EXTRACT

VICIOUS TREATS

Five stories for the New World

By

Alex Broun

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NOTE ON CAST:

Vicious Treats can be performed by a cast of 6 with the following doubling:

ACTOR 1 (50-60) – WILLIAM/GRAEME

ACTOR 2 (20s) – BEN/MATTHEW

ACTOR 3 (30s) – PAUL

ACTRESS 1 (50-60) – LYNNE/DAWN

ACTRESS 2 (20s) – CLAIRE/HELEN

ACTRESS 3 (30s) – CLAUDIA/TRACEY

VICIOUS TREATS : PLAY1

The Gift of the Gun

Cast

WILLIAM 50s

BEN Late teens

Setting

Bare room in a deserted warehouse.

Time

Monday. 9am.

Production History

The Gift of the Gun was first performed at Short & Sweet 2003 at the Newtown Theatre, Sydney. Directed by George Ogilvie.

It was then produced as part of 'Vicious Streaks' at the Darlinghurst Theatre, Sydney in 2004. Again directed by George Ogilvie.

Next is was produced as part of Shorter & Sweeter 2004, the best of Short & Sweet 2002-2004, at the Studio, Sydney Opera House before touring to the Victorian Arts Centre, Melbourne and the Parramatta Riverside Theatres. Production again directed by George Ogilvie.

In 2005 it was produced at the BareStage Theatre, Red Bluff, California, USA as part of Six 10s @ Eight, New Plays Festival. Directed by Bryon Burruss. The production was also recorded for broadcast on National Public Radio (NPR) in the USA.

The Gift of the Gun

A bare room. 9am.

In darkness music begins. A Chopin Etude.

A spotlight comes up on a child's mobile of bright coloured shapes. Red triangles and yellow rectangles, floating in space.

Lights come up on **WILLIAM**. He sits on a chair down left. He is well dressed in an expensive suit and shiny shoes.

To his right is a bare table. On it two objects : a yellow box and a red triangle. Beside it a plain black sound system. There is a door upstage.

The spotlight fades on the mobile. The music remains.

There is a knock at the door. The music is suddenly cut off.

WILLIAM: It's open.

THE DOOR OPENS SLOWLY AND **BEN** ENTERS. HIS FAIR HAIR IS SLICKED BACK AND HE WEARS A BRIGHTLY COLOURED RED SINGLET AND YELLOW PANTS. HE CARRIES A SMALL BACK PACK.

WILLIAM: Close the door.

BEN CLOSES THE DOOR.

WILLIAM: No problem finding the address?

BEN: Place seems deserted. You must be the only one here.

WILLIAM: It's scheduled for demolition.

BEN: Whatever blows your mind. I'm Ben.

WILLIAM: My name is William. Come over here so I can look at you.

BEN PUTS DOWN THE BAG. HE WALKS SLOWLY TOWARDS **WILLIAM**. **WILLIAM** INDICATES FOR HIM TO WALK UP AND DOWN.

BEN WALKS IN FRONT OF **WILLIAM**. **WILLIAM** WATCHES HIM.

WILLIAM: Excellent.

BEN: Blonde enough for you?

WILLIAM: Perfect.

BEN: Clothes alright?

WILLIAM: You've done very well.

BEN: Not leaving anything to chance are you?

WILLIAM: Best not to.

BEN: Any more special requests?

WILLIAM: Not just yet.

PAUSE. **BEN** LOOKS AT **WILLIAM**.

BEN: So, having a good day?

WILLIAM: So far.

BEN: (WANDERING AROUND ROOM) Do you live here?

WILLIAM: Of course not.

BEN: It doesn't look too cosy. Is there a bathroom? I might need to clean up afterwards.

WILLIAM: Unfortunately not.

BEN: How about some towels?

WILLIAM: I do apologise.

BEN: It's alright. I've got some of my own. Keep them for little emergencies.

BEN OPENS UP HIS BAG. HE TAKES OUT SOME TOWELETTES. HE HOLDS UP A SMALL CASSETTE PLAYER.

BEN: How about some music?

WILLIAM: Not at the moment.

BEN PUTS THE CASSETTE PLAYER AWAY. HE STANDS.

BEN: So what will it be? Giving. Receiving. Or are you just interested in some oral? You look like you really like to suck dick.

WILLIAM: Absolutely not.

BEN: Oops. Didn't mean to offend you. I don't often have new clients. Too popular with my regulars. They get great service so they ask for me again and again. Hopefully you will too.

WILLIAM: A once off will be sufficient.

BEN: Don't be so hasty. Wait to see if you like me. (PAUSE) I don't usually go to someone's place. You never know what could happen. But Terio said you come highly recommended and you'd make it worth my while.

WILLIAM: You'll be well compensated.

PAUSE. **BEN** BEGINS TO UNBUTTON HIS PANTS.

WILLIAM: What are you doing?

BEN: Don't you want to watch me.

WILLIAM: God no. No offence.

BEN: Most people say I've got a great body.

WILLIAM: You look very firm.

BEN: Would you like to touch me?

WILLIAM: No, but thanks for offering.

BEN: I could lie on the table.

WILLIAM: That won't be necessary.

PAUSE.

BEN: Look, I don't mean to sound ungrateful. But could we get started. I've got to be back for one of my regulars at eleven.

WILLIAM: Certainly.

BEN: Well? What would you like me to do?

WILLIAM: Go to the table and lift up the red triangle.

BEN: Oh, so that's it. Toys.

WILLIAMS: Objects from my childhood.

BEN: Kinky.

BEN GOES TO THE TABLE. HE LIFTS UP THE TRIANGLE TO REVEAL A REVOLVER. **BEN** RECOILS IN HORROR.

BEN: Oh shit! Shit!

BEN RUNS FOR THE DOOR. HE TRIES THE HANDLE. IT IS LOCKED.

BEN: Jesus. Help me. Help me.

HE BANGS ON THE DOOR.

BEN: Help me - please!

WILLIAM: As you said the warehouse is deserted.

BEN SCRAMBLES FOR HIS BAG. **WILLIAM** STANDS.

BEN: Stay away from me. I've got a panic button. In two minutes they'll be security from the service all over the place.

WILLIAM: Please Ben - I'm not going to hurt you.

BEN: (SEARCHING THROUGH HIS BAG) You stay away from me. (PULLING OUT BUZZER) Got it.

WILLIAM: There is no need to panic.

BEN: That's not how I see it.

WILLIAM: I'm standing still and I'm putting my hands above my head. (**WILLIAM** RAISES HIS ARMS.) There is only one revolver in the room and I am not intending to touch it. I am completely powerless.

BEN: Why should I believe you?

WILLIAM: You are welcome to search me.

BEN DOES NOT MOVE.

WILLIAM: I am not going to hurt you. And as your manager said you will be extremely well paid for your services.

BEN, HOLDING THE BUZZER IN ONE HAND, MOVES SLOWLY

TOWARDS **WILLIAM**.

HE PATS HIS POCKETS AND FEELS HIS PANTS.

WILLIAM: Nothing except the clothes on my back.

BEN STANDS BACK.

BEN: What is going on?

WILLIAM: May I put my hands down?

BEN: Okay, but keep them where I can see them.

WILLIAM: Thank you.

WILLIAM LOWERS HIS HANDS.

BEN: Is this like some weird S and M thing?

WILLIAM: (HE SMILES) After a fashion. Try to look at me as just another client.

BEN: Pretty weird client.

WILLIAM: Who is paying you very well for your services. Lift up the yellow box.

BEN: I'm not touching anything else.

WILLIAM: May I remove it then?

BEN: How do I know it's not a bomb or something?

WILLIAM: It's not. (PAUSE) Would you like to leave?

BEN: Absolutely right.

WILLIAM: The key for the door is hidden somewhere in this room.

BEN: Where?

BEN BEGINS TO SEARCH AROUND THE ROOM.

WILLIAM: Let me remove the box and then I'll tell you.

BEN: Tell me now.

WILLIAM: Not until I remove the box. (INDICATING BOX) May I?

PAUSE. **BEN** NODS. **WILLIAM** MOVES TOWARDS THE BOX. **BEN**'S EYES FIX ON THE GUN.

BEN: Stop!

PAUSE.

WILLIAM: Why don't you pick the gun up? It might make you feel safer.

BEN: I've never held a gun in my life.

WILLIAM: Then now would seem a good time to start.

PAUSE. **BEN** GINGERLY PICKS UP THE GUN.

WILLIAM: How does it feel?

BEN: Cold.

WILLIAM: It'll warm up.

BEN: Is the thing-a-me on?

WILLIAM: Yes, the safety catch is on. Would you like me to show you how to take it off?

BEN: Stay where you are. It's fine the way it is.

WILLIAM: As you wish. May I remove the box now?

BEN NODS. **WILLIAM** LIFTS THE BOX TO REVEAL THREE NEAT PILES OF CASH. **BEN** IS DRAWN TO IT. **WILLIAM** STEPS AWAY.

WILLIAM: Touch it. It's yours.

BEN PUTS DOWN THE BUZZER. HE PICKS UP SOME OF THE MONEY.

BEN: This is for me?

WILLIAM: All of it. Not bad for a morning's work.

BEN: You must be into some pretty weird stuff. What do I have to do? Let you stick a rat up my arse.

WILLIAM: Nothing as vulgar as that.

BEN: Then what do you want me to do?

WILLIAM: I want you to give me a gift.

BEN: Listen mister, I don't think I'm selling what your buying.

WILLIAM: You're more than capable.

BEN: So what is this gift?

WILLIAM: It's in your hand.

BEN: You want me to give you a hand job with the cash?

WILLIAM: The other hand.

BEN LOOKS AT THE GUN. PAUSE.

BEN: (REALISING) You're mad.

WILLIAM: I can assure you I am perfectly sane.

BEN: Not from where I'm standing.

WILLIAM: All my life there has been an absence of control. I have been perpetually at the mercy of others. The whim of chance, fate, circumstance. But through it all one piece of information has been a considerable source of comfort for me. The knowledge that there was one pivotal moment in my life that if I acted quickly enough, I could control. Completely. The time, the place and the mechanism of my death.

BEN: And you chose this room - and me?

WILLIAM NODS.

BEN: But why do you want to die?

WILLIAM: The reasons are not important. Suffice to say I have them. You don't need to know why. Indeed it's perhaps better if you don't.

BEN: I'm kind of involved here. What you're asking me to do is likely to cause a few bad dreams down the track.

WILLIAM: As I said this is one event that I can control. And I choose to keep my reasons private. That's what I want and on this day I am getting what I want. I'm not asking you to do something that far from your usual gamut.

BEN: Killing people is a little out of my ordinary work day.

WILLIAM: You carry out a service. Give people a bit of a thrill. I'm not asking for anything quite so ⋯ grubby.

BEN: I think will be just a bit messy.

WILLIAM: I'm asking you to carry out a service.

BEN: You got the wrong boy. I give blow jobs.

WILLIAM: But that's not what I want.

BEN: Yes it is. You're asking me to give you the ultimate blowjob.

WILLIAM: Don't be vulgar. That's not how I want it.

BEN: Some clients like it if I talk dirty.

WILLIAM: I would be grateful if you could restrain from it.

BEN: Always want to give client satisfaction.

WILLIAM: And you can do that. Completely.

PAUSE.

BEN: You do understand you only get to do this once. I can't come back tomorrow.

WILLIAM: I'm well aware of the consequences.

BEN: This isn't like some test is it? I'm not being filmed for some stupid reality TV show.

WILLIAM: I do understand that this must come as quite a surprise to you. Look at it rationally.

BEN: You're a psycho.

WILLIAM: At this moment I would imagine you desire two things. The first would be to leave this room as soon as possible.

BEN: You're right there.

WILLIAM: The second would be to take that money with you.

BEN: The thought had crossed my mind.