

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



# Everything

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by Bruce Shearer

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EXTRACT

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# CAST OF CHARACTERS

The play has the potential for more than 10 actors to be involved, but can be performed with as little as five by doubling up the small roles and TV and radio voices.

- CLAUDETTE      Single mother in her mid 30's. Warm affectionate, and witty in an off-beat manner.
- TILDA            A fifteen year old who is easily swayed by peer group pressure and advertising. Basically a nice kid.
- MEGLO          This role can be performed by either a male or female actor. The character is ruthless in seeking power and money, and is uninterested in the feelings of others
- PLIMPTON      This role can be performed by either a male or female actor. A bland advertising executive with a hatred for Weazlby, another advertising executive.
- WEAZLBY      This role can be performed by either a male or female actor. An advertising executive. A would-be Meglo. A total yes person and toady.
- SWIFT          This role can be performed by either a male or female actor. An advertising executive who is the natural successor to, and thus feared by, Meglo.
- YLLANA        Tilda's trendy fashion conscious friend.
- SCINTILLA  
PUTRESALLE    Three cardboard cut-out teen models.  
LUSCIANNE
- RADIO VOICES   Various hyped up, over the top commercial  
TV VOICES      sales voices.
- JOURNALISTS    Investigative, cynical voices.

# EVERYTHING

## SCENE 1

The scene is set in a cluttered inner city flat, inhabited by Claudette and Tilda. Tilda is lying flat on the floor on her stomach, staring at the TV which the audience cannot see. Claudette is tidying up the room in a casual and removed fashion. Throughout Scene 1, radio and TV voices can be heard, provided by the actors who are off-stage.

TV VOICE            GO ON POXY FOX, SHOW EM WHAT YA GOT,  
                              SHOW EM YOU'RE HOT, IN A POXY FOX BRA.

TILDA                That's what I need. All the others have got one.  
                              I'M OUT, I'M MAROONED!

CLAUDETTE         That's a rather interesting word to use

TILDA                (LOUDER)

                              That means I'M INVISIBLE, I DON'T EXIST!

CLAUDETTE         Are you sure it doesn't mean you're a shade of  
                              purple?

TILDA                (LOUDLY AND WITH EMPHASIS)

                              I'm in the outer limits, I need help, I need

                              (PAUSE)

                              ACCESSORIES!

TV VOICE            IMPROVE YOUR EYES, DEODORISE, GET RID OF  
                              FLIES, AN ALL TIME HIGH WITH . . .

CLAUDETTE (OBLIVIOUS TO HER DAUGHTER'S RANTING  
CLAUDETTE CONTINUES TO DUST THE  
FURNITURE. SHE LIGHTLY DUSTS TILDA AND  
ADDRESSES THE TV.)

I'll keep my flies thankyou very much.

(SHE FLICKS THE TV OFF.)

TILDA (ROLLS OVER ONTO HER BACK AND GAZES AT  
THE CEILING. SHE SHOUTS.)

I'm fifteen and I'm over the hill.  
I HAVEN'T GOT A STUD. I NEED HELP, I NEED  
A POXY FOX BRA.

CLAUDETTE (TAKING JUST A LITTLE NOTICE)

A very tacky looking article. Poorly made and rather  
overpriced if you wish for my opinion.

TILDA (GETTING TO THE POINT.)

I'VE GOT TO HAVE ONE! If I have to I'll pinch  
one, or (PAUSE) I'LL DIE!

CLAUDETTE I think you're limiting your options just a little.  
A girl of your age needs more scope, a more  
majestic vision . . .

(TILDA SEES THAT CLAUDETTE IS WORKING  
HERSELF UP INTO A SPEECH AND IN  
DESPERATION FLICKS ON THE RADIO.)

RADIO VOICE DO IT GIRL, DO IT GIRL, IT'S AN UPBEAT WORLD,  
YOUR HAIR SHOULD CURL, PUT HIM IN A WHIRL,  
WITH A CURLY GIRL PERM.

(INVOLUNTARILY, BOTH OF THEIR HANDS  
CLUTCH AT THEIR HAIR, ACCOMPANIED BY  
SURREPTITIOUS GLANCES AT ONE ANOTHER.  
THEIR EYES MEET.)

TILDA Oh, oh, I can't stand it. I can't stand it.  
EVERYONE'S got a perm. I mean EVERYONE!

(IT IS PAINFULLY CLEAR THAT CLAUDETTE  
DOES NOT HAVE A PERM.)

EVEN THE TEACHERS! And here I am with a  
boring old fringe.

CLAUDETTE But fringe's are in.

TILDA (WAVING HER ARMS IMPATIENTLY.)

Last week, last week, they're gone.

RADIO VOICE BE GLAD, JOIN THE FAD, YESTERDAYS GEAR IS  
BAD, TODAY IS MAD, MAD, MAD, BE FAD.

CLAUDETTE (TURNS THE RADIO OFF.)

What rubbish!

TILDA (TILDA SITS UP AND MAKES A GRAND  
PRONOUNCEMENT.)

That's it, you don't understand.  
It's a FAD WORLD, if you're not IN IT, you're

OUT OF IT.

CLAUDETTE That's logical.

TILDA (SHE KEELS OVER BACKWARDS TO DEMONSTRATE.)

You're dead.

CLAUDETTE It's all so irresponsible. Where's it all coming from, this GIBBERISH?

TILDA (LEAPS TO HER FEET IN FRONT OF CLAUDETTE AND MAKES THE SOUND OF AN EXPLOSION WITH HER ARMS SPREAD WIDE.)

IT'S INFORMATION. It's telling us what's IN. You don't have to think about it, YOU JUST KNOW!

(TILDA SWITCHES ON THE TV.)

TV VOICE LOST, LOST, THE COST IS LOST,  
WITH PURCHASE CARD, YOU'RE THE BOSS!

TILDA We need that.

CLAUDETTE But you have to pay sometime. There's no such thing as a free brunch.

TILDA The cost is lost! Didn't you hear?

CLAUDETTE That's just advertising, it's only a slogan.

TILDA It's the truth, it's the truth, they can't put it on unless it's true.

(END OF SCENE 1.)

**SCENE 2**

The scene is set in the fluorescent, art-deco boardroom of MEGLOMEDIA INCORPORATED. Seated around the table is a group of tired, worried looking advertising executives. At the head sits Meglo, the founder of the empire.

MEGLO                    Good afternoon, and how are you all? Well, that's enough of the pleasantries, enjoyable as they may be. Feel free to partake of the food and drink before you.

(THE TABLE IS BARE.)

All finished, good, let's get down to business. I'd like to throw this general strategy meeting open to suggestions.

(WOLF-LIKE SMILE.)

Let your brains off their leashes. Why don't we try and be creative for a change. Let's throw some ideas around, about convenience food.

WEAZLBY                What's that?

PLIMPTON                Junk.

(LOOKING AT MEGLO.)

I think we should think big, to try to capture the entire market with a new approach.

MEGLO                    Preposterous, you've got to be kidding.

WEAZLBY                Most unwise.