

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



Enemy Material

by Simon Froehling

EXTRACT

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Cast:

(4 – 3 m, 1 f)

JAN	30 – in love with IMAD; TAMMY's former flatmate
KUHN	32 – JAN's ex-boyfriend; volunteer for the International Gay and Lesbian Organization (I.G.L.O.)
TAMMY	26 – student; JAN's former flatmate; is to help IMAD get a residence permit through a fictitious marriage
IMAD	33 – Egyptian; JAN's boyfriend; has just been arrested at the train-station because he left his backpack lying on the ground next to an ATM

Settings:

Flat	JAN, KUHN and TAMMY in TAMMY's 1-bedroom-studio; it's cosy but crowded
Police Station	IMAD on remand at the police station

1 (Flat)

Comme des Garçons

JAN and TAMMY.

KUHN is listening to them, taking notes from time to time, leafing through his documents.

TAMMY At the theatre
Some boring recital

JAN You were sitting next to him?

TAMMY I met him in the foyer afterwards
I was coming out of the bathroom
well the ladies' room

JAN Of course it was the ladies' room Tammy!

TAMMY So I was coming out of the loo into the foyer and he –

JAN Again

TAMMY – and there he was at the bar

JAN From the beginning

TAMMY Can I please just tell Kuhn the story
and you ask the questions?

JAN The story needs to work

TAMMY I'm aware of that

JAN Well?

TAMMY So I was coming out of the –
the ladies' room
into the foyer
and there he was standing at the bar
A rather trivial first meeting if you ask me
On a scale from one to ten
whereas one is very boring and ten really exciting
I would say that –

JAN None of this is relevant for them!

 What was he wearing Miss Wirz?

TAMMY Probably jeans
 I can't remember

JAN They're going to ask

TAMMY I can't remember
 But there was a scarf
 not for winter
 it rarely gets very cold in Cairo but –

JAN You met him last winter?

TAMMY Let me finish!

JAN It's an important point
 They're going to nail you on
 places
 times
 dates
 So
 was it in winter?

TAMMY As I said
 it wasn't a winter scarf

JAN So when was it?

TAMMY We had that yesterday

JAN When did you meet him Miss Wirz?

TAMMY It was in March
 But he was wearing this kind of scarf
 a silk scarf
 not a tie
 I don't know what they're called
 A silk scarf that you tie around your neck like a tie
 With paisleys

JAN What colour was the scarf?

TAMMY Dark green
 with dark blue paisleys

the paisleys framed in gold
gold thread

JAN Shouldn't you hesitate more?

(To KUHN:)
Shouldn't she hesitate?

KUHN –

JAN I think –

TAMMY – I should hesitate
We know that now

JAN *(To KUHN:)*
She has to let the memory –

(To TAMMY:)
You need to let the memory emerge
It has to well up
slowly

(To KUHN:)
And besides
isn't that much too gay
a silk scarf like that?
Rather camp?

KUHN –

TAMMY But that's what he was wearing
you said so yourself

JAN Perhaps we should think about it again

Because the point is
how does what he was wearing
or what he wasn't wearing
effect their overall picture?

TAMMY He was standing naked at the bar
and yes he's circumcised?

JAN How would you know?

TAMMY All Muslims are circumcised
everyone knows that

I need a concrete stories with details
the more details the better
That's what makes or brakes a story
the details
colours
atmosphere
the five senses
Even though most people forget the sense of touch
and also smell

Besides
we agreed on the story
and if we change it he needs to be here

JAN Comme des Garçons Series Two Red

TAMMY What?

JAN Is his smell
his perfume
the five senses
Comme des Garçons Series Two Red
Smells like sun on wood

TAMMY Good to know
I'll never be able to remember that

JAN Comme des Garçons
Series Two
Red

TAMMY Comme des Garçons
Series Two
Red

JAN There you go

I still think you should hesitate more
Let the memories roll up on you
in waves so to speak

TAMMY Memories are either there or they're not
Memories don't come rolling along
and certainly not in waves

JAN From the start

TAMMY Can't we just improv?

JAN You need an absolutely airtight story

TAMMY It'll seem stiff
If we practise everything it'll turn out totally stiff

JAN Then we'll just practice until it doesn't seem stiff anymore

TAMMY We should wait for him

JAN *(To KUHN:)*
Or what do you reckon Kuhn?

KUHN Hm?

JAN You're not saying anything

KUHN I'm thinking

JAN And?

KUHN And what?

JAN What are you thinking?

KUHN That we should think about something else

Black.

2 (Police Station)
Backpack

IMAD But I can tell you straight away
 that there's nothing in it

 Except

 Passport with visa
 valid

 DayTripper Ticket
 valid

 El Khobz El Hafi
 For Bread Alone
 by Mohammed Choukri
 unread

 My wallet
 empty

 I can't identify myself
 because my passport is in my backpack

 But you can do so with the photo

 You should be able to do that
 or do we all look the same?

 Hey?!

 I asked you something!
 I did

 I would like my bag back
 At least my mobile

 I!
 said!
 something!

 This can't be taking so long
 to clarify everything
 can't be taking you so long

 I'd like to know how long it'll take