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THE SEX ACT

by Alana Valentine

EXTRACT

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1.

A sunny, unusually windless afternoon outside a high school library, somewhere in Sydney.

Olga is sitting on a bench when Marlowe enters.

He sees her and holds out a flyer for her to take.

She doesn't take it, but looks up at him.

OLGA No, thank you.

MARLOWE It's got your name on it.

OLGA still doesn't take the flyer, but she cranes her head to look at it.

OLGA No it doesn't.

MARLOWE Yeah, it does.

OLGA looks at him again and then takes the flyer. She looks up at him again.

OLGA You've got to be joking.

MARLOWE Yeah, we are.

OLGA tries to hand him back the flyer, but now he won't take it.

MARLOWE It's a good idea, right?

OLGA Whatever.

MARLOWE No, but you'd come and see something about feminism wouldn't you?

OLGA Honestly?

MARLOWE Yeah.

OLGA Nah.

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MARLOWE Why not?

OLGA Because, who cares?

MARLOWE But it will be a piss take.

OLGA Yeah. So what?

MARLOWE What, so you think it's a really dumb idea?

OLGA Whatever.

MARLOWE No, come on. You're a girl.

OLGA Yeah? And?

MARLOWE And so, this is your stuff.

OLGA No it's not.

MARLOWE Sure it is.

OLGA Since when?

MARLOWE Since these women were your....foremothers or something.

OLGA tries to give him the flyer again. He won't take it. So she screws it up in a ball and throws it on the ground.

MARLOWE Hey, what's that about?

OLGA That's what I think of my foremothers.

MARLOWE Nice.

OLGA Gender terrorists.

MARLOWE Wow.

OLGA What?

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MARLOWE An opinion.

OLGA Was it?

MARLOWE You know it was.

OLGA If you say so.

Pause.

MARLOWE Why are you suddenly acting dumb?

OLGA I'm not acting.

MARLOWE You are. You're covering.

OLGA Don't be mean.

MARLOWE You are.

OLGA I'm not.

Pause.

MARLOWE Is that what you do?

OLGA What?

MARLOWE My friend Neil says some pretty girls act dumb even when they're smart.

OLGA Really?

MARLOWE Have you ever done that?

Pause.

OLGA Whatever.

MARLOWE But really you're smart.

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OLGA It's just a nasty rumour.

MARLOWE But that's really good.

OLGA Liar.

MARLOWE No, it is. We need opinions.

OLGA Since when?

MARLOWE Since we decided to put on a play about the sex discrimination act.

OLGA And who are you going to play?

MARLOWE Susan Ryan.

OLGA What? You?

MARLOWE Yeah.

OLGA Dressed up?

MARLOWE Yeah.

OLGA In overalls and shit?

MARLOWE Whatever it takes.

Pause.

OLGA Now that I'd like to see.

MARLOWE hands her another flyer. She looks at it, folds it up and puts it in her bag.

2.

A cafe.

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MARLOWE brings two cups of coffee over to the table where OLGA is sitting.

OLGA So, Marlowe's a good name.

MARLOWE Yeah, thanks. (Pause) After the playwright.

OLGA The what?

MARLOWE Christopher Marlowe. The playwright.

OLGA I haven't heard of him.

MARLOWE Contemporary of Shakespeare.

OLGA Right.

She sits down.

OLGA So why did your mother name you after a contemporary of Shakespeare?

MARLOWE She's gay. There's not always a reason.

OLGA Your mother's gay?

MARLOWE Yeah.

OLGA How's that?

MARLOWE In what way?

OLGA I mean....

MARLOWE (FAUX SURPRISE) You mean your mother isn't gay?

OLGA No.

MARLOWE That must be really weird.

OLGA Yeah, right.

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MARLOWE I mean, I'm open minded and all but that must be quite hard, at school and stuff.

OLGA smiles.

OLGA It's fine.

MARLOWE I guess its all you know.

OLGA sips her coffee.

OLGA So why this topic?

MARLOWE What?

OLGA For the school play you're putting on. Why is it about...you know.

MARLOWE Discrimination?

OLGA Yeah.

MARLOWE I find it interesting.

OLGA And the real reason?

Pause.

MARLOWE We had to do something for society and culture and we didn't want to write an essay so we said to Monahan can we do it as a play.

OLGA Why a play?

MARLOWE Just because we shouldn't. You know.

OLGA Who's we?

MARLOWE Me and Neil. This friend of mine.

OLGA Right.