

The Role Model II

A play in two acts

By Bruce Hoogendoorn

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CAST

SCOTT: Late twenties

WANDA: Fifty

LOUISE: Late twenties

ADAM: Fifteen

RYAN: Any age

DAVID: Late twenties

DOCTOR: Thirty

MARTIN: Any age

Cast of six required. Ryan and David to be played by the same actor. Doctor and Martin to be played by the same actor.

SCENE LOCATIONS AND PROP REQUIREMENTS

SCENES:

- 1 & 2) Wanda's office. No props required.
- 3) Beach. Cricket bat, ball and three stumps.
- 4) Cliff top. No props required.
- 5) Adam's bedroom. Chair and walkman.
- 6) Restaurant. One table, two chairs, two wines glasses.
- 7) Beach. TV camera, microphone and one football.
- 8) Wanda's office. No props required.
- 9) Outside retreat. No props required.
- 10) Cliff top. No props required

None of the settings should be realistic. All the scenes can be played on a bare stage.

ACT 1

Scene 1

Darkness. The sound of SCOTT making sexual sounds, getting more and more excited.

SCOTT: Oh yeah...oh yeah...oh yeah...oh yeah...oh yeah...oh
yeah...oh!...oh!...oh!...Ahhh! Shit!!!!

Scene 2

LOUISE's lounge room. There is a couch and a small table. A handbag is on the couch. SCOTT is behind the couch, leaning forward on it, his pants down, but his backside hidden from the audience. He is whimpering.

WANDA: (*horrified, hidden behind couch*) Oh My God!

Wanda stands abruptly, appearing directly behind Scott.

SCOTT: Is it bleeding?

WANDA: No.

SCOTT: Thank God.

WANDA: What on earth is it? (*pause*) Well?

SCOTT: (*pause*) A vase.

WANDA: A vase! What inspired you to do that?

SCOTT: I didn't do it deliberately. I slipped. I'd just had a shower -

WANDA: Oh, save it for the doctor.

SCOTT: I can't go to a doctor! If this gets out about me I'll be ruined.

WANDA: You are such an idiot! After all the work we've done to turn your image around and now you go and do -

SCOTT: Can you save the lecture and just help me. I'm in agony.

WANDA: Help you? What do you expect me to do?

SCOTT: Get it out, of course.

WANDA: What?

SCOTT: You have to get it out.

WANDA: I'm not touching it! You put in there, you get it out.

SCOTT: I've tried.

WANDA: Then I won't have much luck either.

SCOTT: You've got a better angle. You can get behind me and jimmy it out.

WANDA: I'm not jimmying anything out. It's not my job to jimmy things out of your anus. Why didn't you call one of your mates?

SCOTT: Yeah, great idea. Can you imagine the reaction? I'd never live it down.

WANDA: Well, what about your family?

SCOTT: My mother would have a heart attack. You're the only person I can trust with this. Please, you've gotta help me. Now, just grab it and pull it out.

WANDA: *(pause)* It's moments like these I wish I belonged to a union.

SCOTT: Will you get on with it! Louise will be home soon.

WANDA: Will she? Maybe she could get it out?

SCOTT: Yeah, great idea. It's taken me months to get her to even talk to me again. Letting me house-mind for her was a huge step forward. Finding me in her unit with her vase up my arse, might set us back a step or two.

WANDA: To say the least.

WANDA exits.

SCOTT: Where are you going? You're not leaving me, are you?

WANDA: *(off)* I'm going to find some gloves.

SCOTT: You're such a prude! *(beat)* Try under the kitchen bench. *(beat)* And bring out that bottle of scotch. It'll help as an anaesthetic.

SCOTT looks behind himself and shakes his head.

SCOTT: If only I'd been able to find some skinny candles.

WANDA returns wearing washing-up gloves and taking a swig out of the bottle of scotch.

SCOTT: Hey! That's for me.

WANDA: You're not the only one who needs to be anaesthetised.

SCOTT: Give it here.

WANDA has a another swig and then gives it to SCOTT. He really knocks it back.

SCOTT: God that's strong. Right, you ready?

WANDA: No. And I never will be.

SCOTT: Well, you just do it anyway. Be gentle, okay?

WANDA: Yes, yes, it's going to be very romantic.

WANDA takes a big breath, then starts to pull. SCOTT cries out. WANDA stops.

WANDA: Wait on. You're not enjoying this, are you?

SCOTT: No, it killed. You pulled too hard.

WANDA: Sorry.

WANDA is about to pull again, when...

WANDA: I can't understand why you thought you'd get any pleasure out of this, anyway.

SCOTT: Neither can I, now. But at the time it seemed like a great idea.

WANDA: Well, you've learnt your lesson, haven't you?

SCOTT: I sure have. Next time I'll use something much smaller.

WANDA: You mean this wasn't a once off?

SCOTT: Oh, don't go all judgemental on me. Different things turn on different people. It doesn't make me sick.

WANDA: It does in my book.

SCOTT: Yeah, and I bet your book of sexual pleasure would be a pretty thin. When was the last time you had any form of sex? Back in the nineties, I bet.

Anger flashes across WANDA's face and she gives the vase a twist. SCOTT screams.

SCOTT: You did that deliberately!

WANDA: Really? Well, you just remember who's in the position of power here. Right?

SCOTT: *(pause)* Sorry.

SCOTT has another drink.

SCOTT: Right, I'm ready again.

WANDA: Okay. I'll try some different angles.

She pulls all over the place, pulling up and down, and even seemingly trying to unscrew it at one point, with SCOTT screaming out the whole time.

WANDA: Relax. Stop tensing you buttocks.

She gives him a slap on the backside.

SCOTT: Ow! I'm as relaxed as I can be.

WANDA *continues*.

WANDA: It's no good. Subtlety just won't work. I'm going to pull as hard as I can.

SCOTT: Shit. All right. Let me have another drink first. *(he drinks)* Okay.

SCOTT and WANDA both brace themselves.

WANDA: On the count of three. One. Two. Three!

WANDA pulls, SCOTT screams. WANDA falls over backwards and disappears from view behind the couch. SCOTT is whimpering. WANDA gets up.

WANDA: It's no good. I'm going to have to take you to the hospital.

SCOTT: You can't! I'll be recognised and I'll be the laughing stock of the country.

WANDA: No you won't. You'll be in disguise.

SCOTT: What sort of disguise?

WANDA stares at him for a few moments...

SCOTT: Well, come on, I haven't got all day.

WANDA: *(suddenly)* Oh, for God's sake, put this on!

WANDA pulls off her wig.

SCOTT: Oh my God, it *is* a wig!

WANDA: You could tell?

SCOTT: Well, sometimes it looks a bit crooked.

WANDA: Well, I'll make sure it looks nice and straight for you.

WANDA goes to put it on him, but she pulls his head away.

SCOTT: I'm not wearing it!

WANDA: Why not? What's wrong with it?

SCOTT: It'll make me look insane.

WANDA: It will not, it's a very nice wig.

SCOTT: Maybe for a woman your age, but not for me.

WANDA: *(pause)* Do you or do you not want to have your identity hidden when you go to the hospital?

SCOTT: Yeah, but -

WANDA: Then put it on.

SCOTT: But it won't stop people from recognising me.

WANDA: I know that, that's why you'll also be wearing sunglasses and lipstick.

SCOTT: What are you trying to do, make me look like a transvestite?

WANDA: It's better than looking like you, isn't it?

SCOTT *sighs*.

SCOTT: All right. Just do it.

WANDA: Okay.

WANDA *puts on the wig*.

WANDA: Oh, very nice. Very Feminine.

SCOTT: Do you think you could be quiet? I'm in enough pain as it is.

WANDA: Fine.

She opens her handbag and takes out some lipstick.

WANDA: Pout for me.

SCOTT: Oh God, this is sick.

WANDA: Oh yeah, it must be a real come down for you.

SCOTT: It is.

WANDA: Just pout.

He does.

WANDA: Oh yeah, sexy baby.

She applies lipstick. She stops.

WANDA: Let me see. Not bad. Now for the finishing touch.

She gets sunglasses out of her handbag. They are huge.

SCOTT: Oh my God, what are they - solar panels?

WANDA: You just be thankful I like big sunnies. The less we see of your face the better.

She puts them on him and then steps back to look at him.

WANDA: Not bad. Bit mysterious, like Jackie Kennedy.

SCOTT: That's great, but can you recognise me?

She studies him.

WANDA: I'd pass you in the street without blinking.

SCOTT: Good.

WANDA: So are ready for your big entrance at the hospital?

SCOTT: This is going to be the worst night of my life.

Blackout.

Scene 3

SCOTT *is lying face down on a gurney. A sheet is over him but the outline of the vase can be seen poking up through the sheet. A mobile curtain is behind him.*

SCOTT: (*shouts*) Does anybody work here at all? I want a doctor in here now!

WANDA *comes in.*

SCOTT: Where the Hell are they?

WANDA: It shouldn't be too much longer.

SCOTT: I shouldn't have to wait at all - I've got private health insurance.

WANDA: Yes, but you can't use it if you want to keep your true identity hidden, can you, vase man?

SCOTT: I s'pose not. It's a bloody disgrace that public patients have to wait this long. This is extremely serious.

WANDA: I tried to explain that to them, but they inexplicably gave priority to a couple of car accident victims.

SCOTT: Yeah, well unless one of them has a gear stick stuck up his arse, I should be first.

The DOCTOR enters.

DOCTOR: Well well well. What have we here?

SCOTT: About time. I've been waiting two hours.

DOCTOR: Sorry about that. It's been a hectic day.

WANDA: That's quite all right, doctor. Thanks for coming. My name's Claire, and this is my nephew Michael. He's had a bit of an accident.

DOCTOR: That's no good. Let's have a look then, shall we?

The DOCTOR pull down the sheet and we see the top of the vase Peaking out from SCOTT's buttocks.

DOCTOR: Oh dear.

SCOTT: It's not what you think.

DOCTOR: It's all right, Michael. I know what happened. You got out of the shower, slipped and fell on a vase that was inexplicably on the bathroom floor.

SCOTT: Something like that.

DOCTOR: It's amazing the amount of men that happens to. People should be more careful where they leave things. I've seen men who've fallen on cricket bat handles, broom sticks, and even the odd pineapple.

WANDA/SCOTT: Shit.

DOCTOR: Yes. Dreadful luck all round.

SCOTT: Yeah, all right. You've made your point. Can you just give me local anaesthetic and get it out, please.

DOCTOR: Sorry, but it's a bit more complex than that.

SCOTT: What do you mean?

DOCTOR: A local anaesthetic doesn't work back there. You'll have to have a spinal block.

SCOTT: A spinal block. But I'm not having a baby!

DOCTOR: Actually, it's fairly similar. And if I can't pull it out it, it will be a caesarean.

SCOTT: For God's sake!

SCOTT punches the bed and his sunglasses fall off.

SCOTT: My sunglasses!

WANDA *scurries round, but the DOCTOR picks them up first.*

DOCTOR: They're broken.

SCOTT: Shit!

SCOTT *snatches them and tries to repair them.*

DOCTOR: Hey, don't I know you?

SCOTT: No. Definitely not.

SCOTT *tries to put the sunglasses on, but it's no good.*

DOCTOR: You're that swimmer!

SCOTT: I'm not a swimmer! I'm just a sweet transvestite from Transsexual Transylvania.

DOCTOR: Yes, you -

WANDA: Doctor, I assure you David is no swimmer. For a start, he can't swim.

SCOTT: I can't. I sink like a stone.

DOCTOR: *(pause)* David? You said his name was Michael.

WANDA: *(pause)* It is Michael. David is his...

SCOTT: Nickname!

DOCTOR: Nickname? No-one has David for a nickname.

SCOTT: Well, I do.

DOCTOR: How'd you get that?

SCOTT: Well, um...

WANDA: His older brother always picked on him when he was kid. Until one day David - Michael - snapped and threw a stone at him knocking him unconscious. Just like David did to Goliath in the Bible. Hence the nickname.

DOCTOR: Huh. Well, you certainly bear a strong resemblance to that swimmer. You know, the one who slept with his best mate's - .

SCOTT: He wasn't my best -

WANDA *hits the vase.*

SCOTT: Ah!

WANDA: Doctor, would it be possible to remove the vase soon?

DOCTOR: Certainly. I'll just organise a theatre.

He exits.

SCOTT: Great work, Wanda, calling me David.

WANDA: Minor slip up, that's all.

SCOTT: He knows it's me now.

WANDA: No, no. I think I fooled him with that story.

SCOTT: Oh yeah, that was brilliant: David and Goliath. What a great improviser you are. You should go into theatre sports.

WANDA: Well, what about you calling it a nickname. That put me in a tight corner from the start.

SCOTT: You could have at least put a bit more thought -

WANDA: Shut-up! I don't want any more shit from you tonight. I've been through enough already. So you just back off.

SCOTT: Okay, I'm sorry. I just want this over with.

WANDA: Me too.

SCOTT: Can you fix the glasses, please?

WANDA takes the glasses and starts fiddling with them. Suddenly a mobile phone appears through the curtain.

VOICE: *(off)* Hey, Scott!

SCOTT looks up. There is a flash. Then the mobile disappears.

SCOTT: Oh shit!

WANDA: What's wrong?

SCOTT: Someone just took my picture.

WANDA: You're joking?

SCOTT: No. Someone said my name, then a mobile came though the curtain and there was a flash.

WANDA: Did you see who it was?

SCOTT: No. You have to get them.

WANDA: But I didn't see anything.

SCOTT: Well, go and look for someone with a mobile.

WANDA: Everyone has a mobile!

SCOTT: For God's sake, Wanda, they're getting away!

WANDA hurries out. A few moments later the DOCTOR returns.

DOCTOR: Ready for your excavation?

SCOTT: You!

SCOTT *grabs him and puts him in a headlock.*

DOCTOR: What are you doing?

SCOTT: Give me your mobile.

DOCTOR: What?

SCOTT: You just took my picture.

DOCTOR: No, I didn't.

SCOTT: You better not be lying to me.

DOCTOR: I didn't take your picture.

WANDA *comes back.*

WANDA: I couldn't see any - Scott! What are you doing?

SCOTT: I think he took the picture.

WANDA: Let him go!

DOCTOR: Scott? So you are that swimmer.

SCOTT: Search his coat, Wanda.

WANDA: Scott -

SCOTT: Just do it.

WANDA *does it.*

WANDA: Nothing.

DOCTOR: Let me go now please, *Scott*. Or the police will be here very soon. You won't be able to keep it out of the paper then, will you?

WANDA: Scott, just let him go.

DOCTOR: Do you want this vase removed or not?

SCOTT *lets him go.*

SCOTT: Fuck!

He bangs his hand down on the bed and the wig falls off. Blackout.

Scene 3

SCOTT *sits on the couch in LOUISE's flat, looking into a hand mirror, wiping off the lipstick. A box of tissues is next to him.*

SCOTT: If you'd put more make-up on me, he wouldn't have recognised me with or without the sunglasses.

WANDA: *(off)* I thought the sunglasses would be do the job.

SCOTT: Well, they didn't and now my life could be ruined because of you.

WANDA: *(off)* Because of me, did you say? Did I stick a vase up your ass?

SCOTT: All right, all right. I'm sorry. You did your best, but it just wasn't good enough this time.

WANDA: *(off)* How kind of you to say so.

WANDA enters, wig back on, wearing gloves, and holding the vase which now has flowers in them. She holds it at a distance.

SCOTT: Did you give it a wash?

WANDA: Twice. Not a stain to be found.

SCOTT: Then why are you still wearing the gloves?

WANDA: Even if I'd used industrial-strength cleaner I'd still wear them.

SCOTT: You're such a baby. A bit of crap never hurt anyone.

WANDA: Maybe not physically, but mentally I don't think I'll ever get over this.

SCOTT: You better check the internet again.

WANDA: I just did. Nothing came up.

SCOTT: Did you use Google?

WANDA: Yes. I put in "Scott Martin, swimmer, anus, vase". Nothing.

SCOTT: Well, try some different keywords, like, "rectum, date, jatz cracker", that sort of thing.

WANDA: I already did. I even tried "back door", but there was nothing.

SCOTT: If that gets on there...

WANDA: Stop worrying about it for a while. Just wipe off the lipstick and I'll get

you something to eat.

SCOTT: I'm not eating anything for days. If I eat, I have to crap, and there's no way I'm going through that agony.

WANDA: That's up to you. But remember to keep your fluids up, all right?

SCOTT: Yes, mother.

There the sound of a door opening.

SCOTT: It's Louise! Help me with the lipstick.

WANDA *quickly wipes it off.*

LOUISE: *(off)* Scott! Scott!

SCOTT: Is it off? Is it?

WANDA *looks closely.*

WANDA: Yes.

SCOTT: Get rid of the tissues. Hurry.

WANDA *grabs hurries off.* LOUISE *enters dressed casually, but immaculately, holding a suitcase.*

LOUISE: Scott, there you are.

SCOTT: Louise, welcome back. How was your holiday?

LOUISE: Great. Really relaxing. Thanks to my mother constantly asking me about My love-life and continually wondering aloud when she would be getting some grandchildren.

SCOTT: I know that feeling.

LOUISE: And how did you go? No problems?

SCOTT: None at all. Very quiet.

LOUISE: Well, the place looks great. Nice and tidy. *(sees the vase)* Even some fresh flowers.

LOUISE *picks up the vase and smells them.* WANDA *enters.*

WANDA: No!

LOUISE *jumps and turns around.*

LOUISE: Wanda.

WANDA *gags and hurries out*. LOUISE *puts the vase down*.

LOUISE: What's wrong with her?

SCOTT: She's had a bit of a tummy bug.

LOUISE: Oh. What's she doing here, anyway?

SCOTT: She wanted to help clean up the place. Make sure I left it tidy for you.

LOUISE: That's very kind of her.

WANDA *re-enters*.

WANDA: Sorry about that, Louise. I just wanted to finish cleaning a few things before you got back. You know what men are like. They think they've cleaned something, but the job's only half-done.

LOUISE: Well, I'm very happy. No need to do any more. I was terrified that the furniture would be trashed, the carpet would be stained with alcohol, and naked women would be sprawled everywhere.

SCOTT: (*hurt*) I'm not like that any more.

LOUISE: I know. I'm only teasing. Thanks for looking after the place.

SCOTT: That's okay.

A mobile phone rings. WANDA *answers it*.

WANDA: Sorry, that's mine.

LOUISE: It's okay. I'll just put this in the bedroom.

LOUISE *exits with the suitcase*.

WANDA: Hello. (*pause*) Yes. (*pause*) What? (*pause*) But he hasn't got that sort of money!

SCOTT *looks up, worried*.

WANDA: No, I'm not negotiating anything until I see the photograph. (*beat*) Yes, you can send it to my phone, then we'll talk.

WANDA *puts the phone away*.

SCOTT: Oh God! It's started, I knew it would.

SCOTT *puts his head in his hands.*

WANDA: Just keep your cool, all right?

LOUISE *re-enters.*

LOUISE: Now how about I make you two some dinner to say thanks for all your help?

WANDA: Thanks, Louise, but we have to go.

LOUISE: Oh, that's a shame.

WANDA: Come on, up you get, or we're going to be late.

SCOTT *gets up very slowly, he doubles over in agony.*

LOUISE: Scott, what's wrong?

SCOTT: Oh, nothing, I ah -

WANDA: He had a bit of a fall.

SCOTT: Yes, on my tailbone.

LOUISE: Oh, you poor thing.

WANDA: He'll be fine. Come on, Scott.

SCOTT *walks slowly, hunched over like a Neanderthal.*

LOUISE: Are you sure you're okay?

SCOTT: Yeah, great.

LOUISE: Will you be all right to come to the retreat on Thursday? We've got a new group of kids for you to exercise into happiness.

WANDA: We'll let you know, Louise. Hurry up, Scott, we have to go.

LOUISE: Well, thanks again.

SCOTT: No problem.

They exit, with WANDA leading SCOTT by the hand. LOUISE again looks at the vase, picks it up, and smells the flowers.

LOUISE: How sweet.

She looks thoughtful. Blackout.

Scene 4

SCOTT *and* WANDA. *No set needed.*

SCOTT: How much!

WANDA: One hundred thousand dollars.

SCOTT: But I haven't got that much!

WANDA: I know that.

SCOTT: Well, you'll have to tell him.

WANDA: I did, but he probably thinks you've got lots of money because you're famous.

SCOTT: Tell him I'm not even close to paying off my unit and have hardly any savings.

WANDA: Scott, we'll try every avenue we can.

SCOTT: Fuck! So what will happen if I don't pay?

WANDA: The photo will be put on the internet.

SCOTT: Oh my God! *(beat)* I bet it's that doctor! Did it sound like him?

WANDA: His voice was muffled. I couldn't tell.

SCOTT: We should grab some cricket bats, go round to the hospital and sort him out.

WANDA: Great idea. And how will you explain that to the Police afterwards?

SCOTT: I know, I know, but I just don't know what to do.

WANDA: Well, for a start we'll wait until we see the photo. After all, it might not look like you.

SCOTT: But that bloody doctor recognised me. It's bound to look like me.

WANDA: Maybe. But who knows what the quality is like.

SCOTT: Well, when will we get it?

WANDA's mobile phone beeps. She looks at it.

WANDA: Now.

SCOTT: Open it.

WANDA *does so. They look at it.*

SCOTT: Oh shit! I knew that wig wouldn't do any good!

WANDA: We could say it was doctored.

SCOTT: Very funny.

WANDA: I'm serious. It's so easy to do it on computers. Everyone will believe it.

SCOTT: No they won't. They'll want to believe it's me. I'll become a joke.
Everything will be ruined - for good this time. No more motivational speaking.
Nothing.

WANDA: Maybe -

SCOTT: No maybes! Remember that newsreader years ago who was rumoured to have had a cucumber surgically removed? There was no photo or anything, but then one day she disappeared from the news and was never seen again.

WANDA: *(pause)* Well, do you want to pay the money?

SCOTT: I'd have to take out another loan.

WANDA: If you do that now, there could be no end to the bribery. No guarantee that the photo would be deleted.

SCOTT: No.

The phone rings. WANDA looks at her mobile.

WANDA: That's him again.

SCOTT: Shit

WANDA: What do you want me to say. No deal?

SCOTT: No, let me talk to him.

WANDA: What are you going to say?

SCOTT: Just give it to me.

WANDA: You just keep your cool okay? If you say anything stupid -

SCOTT: I'm not going to say anything stupid

WANDA gives him the phone.

SCOTT: Hello, this is Scott speaking. *(pause)* But I don't have that sort of money. *(pause)* Just because I'm famous doesn't mean I'm rich. My only income is my motivational speaking, and I usually only do that only once a fortnight *(pause)* No, I do not get twenty thousand bucks a pop - I'm not Ian Thorpe. I get two thousand dollars. *(pause)* I'm not lying. And most of that goes into paying off my unit. *(pause)* No, I can't do adds, or commentary because of what happened last year. *(pause)* He wasn't my best mate, he - *(pause)* Yes, I know I did the wrong thing. I hurt him very badly and I'm very ashamed of that. But I'm trying to make up for it now. I'm helping depressed kids. I'm doing my best, and I really think I need a break. I've been through Hell. *(SCOTT breaks down. WANDA gives him the thumbs up. SCOTT winks at her).* Yes, I'm still here. *(pause)* No, I couldn't afford that either. How about ten thousand dollars? *(pause)* Okay, thanks. I'll speak to you later.

SCOTT hangs up.

WANDA: So?

SCOTT: He's thinking about it.

WANDA: Good. How long before he gets back to you?

SCOTT: Two hours.

WANDA: Well, in the meantime we'd better find out if it is that doctor.

SCOTT: How can we do that?

WANDA: Ring him back.

Blackout.

Scene 5

The DOCTOR is reading a medical chart. Behind him is the mobile curtain. His mobile phone starts to ring. He looks at the number, takes out a surgical mask and puts it on. He answers it in a muffled voice.

DOCTOR: Hello. *(pause)* You *have* got the money?

The mobile curtain is pushed aside, revealing SCOTT and WANDA. SCOTT has a phone against his ear, and is holding a cricket bat.

SCOTT: Yes. But you're not getting any of it.

DOCTOR: Shit!

The DOCTOR tries to run out.

SCOTT: No you don't.

SCOTT raises his bat, threateningly. The DOCTOR stops. SCOTT pulls down the surgical mask.

DOCTOR: I can explain.

SCOTT: I'd like to hear it. Since when do highly paid doctors go around blackmailing their patients?

DOCTOR: I'm not highly paid.

SCOTT: Oh, yeah, a doctor on skid row, I'm sure.

DOCTOR: It's only my second year working. It's a real struggle to be honest.

SCOTT: One hundred thousand a year must be real tough.

DOCTOR: Only eighty. And my mortgage payments are ridiculously high.

SCOTT: Mortgage payments? That's why you blackmailed me?

DOCTOR: I bought a house in a very exclusive suburb and had to take out a huge loan.

SCOTT: Well, why didn't you buy in a cheaper area?

DOCTOR: It's my wife. She was born and bred on the North Shore. She wouldn't live anywhere else. I didn't want to refuse her, because I was afraid she wouldn't marry me.

He starts to cry.

SCOTT: Oh, stop crying. We don't care about your stupid marriage. All we care about is the photo.

WANDA: That's right. If it gets out and Scott gets dragged through the mud, you'll be dragged through with him. You're career will be over, and so will your marriage.

DOCTOR: Oh no.

SCOTT: So hand it over.

DOCTOR: It's too late.

SCOTT: What do you mean?

DOCTOR: I sold it to someone else.

SCOTT/WANDA: What!

DOCTOR: I felt sorry for you, after what you said on the phone. I didn't want to take your money.

WANDA: Rubbish. You got a better price, didn't you?

DOCTOR: Much better.

WANDA: Who'd you sell it too? TMZ?

DOCTOR: Who?

WANDA: The celebrity internet site.

DOCTOR: An internet site would buy it?

WANDA: You have no idea what you're doing, do you? So just tell us who you sold it to and we'll try to buy it back.

DOCTOR: *(pause)* I can't say. It was part of the deal.

SCOTT raises the bat.

SCOTT: You tell us, or your career is over.

DOCTOR: *(pause)* Wait on. How is it over? You have no evidence. Just a few phone calls, that's all. And what's unusual about a doctor calling his patient to see how his recovery is progressing?

SCOTT: What's unusual? Show him, Wanda.

WANDA lifts her top revealing a Dictaphone taped to her stomach.

DOCTOR: Oh shit.

WANDA: Listen to this.

She rewinds it and presses play. Music plays.

SCOTT: What the Hell is that?

DOCTOR: It's the Insomniacs. I've got that album. It's great.

SCOTT: Maybe you fast forwarded it by accident. Rewind it.

She does and presses play. More music.

SCOTT: For God's sake, Wanda. Can't you do anything right?

WANDA: It worked back at your place.

DOCTOR: What a shame. Well, it was nice catching up with you both. But if you'll excuse me, I have patients to attend to.

SCOTT raises his bat.

SCOTT: You're not going anywhere.

The DOCTOR leaps back.

SCOTT: Lucky for you you're already in the emergency ward.

WANDA: Scott, you said you'd only use it to scare him.

SCOTT: I haven't got a choice now.

DOCTOR: I'll charge you with assault.

WANDA: Scott, it would do more damage to your career than the photo.

SCOTT lowers the bat.

SCOTT: You're lucky we're not alone.

DOCTOR: Pop back later in the week and someone will remove those stiches. Should be a most painful experience.

The DOCTOR walks out jauntily.

SCOTT: Fuck!

WANDA: Calm down.

SCOTT: I'm not going to calm down. The photo is out there and we have no idea who has it.

WANDA: I know, but... Yes we do.

SCOTT: What?

WANDA: Well, think about it. How many people in this world would pay thousands of dollars to humiliate you? They'd have to be both rich and really hate your guts.

SCOTT *thinks*.

SCOTT: I can't think of anyone.

WANDA: Oh, come on. You even gave Doctor Evil the idea by mentioning him on the phone today.

SCOTT: *(pause)* Oh shit!

WANDA: That's right - your best mate!

Blackout

Scene 6

Sounds of a busy swimming pool. SCOTT stands there, looking around. A male voice.

DAVID: *(off)* What the hell are you doing here?

DAVID enters wearing his swimmers, looking magnificent.

SCOTT: David. Hi.

DAVID: I repeat. What the hell are you doing here?

SCOTT: Just popped by to say hello. See how you are.

DAVID: Really?

SCOTT: Yeah. You look great. You should come out of retirement.

DAVID: *(pause)* I have kids to coach.

DAVID turns to go.

SCOTT: Hey, I've really been enjoying your commentating. It's great they finally hired someone who actually knows what he's talking about.

DAVID: As I said, I have kids to coach.

DAVID turns to go.

SCOTT: David, I'm...

DAVID: You're what?

SCOTT: I'm...sorry.

DAVID: For?

SCOTT: For...sleeping with Jenny.

DAVID: You're sorry?

SCOTT: Yes.

DAVID: It happened over a year ago. Why have you all of a sudden decided to apologise?

SCOTT: Well, I couldn't face you until now.

DAVID: You were my best mate.

SCOTT: Well, not really.

DAVID: You were the best man at the wedding.

SCOTT: Well, okay, I was *your* best mate.

DAVID: How could you do that to me?

SCOTT: I'm sorry, I was drunk.

DAVID: No you weren't. You hardly ever drink.

SCOTT: All right, David, I was weak. I know that. It's just...she came after me.

DAVID: She said it was you.

SCOTT: Yes, all right. It was entirely my fault, okay? I'm sorry. (*beat*) Anyway, how is she?

DAVID: I don't know.

SCOTT: What? You've broken up?

DAVID: I tried to forgive her, but I couldn't do it. I couldn't stop imagining the two of you together.

SCOTT: But I thought it had brought you closer together.

DAVID: For God's sake, that was PR. You should know that. You're the master, aren't you? Using those depressed kids to save your career.

SCOTT: I'm not using them. I've really helped them.

DAVID: Well, you had to, didn't you, otherwise what use would they have been? It makes me sick. The media carrying on about what a hero you are for saving that kid who was in love with you.

SCOTT: I did save him. You should see him today. He's as fit as a fiddle, he's got friends. His life is going well.

DAVID: Good. You won't be able to use him again, then, will you?

SCOTT: What do you mean?

DAVID: Great seeing you, Scott.

DAVID *turns to leave.*

SCOTT: Dave, how about a round of golf after training? Come on, just like we used to. Then we'll have a drink afterwards. We shouldn't let a mistake like this come between us.

DAVID: I'm busy. Real busy.

SCOTT: Yeah, doing what?

DAVID: Nothing much. Just righting a wrong.

SCOTT: David, I'm really sorry for what I did. Please. Can't you find it in your heart to forgive me? We can be best mates just like we used to be. Come on. I've missed you.

DAVID: *(pause)* Don't ever come here again.

DAVID *turns to leave.*

SCOTT: What about you! You're not exactly the greatest bloke in the world.

DAVID: What do you mean?

SCOTT: You slept with Mike Daniel's girlfriend.

DAVID: Yeah, but he wasn't my best mate.

SCOTT: He was on the team.

DAVID: Not really. He was only a reserve for the relay.

SCOTT: Still, it was a shit thing to do.

DAVID: Well, you know all about shit things, don't you? And now everyone else will know about your expertise, too.

SCOTT: What do you mean?

DAVID *smiles then exits.*

SCOTT: What do you mean? *(beat)* What do you mean!

Blackout.

Scene 7

The Retreat. There is a computer on a desk. ADAM walks in wearing running gear, looking fit. He stops, takes his pulse and then starts stretching. LOUISE enters.

LOUISE: Adam. Hi. I didn't think anyone was here.

ADAM: Hi, Louise. How was your trip home?

LOUISE: Well, I got through it, put it that way. Where is everyone? I came here and found the place deserted.

ADAM: I took the new kids for a run. They're outside throwing up.

LOUISE looks out.

LOUISE: Poor little tots. At least it's temporarily stopped them dwelling on their problems. Why did you take them, anyway?

ADAM: Scott didn't turn up, so I thought I'd better do it.

LOUISE: Scott's hurt his tailbone. He can barely walk let alone run.

ADAM: Oh.

LOUISE: And they were happy for you to take them?

ADAM: They seemed to be.

LOUISE: Good on you for taking charge like that. You wouldn't have done that six months ago, would you?

ADAM shakes his head.

LOUISE: And how have you been feeling the last few weeks?

ADAM: Good. Really good.

LOUISE: No depression?

ADAM: No, not at all.

LOUISE: I'm so happy for you Adam. I really am.

She pats him on the shoulder.

ADAM: Thanks. *(beat)* Is it okay if I use the computer?

LOUISE: Sure. Can I get you a drink?

ADAM: Thanks, Louise. A glass of water would be great.

LOUISE exits. ADAM sits down on the computer and taps away. He reads a message. LOUISE comes back in with the water.

LOUISE: Here you are.

ADAM: Oh no.

LOUISE: What is it?

ADAM: My friend's sent me an email saying Scott's done something horrific.

LOUISE: Oh great. What is it this time?

ADAM clicks on the mouse.

LOUISE: What on earth is...

They crane their heads forward to look more closely at the picture. They groan. ADAM looks away in disgust, while LOUISE covers her eyes.

ADAM: That is sick! No wonder he can't run.

ADAM looks back.

ADAM: Look, there's a story.

LOUISE: Can you read it out? I can't look.

ADAM: "Olympic champion Scott Martin checked into Royal North Shore Hospital last night to have this vase removed from his anus. How did it get there, I wonder? Did he have an unlucky fall? I don't think so. Is there anything this guy won't do? First he sleeps with his best mate's wife, then uses depressed kids to save his career. Should a man like this really be looking after depressed kids? I don't think so".

LOUISE: Does it really say that?

She looks at the screen.

LOUISE: Oh my God!

ADAM: What?

LOUISE: That's my vase!

Blackout.

Scene 8

SCOTT's house. WANDA is on the mobile.

WANDA: Bill, I will say it again: it is not Scott. The photo's been doctored. You know they can do anything with technology these days. *(pause)* We haven't made any decision on that yet. We'll seek legal advice, but until we find out who's done it there's nothing much we can do. Okay? *(pause)* No, he is not a transvestite. He is a rugged Aussie male with rugged Aussie male interests. Sport and chicks, Bill. And motivating people to better their lives. Particularly those less fortunate than himself. People like you, Bill. Goodbye.

She hangs up the phone. It rings again immediately. She is about to answer it.
SCOTT enters with a suitcase.

SCOTT: Don't answer it. Just turn it off.

WANDA: But I have to deny it's you. If I don't, people will assume your silence means it's you in the photo.

SCOTT: I know, but I just can't bear to listen to it. Call them back later. Let's just get out of here.

WANDA turns off the phone.

WANDA: Well, where do you want to go?

SCOTT: Home, to Mum's and Dad's.

WANDA: You can't. The media know where they live and are probably on their way there now to get their comment.

SCOTT: Then let's go to a motel, anywhere. But let's go now before those vultures descend on us.

WANDA: No. You'll be recognised at a motel. A greedy staff member's bound to do you into the media.

SCOTT: Then where? Where can I go?

Blackout.

Scene 9

LOUISE's unit. A large cardboard box is on the floor. LOUISE comes into the room wearing dishwashing gloves, holding a vase and drops it into the box. ADAM enters wearing gloves, too, and holding a very big vase.

ADAM: What about this one? It looks a bit stained.

LOUISE: He couldn't have managed that, could he?

ADAM: I wouldn't know. But it does smell a bit funny.

LOUISE: Oh no. I love that vase.

ADAM: It might be because it's old. Do you want to smell it?

LOUISE: I don't know if I can. I'm starting to feel really sick.

ADAM: I'll just put it in the box, then.

LOUISE: No, I'll...I'll check it.

ADAM holds it up. LOUISE takes a deep breath. She quickly smells it. She gags, nods wildly and says...

LOUISE: In the box, in the box.

She runs out of the room, gagging. ADAM dumps it in the box. There is a knock at the door.

ADAM: Louise, there's someone at the door.

LOUISE: *(off)* Can you get it, please, Adam. I'm a bit busy at the moment.

We hear her throwing up. ADAM exits. A moment later SCOTT and WANDA hurry in followed by ADAM. WANDA holds his suitcase.

SCOTT: Not a word from you, Adam. Not one word.

SCOTT comes in hunched over. WANDA follows.

ADAM: You shouldn't have come here, Scott. Louise is furious at you. She really loved that vase. It was a house-warming gift from her mum.

SCOTT: I don't have anywhere else to go. The media are already outside my unit.

ADAM: Well, don't expect a warm welcome.

SCOTT: Where is she, anyway?

ADAM: Throwing up.

SCOTT: Why?

ADAM: Why do you think?

SCOTT: God she's a wimp.

ADAM: Who wouldn't throw up if that happened to their favourite vase.

SCOTT: Oh, don't you start going all moralistic on me. You with your newly-discovered sexuality. I bet you've been up to all sorts of sick stuff.

ADAM: I have not.

SCOTT: Rubbish. You're probably into group masturbation.

ADAM: You can't say that! That's disgraceful!

WANDA: You did go a bit far there, Scott. So just calm down, or Louise won't help you.

LOUISE: Help him? You want my help after what you did?

They turn to see LOUISE staring at them.

SCOTT: Louise, I'm sorry, I really am. But the press are after me and I don't have anywhere else to go.

LOUISE: I left you here to look after my unit and you betray my trust by impaling yourself on my favourite vase.

SCOTT: I didn't do it deliberately. I slipped on your bathroom floor and landed on -

LOUISE: I have never kept that vase in the bathroom, and it would be physically impossible for that to happen anyway.

SCOTT: *(pause)* All right, I have nothing to say in my defence. Except the vase is fine. It still holds flowers perfectly well. And Wanda gave it good clean before she put it back.

WANDA: I did. I gave it a really good scrub.

LOUISE: It was a gift from my mother. She rang me in tears this morning. She saw where you had so tastefully placed it.

SCOTT: Your mother saw the picture?

LOUISE: Yes. And like the rest of us, she'll never forget it.

SCOTT: Maybe my mother saw it, too.

WANDA: But she doesn't have the internet on, does she?

SCOTT: She had it put on last month.

WANDA: Oh dear.

SCOTT: People all over the country will see it.

ADAM: All over the world, more like it.

LOUISE: Serves you right.

SCOTT: Serves me right? Someone took my photo against my will and then tried to bribe me with it.

LOUISE: You were bribed?

SCOTT: Yes, by some doctor with a huge mortgage. But when I refused he sold it to someone else and now it's on the internet for everyone to see.

LOUISE: *(pause)* I'm sorry that's happened to you, Scott, but it doesn't excuse what you did with my vase.

SCOTT: For God's sake, Louise, it's just a vase. You're carrying on like I killed your kitten.

LOUISE: But it wasn't just one vase, was it?

SCOTT: What do you mean?

LOUISE: Adam and I have been through the whole unit and found a number of things that have a suspicious...aroma. Here.

She takes out a number of items and puts them on the floor. He looks at them.

SCOTT: Hey!

He picks up a candle.

SCOTT: Where did you keep this? If I'd found this I'd never have gotten into this mess.

LOUISE: So you didn't use that?

SCOTT: No, unfortunately.

LOUISE snatches it from him.

LOUISE: Well, I'd appreciate it if you'd put the ones you did use back in the box so I can throw them out.

SCOTT: I didn't use any of these.

LOUISE: *(pause)* Fine. You can leave now.

SCOTT: But, Louise -

LOUISE: Goodbye, Scott. Good luck with the media.

Pause. SCOTT stares at her for a moment, then looks at the pile. Finally he kneels down. He studies the pile. They all watch him. After a moment SCOTT picks up a small vase. He looks at it for a moment, everyone holds their breath to see what he does with it, then he puts it in the box. They all groan. He then picks up a dustpan brush. He looks at it for a moment then, too, puts it in the box. They groan louder. He picks up a sculpture and looks at it. He starts to hand it to LOUISE. They all sigh in relief, but then he stops...

SCOTT: Hang on. *(he thinks)* Oh, that's right.

He puts it into the box. They give their loudest groan.

SCOTT: That's it.

LOUISE: You're sick.

SCOTT: I am not. Sexuality is a very individual thing.

LOUISE: I'd get help if I was you. You might end up doing yourself permanent damage.

SCOTT: Unlike you.

LOUISE: What's that supposed to mean?

SCOTT: You're such a close-minded prude. Acting superior to everyone. You're probably so uptight you don't even masturbate.

WANDA and ADAM gasp, then dead silence.

LOUISE: Adam, can you take the box out to the hopper, please?

ADAM: Good idea.

WANDA: I'll help.

ADAM picks up the box and hurries out, followed by WANDA.

LOUISE stares at SCOTT.

LOUISE: So you think I'm uptight?

SCOTT: Yes.

LOUISE: Not very adventurous, you think?

SCOTT: No.

LOUISE picks up the biggest vase off the floor.

LOUISE: You didn't touch this one, did you?

SCOTT: No. Look at it.

LOUISE: Couldn't take it, eh? Too uptight.

SCOTT: Well, there are physical limits.

LOUISE: I don't think you were trying. I don't think you were being adventurous enough.

SCOTT: Well, come on.

LOUISE: No, you come on. Let's be adventurous together.

LOUISE starts to come towards him with the vase.

SCOTT: What are you doing?

LOUISE: What does it look like. Having an adventure with you. Come on, big boy. You can take it. Come on, turn me on.

SCOTT starts backing off, hunched over still in pain.

SCOTT: Louise, this isn't funny.

LOUISE: It's not meant to be. It's meant to be hot. Drop your pants.

SCOTT: But I have stitches.

LOUISE: Come on, the pain will heighten the pleasure.

She stabs the vase at him.

SCOTT: Leave me alone.

SCOTT runs away.

LOUISE: Look at you, running like a Neanderthal. How exciting. Come on primitive, man, let's do primitive things together.

LOUISE *comes at him with the vase.*

SCOTT: Stop it.

SCOTT *runs past her. LOUISE rams the vase into his backside. SCOTT screams out, stops and clutches his backside.*

LOUISE: Feel good, baby?

SCOTT: No!

SCOTT *crumples to the ground.*

SCOTT: My mother might have seen the photo.

He dissolves into tears. LOUISE watches for a moment. She makes an initial move to comfort him, but then stops.

LOUISE: You can stay, all right? Until you find somewhere else.

SCOTT: Thanks.

LOUISE *exits, leaving SCOTT wiping his eyes alone.*

ACT TWO

Scene 1

SCOTT *is sitting on the couch, facing the audience, holding a remote control, pointing it at an unseen television in front of him, flicking from channel to channel. Finally he stops and we hear football on the television. LOUISE comes in vacuuming the room.*

SCOTT: Louise! Louise! I can't hear.

LOUISE: What?

SCOTT: I can't hear!

LOUISE turns off the vacuum cleaner.

LOUISE: What?

SCOTT: I said I can't hear the television.

LOUISE: I can't help that, Scott. The place is a mess. I've had to vacuum it twice since you got here yesterday.

SCOTT: I'm sorry.

LOUISE: Are you planning to sit there watching television all day?

SCOTT: I can't do much else. I can't leave the unit.

LOUISE: Well, why don't you read a book. Something that might expand your mind, instead of watching this rubbish.

SCOTT: What do you suggest? Something like this, perhaps?

He picks up a book that is next to him on the couch.

LOUISE: Give me that, please.

SCOTT: "Lovers under the Midnight Moon".

LOUISE: Give it to me!

LOUISE tries to snatch it, but SCOTT stands up and hurries away.

SCOTT: You read Mills and Boon!

LOUISE: I do not.

SCOTT: You talk about me watching rubbish. What about what you're reading? Mills and Boon!

LOUISE: A friend of mine gave it to me. I've never read one before.

SCOTT: Oh yeah.

LOUISE: I was going to read it for a laugh, that's all.

SCOTT: But there's nothing funny about it. It's just stupid. Listen...

SCOTT flicks through the book and finds a spot.

SCOTT: "The Prince's tall, powerful, body towered over her, and she felt like a little girl staring up at the statue of a war hero. One of his eyebrows arched up enigmatically, and he said, "I have something for you, my dear". And from behind his back he dramatically revealed a box with one golden word emblazoned on it: Tiffany's,". That is just crap.

LOUISE: I'm sure you'd know, having read all of one paragraph.

She snatches back the book.

SCOTT: I've heard that a lot of professional women read these things. Despite all their success, they're still dreaming of their knight in shining armour.

LOUISE: Is it any wonder with men like you in the world?

SCOTT: I can be romantic.

LOUISE: I'm sure.

SCOTT: I can.

LOUISE: Fine. I believe you. In fact, there's a bit in here that probably epitomises your romantic nature.

She flicks through the book and finds a page.

LOUISE: Here... "The Olympic swimming champion burst into her room wearing only speedos, his sculpted body still wet and glowing from swimming laps. He enigmatically arched an eyebrow and said, "I have something for you, Darl". Her heart skipped a beat and she held her breath - finally that moment she had been dreaming of for months had arrived. Then from behind his back he revealed an oddly-stained vase".

SCOTT: Ha ha ha.

LOUISE: See, it is a laugh.

There is frantic knocking at the door.

LOUISE: Excuse me, Scott, it must be the prince.

LOUISE exits. SCOTT changes channels. A moment later WANDA hurries on breathlessly, followed by LOUISE.

SCOTT: Wanda. What is it?

WANDA: Put on Channel Nine. I've been tipped off that Ryan Barry is going to talk about your photo.

SCOTT: Oh shit.

SCOTT flicks the remote. RYAN appears in a spotlight.

RYAN: Well, the whole country's been talking about it for days now - that infamous email with the photo of Olympic swimming champion Scott Martin wearing drag and with a vase stuck in a place it's way too big for. Up until now, no-one in the media has been game to air the story, for fear that the photo has been doctored and that legal action could ensue. However, the story has now developed an extraordinary twist: believe it or not, the vase itself has turned up safe and sound and will shortly be auctioned on ebay.

SCOTT/WANDA/LOUISE: What?

RYAN: Yes, you heard me correctly. The vase is to be auctioned on ebay. Who on earth would want such an item is beyond me. However, an ebay spokesman has assured me there is already a great deal of interest, and it could fetch tens of thousands of dollars.

SCOTT/WANDA/LOUISE: What?

RYAN: If this is true, I can only say that the sporting memorabilia community has finally gone mad. But what I want to know is, who is selling the vase? The ebay spokesman would not reveal their identity, but says it is someone very close to the Martin camp. As for Martin himself, he has not been seen for days and seems to have gone into hiding. This method is clearly not working and it is time for him, like the vase, to emerge from hiding and clear up this matter. I'm Ryan Barry.

SCOTT clicks the remote control. Blackout on RYAN.

SCOTT: Adam! That little bastard!

LOUISE: He wouldn't do such a thing,

SCOTT: Oh, really. Who was the one who threw the vase in the hopper?

LOUISE: Someone else might have found -

SCOTT: And who took fifteen thousand dollars off me to say what a great bloke I was on television?

LOUISE *is silent.*

SCOTT: I'm going round to sort him out. Come on, Wanda.

SCOTT *and* WANDA *exit.*

LOUISE: I'm coming too. I'm not going to let you hurt him.

LOUISE *exits. Blackout.*

Scene 2

SCOTT, LOUISE, and WANDA outside ADAM's house. SCOTT yells into the wings.

SCOTT: Adam, you get out here or I'm going to kick the door down and drag you out!

LOUISE: Great technique, that's bound to get him co-operating.

SCOTT: I'm not here for his co-operation.

WANDA: Scott, just cool it, will you?

LOUISE: Adam, it's all right. No-one's going to hurt you. We just want to talk.

ADAM comes out.

SCOTT: There you are, you backstabbing little criminal.

SCOTT goes towards him, LOUISE and WANDA hold him back.

WANDA: Scott!

SCOTT: You've done it to me again, haven't you?

ADAM: You said I was into group masturbation.

LOUISE: You said what?

SCOTT: It was just a joke.

ADAM: You can't say that about people. Especially someone in a fragile psychological state like me.

SCOTT: "Fragile psychological state"? Listen to him! You're in the best Psychological state of you life - fit as a fiddle, in touch with your sexuality, and surrounded by stacks of new friends. You just did this out of greed.

ADAM: No, you went too far, you -

LOUISE: Adam, it is a bit of a weak excuse. Doing it out of revenge.

SCOTT: See, your psychologist has seen through, so you may as well drop it and tell the truth.

ADAM: *(pause)* Well, Mum and I are doing it pretty tough –

SCOTT: Oh, for God's sake, don't use the Aussie Battler defence. I gave you twenty thousand bucks!

ADAM: Yeah, but we used most of that to pay off our debts.

SCOTT: So you're ahead now?

ADAM: Yeah, but we want to buy a house and need money for the down-payment.

SCOTT: You've got to be joking!

WANDA: Adam, we understand you and your mum's desire to be property owners, but you've done the wrong thing. You should have offered us a percentage of the ebay auction.

SCOTT: What?

WANDA: I think fifty/fifty is not unreasonable.

SCOTT: We are not taking a percentage! It would be an admission that it really happened. My life would be ruined.

WANDA: To be honest, it looks pretty ruined anyway, so we may as well make one last pile of money while we can.

LOUISE: You're not getting any money - it's my vase.

SCOTT: There, Wanda, that settles it. Louise won't let the vase be auctioned.

LOUISE: I didn't say that.

SCOTT: What? You'd auction it? You'd put me through that?

LOUISE: Well, I've got a big home loan, Scott.

SCOTT: Not you, too! Is everyone in the country turning to crime to buy real estate? Housing prices are out of control!

LOUISE: It's not a crime. And things are tight. It would help.

SCOTT: I can't believe this is happening.

WANDA: Neither can I. That vase was worthless until Scott added value to it.

LOUISE: But I own it.

WANDA: You threw it out.

LOUISE: But it was my rubbish.

SCOTT: SHUT UP! All of you!

They all stop.

SCOTT: There is not going to be an auction because Adam is going to give me that vase and I am going to smash it to pieces. Now, Adam, where is it?

ADAM *is silent.*

SCOTT: Adam, this is my life, we're talking about! This is real, do you understand?

ADAM: Yes.

SCOTT: So, will you give it to me, please?

ADAM: All right.

SCOTT: Thank you.

ADAM: For fifteen thousand dollars.

SCOTT: What?

ADAM: I could get more through ebay. It's a good deal.

SCOTT: Why you little bastard!

SCOTT *grabs him.*

ADAM: Help!

LOUISE *and WANDA grab ADAM, and try to get him away from SCOTT.*

LOUISE: Get off him, Scott.

WANDA: Scott, keep your cool, keep you cool.

SCOTT: I'm going to kill him!

Suddenly there is a camera flash, and they all freeze in a pose that looks like they are all getting stuck into ADAM. A projected headline above them reads: "GOLD MEDALLIST, MANAGER AND PSYCHOLOGIST, BASH DEPRESSED KID".

Spotlight on RYAN. He is holding up a newspaper with the picture on the front page.

RYAN: What on earth is going on at the Beating the Blues retreat? This photograph on the front of the Tele' this morning shows Olympic gold medallist Scott Martin, his manager Wanda Michaels, and the retreat's clinical psychologist, Louise Harris, bashing - yes, you heard right, bashing - a depressed young boy who's been receiving treatment at the retreat.

The boy is none other than Adam Fisher, who last year claimed that Scott Martin paid him to say he'd helped him overcome his depression, to improve Martin's public image. The next day Martin was filmed saving Fisher's life. Then Fisher retracted the whole story, saying he'd been angry with Martin because he was in love with him, but Martin had rejected him. Then six months later we get Martin's famous centrefold with the vase, followed by this shocking assault. If was the parent of a child attending the retreat I'd get them out of there quick smart. And I'd be demanding a full investigation from the government. The retreat is predominantly government-funded and therefore accountable to the taxpayer. I call on Mr Martin and his band of thugs to come forward and provide us with an explanation, or the government should intervene and provide protection to some of the most vulnerable members of our community. I'm Ryan Barry.

SCOTT, WANDA, LOUISE and ADAM come back to life. They are now looking at a newspaper.

ALL : Oh my God!

LOUISE: I wasn't attacking him. I was trying to protect him from Scott.

WANDA: So was I.

LOUISE: Now everyone will think I'm a child abuser.

WANDA: And me.

LOUISE: This is all your fault, Scott.

SCOTT: It is not, it's Adam's.

ADAM: Mine!

SCOTT: You're the one who tried to sell the vase to ebay. Yet you come off in the paper looking like a victim, when in fact you're the aggressor!

LOUISE: Oh Scott, how can you -

A mobile phone rings. They all pull out their phones. It's LOUISE's.

LOUISE: Hello. Oh, Phillip. Look about the photo I can... But, Phillip, it isn't what it looks like. If you could give me a chance to...

Another mobile phone rings. They all look again. It's ADAM's.

ADAM: Oh, hi Mum. *(pause)* Yes, I'm fine. I wasn't hurt. *(pause)* Mum, it's not what it looks like. We were just mucking... Mum will you just...

Another mobile phone rings. It's WANDA's.

WANDA: Wanda Michaels. *(pause)* G'day John, how are you? Scott's really looking forward to speaking at your... Oh, come on, John, that's just a big misunderstanding. It'll be cleared up by tomorrow.

SCOTT *'s mobile rings.*

SCOTT: Hello. Scott speak - Mum! *(pause)* Mum, will you just calm down and listen. I slipped coming out of the shower. *(pause)* I don't know why it was on the floor.

LOUISE: I wasn't bashing him, I was trying to help him. It was...

ADAM: But Mum, I love the retreat! You can't do this!

SCOTT: No, I'm not a transvestite. Yes, you will still get grandchildren.

WANDA: John, don't be so hasty. If you just wait until tomorrow this whole thing will be cleared... John?

LOUISE: Will they at least give me a chance to explain?

ADAM: Please, Mum! Don't do this. Please!

LOUISE: Okay, what time?

SCOTT: No I did not bash the kid. *(pause)* Mum, please stop crying. *(pause)* Look, I'll talk to you tomorrow, okay?

They all put their phones away.

WANDA: Well, that was your first cancellation. The first of many I suspect.

SCOTT: Fuck.

ADAM: That was my Mum. She said I can't have anything more to do with the retreat and I have to go home right away.

SCOTT: Adam, I'm so -

ADAM: It was the best thing that's ever happened to me. Now thanks to you it's been taken away. I hate you!

ADAM *runs off.*

LOUISE: That was Phillip White. The chairman of the Beating the Blues board. He's called an emergency board meeting for tomorrow, and I've been told to attend. He wouldn't say, but from the sounds of it I'm going to be sacked.

SCOTT: Oh, Louise, I'm -

LOUISE: Don't give me any sympathy. This is all your fault. Helping these young people is all I've ever wanted to do, and now you've destroyed that. I wish I'd never laid eyes on you.

LOUISE *hurries off.*

WANDA: Well, what are you going to do next? Burn down the retreat.

SCOTT: Piss off. Just do your job and work out what we're going to do to fix all this?

WANDA: There's only one thing left to do.

SCOTT: Well, what is it?

WANDA: You're not going to like it.

SCOTT: Just tell me first and we'll see.

Blackout.

SCOTT: *(in darkness)* What? You've got to be joking!

Scene 3

Spot on RYAN.

RYAN: Well, it's been the strangest and most intriguing story in Australia this year. Filled with outrageous photographs, auctions and assaults. But until now the main players have kept quiet. Now they've finally come out of hiding and are here to shed light on this confusing tale. Welcome to Scott Martin, Louise Harris, Wanda Michaels and Adam Fisher

Lights up on them all. They all say hello.

RYAN: Adam, I'll start with you. How are you? Have you recovered from being bashed?

SCOTT: He wasn't bashed.

ADAM: It's true. I wasn't. It was a minor scuffle, and I wasn't even hurt.

RYAN: Well, the picture tells a different story.

SCOTT: All right. I was trying to...get to him. But Wanda and Louise stopped me. In the photo it looks like they're trying to get to him too, but they were protecting him.

RYAN: And why were you trying to "get to him"?

SCOTT: Because -

ADAM: Because he was mad at me for trying to auction the vase on ebay.

RYAN: That was you?

ADAM: Yes.

RYAN: But why would you do that? Six months ago you said how Scott turned your life around.

ADAM: Well -

SCOTT: Because he and his Mum have been doing it tough. They need the money. Adam saw a chance to make some and went for it. He didn't realise what it could do to me. There was no malice in it.

ADAM: I'm so sorry, Scott.

SCOTT: That's okay, Adam. And don't you worry about your financial troubles. I'm going to help you and your Mum out.

ADAM: You will?

SCOTT: You betcha.

ADAM: Thanks, Scott.

RYAN: That's very generous of you, Scott. And it leads me to the topic of the vase.
Why did you put it where you did?

SCOTT: I didn't put it there. I slipped as I was coming out of the shower.

RYAN: Scott, come on.

SCOTT: I know it sounds, unbelievable, but that's what happened.

RYAN: And where exactly was the vase when you fell on it?

SCOTT: It was on a small table in the bathroom. That's where Louise keeps it.

LOUISE: That's right. I often have flowers in it, to freshen up the bathroom.

RYAN: The plot thickens. Are you and Scott involved?

LOUISE: No! No. Scott was house-minding for me while I was away. We're just -

RYAN: Good friends?

LOUISE: Yes.

RYAN: Okay, so did this unlucky fall end with you landing in a wig and some
lipstick?

WANDA: That was my idea. I tried to disguise him so he wouldn't be recognised at
the hospital.

RYAN: Quite a tall tale. And I don't believe a word of it. Neither will my viewers.

SCOTT: Well, that's your bad luck, because it's true.

RYAN: Come on, Scott, you're only making it worse for yourself. Tell the truth.

SCOTT: It is the truth. And if you don't believe it, you can go to Hell. I don't need
this. I've had enough.

SCOTT gets up to leave. WANDA grabs his hand.

WANDA: Scott, please. This isn't going to help.

SCOTT: *(pause)* All right! I stuffed the vase up my arse. Satisfied?

RYAN: Why did you do that?

SCOTT: Because I thought it would get give me sexual pleasure. But all it gave me was pain. And don't look at me like I'm sick. Who hasn't done something off to give themselves a thrill? I'm sure all of you here have done sick stuff that you wouldn't want people to know about, haven't you? *(They all look down.)* Haven't you? *(pause)* All right, don't admit it, but I know you all have. And whatever it is you've all done, I'm sure you wouldn't want it photographed and emailed all over the world.

RYAN: Why did you let the photograph to be taken?

SCOTT: I didn't let it get taken. Someone at the hospital took it without me knowing and then tried to bribe me. But I wouldn't pay up so it ended up on the internet. I know what I did was a bit off, but it didn't hurt anyone. And I didn't deserve to be publicly humiliated for it. Now not only is my life destroyed, but Adam's mum won't let him go back to the retreat, even though it's been the best thing to ever happen to him. And Louise, who loves these kids and helps them more than anyone has helped them in their whole lives, is about to be fired. It's wrong. It's all so wrong.

RYAN: I agree, it is wrong. You have to press charges against the person who did it to you.

SCOTT: We can't prove he did it.

RYAN: So, you're going to let him get away with it?

SCOTT: I don't know. I don't know what I'm going to do about anything anymore.

Blackout.

Scene 4

SCOTT *stands outside by himself*. LOUISE *comes in*.

LOUISE: Well, it's done the trick. Phillip just called me - the board doesn't need to see me tomorrow.

SCOTT: That's great. What a relief.

LOUISE: And Adam's Mum called and said he can still come to the retreat.

SCOTT: That's not so great, but it's good for him.

LOUISE: He's so excited. His mum too. They were wondering how much money you were going to give them.

SCOTT: Oh God. I wish I'd never said that. I've become that kid's personal piggy bank.

LOUISE: I don't think you need to give them too much. You've already given him twenty thousand dollars.

SCOTT: No, I'll give them a few thousand I s'pose. It would look bad if I didn't.

LOUISE: *(pause)* I really appreciate what you said about me on the show, Scott.

SCOTT: That's okay. It was the least I could do after jeopardising your career like that. I'm so sorry I put you through all that stress, Louise.

LOUISE: *(pause)* That's all right. *(pause)* Did you mean what you said about me?

SCOTT: Yes, of course I did. You're fantastic with the kids. I know they mean the world to you. And you mean the world to them.

LOUISE *nods*. *Pause*.

LOUISE: Do you think you'll still continue to help them?

SCOTT: You mean you still want me to? After everything that's happened?

LOUISE: Yes. Because when you're actually working with the kids you're great. It's the peripheral stuff that causes the problems.

SCOTT: Yeah, I know. Everything I do leaves a trail of destruction.

LOUISE: So, do you think you will?

SCOTT: Do you think the parents or the board would want me?

LOUISE: They might. I know the kids still do.

SCOTT: Yeah? What have they been saying about the vase?

LOUISE: Adam said there's been few jokes, but nothing vicious.

SCOTT: Yeah, for years to come I'll be the *butt* of jokes.

LOUISE *smiles*.

SCOTT: I've become a laughing stock, Louise. I think the retreat would be better off without me.

WANDA *runs on*.

WANDA: Good news! I've just closed my biggest deal ever.

SCOTT: What?

WANDA: One hundred thousand big ones!

SCOTT: One hundred thousand! Did you hear that Louise? The interview worked. I'm back!

WANDA: Not for you. A new client.

SCOTT: A new client?

WANDA: I can't believe I talked him into it.

SCOTT: So no-one has re-booked?

WANDA: Not yet.

SCOTT: So I'm finished?

WANDA: Hold your horses, Scott. I still have one or two things up my sleeve for you.

SCOTT: Like what?

WANDA: We'll talk about it later. I have to go and see my new client now.

WANDA *starts to leave*.

SCOTT: So, who is it, another swimmer?

WANDA: He's not a swimmer.

SCOTT: Well, what sport then?

WANDA: He's not a sportsman. He's a doctor.

Blackout.

Scene 5

Television spot up on the DOCTOR with RYAN. The DOCTOR is crying.

DOCTOR: I'm so ashamed. I never thought I could do something like that. But I had such a huge mortgage. My wife forced me into buying a house on the north shore. I knew we couldn't afford it, but she said she wouldn't marry me unless we bought there. So when I saw Scott with the vase, I saw an opportunity, and... *(he weeps)* But the marriage is over now. I put my foot down over some renovations, and she walked out. So now I'm going to get my life back. I'm going to work in Africa for World Vision and donate the forty thousand I got for the photo of Scott to the Beating the Blues Retreat. I'm going to forget all about housing prices and devote myself to helping the needy.

RYAN: That's great, but who did you sell the picture to?

Blackout.

Scene 6

A spot. DAVID, in his swimmers, is chased into it by journalists, where he stops and turns on them. He is agitated. A crowd of microphones are thrust under his chin. A volley of questions are fired at him.

JOURNALISTS: Why did you do it, Dave? How do you feel about your ads being canned? Is it true that Channel Nine has fired you from the commentary team? Don't you think you went too far with Scott? Hadn't he been punished enough?

DAVID: Punished enough? He wasn't punished at all! He used these depressed kids to save his career and make everyone think he's a great bloke. Don't they remember what he did to me? He was my best mate and he slept with my wife! He destroyed my marriage. So I did what any man would have done and took revenge. An eye for an eye. And now *I'm* being punished for it. My ads have been cancelled and God knows what else. Has this country gone mad? This so-called great bloke gets off by shoving vases up his arse! He's a sicko. He's un-Australian. How can you think he's a great bloke? Can't you see what he is? Are you all totally insane?

Blackout.

Scene 7

SCOTT *stands in front of a lectern, holding a gavel. He is acting as an auctioneer. Sitting on a small table next to him is a cloth covering an object.*

SCOTT: Do I hear twenty thousand? Come on people, do it for the kids. This will pay for brand-new gym equipment for them. They'll be so tired they won't have time to be depressed. Who will give me twenty thousand for the kids? Come on, let's see which of you corporate heavyweights really has a heart.

VOICE: *(off)* Twenty-thousand!

SCOTT: Well done, Martin! You've cheered the kids up already. Now do I hear Twenty-two thousand? Come on. We could buy some new bikes for them. What, you don't want the kids riding? We promise to keep them off the roads - they won't dent your bull bars. *(beat)* Oh well, you've been great anyway. So twenty thousand going once...going twice...gone for twenty thousand to Martin Redding of Redding Marketing! Come on up, Martin.

MARTIN *enters and SCOTT shakes his hand.*

SCOTT: Congratulations, Martin, and thank you. The money will help enormously. Now if you don't mind, a quick goodbye kiss before you go.

MARTIN *recoils.*

SCOTT: Not you, Martin, so don't get excited.

SCOTT *picks up a previously unseen gold medal with a ribbon off the table and gives it a kiss. He then puts it over MARTIN's head and shakes his hand again.*

SCOTT: Look after it, Martin, it means a lot to me.

MARTIN *exits.*

SCOTT: Right. Now, it's time for the final item of the night.

SCOTT *takes the cloth off revealing the vase.*

SCOTT: This vase was generously donated for auction by the retreat's clinical psychologist, Louise Harris. It was a gift from her mother, so she was very attached to it, although not as attached to it as I once was. It's decorated with a lovely floral design, and has a very curvaceous, provocative shape. It is in pristine condition apart from a few minor stains. It also has a rather pungent aroma, but I've been told that will disappear in time. It is perfect for holding flowers, but also performs other tasks I won't go into here. So, let's start the bidding. Do I hear ten thousand?

VOICE: *(off)* Ten thousand!

SCOTT: Crikey, that was a quick bid. And I must say I don't like the look on your face, sir - it looks a bit lascivious to me. I fear for this little vase's future.

VOICE: *(off)* Twelve thousand!

SCOTT: Another one! And look at you, sir - you're practically drooling. I can't let this happen to my little vase. Don't worry, sweetheart, I will save you. Fifteen thousand!

Blackout.

Scene 8

SCOTT *by himself, looking melancholy in the moonlight. Then LOUISE races in.*

LOUISE: Scott, there you are!

SCOTT: Hi.

LOUISE: Can you believe it? Forty thousand dollars! You raised Forty thousand dollars for the retreat! With the bribery money that comes to eighty thousand! Do you know how many things we can do with that money? We can replace all the rusty old bikes, build a climbing wall, and upgrade the gym. The possibilities are endless. I can't believe it. I just can't.

SCOTT: *(flat)* That's great.

LOUISE: And you were so funny during the auction. I can't remember laughing so much. Everyone loved the way you sent yourself up.

SCOTT: Terrific.

LOUISE: *(pause)* Scott, are you okay?

SCOTT: Yeah, fine.

LOUISE: *(pause)* Scott, have I upset you?

SCOTT: No, no, you haven't, it's just...

LOUISE: Yes, Scott?

SCOTT: *(pause)* I was just thinking about everything that's happened: sleeping with Jenny, losing my career, getting it back again; the vase, the photo on the internet, losing my career again, and now, finally, I've lost my...gold medal.

SCOTT *momentarily cracks up, but quickly gets himself under control.*

LOUISE: Oh, Scott. I'm so sorry, I'm -

SCOTT: I worked harder to get that gold medal than anything in my whole life, and now it's gone to some...fat cat businessman. *(beat)* If only I'd controlled myself. None of this would have happened. None of it.

LOUISE: No. And there would be a lot of kids I know who would be the poorer for it. And a lot of adults, too.

SCOTT: Really? Who?

LOUISE: Well...me for one.

SCOTT: You? After everything I put you through?

LOUISE: Admittedly, you did stress me a little. You nearly destroyed my career and the retreat's reputation, not to mention what you did to my vase. Those were very black marks against your name. But none of that matters now because, even though you did it for the wrong reasons, you actually helped Adam and all those other kids. And you raised all this money for us. Now everyone knows who we are and what we're trying to do. You've ensured our future. And I don't know how you did it, but maybe it's because you're so alive, Scott. *(She passionately takes his hands.)* You're just so alive.

They stare at each other for some time, then...

SCOTT: It's a full moon.

LOUISE: Yes. *(She looks at her watch.)* And it's midnight.

They stare at each other, but before they can make a move, WANDA bursts in.

WANDA: Stop the press!

SCOTT and LOUISE quickly separate.

WANDA: You're back, big boy, and you're bigger than ever!

SCOTT: What?

WANDA: Those corporate heavyweights in there love you. They came to laugh at you, but now they're laughing with you. They think you're the funniest thing since Malcom Fraser lost his trousers. I've already made ten corporate bookings at ten grand a pop, and there's another ten scragging each other to book you next!

SCOTT: You're joking!

WANDA: I'm not joking. But that's not the best of it. You are soon to find yourself on TV.

SCOTT: How?

WANDA: Because a certain commentator who likes to put indecent photos of his best mate on the internet has got his just desserts and been sacked. And who do you think has been offered his job?

SCOTT: Me?

WANDA: Give the man a coconut! And a new luxury apartment in the CBD, and a limited edition Porsche, and give his manager twenty percent of the lot! We're back and we're here to stay! Any man who sleeps with his best mate's wife then jams a monster vase up his arse and still gets everyone to love him, is a walking talking piggy bank. Come here, piggy, I love you!

WANDA *grabs his head violently and kisses him on the forehead.*

WANDA: *(to LOUISE)* And I love you too!

She kisses LOUISE.

WANDA: You and the retreat are the best things to ever happen to us. Sorry we almost ruined your career there for a moment, but it's all turned out for the best. You'll be able to keep doing wonders for these kids. You're a beautiful person. *(beat)* Right, I'm going back in, and I'm not coming back out until my diary is full. *(yells at the wings)* Line up, Boys, I'm gonna book every single one of you!

WANDA *exits.* SCOTT *stands stunned.* *After a moment...*

SCOTT: I'm back. *(pause)* I'm back. *(pause)* I'm back! I've got it all back! And more. Much much more! And all it cost me was one lousy little gold medal. It's the bargain of the century! Sleeping with my best mate's wife and jamming a vase up my arse were the best things I ever did! Can you believe it, Louise? Can you?*(pause)* Louise?

LOUISE: So it all starts again, does it?

SCOTT: What do you mean?

LOUISE: The parties -

SCOTT: The parties! Oh my God, the parties! I can hardly wait!

LOUISE: And the women.

SCOTT: Oh yeah, and the women! The women! That's gonna be... No. No. No. It doesn't all start again. Not again.

LOUISE: No? You sure. Sounds like they'll all want you again. Will be hard to resist.

SCOTT: I'm not losing everything again.

LOUISE: *(pause)* Well, that's great, Scott. Good luck with it.

LOUISE *turns to go.*

SCOTT: Louise, wait.

She stops.

SCOTT: I have something for you. To say sorry for everything.

LOUISE: Scott, you didn't have to do that.

SCOTT: I wanted to. And to be honest...it's not just to say sorry.

LOUISE: *(pause)* What do you mean by that?

SCOTT: It's just a pity I'm not in my speedos dripping with water.

LOUISE: What?

He produces a lavish looking jewellery box.

LOUISE: Oh my God!

SCOTT: *(proud of himself)* It's Tiffany's.

LOUISE: I know, I know.

SCOTT: Open it.

She does.

LOUISE: Oh my God!

SCOTT: Do you like it?

LOUISE: Oh, Scott, it's the most beautiful necklace I've ever seen.

SCOTT: May I put it on you?

She pauses for a moment, then she nods her head. SCOTT takes out the necklace and puts it on her, then stands back to admire her.

LOUISE: How does it look?

SCOTT: Beautiful. You look beautiful.

The stare at each other for a moment. WANDA bursts in.

WANDA: Scott, all the heavyweights want to talk to you. Get in there and start schmoozing, while I do the booking.

SCOTT: In a minute.

WANDA: Oh my God! Look at that!

WANDA *has seen the necklace. She hurries up, takes it in her hand and looks at it.*

WANDA: This is the most beautiful necklace I've ever seen.

LOUISE: Scott gave it to me.

WANDA: Scott? Are you two back together?

SCOTT *and LOUISE looks at each other uncertainly.*

WANDA: Well, are you?

LOUISE *finally holds out her hand to him. SCOTT takes it.*

WANDA: You beauty! We'll get a fortune for the story. I'll get New Idea and Woman's Day into a bidding war. And God knows how much we'll get for the wedding photos.

LOUISE: Wedding?

SCOTT: Wanda, just steady on for once, will you? Just let me...

WANDA: Let you what?

SCOTT: This...

SCOTT *leans in, is about to kiss LOUISE when ADAM enters and yells...*

ADAM: Louise, no!

SCOTT: Adam!

ADAM: Don't do it. You know what he's like.

LOUISE: Adam, please.

ADAM: But you know he's a Neanderthal.

SCOTT: Adam!

LOUISE: I know -

SCOTT: Louise!

LOUISE: But he's just so...

ADAM: What?

She thinks for a moment...

SCOTT: Alive?

LOUISE: *(pause)* Yes. So come on, Neanderthal man, let's get primitive.

She grabs his arse firmly and provocatively.

WANDA/ADAM: Louise!

SCOTT: Adam...go get my vase.

LOUISE and SCOTT kiss. WANDA watches misty-eyed and puts an arm-around ADAM, who looks appalled. Blackout.