

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



Stalking Matilda

by Tee O'Neil

EXTRACT

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STALKING MATILDA
TWENTY ONE SCENES FOR THE THEATRE

*A young 1st world citizen swims out into the ocean never to be seen again.
A Chorus gather to tell the tale of Matilda Lynch and her involvement in a murder and an arson investigation.*

Stalking Matilda was:
Winner of 2003 RE ROSS Trust Playwright's Award (AUST)
Shortlisted for the 2004 Corcardorca Play of the Year Award (IRELAND)
Australian Premiere by Theatre @ Risk August 2005

Text notes:

A - at the beginning of a line indicates a change of Chorus
A / marks the point of interruption in overlapping dialogue
A # or * or ∞ indicate the same speaker's lines in the Chorus

CAST LIST

(Can be adjusted to be played by a cast of five. The maximum is flexible)

MATILDA	a female citizen
SULEYMAN	a male alien
ASYA	a female alien
MALONEY	a female citizen amateur boxer
STALKER	a citizen (either sex)
STALKER'S TRAINEE	a citizen (either sex)
GENERAL	a male citizen
INTERVIEWER	a male citizen
CHORUS	played by whole cast
FEVZI, PARENTS, COP1&2, SMARTARSE	

SCENE ONE

TEXT MESSAGES

*(Sounds of the ocean
Matilda slips off her coat. She places the mobile phone on the top of her coat
and walks out to sea
The sounds of the ocean fade
A chorus of story tellers gather)*

CHORUS LEADER: Matilda Lynch, a young first world citizen, swims out into the ocean and is never seen again. What was her involvement in a murder and arson investigation? Was she victim or aggressor?
Champion or Loser?
A fighter against prejudice or its ingenious practitioner?

*(The mobile phone that Matilda left on the sand is passed around.
The messages in the inbox can be read out and/or be projected onto the walls)*

12 Nov 11:00:40 Matilda. Please help me. Please don't let them do this. They will kill me if you don't stop them. Sender: Fevzi.

11- Nov 08:01:43. I scared 2 go out. They took him where were you? They took him, they took him away and soon they take me Matilda where are you? Sender: Asya.

4 Nov 10:25:21 Why is my bolshie sex kitten not coming to her Papa? ID Restricted.

7-Nov 17:12:56 Migration cops heading your way. Sender: Withheld

5 Nov 10:06:28 Tilda honey- got the photos. Dad is back on Prozac. Don't ask for best wishes, money or 4 mail to be redirected. If u did it 2 upset us congratulations sweetheart. Sender: Parents.

9-Nov 16:01:31 Will take night class Don't wait up my Tiger. Suleyman

10 Nov 00:06:45 You did it! You fucking did it? You alien cock-sucking whore. I'll kill you I'll break all your bones and swallow your cold dead heart. Bitch! Sender: Withheld.

10 Nov 1439 Just a message to remind you that your coat is awaiting delivery in our city showroom. Please confirm available times for safe consignment. Matilda Coats™

6 Nov 09:50:09 Answer yr door Madam I know yr in there. He is very unhappy. I'm outside in the limo. Sender: General's Driver

10- Nov18:46: 58 Deed is done, put money on the fridge. R U coming to the fight? Maloney

9- Nov. 23:19:14 Just pretend it's me. Our secret Tiger will set me free. Withheld

11 Nov 0903 Deposit the money at 2pm- Will tell you what u want to know. Don't try to follow me. Delete this text. Withheld

13-Nov 14:03:42 Meet me at the lion's cage Tiger. Wear your coat. Withheld

SCENE TWO

DESCRIBING MATILDA

- How would we describe her?
- Matilda?

(Matilda stands out from the group)

- She's tall
- Not so tall
- More like slightly under average in height
- Is she slim?
- Definitely slim
- Athletic
- Matilda?

(Matilda looks impatient)

- She's intimidating
- No I wouldn't say that
- She has strong convictions
- And she's slim
- A whipper snapper
- But she's got meat
- Where it counts
- She has nice hands though never manicured
- No rings
- No rings even after she married?
- She has this thing about nails
- Nails?
- Finger and toe nails
- She clips them but just so they cover the fingers and toes
- Why does she do that?
- It's protection
- She believes the nails are to protect the twenty digits given to most of us at birth
- Are toes digits?

- She's big on protection
- Matilda?

MATILDA: Yes?

- Where are you from?

MATILDA: *(arm up palm out)* My father's shove. My mother's push

CHORUS: As she speaks she often, without awareness, holds out her arm and shows her palm to the person she is speaking to. *(arm up palm out)*
As if she is stopping traffic.

CHORUS: *(arm up palm out)* Though she's loathe to admit it.
She's anxious to stay in control of situations

SCENE THREE

LIMBO

CHORUS LEADER: Where do we begin?

- In the plot or the story
- What's the difference
- Story is the whole story - plot is what we chose to tell of the story
- And where we start the story
- Start on the beach

OK That's the location

CHORUS LEADER: Yes a suburban beach.

Where Matilda walks out to sea and is never seen of again

But where is our place?

- Our world?
- The 1st world

And our time?

- The present

What's the conflict?

- 3rd to 102nd world aliens wait for the 1st world government to decide on their alien patriation case

The emotional state?

- Limbo
- The dramatic action?

ALL CHORUS: LIMBO!

*(Appropriate limbo music
Choristers hold a limbo pole and someone limbos underneath)*

CHORUS: The cast of characters.

- The Main Cast characters?

*(A chorus member nominates himself to be SULEYMAN.
He laughs his distinctive laugh and approaches the pole)*

CHORUS LEADER: Suleyman Melekwa. Alien, allegedly from the 54th nation.

Apparently teaches alien studies as Professor Vincent Ayanda in a
small suburban college

(Suleyman is close to the pole and bending backwards)

SULEYMAN: No no, no Fevzi. But there is kindness in the 1st world.

You must just look in the right places

(Suleyman goes under the pole. FEVZI warms up before the pole)

CHORUS LEADER: Fevzi Jasara; Alien. Asya's boyfriend.

Apparently, a NAPO cluster bomb wiped out his whole family
in the 36th nation

(He touches his forehead and then his heart before going under the pole)

FEVZI: God is all powerful.

(Asya approaches the pole. She is a bit overweight)

CHORUS LEADER: Asya Farid- Alien, evidently a former student photographer
and political agitator from the twelfth nation

ASYA: So I say 'No no, no you cannot deport me!'
And they say 'But you have lost your appeal to stay'
and I say 'But you cannot deport a pregnant woman'
and they say 'But you are not pregnant you are fat!'
And I say 'Don't be rude!'
And they say 'Prove it! We give you test. Please piss in this' and give me
plastic cup.
I think; Problem, problem and I say 'But I just had piss'
and they say. 'Wait outside toilet until you feel like'
So I wait, and I wait and this woman pass me and she, she
(mimes pregnant belly)
big and I ask her 'Please, please can I have some piss?'
and she look at me crazy and then scared and then I say
'I give you fifty dollar for a bit of piss in this cup' and she say 'OK'
But now I must have sex now someone!
Minister of Migration want a baby now!!!

*(Suleyman laughs his distinctive laugh
Asya limbos under the pole and then shows everyone her new passport)*

ASYA: And Look! I am Mary now!

*(Fevzi snatches Asya's passport - Asya chases him.
Asya chases Fevzi, he avoids her- between taking peeks at
the passport photo)*

FEVZI: *(Referring to the photo)* But you are small! She big tooth!
And look- her nose! *(Fevzi makes a gesture of a big nose)*

ASYA: *(snatching the passport back)* All aliens look alike to these people!

SULEYMAN: And Fevzi? What is your name now?