

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



Downstairs at Gosford Park

by Gary Abrahams

EXTRACT

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DOWNSTAIRS AT GOSFORD PARK

Gary Abrahams

CAST

Samson, a waiter in his late thirties.

SETTING

An arts function involving various actors and writers performing pompous and pretentious monologues.

DOWNSTAIRS AT GOSFORD PARK

SAMSON *has been walking around all evening holding a tray of water samples. He has an air of quiet desperation. During the monologues he has been standing to the side of the room, dutifully holding his tray, slowly getting more and more wound up, until ...*

Samson: *(Suddenly and quite loudly)*

In my head I am a woman.

(He stops, shocked that he has spoken out loud)

Sorry. That's not quite right. Not what I meant to say.

(He gathers strength, and the following comes out fast and uncontrolled)

I've been standing here holding this fucking tray all night and planning ... rehearsing what I was going to say ... writing myself a monologue in my head. I wasn't even sure if I was going to say it out loud, tell my story out loud. We all have a story ... I mean I also have a story, I don't need some wannabe writer to write me a story, I have my own story ...

Fuck.

(He stops. Takes a breath. Gains control)

This is harder than it seems.

It's certainly not as spontaneous as I thought it would be. In my head, as I was standing here, with this tray, all night, I would suddenly just start speaking, just start talking, and a flood of words would come out of my mouth, and my story would be told and you would all listen, and be engrossed, and then you'd all stop just thinking of me as a waiter, a human dumb waiter, and see that I am ... um ... um ... not just a waiter.

Maybe what I'd say would seem so great to you you'd all start talking to me later on, and ask me to put down my tray and join your conversation, join your group, and then maybe I'd meet some brilliant artists, or theatre people, or whoever the fuck comes to these things, and you'd see that I was brilliant too, that I was just like you and we'd *connect!*