

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



# Love's Triumph

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by Terence Crawford

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EXTRACT

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Characters:

Edwina "Eddie" Brumble-	60-ish, a Kings Cross "colourful identity". Proprietor of a number of establishments including "The Love Palace", and various illegal gambling houses. A confirmed spinster.
Alberto Rossini-	late 50s, a Senior Sergeant Detective with the Kings Cross Vice Squad. A bachelor.
Morrie Fairway-	50s, a gambler in debt to Eddie.
Angelique Won Fon-	early 20s, a prostitute in Eddie's employ. Of Chinese and Vietnamese heritage.
Darcy Archibald-	mid 20s, from Broken Creek (out past Moree), NSW. Aboriginal.
Chastity-	16, also in Eddie's keep. Later revealed to be the long-lost daughter of Morrie Fairway.
Brad Archibald-	16, Caucasian "brother" to Darcy. Later revealed to be the long-lost son of Morrie Fairway, and twin to Chastity.
Hoover J. Idiott-	A Southern Preacher, Entertainment and Recruitment Officer with The Church of the Holy Union.
"Baby" Idiott-	His wife, treasurer of The Church of the Holy Union.

Scene:

The action of the play occurs throughout the course of a single Saturday in Sydney.

Notes:

Eddie may be played by a man in drag, or by a woman.  
The roles of Baby and Chastity are to be played by the same actor.

I have marked only the most certain "asides". Much of the playing may, in fact, be done directly to the audience.

ACT ONE, Scene One

*The Love Palace*

*Rossini, Eddie, Morrie.*

Rossini: State your name, my homely looking friend,  
That Mrs Brumble here may find that moniker  
In this, her book, and so arrive at your  
Partic'lar circumstance regards this joint.  
When I say joint I mean no disrespect.  
For you, dear lady, run the cleanest house  
This side of the great ocean, and your girls  
Are all clapped out. I mean they're clean. Unclapped.

Eddie: Joint will pass, Rossini. He's in debt.  
There is a fearful suspect to his eye.

Rossini: If he's in debt, ma'am, well may he look fearful,  
For I have seen them vanish without trace  
That crossed the deity of this hallowed place.  
But time is money. Yield your name, you squirt.  
You think we've got all day to dish the dirt  
And reminisce on ancient pretty deaths  
Of former mugs and whore-fools such as you?

Morrie: I am no whore-fool. Never have I lain  
With harlot junkies such as you exploit.

Rossini: A righteous man whose dick has touched no tart.  
I bet he tells us next he's widower  
To some angelic, charitable saint  
And never since her death has he had sex.

Morrie: You mock me with a painful truth.

Eddie: Enough.  
Who cares to hear this pork- sword chronicle?  
Give me your name, you mug, or I'll bite your nose.

Morrie: Morrie Fairway is my name.

Eddie: Fairway, Fairway,  
Ah, here it is. You pratt, you snivelling goose.  
You dare to come in here and talk to me  
Of charity and goody-two-shoe tarts  
When right here in my book, my trusty tome,  
Is record of your gambling debts to me.

Morrie: I never claimed that I was good, madam.

The sergeant here, he -

Rossini: Senior sergeant, chum.

Morrie: Senior Sergeant, sorry, he's the one  
Recounted my sad history in jest,  
And jesting, fell upon some tragic facts  
Describing my dear wife, so long departed.  
Goodness was in her but not in me,  
For I am one of those you feed upon;  
A gambler and a hopeless, bankrupt mug.

Eddie: Fifty thousand bucks.

Rossini: That's quite a sting.

Eddie: Says here you moved from two-up to the cards  
Then rode the roulette wheel as dawn approached,  
And every game you played upon you lost,  
But happy were you in your losing streak:  
A lust for loss. Is that the kink you crave?  
It is a virus I have seen infect  
Many a man who's walked tall through my door.  
Their tongues grow thick, their fingers slip, their brows  
Are billboards on which words strangely appear.  
Sergeant Rossini?

Rossini: Senior Sergeant, ma'am.

Eddie: Tell this man what words are on his brow.

Rossini: The words are "loser", "debtor", "danger", "death".

Eddie: You understand these words, Mister Fairway?

Morrie: I understand. I see that I've arrived  
At grim addiction's final consequence.

Eddie: So where's the cash?

Morrie: I have no cash to yield.

Eddie: You owe me fifty grand, you naughty twerp.

Morrie: It might well be a million, Mrs Brumble,  
For all the hope I have of paying it.

Eddie: Listen to me, you witless, welshing prawn,  
Between now - What's the time, Rossini?

- Rossini: Ten.
- Eddie: - and six tonight. That's eight hours, you got that?  
You search out every friend you've ever had,  
You crawl through every sewer, every bar,  
Refinance mother's dentures, sell your arse  
For any paltry price that you can get.  
Because at six, my friend, we'll meet again  
At Missus Macca's Chair, through the Domain,  
A favourite haunt of mine for many years  
To view the Harbour and recover debts.
- Rossini: Oh, I remember well that playful night  
We called in debts upon that very spot  
From Johnny Parsimon. Remember Johnny?  
He couldn't pay, you see, and so we laid  
A picnic blanket down upon the grass  
And Johnny was persuaded to lie down  
And Mrs Brumble here took knife and fork  
And, dainty as you please, with bib tucked in,  
Cut off his toes, and fed them to the gulls.  
You never got your money but I felt  
You got your money's worth.
- Eddie: I loved the sixties.  
We made our own fun.  
But now is tougher times for business folk  
And colourful identities like me.  
No time to linger fondly on the kill,  
Just "bang" between the eyes, then in the drink.  
You can't tell me that's progress! Nonetheless  
That's where we stand. And so tonight, Fairway,  
You bring along the money or you die.  
Now piss off.
- Rossini: Mrs Macquarie's Chair at six o'clock.
- Morrie: Upon my word, I'll meet you for my strife  
And end this friendless, lamentable life. *exits*
- Eddie: A decent sort of cove, Rossini.
- Rossini: Yes.  
He'll make a lovely supper for the fish.
- Eddie: Who's next?
- Rossini: We had some rabbit from Rose Bay;  
A toff who signed his waterfront to you  
Last Wednesday night while fiddlin' with the dice.





Eddie: "Love's Triumph"? What a stupid bloody name.  
When Love goes into battle hereabouts  
It quickly blows a cowardly retreat  
On sight of its sworn foes, love's enemies;  
This age of ours, this city and pure greed.  
So lies the land.

Rossini: A philosophic view  
But one that sees not Love's counter attacks.  
Love may seem dead or driven from some heart  
Or shrivelled in a body, comatose,  
But then some angel hovers overhead,  
With bow and arrow poised like Robin Hood,  
And lets one fly into the wretch's heart  
And Love begins a-stirring once again.

Eddie: Old fashioned talk. Not now nor in this town  
Can little smart-arse Cupid hit the spot.  
He's not just blind, he's blind drunk, or he's climbing  
Up some corporate ladder with the rest,  
Or selling advertising space upon  
His bow, or dealing junk in my back lane,  
Hobnobbing with TV executives,  
Dreaming of a pretty harbour view  
Like all the rest. Like all the rest out there.  
So don't make out that Love's some pugilist  
About to make a comeback in the ring.  
He's on the mat, and blood seeps from his ears,  
And there your featherweight will shake and die.  
That's our city. Dump Love or be buggered.  
The third, you say?

Rossini: "Love's Triumph".

Eddie: What's the odds?

Rossini: Fifty to one.

Eddie: I'll put a grand on that.

Rossini: Well, let us hope Love triumphs after all. *exeunt*

*Chastity emerges from beneath the floorboards, or from some other obscure hiding spot. She carries a torch, and a book.*

Chastity: My mistress paints a picture of the world  
And so the world's created. Such is her  
Vice grip upon the palette and the brush.  
And I, unwilling model, lifeless study,  
Poor figure in her wicked landscape, moan

For any creature dragged into the frame.  
This Morrie Fairway - that's an honest handle -  
Takes hold my heart and quivers ventricles  
That I have dropped a tear onto my text.  
I fear the man is dead, or mort'ly vexed.  
I must go find my sister, Angelique,  
And put her in the picture, so to speak.

ACT ONE, Scene Two

*Circular Quay. Enter Darcy Archibald, followed by Brad Archibald.*

Brad: Darc? Eh, Darcy?

Darcy: What?

Brad: How come they call it Circular Key, anyway?

Darcy: Dunno.

Brad: Ain't circular. Why don't they just call it... Busy Key?

Darcy: Never seen so many people movin' so bloody fast.

Brad: Where they hurryin' to?

Darcy: The fairy boats.

Brad: The what?

Darcy: They're all racin' off to catch the fairy boats.

Brad: Where they catch 'em to?

Darcy: Dunno.

Brad: Fairyland, could be. Or maybe this is the fairyland. Maybe that's why there are so many funny lookin' coves around.

Darcy: Sure are lots of people.

Brad: How come they call it Key?

Darcy: Key-hole to the city, I s'pose. Where everybody enters.

Brad: We didn't enter here. We entered at Central Station.

Darcy: Well, we're not everybody.

Brad: Too right. You don't enter through a key-hole anyway.

Darcy: Shut up, Brad.

Brad: They should call it Busy Door.

Darcy: Not too many blackfellas about.

Brad: Seen a bloke playin' a didge but he was dead set Indian or somethin'.

Darcy: How much coin you got?

Brad: Few bucks. You?

Darcy: 'Bout the same. What we need, little brother, is a job. Must be somebody in this city needs two honest, hard workin' lads to do somethin'.

Brad: I don't like it here, Darc. It's not like Broken Creek.

Darcy: Of course it's not. That's why we come here, eh? There's jobs here, right? You wanna get a job?

Brad: Yeah.

Darcy: Well?

Brad: I know, but -

Darcy: And there's girls here too.

Brad: There's girls in Broken Creek.

Darcy: I know, but -

Brad: Well?  
What's girls to us or us to them but jokes?  
Sheila's are from outer space. Us blokes  
Live on the planet earth. We hunt our prey.

Darcy: You wouldn't know your prey if it said g'day.  
I want to fall in love.

Brad: *(aside)* He's jokin', right?  
Cripes! Is there a doctor in tonight?

Darcy: We can't go chuckin' rocks at 'em forever.