

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



Behind the Play

by Marita Wilcox

EXTRACT

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CHARACTERS

CARRINGTON: Club President, in his mid 50's.

WALKER: Aboriginal Footballer, Vice-Captain, early 30's.

TINY: Footballer, early 30's.

TINA: Tiny's wife, pregnant with third child.

ANGELA: Fiancee of 'Donno', 18 years of age.

KATRINA: Wife of 'Grey, the club champion, early 30's

CYNTHIA: Bride of the new Captain 'Lance', late 20's.

SIMONE: Girlfriend of 'Walker', early 30's

LYNETTE: Sports Reporter, mid 20's.

FOOTBALL FAN

BEHIND THE PLAY

SCENE 1

*An AFL clubroom.
Evening.*

Off-stage, in the Social club, a wedding reception is in full swing, music, laughter and voices can be heard.

The light from the Social Club reveals the clubroom. On the doorway hangs a sign that reads 'Players Only'. It is furnished with comfortable chairs, a bar, stools, telephone, and football memorabilia. Scattered around are women's coat and bags, and the brides makeup kit and suitcase. There is also a few champagne glasses and an couple of empty bottles around. In a corner there is a box of soft toys.

Off stage the laughter and talking from the wedding reception gets louder.

Richard Carrington (Cary), the Club President, quietens the crowd.

CARY: *(Shouting)* Ok, ok everyone ... now, to the Bride and / Groom.

EVERYONE: To Cynthia and Lance, Mr and Mrs Wyatt. *(Loud whistles, clapping and cheering continues right through this section)*
WOAH, ON'YA MATE, / ON'YA, YEAHHHH

TINY: *(Loudly)* On'ya mate,. Hey, Lance her matey. Hey mate, get it in tonight, if you can find it. *(Laughing)* Not like you arsing about around the fog at Waverley ... I'll be rooting for you.

WALKER: *(To Tiny)* Shut up, your being watched.

TINY: *(To Walker)* Ha,What about Donno's new girlfriend, would you give her one or what?

WALKER: Not after you ...before maybe *(Laughs)*

TINY: That'd be right you piss weak / bastard -

TINA: SHUT UP YOU TWO.

TINY: *(To Tina)*He had a go at me.

TINA: SHUT UP / I SAID

WALKER: I'm outa here.

(Tiny and Walker push and shove each other playfully to center stage. Walker has a trendy stylish suit on, Tiny is more casual and untidy. Bridal Waltz music starts. Background crowd noises start to fade)

TINY: *(Shouting)* You arsehole. *(Hits him from behind)* Didn't even see it coming did ya, bit like Dunstall *(Or substitute current champion of the moment)* He's had you by the balls / more times than -

WALKER: *(Hits back)* You can't talk.

TINY: Shit for / brains *(Hits him again)*

WALKER: *(Quietly)* Ease up.

TINY: Best place for you this year will be the bench, / in the reserves.

WALKER: And you think you're going to be Vice Captain?

(Tiny gives the thumbs up sign. Tina sticks her head out of the Social Club doors)

TINA: *(Shouting)* Just shut your faces / you two.

TINY: *(Sternly)* Get back inside Tina, go on.

TINA: They'll hear / you.

TINY: *(Yelling)*Nick off I said.

(Tina goes inside. Tiny and Walker watch her)

TINY: *(Smiling)* Treat 'em mean.

(Walker brushes himself down, Tiny gets himself a beer from the bar)

CARY: *(Off stage)* And now if everyone would like to join Lance and his bride on the dance floor ...

(Cheering, clapping and crowd noises as everyone starts dancing)

TINY: *(To Walker)*What d'ya reckon we hit the Albion?

WALKER: What about Tina?

- TINY: She's safe .. let's go / then
(Walker stops him)
- WALKER: *(Seriously)* Na ... you see ... I've got someone I said I'd meet.
- TINY: Where?
- WALKER: Lygon St.
- TINY: We'll pick him up, start at the Queensberry / and do the lot.
- WALKER: Umm ... no mate ... it's sort of an interview.
- TINY: Jesus Walker are you being head hunted?
- WALKER: Hey?
- TINY: You're on a great wicket here. AHAAAA.....you into that top 10 publicity deal thing with Ricky Nixon Huh ?
- WALKER: Stupid bastard.
- TINY: So ... you smell another dollar .. / you talk, I'll drink ... c'mon.
- WALKER: What?
- TINY: Oh c'mon, you said you'd fix me up with something one day ... have to look after your mates.
- WALKER: Well, there could be something in it so, if you / *(Walker clips Tiny behind the ear and goes to leave, Tiny grabs him)*

OPTIONAL CHARACTER INSERT

FOOTY FAN (No dialogue)

A FEMALE FOOTBALL FAN, DRESSED IN BLACK WITH SEVERAL FOOTY SCARVES AROUND HER NECK AND A BEANIE ON, QUIETLY SNEAKS INTO THE ROOM

UNNOTICED BY TINY AND WALKER. WHEN SHE SEES HER TWO IDOLS SHE FREEZES AND IS MEMORIZED BY THEM. HARDLY VISIBLE IN THE BACKGROUND, SHE WATCHES THEM, PATHETICALLY HOLDING OUT A AUTOGRAPH BOOK TOWARDS THEM.

- TINY:** Bullshit
- WALKER:** I have to "suss" it out first.
- TINY:** You're just like Carrington, cunning as a shithouse rat.
- WALKER:** Just business brains.
- TINY:** Shit for brains.
- WALKER:** *(Annoyed but friendly)* Listen mate, I'm looking after myself, cause they'll give you the arse as soon / as it suits them,.....
- TINY:** Don't give me the shits !
- WALKER:** Huh *(He laughs)* Piss off You can't come. *(Walker grabs Tiny in a friendly headlock and steers him towards the social club)*
- TINY:** You're full of shit. *(He resists Walker grip and heads back to the bar Walker follows)*
- WALKER:** What do you mean?
- TINY:** An interview ... come on!
- WALKER:** She's a sports journalist / and she's -
- TINY:** What! A woman journo ... ah knew it ... good fuck?
- WALKER:** Tch ... *(He starts to leave)*
- TINY:** Well, I'm with you ... your alibi ... just in case ... you know !
- (Cary enters from reception and sees them).*
- CARY:** *(To Walker)* Been looking for you. *(He strides toward them and acknowledges Tiny)* Tiny.
(Footy fan remains motionless and scared)
- TINY:** *(Acknowledging Cary)* Elliott, I mean Cary.
- CARY:** *(To Walker)* Need to talk ... I'll be in my office ... see me before you go.

- WALKER:** What about now?
- CARY:** No ... busy ... uh, don't interrupt me for an hour or so ..(*Partly to himself, partly to Walker*).Fucking salary cap problems, they can't prove we breached the rulings,.... they've bloody well just rewrote them to give it more teeth, the bastards, Threatening us they are with a bloody \$50,000 fine..arseholes.. (*To Walker*) Yeah..what..ah..ah.. about an hour, then it'll suit. (*To Tiny*) Tiny, you need to lose 6 kilos.
- TINY:** 6 kilos. Me?
- CARY:** You've got two weeks ... do it.
- TINY:** Jesus!
- CARY:** Both of you are getting a bit long in the tooth ... yeah ... you too Walker ... fitness Tiny. There's younger players breathing down your neck. You've only got one more season in you if you don't double your training and your a bloody certainty to be one of the first hooligans to be caught in the bloody threatening conduct clause of the fucking melee ruling (*He begins to exit, muttering to himself, acknowledges the footy fan, she smiles back nervously*)
- TINY:** Yeah..Yeah..Yeah..
- CARY:** (*To Tiny*) Should sell you off before (*He stops and faces the footy fan, grabs her by the backside and scruff of the neck and marches her out the exit that goes to his office*)
(*To Tiny and Walker*) You guys just can't help mouthing things off, can you ?
- TINY:** (*Loudly*) Yeah ok,..... HEY CARY ... your fly's undone.
- WALKER:** That'll get you nothing.
- TINY:** What does he know about football?
- WALKER:** A million dollars worth ../. football's changing.
- TINY:** I love the game that's good enough.
- WALKER:** It's more than a game. (*He starts to leave*) I'll see you later ...
- TINY:** Bullshit (*Tiny follows him out, They exit the same way Cary went*)

(Tina comes out of the Social Club. She is very pregnant and quite tipsy. Her dress is not flattering and her hair is untidy. She looks around)

TINA: Tiny .. Tiny? C'mon *(She goes into the players room)* C'mon, stop mucking around. *(She looks around the room, then towards the offices)* Oh, suit yourself ya wacka. *(She goes to the bar and fossicks behind it, surfacing with a bottle of champagne)* Ah, just what the doctor ordered. *(She tries to get the cork out)* Sshh ... sshh ... just like Tiny ... stuck in. *(She finds a fork and tries to prise it out)* Ohh ... shit. *(She hurts her finger and jumps around holding her belly)* Bloody hell. *(She talks to the bottle)* Now, listen to me, when I say open, you open, got me? This's your last chance.

(Angela enters from the Social Club, about 18 years old, impeccably groomed and dressed. She looks around and seems worried and a bit lost. She hears the pop of the cork and jumps)

TINA: Got ya! *(She pours herself a glass)* Oh no doctor, I'm just a social drinker.....Up yours. *(Toasting herself, she notices Angela)* Oh hi ... c'mon in. Welcome to 'OUR' room.

ANGELA: *(Shyly)* Oh sorry ... but is this where the bathroom is?

TINA: Well it depends which 'bathroom' you want. Would you like the one with just baths or would you like one with toilets as well, because there's only one with baths and toilets, but noooo ... you can't use that one because that's in the holy sanctuary and you have to have balls to use it. But our esteemed President, Cary Grant the Dictator, has one in his office just in there *(She exaggeratingly points towards the offices)* although that's really a shower with a foot bath, lovely basin in there with huge mirrors, but then you'd have to be invited to use it, but I guess you'd get an invitation. There's a 'yobbos' loo, *(Exaggeratingly pointing in another direction)* but that's for common people and you're not common are you? Are you still a virgin?

ANGELA: Ohh ... um ../. um ... I'm ...

TINA: Oh come off it ... only joking.

ANGELA: Oh ... *(She is embarrassed and nervous)*

TINA: God, hey it's all right. Anyway, what d' ya ask me?

ANGELA: I'm looking for the loo.

TINA: Oh ... There. *(She point again)*

ANGELA: Thanks. *(She goes into the bathroom and is out of sight. Tina follows her holding the bottle and glass)*

TINA: So ... what d'ya think ... huh ... huh ... Angie?

ANGELA: Pardon?

TINA: What d'ya think huh? I said what d'ya think?

ANGELA: It's a lovely wedding.

TINA: Wedding? About who's going to be Vice Captain.

ANGELA: Oh ../. sorry ... umm

TINA: Well, I think it's about time they gave Tiny a go. He's the best they've had for 10 years and he's fitter than anyone else ..got the best mark in the AFL last year.... well, nearly... and he would have come close to the Brownlow if he hadn't been robbed by those white rats . He was nearly runner-up to Walker in the supporters best and fairest. Anyway, if he doesn't get it ... I'll have a few words to say.

(Toilet flushes and Angie re-enters.)

ANGELA: Umm ... Tiny would be good ../. um

TINA: That a girl. *(She pours more champagne.)* Here, get this into ya.

ANGELA: I really don't drink that much ../. mum said that -

TINA: It's beautiful. It's La Christening No. 4.

ANGELA: Oh ... well, it must be good then. *(She takes the glass Tina offers her)*

TINA: I'll race you, just a quick drink, to celebrate.

ANGELA: The baby?

TINA: No ... Tiny being Vice Captain.

(The bride, Cynthia, whose wedding dress resembles Scarlet O'Hara from Gone With The Wind and Katrina, a woman in her late 20's, early 30's, dressed in the same dress as Tina, (Bridesmaid outfits) can be heard having a conversation off stage) (SIMULTANEOUS DIALOGUE, TINA AND ANGIE CONTINUE SPEAKING AS CYNTHIA AND KAT TALK OF STAGE).

- ** ANGELA:** Oh ./.. um um
- TINA:** C'mon. *(She starts to scull. Angela copies her and drinks the lot so she can go)* Good girl, have another. *(Tina fills the glasses)*
- ** ANGELA:** Oh no ...*(Tina, flings a coat (Kat's) from the couch to a chair, then maneuvers Angie to sit down, which she nervously does.)*
- ** CYNTHIA:** It'll be fabulous for Lance. He'll come back fitter than the rest of them / put together.
- KATRINA:** He's not as good as my Grey, anyway I still think you should let him go on the trip with the boys, you know they need to build the team spirit after such a dreadful season.
- CYNTHIA:** But you wait, Lance'll be ... it's not the usual sort of honeymoon. *(They enter the players room)* Oh hi, having a good time?
- TINA:** Like a cat swallowing a magpie.
- KATRINA:** Wrong team, Tina. Have another drink.
- TINA:** Brilliant idea ...
- CYNTHIA:** And you're Angela, aren't you?
- ANGELA:** Angie ... yes ... you look lovely.
(Kat turns to look at Angie, and is obviously annoyed that she's in the room, and sitting on the couch that she always uses.)
- CYNTHIA:** Thanks. *(To Katrina)* Angie's with Donno. *(To Angie)* This is Katrina, wife of the legendary Greyhound
- KATRINA:** *(Terse)* Hello.
- ANGIE:** Oh ... hello ... pleased to meet you. *(Angela picks up that she isn't really welcome and timidly stands.)*
- KATRINA:** Mmm.. You too.
- ANGIE:** My dad says Gray's favorite to be captain-and one day, coach, now that Ron's retiring.
- KATRINA:** That's very astute of your father. *(She sits on the couch and checks her makeup)*
- ANGIE:** Dad says he's got it all.

- TINA:** Kat's the one that's got it all. (*Taps her head*) A glass of champagne to celebrate. (*She fills up glasses*)
- CYNTHIA:** (*Southern American accent*) Well, thank you mam, Ah just don't mind if ah do
- TINA:** To Tiny ...
- CYNTHIA:** To Tiny?
- TINA:** Being Vice Captain.
- KAT:** To Cyn and Lance.
- TINA:** To Cyn and Tiny
- KAT:** (*Rolls eyes*) To Cynthia, welcome to the wives club, / the hardest one of all.
- ANGIE:** (*Enthusiastically*) To Cynthia. (*Kat glares at her. They all drink*)
- KAT:** (*To Angie, probing*) How long have you been going out with Donno?
- ANGIE:** (*Shyly*) Not long, mum and dad introduced / us at the Social Club.
- KAT:** He's a good player and as long as he keeps level headed and doesn't panic he'll get a Guernsey permanently.
- ANGIE:** That's what dad's been telling him.
- CYNTHIA:** You've met her parents.
- (Simone stands at the door, She is slim, perfectly groomed and wears an elegant, simple dress. She is in her late 20's. She looks around her, trying to find Walker. She enters and acknowledges the ladies in the room, but she seems somewhat distracted and pensive.)*
- KAT:** I have ... who? (*Tina acknowledges Simone*)
- CYN:** The Dawsons, Rod and Di ... Hello Sim, you look gorgeous.
- (Simone smiles and nods, Cynthia waits for her to return the compliment, but she doesn't)*
- KAT:** (*To Simone*) Hi. (*To Cynthia*) Rod Dawson who's on the committee? (*Angie nods*) Well why haven't I met you before?

- ANGIE: I've only just started going / to the Social Club.
- TINA: Hey Mona, get this into ya, we're celebrating. You seen Tiny?
- SIMONE: It's Simone. *(She takes the champagne)* Thanks ... no / I haven't.
- KAT: You looking for Walker?
- SIMONE: No. *(She takes a mouthful of champagne and goes straight to the ladies toilets. Cynthia is annoyed that Simone is using the bathroom and she fusses with her dress)*
- TINA: *(To Cyn)* He's gone walkabout again. *(They laugh)*
- SIMONE: *(Shouting back)* If he has. it's probably to keep an eye on the Casanova from Tasmania. *(Tina reacts, Cynthia laughs)*
- KAT: *(To Angie)* So, are you as good a supporter as your parents?
- ANGIE: Nearly.
- KAT: If you're going to go out with a player you have to be the / best -
- TINA: Best type of athletic supporter. *(She laughs)*
- KAT: Tina! You not only have to support your man, but / the club too ...
- **TINA: This is a wedding not a recruitment / session, Kat.
- **ANGIE: *(Quietly)* I will ... I mean ... I do .. / . but he doesn't need a -
- KAT: Are you going to be around for the whole season?
- ANGIE: Oh yes, / we're going to ...
- CYN: *(To Tina)* Is my hair all right?
- TINA: Turn around. *(Cynthia turns around)*
- KAT: *(To Cynthia)* I'll fix it in a minute.
- TINA: It looks all right. / very you
- (Simone re-enter and looks for her handbag, she notices Kat's coat strewn across the chair that she always uses and flings it across to the couch, flicking Kat, Kat is shocked. Tina breaks up at this little performance.)*
- SIMONE: *(To Kat, sarcastically)* Nice frock !!