

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



# Punch!

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by Geire Kami

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EXTRACT

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## CAST

PUNCH

JUDY

BABY

POLLY

SCARAMOUCH

BEADLE

THE DEVIL

BLIND MAN

JUDGE

HANGMAN

Voice Overs include VO (News Reader) and GSV - GSV5 (game show voices 1 - 5). The nature of the inter-weaving effect of the VO's indicates that they may need to be live.

Note on script: "/" indicates overlapping conversation.

Lights come up to reveal Punch dressed in yellow, sitting in an armchair. He has a beer can in his hand. Baby is playing on the ground. There is a knock at the door. SFX of vacuuming off stage. Punch sits looking his reflection on the round back of a spoon.

Judy (offstage) Will you get that?

Knocking.

Judy (os) Hey!! Punch! Will you get the door?

Knocking.

Punch My heart is in anguish within me...

Judy Get the fucking door!! I'm vacuuming!!! Jesus Christ!!!

*Punch gets up and goes to the door. He is still in a trance.*

*Blind Man is in the doorway.*

Blind Man Alms for the poor sir?

Silence.

Blind Man I say: Alms for the poor? Give that you may receive.

*Punch slams the door with one swinging motion of his arm, turns and walks to his chair. Enter Scaramouch walking swiftly, catches Punch on his way to his chair and from underneath removes the can from Punch's hand and has a long drink. Punch continues to walk, hand held as if he still carries the beer. Scaramouch leans in close to Punch's face.*

Scaramouch Well, well, well. Sitting on your fat arse again are you? Look at yourself...go on. Pathetic. Look at this place...what have you got in here? Nothing. You have no self respect. Do you know that? Life is all about what you can accumulate. You - you're accumulating dust. That's all.

Punch the terrors of death have fallen upon me...

*Scaramouch puts the can back in Punch's hand.*

Scaramouch Who cleans this place? Your wife? Is she blind? Look at this dirt! Anyway ugh! Got to get back to my big, infra red remote, flat screen, picture in picture TV.

*Scaramouch exits. Beadle looks in window. Then makes for the door. Knocking.*

Knocking.

Judy (OS)      Jesus Christ! Do I have to ask you every time to get the goddamn door?

*Punch gets up and opens the door. Turns and walks back to his chair. Zombie.*

Punch            Fear and trembling come upon me...

*Beadle enters - surveys the landscape.*

Beadle           Mr. Punch you signed on late this morning. You know it kills me to have to do this mate, but...

*Beadle takes out a little black police note book and writes. Then leans down and takes a swig of beer.*

Beadle           Consider that your last warning.

Punch            and horror overwhelms me.

Beadle           Look...I can't promise anything right? But, I'll try and get it overlooked.

*Punch opens his mouth. Beadle cuts him off.*

Beadle           Yeah I know! You can thank me by keeping your mouth shut. We got an arrangement, remember?

*Punch closes mouth. Beadle places can back in Punch's hand, burps and leaves wiping his mouth with the back of his hand. Baby starts to whimper. She crawls over to Punch and sits beside him whimpering. She takes the can and has a sip and puts it back in Punch's hand. Stops whimpering and gets up straddles Punch and gyrates against him simulating sex. She slides down to the floor and crawls away.*

Punch            And I said...

*Enter Polly. Polly looks around the room cautiously, then tiptoes over to Punch.*

Punch            O that I had wings like a dove.

Polly            RAAA!!

*He jumps in his seat. Still in a trance.*

Polly            Hey, I know you told me never to come round but I had to see you.

Punch            I would fly far away and be at rest...

*Polly takes beer. Straddles Punch in seat. Arches back and drinks. Leans down, kisses Punch.*

Polly            When can I see you again? ...Well?

*Gets up. Puts beer in Punch's hand.*

Polly            (Screams) What the fuck is the matter with you?!! Tell me what the hell is going on? Speak! Fuck! You're pathetic! You call yourself a man? You're not a fucking man. You're nothing! You piece of shit!

*Turns to leave. Then turns back.*

Polly            I'm sorry honey. I just miss you that's all. Come over soon k? Love you! Toodle loo!

Punch            Yea I would fly far away and live in the wilderness...

*Polly leaves. Judy enters vacuuming. She vacuums all around Punch..*

Judy            Up!

*Punch doesn't move.*

Judy            Lift up!!

*She grabs his pants and wrenches one leg up and vacuums under it then wrenches the other and does the same. She turns off the vacuum cleaner*

Punch            I would wait for he who would save me...

Judy            Slack bastard.

Punch            from my cowardice

*Judy takes beer and drinks from it puts it back in Punch's hand. Wipes hands off on each other, straightens skirt, etc. etc. (any repeated habit like action) leans down and kisses Punch.*

Judy            (brightly) All done!

*Judy leaves. Punch lifts the can slowly to his mouth, and pours. He lifts the can still in pouring position. Nothing is pouring. He holds the can off to the side upside down and shakes it.*

Punch            and from the storm.

Baby            Loser.

*Punch turns around and looks at Baby. Turns back to the mirror. Punch begins crying.*

*Devil enters.*

Punch            I had a dream. I was seven years old again. I was standing on the balcony with Gerald and we were playing with the baby, always the baby only this time my hands were bigger. The baby was small enough to fit in my palms. I was leaning over and the baby started to wriggle around and I let him go, I didn't mean to, I just kind of slipped, then everything started to move really slow. I ran inside the house and tried to call god , or whatever - to call heaven and the angels, I wanted to say fuck! Help me! Don't let this happen to me now. It's going to ruin my fucking life but there was an answering machine and god said I'm not in at the moment. Here comes the beep. You know what to do but I just couldn't remember my number. I ran back and the baby was on the concrete already - a smear of blood, some little white bones sticking out. I kept thinking not again not again not again - I shouldn't have dropped him because my hands were big.

*He takes the spon and holds it to his wrist in suicide position. During this speech the devil moves closer to Punch.*

Punch            What have I got to live for? No love. Who could love me? No money. No job. I'm nothing. I have missed every opportunity to make something good of my life. And who cares? You know? Who sees this? Not my family...not my fucking wife. Friends? What friends?

*He slices his wrist. Blood pours down. Punch watches his wrist. The Devil collects some in a small ink well then wipes away the blood to reveal a healed wrist.*

Devil            The perfect blend of self-pity and cowardice. Maybe this is the one.  
(Devil dances around) Maybe this is the one, maybe this is the one...

*Pause. Punch looks at the wrist.*

Punch            Oh my...god. I can't do anything right! I fail at everything. I don't think I've ever created anything.

I've got to do something. I'm going to create something...something...creative. Yeah I'll build something. Like a...something useful. A box. A little coffin. Yeah. Yeah. In this little coffin I'm going to...bury my past. This could be the beginning of...I don't know. That's what I'm going to do.

*Punch exits. Devil follows.*

*Curtain Down.  
End scene.*