

EXTRACT

GONE

a short play

by

Alex Broun

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Cast**PHIL****ROD****Author's Note:**

This play was written in response to the death of David Hookes in Melbourne, Australia in January 2004 and the trial of Zdavko Micevic for his manslaughter.

With the greatest respect for Hookes' memory and his family.

The playwright seeks to make no comment on the events around Hookes' death or on the court's eventual findings.

PRODUCTION NOTE:

The play is designed to be delivered at a rapid, explosive pace and often there is only one word – or even one letter – per line. In other words – it should fly along.

Performance time should be around 12 to 14 minutes – and definitely no longer!

Enjoy.

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ROD: (AT PACE) I didn't notice him at first.

PHIL: He pissed me off straight away.

ROD: Why would you notice him? He was the sort of person you don't notice.

PHIL: Walks into the place like he owns it. Like he belongs.

ROD: The sort of person you bypass while you're moving towards something else. He wasn't a destination, he was an obstacle.

PHIL: He doesn't belong here. He's a guest. I belong here.

ROD: A fencepost. A squashed rabbit. A fly.

PHIL: I decide who comes in or out.

ROD: He was nothing just ... space.

PHIL: Right now - I'm in charge.

ROD: That's all he was – empty space. A “space filler”.

PHIL: I say what goes.

ROD: It wasn't until later that his presence became apparent. It had been a great night. Shots, banter, flirting but then -

PHIL: They stood out.

ROD: An argument. A disagreement.

PHIL: It was heating up.

ROD: Pathetic, trifling.

PHIL: That's what they teach you in "Customer Care". Take the pot off the burner before it starts to boil.

ROD: And because it was nothing suddenly - he was there. “The Nothing man” – the empty space – stressing out over nothing.

PHIL: Stepping in now - saves trouble later.

ROD: Standing over us - big fat head, five buck black t-shirt, ridiculous hair cut.

PHIL: "I'm going to have to ask you to keep it down."

ROD: "Why don't you dickheads shut up?"

PHIL: "You're disturbing the other patrons."

ROD: "You're pissing me off."

BOTH: "Maybe you should take it outside."

ROD: Now usually I'm meek and mannered but something about this guy just really -

PHIL: And then he steps forward - shiny grey suit.

ROD: - pissed me off. He was just so braindead, so thuggish, such an oaf.

PHIL: Slobber on his chin.

ROD: We were having a good time. We were rowdy, sure, but so was everybody else. We'd had a great week and we'd come to celebrate. What do they expect when they're selling Tequila slammers for three bucks a pop?

PHIL: Breath stinks like a cheap lawn mower.

ROD: So I was up to him - right in *his* face. Intimidating *him*, staring down *him*. "Haven't you ever seen people having a good time?"

PHIL: It was all top draw stuff.

ROD: The great bouncer was baffled.

PHIL: "Letting off some steam."

ROD: "We're just having a good time."

PHIL: "You're just jealous because you're a brainless thug and - "

ROD: "What are you really angry about? The fact we're having a good time or the fact that - "

BOTH: "We're us "

ROD: "And you are - "

PHIL: "You." Then it's -

ROD: "Meathead."

PHIL: Like I said – top drawer.

ROD: No words. He has no words, of course. He just grabs me and drags me across the bar.

PHIL: It wasn't what he was saying - that was just drunken crap - it was the way he was saying it. Screaming in my face, veins popping, saliva pouring out all over me.

ROD: In front of my friends, in front of my work colleagues, in front of the other clients - like some kind of dog. And then –

PHIL: So I take him outside.

ROD: I'm on the pavement.

PHIL: Back of the club.

ROD: He's thrown me on the pavement.

PHIL: Lover's lane.

ROD: My suit is knee deep in crap. Now I'm angry.

PHIL: I take a quick look around. No punters, only Gene - and he's not gonna say anything. Covered up for him often enough.

ROD: Inside I was just joking.

PHIL: Where were his so called "friends"? Bloody glad he'd been thrown out. The dickhead was pissing them off as well.

ROD: But now I really let him have it. "Listen here you two bit meathead."

PHIL: We'd already been through this.

ROD: "Why don't you crawl back to the little tribe that spawned you? Or don't want they want you hanging around either -you fat moron."

PHIL: One more quick glance - and then –

ROD: So what does he do? The meathead? The moron? He can't put more than two syllables together so he does the only thing he can do.

PHIL: I popped him.