
OCTOBER

BY IAN WILDING



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October was premiered by Griffin Theatre Company at the SBW Stables Theatre, Sydney, on 26 April 2007 with the following cast:

DICK	Simon Burke
ANGELA	Simone McAullay
TIM	Christopher Stollery
DEZ	Ed Wightman

Director, Julian Meyrick

Designer, Jo Briscoe

Lighting Designer, Bernie Tan

Sound Designer, Nick Wishart

October was developed as part of the Melbourne Theatre Company's Hard Lines Affiliate Writers' Scheme.

CHARACTERS

TIM, late 50s

ANGELA, 30s

DEZ

DICK

SCENE ONE

DEZ *and* ANGELA.

DEZ: I saw you. Yes. And you saw me. I said hello. And then you just walked past.

ANGELA: I'm sorry. I don't understand.

DEZ: You stopped. Looked the other way. And then walked past. You saw me then looked away. When I said hello. And I said it quite loud.

ANGELA: If you were shouting in the street I probably did look away. [*She laughs.*] If someone from nowhere comes up and shouts at you in the street—

DEZ: You looked me in the eye and then walked past. Like I was no one. And I want to know why. Because I am someone.

ANGELA: Are you? And is that something entirely up to you?

TIM enters with a glass of water for ANGELA.

TIM: And you're sure you won't have anything?

DEZ: Dez.

TIM pours himself a tumbler of scotch.

ANGELA: May I ask a stupid question?

DEZ: Go ahead.

TIM: [*with* DEZ] Go ahead—darling.

ANGELA: Only I haven't been introduced.

DEZ: We haven't been introduced.

ANGELA: I don't mean to be formal.

TIM: Is everything all right, darling?

ANGELA: I'm not entirely sure.

ANGELA laughs.

DEZ: We haven't been introduced. That's great.

TIM: That's great. What's great?

ANGELA: I don't mean to be rude. But I'm afraid we must be at cross purposes.

DEZ: That's fine. No I get it.

TIM: I'm confused.

ANGELA: Dez? Yes. Hello. Yes. I'm sorry. How to ask this? Am I supposed to know you?

DEZ: That's great.

ANGELA: It's just—where is it I'm supposed to know you from?

TIM: Yes. I'm confused.

DEZ: You would be.

ANGELA: But where is it you think you know me from?

DEZ: Do you want me to say it in front of your husband?

TIM: In front of me?

ANGELA: No. I'm sorry. I don't mean to be—

DEZ: Rude.

TIM: You told me you were a friend. Is that not the truth?

ANGELA: A friend of mine?

DEZ: I didn't say I was a friend.

TIM: I hope we're not going to split hairs. Because you take someone on their word—

DEZ: Jesus.

ANGELA: You seem upset. Is there something we can do to help you?

DEZ: There is, actually.

TIM: You don't know him?

ANGELA: No.

TIM: I take people at face value. And I let you in on your word. Now if there's been a mistake—fine. That happens.

ANGELA: I don't want you to feel that I'm saying anything by it—but I've never met you.

TIM: Are you selling something?

DEZ: If I was selling something I wouldn't come where the residents already have everything. Unless it was insurance.

TIM: Insurance?

DEZ: I'm not selling anything.

ANGELA: Are you from a religious group?

DEZ: Am I a fundamentalist?

ANGELA: We don't discriminate.

DEZ: I take communion. Is there a problem with that?

TIM: No. I don't understand.

DEZ: The sacrament.

ANGELA: We're saying we don't make judgements based on religion, Dez.

TIM: This is the wrong way to go about things.

ANGELA: It is a little unfair.

TIM: And you will achieve nothing by it.

ANGELA: Can we call someone for you? Is there someone who helps you?

TIM: You've made a cock-up. Yes? Don't worry about it.

ANGELA: Happens to the best of us.

TIM: You've made a stuff-up. Let's not make this embarrassing.

DEZ: I'm only human. I guess I'd like to hear you admit that much.

ANGELA: I do understand that.

DEZ: But you clearly don't.

ANGELA: Do you need some money?

DEZ: I haven't asked you for money.

ANGELA: I offered.

DEZ: I'm only human. That's what I asked for.

TIM: Look. Angela says she doesn't know you. And I certainly don't know you.

DEZ: Why certainly? Because I don't move in your circle? Because I didn't go to your school?

ANGELA: No.

TIM: Because we just don't.

DEZ: It's that simple.

TIM: There's been some sort of a mistake. It's that simple.

ANGELA: Or tell us how we can help you.

TIM: I have about two hundred dollars.

ANGELA: Just to help you out. We're offering. You didn't ask.

TIM: We are being civil about this. Yes?

DEZ: Women are a puzzle with no solution.

TIM: Look. Just sling your hook, mate.

DEZ: Sling my hook?

TIM: Not sling—

DEZ: Is that you or Johnny Walker talking?

TIM: No. This is Laphroaig.

ANGELA: A very good friend of ours is a life counsellor.

DEZ: That must make you very happy.

ANGELA: She specialises in cognitive behavioural therapy.

DEZ: And you are telling me because—

ANGELA: If you are feeling lost—confused. Is that the right word? The city is a big lonely thing.

TIM: It is.

DEZ: And ever more so.

ANGELA: And I'm sure she would talk to you—as a favour—if I asked her. And she works on a sliding scale.

DEZ: That's really fucking kind of you, Angela. No really. Really fucking generous.

ANGELA *exits*.

TIM: Listen to my exact words. Listen to my intonation. Don't become agitated. I am willing to drive you wherever it is you need to go. There are people who can help you. We are offering to put you in touch with the people or agencies who can help you with whatever it is that has you so—I will even drive you to your church. If you need to pray. But I would really like it—prefer it—if you were to just go. And now.

DEZ: I fucked her. I know. I fucked your wife. And we had more than that. Lovers? Is that going too far? I don't know. I don't think so. We sat on the edge of the bed and talked and laughed. I didn't know she was married. But the truth remains I fucked her.

TIM: Let me call you a cab. I'll pay for it.

DEZ: Don't you want to know what she's really like?

TIM: Not really. No.

DEZ: Right.

TIM: Listen carefully to what I am saying. Get help before this escalates.

DEZ: I will.

TIM: I broke a man's nose once. Yes I did. And it didn't give me any pleasure. But I would do it again.

DEZ: Going to get the old boy's rugby fifteen together and stand on my head until I agree with your version of the world?

TIM: You are in my home under false pretences. I have given you the benefit of the doubt. I took you in on your word. I won't creep through life. And so now I want you to go. Can you go now? You will go. And it will be now. Go. Now. I'm waiting.

ANGELA *enters*.

Angela. Call the police.

ANGELA: I have. I just did. [*To DEZ*] You need to be somewhere safe.

TIM: There is still time for us to organise transport to a clinic rather than a cell.

ANGELA: I only called the police because they will help you get wherever you need to be. Not to punish you. There's nothing to punish. Really.

DEZ: Once upon a time the future was full of possibility. But the future just ended. The future just died. And I didn't get a say in it. Then I saw you—quite by chance. And I said hello. We both knew. We stood there. Then you looked away. And then you walked.

TIM: Don't threaten us please. Don't threaten anyone.

ANGELA: We can see that you're hurting.

DEZ: I've seen things that I know are true. And so have you. You know the difference. [*To ANGELA*] Me and you. I'll see you again. And next time—you will see me. I'll make certain of it. I'll stand somewhere you can't look away and—pretend. I just wanted to know why. Yeah. I reckon I know. Enjoy all your stuff. While it lasts. And dance, you selfish fuckers, dance. [*Pause.*] Come with me. Come with me.

DEZ exits.

ANGELA: He doesn't know me—us. He doesn't know us. How can he—?

TIM exits then re-enters.

He doesn't know us. I didn't—I don't look away. How can he say those things when he doesn't even know us?

They embrace.

Did you lock the door?



SCENE TWO

TIM and ANGELA.

TIM: I have to go in early tomorrow. To justify my fuel consumption.

ANGELA: You care too much.

TIM: People hate turbulence. I care about people. Shoot me for flying around it.

ANGELA: You're a fantastic pilot.

TIM: It's what I love.

ANGELA: It shows. And it shows that you care about people.

TIM: Which is why I fly around turbulence when I could just—

ANGELA: I know you do.

TIM: —save fuel by flying through it.

ANGELA: And as a shareholder I would prefer it if you did. [*She laughs.*]

No.

TIM: The business demands. And the demands of people. It becomes harder to negotiate the opposites.

ANGELA: We had a whole new season of samples descend on us today.

TIM: You love it when a new season descends.

ANGELA: I think people should live in beautiful houses. Is that wrong?

TIM: No. They're lucky to have you.

ANGELA: Are they?

TIM: All the people you design for. [*He sips his drink then drops some ice into it.*] No. No.

ANGELA: No?

TIM: No. This is hopeless. This not saying is—

ANGELA: Yes. I know.

TIM: I can't pretend that nothing happened.

ANGELA: I love you.

TIM: It's just so—feeling like you can't say because certain words are off limits.

ANGELA: Did you hear me?

TIM: And I love you. And you know that.

ANGELA: I do.

TIM: But this random act of violence—

ANGELA: You know I would do anything for you, don't you?

TIM: And me for you.

ANGELA: There is nothing—no line.

TIM: And I feel exactly the same way.

TIM and ANGELA are together:

ANGELA: You're shaking.

TIM: I am so angry, Angela.

ANGELA: Please. Don't be.

TIM: I don't want to be.

ANGELA: There's no point.