

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



Lost Lagoon

by Adam Grossetti

EXTRACT

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CHARACTERS

CLIFFIE: A man anywhere between forty and seventy.

SCHEHERAZADE/LILY: A nurse/woman. Anywhere between forty and seventy.

RORY: A son. Anywhere between twenty and thirty.

Lost Lagoon received a public reading at the 1999 Sydney Fringe Festival. It was directed by the author with the following cast:

CLIFFIE Anthony Phelan

SCHEHERAZADE/LILY Carole Skinner

RORY Richard Sydenham

Lost Lagoon premiered at Belvoir St Theatre Company B Downstairs season. August 4 1999. It was directed by the author with the following cast:

CLIFFIE: Anthony Phelan.

SCHEHERAZADE/LILY: Gael Ballantyne.

RORY: Craig Ball.

In the black we hear the sound effects of people playing, a man, a woman, a small child. Then silence. Lights rise to state. On stage is Cliffie. He is an old man with scruffy facial growth and long hair. He sits on an old worn out sofa angled inward from stage left. The sofa has no pattern, preferably bland white or dull yellow. Springs and foam protrude through the surface. Timber floorboards cover the stage, though on the perimeter some are missing and underneath can be seen bright dust/sand. There are numerous tins of bright yellow paint, opened. A number of worn paint brushes in an empty glass. Directly opposite the sofa and at a similar angle, facing inward, is an easel with a canvas facing away from audience view. Numerous canvases of various sizes lean against all walls., their backs the visible side. Cliffie has on worn out trousers splashed with yellow paint, an old shirt, old boots. His hands and arms splattered in yellow paint. Two empty picture frames hang on the right and left side of the upstage wall beyond the sofa. The walls are pure black with flecks, splashes and streaks of yellow paint here and there. A small unvarnished wooden table is placed behind the sofa, on it, a breadboard, an old knife, curls of apple peel, an old spoon, numerous paintbrushes and yellow tins of paint. There are no extraneous furnishings.

Two soft spots rise on the empty picture frames, then light fills the space.

Cliffie grips a brush in his hands. He sighs, rises, walks to the canvas, dabs at it. Smiles. Scheherazade enters, carrying a number of food containers. She walks to the table and starts to organise the food containers, her back to Cliffie. Several seconds pass.

CLIFFIE (Speaking to the canvas.)
Whas' tha?

SCHEHERAZADE
Nuf' a' that.

Pause. Cliffie looks at Scheherazade, then indicates to the canvas.

CLIFFIE (Smiles maniacally)
Someone dere, someone dere.

SCHEHERAZADE
Cliffe!!

CLIFFIE (*Smiling, pointing at the canvas.*)
Someone dere, someone dere, you see, you see dem, dey came, dey coming!

SCHEHERAZADE
Listen if you're going to continue to babble you won't get any food!

CLIFFIE
But dey coming here! Dey jus left but dey come back, dey come back tomorroee!

Cliffie gestures at the canvas.

SCHEHERAZADE
Now listen to me, stop all this and get some food into you! Would you like some food?

CLIFFIE
Verie much than' you.

Cliffie walks to the sofa and sits down.

SCHEHERAZADE
Good, that's good.

Scheherazade with a bowl of soup approaches Cliffie and hands it to him, he holds it with both hands.

SCHEHERAZADE
There...*(She strokes the side of Cliffies face and begins to ladle soup to his mouth.)*
...that's better isn't it. Good?

CLIFFIE (*While eating*)
Mmm. Bit watery.

SCHEHERAZADE
It's soup Cliffie of course it's a bit watery.

CLIFFIE
Blood not soup.

SCHEHERAZADE
I know Cliffie, I know.

CLIFFIE
Say it, say it then!

SCHEHERAZADE
Bloods thicker than water.

CLIFFIE (*Smiling maniacally*)

But, but...say it say it.

SCHEHERAZADE

But so is soup.

CLIFFIE (*Clapping his hands.*)

Yah, yah!

SCHEHERAZADE

Okay okay I said it, settle down, come on eat up.

Cliffie slurps down the remaining soup, continues to hold the bowl in his hands.

SCHEHERAZADE

Okay, now repeat after me. (*She stands beside Cliffie*) I am worthwhile.

CLIFFIE

You are lady, *you* are worthwhile, yeah.

SCHEHERAZADE

Not me Cliffie, you. Okay let's try again.

CLIFFIE

Okay.

SCHEHERAZADE

Okay.

CLIFFIE

Okay.

SCHEHERAZADE

I am worthwhile.

Cliffie's voice changes tone becomes serious, sincere.

CLIFFIE

I am worthwhile.

SCHEHERAZADE

I should be respected.

CLIFFIE

I should be respected.