and hours of labour...

HARRISON:

Liar. Give you thirty.

LIZZIE:

I ain't no liar. Youse blokes have got no idea what ...

*FREDDY rushes in, out of breath, clutching his side and his dialogue overtakes HARRISON's purchase.*

FREDDY:

Sorry I'm late Mum. I was called into work even though it's the weekend and ...

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:

Oh Freddy it's been half an hour since I called you. We should have been at the Opera House fifteen minutes ago! Where's the taxi?

FREDDY:

Taxi?

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:

Yes. The Taxi? You didn't let it go, did you?

FREDDY:

Oh, I didn't think. Um, we'll need a taxi?

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:

Well, I am not walking there in this weather and in these shoes! You really are the most useless boy. So incompetent.

FREDDY:

Sorry Mum.

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:

We shall be so terribly late. They'll lock us out. Go and find us a taxi.

FREDDY:

I don't know ...

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:

Go! Immediately.

*FREDDY makes a hurried, clumsy effort, knocking into LIZZIE, sending her crashing to the ground and scattering her bags.*

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:  
Don't worry about that! Just go!

FREDDY: *(exiting, not looking)*  
Sorry!

LIZZIE: *(picking up her bags and sarcastically calling after him)*  
Nah! It's all right! Don't worry about it mate. I got it sorted. *(gives his retreating back the finger)*

MRS HARRISON:  
I'm sorry my dear. Is everything all right?

*[MRS HARRISON makes a futile attempt to help LIZZIE, who gets up from the ground, brushing herself off and gathering her merchandise. HARRISON guides his mother away from the fracas.]*

LIZZIE:  
Sorry ain't gonna fix this.

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:  
Don't fuss Amanda.

LIZZIE:  
What about this bag? It's fucked.

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:  
There's no need for that sort of language. I'm sure Fred never meant to...

LIZZIE:  
Was that your son? Not much of a gentleman is he? Just bashes into me then runs off. Nice job you did there.

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:  
Really, I don't think you have any right to ...

LIZZIE:  
Well, what you going to do about it? You going to take responsibility for your son?

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:  
There's no need for that tone of voice. Really, I ... oh dear. Look. Here's a fifty.

LIZZIE:  
It's worth more 'n' I got change for a hundred.

MRS HILLSBOROUGH:  
No ... this is for the damage. I don't want the bag. Oh dear no! Just take the money.

LIZZIE :  
Cheers. Sweet.

*PICKERING strides in, looking to hail a taxi.*

PICKERING:  
Taxi!

MRS HILLSBOROUGH: (*alert*)  
Taxi?

PICKERING:  
Bit thin on the ground, I'm afraid.

*LIZZIE takes advantage of PICKERING's proximity*

LIZZIE:  
There'll be one along eventually. Hey, why don't ya have a look at these while yer waiting?

PICKERING:  
Why would I want a bag?

LIZZIE: (*winking broadly*)  
Fer yer wife. Or girlfriend. Or both, even. Should buy you a hot night.

PICKERING:  
I'm not married. Nor do I have a ...

LIZZIE:  
You don't have anybody cos you don't give em anyfink nice. You wanna girlfriend, you gotta buy em nice fings. What about a wallet?

PICKERING:  
I don't need a wallet and I don't have any small notes.

LIZZIE:  
I got change ...

PICKERING:

I'm sorry ... look (*fishing through his pockets*), here's three dollars seventy. If it is of any use to you.

LIZZIE:

Three dollars seventy? That ain't gonna buy nothin. I mean, nobody expects this stuff to be Fendi or anyfing but its worth more 'n five bucks!

PICKERING:

I don't want anything, just keep the money!

LIZZIE: (*increasingly louder*)

I aint no beggar y'know. And I don't rip people off. I got a licence to trade and if you just look at these ones, the one's I made meself. Beautiful ...

HARRISON: (*interrupting*)

Pick?

PICKERING:

Pardon?

HARRISON:

Chas Pickering!

PICKERING:

Oh my god! Harry! It must be ...

HARRISON:

Ten years at least!

LIZZIE:

That'd be right. Old boys club.

HARRISON:

What have you been up to all these years?

PICKERING:

If I told you, I'd have to shoot you.

HARRISON:

Yeah? So learning three or four languages paid off?

PICKERING:

Well, with Mandarin and Indonesian it certainly did. I've been attached to the Prime Minister's Department. You know, translating. I go everywhere. Just on a bit of leave at the moment.

HARRISON:  
Always knew you'd wind up in diplomacy.

PICKERING:  
Hardly that.

HARRISON:  
Translation would have to be very diplomatic at times, I think.

PICKERING:  
Yes, well amongst politicians you have to learn to pick and choose your words. Diplomacy is all about manners and appearance. Sure they look the part but as soon as they open their mouths you know what you are dealing with. God I'd love to put one over on them some day.

HARRISON:  
Most of society is all about show. Tap, and it is all hollow. Call me if you ever decide to have a shot at them. Mother! Mother! Look who it is! It's Pick!

MRS HARRISON:  
Goodness. Is it really you Chas?

PICKERING:  
Mrs Harrison. Lovely to see you again. You haven't aged a day.

MRS HARRISON:  
As diplomatic as ever. Even when you were a boy and you and Henry ran amuck in the backyard, your manners were impeccable. Pity none of it ever rubbed off on Henry. Oh, Chas, this is a friend of mine. Valeria Hillsborough.

*(they exchange greetings)*

What are you doing with yourself Chas?

PICKERING:  
Trying to be a tactful translator, Mrs H.

MRS HARRISON:  
And very well suited, I imagine

HARRISON:  
Hey, are you still betting on anything that moves?

PICKERING:  
Hah! You remember!