

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



Rehearsing the Shower Scene from 'Psycho'

by Barry Lowe

EXTRACT

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

NORMAN *Older man, into fantasy. Has a passion for thrillers and Hitchcock movies. Also plays* **BABY JANE HUDSON**.

CROWE *From the country, young, aggressive, sinister, violent. Also plays* **HAWK**.

This play is dedicated to **ARTHUR DICKS**

AUTHOR'S NOTE: My thanks to Alfred Hitchcock, Robert Bloch, Joseph Stefano, Henry Farrell, Lukas Heller, Joe Orton, Stephen King, Tennessee Williams, and Billy Wilder all of whom I gleefully pillaged to make a point.

Scene 1: *THE SOUND OF RUNNING WATER AS THE LIGHTS COME UP. THE STAGE IS IN SEMI DARKNESS BUT A FIGURE WITH LONG UNRULY HAIR AND A FEATURELESS DRESS COMES ON. SHE GOES TO THE STEREO OR TAPE DECK, ETC AND CLICKS IT ON. THE MUSIC FROM THE MOVIE 'PSYCHO' COMES ON. SHE RAISES A LARGE KNIFE AND ADVANCES ON THE BATHROOM. SCREAMS AND SUDDENLY ALL GOES QUIET. PERHAPS THE POP OF SHOWER CURTAIN RINGS AS THE BODY FALLS TEARING THE CURTAIN FROM ITS RAIL. THE SOUND OF RUNNING WATER CONTINUES. LONG PAUSE BEFORE THE FRONT DOOR OPENS AND NORMAN ENTERS CARRYING SHOPPING AND WHISTLING OR HUMMING THE THEME FROM THE TV SHOW "ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS". HE PUTS DOWN WHATEVER HE'S CARRYING AND HEARS THE WATER RUNNING. HE LOOKS CONCERNED THEN TEARS INTO THE BATHROOM.*

NORMAN: *(OFF)* Oh, my God, mother, no. Not again.

(QUICK BLACKOUT)

Scene 2: *NORMAN IS FLIPPING IMPATIENTLY THROUGH THE PAGES OF A MOVIE BOOK ABOUT GREAT THRILLER MOVIES ETC GLANCING AT HIS WATCH FROM TIME TO TIME. HIS HOME IS FILLED WITH STUFFED BIRDS LIKE NORMAN'S BACK ROOM AT THE MOTEL IN "PSYCHO". THERE IS A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.*

NORMAN: Enter! *(CROWE COMES IN AND CLOSSES THE DOOR. HE IS RATHER SCRUFFY AND WEARS THONGS)* You're late!

CROWE: Didn't know I was expected any particular time.

NORMAN: *(LOOKING AT HIM FOR THE FIRST TIME)* Those thongs are a nice touch.

CROWE: All I had.

NORMAN: I suppose next you'll tell me that's real dirt between your toes and not Max Factor.

CROWE: Didn't have time to wash. Anyway, it's pissin' down outside.

REHEARSING THE SHOWER SCENE FROM *PSYCHO* 5

NORMAN: Not what I expected.

CROWE: Neither're you.

NORMAN: Definite possibilities, though you look familiar ...

CROWE: Ya said last week ...

NORMAN: Last week?

CROWE: Dontcha remember?

NORMAN: *(ANNOYED)* If I've told that agency once I've told them a million times - no repeats.

CROWE: Repeats? *(TAKING OUT A CRUMPLED CARD)* This is the right address?

NORMAN: *(SEARCHING THROUGH SOME PAPERS)* Which agency are you from?

CROWE: *(DOESN'T UNDERSTAND)* I'm not from no agency.

(SUDDENLY THE SOUND OF LOUD BANGING FROM THE FLOOR ABOVE. NORMAN GOES TO THE DOOR AND CALLS UP THE STAIRS)

NORMAN: Not now, mother, I have a visitor. *(RETURNS TO HIS SEAT)*

CROWE: Don't mind me. If your mum needs somefink.

NORMAN: Mother is - how do you say it? - not feeling herself today.

CROWE: Oh? *(IT'S A QUESTION SEEKING MORE INFORMATION BUT NONE IS FORTHCOMING)*

NORMAN: If you're not from an agency what are you doing here then?

CROWE: You invited me. Least I fink it was you.

NORMAN: I invited you.

CROWE: Yea.

NORMAN: What did I say exactly?

CROWE: Don't remember *exactly*. Music was too loud.

NORMAN: *(NOT REMEMBERING)* Oh?

CROWE: You **do** remember?

NORMAN: *(FAKING IT)* That was ages ago.

REHEARSING THE SHOWER SCENE FROM *PSYCHO* 6

- CROWE:** Not that long.
- NORMAN:** (*STILL NOT REMEMBERING*) Um ... I'd forgotten all about you.
- CROWE:** I didn't forget you, but.
- NORMAN:** Obviously.
- CROWE:** Can I have somefink to eat?
- NORMAN:** This is not a cafe.
- CROWE:** You invited me over.
- NORMAN:** I have someone calling in a few minutes. They're running a little late.
- CROWE:** That why you were shitty when I came in?
- NORMAN:** I beg your pardon?
- CROWE:** Ya said ya had somefink in mind when I met ya.
- NORMAN:** (*DISTRACTED*) Did I? Oh yes, that's right, I did.
- CROWE:** As long as it's none a that poofa shit. Don't get off on that. Not a poofter are ya?
- NORMAN:** Uh ...
- CROWE:** Didn't think so.
- NORMAN:** Look ... um ...
- CROWE:** Crowe. That's me name. Crowe.
- NORMAN:** Listen .. uh ... Crowe. I really do have someone coming over on business in a few moments. And that little job I was telling you about ... well ... I don't think you'd work out.
- CROWE:** How about lettin' me stay, man?
- NORMAN:** This not a motel.
- CROWE:** Hey, I'm down on me luck. Nowhere else ta go.
- NORMAN:** So where have you been staying lately?
- CROWE:** Shelters. Squats, that sorta thing. Or when me an' me mates got the money we stay somewhere fancy.