

# Who's Afraid of the Working Class?

trash

ANDREW BOVELL

money

PATRICIA CORNELIUS

dream-town

MELISSA REEVES

suit

CHRISTOS TSIOLKAS

requiem

(musical score)

IRINE VELA

edited by Julian Meyrick

## CURRENCY PLAYS

First published 2000

Currency Press Ltd,

PO Box 2287, Strawberry Hills, NSW, 2012, Australia

enquiries@currency.com.au

www.currency.com.au

in *Melbourne Stories*.

This edition first published in 2014.

Reprinted 2017.

Introduction © Julian Meyrick 2000, 2014; *Who's Afraid of the Working Class?* © Andrew Bovell, Patricia Cornelius, Melissa Reeves, Christos Tsiolkas, Irine Vela, 2000, 2014

### COPYING FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES

The *Australian Copyright Act 1968* (Act) allows a maximum of one chapter or 10% of this book, whichever is the greater, to be copied by any educational institution for its educational purposes provided that that educational institution (or the body that administers it) has given a remuneration notice to Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) under the Act.

For details of the CAL licence for educational institutions contact CAL, 11/66 Goulburn St, Sydney, NSW, 2000; tel: within Australia 1800 066 844 toll free; outside Australia 61 2 9394 7600; fax: 61 2 9394 7601; email: info@copyright.com.au

### COPYING FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Except as permitted under the Act, for example a fair dealing for the purposes of study, research, criticism or review, no part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means without prior written permission. All inquiries should be made to the publisher at the address above.

Any performance or public reading of *Who's Afraid of the Working Class?* is forbidden unless a licence has been received from the author or the author's agent. The purchase of this book in no way gives the purchaser the right to perform the play in public, whether by means of a staged production or a reading. All applications for public performance should be addressed to Currency Press at the address above.

In accordance with the requirement of the Australian Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance, Currency Press has made every effort to identify, and gain permission of, the artists who appear in the photographs which illustrate these plays.

Cataloguing-in-publication data for this title is available from the National Library Website: [www.nla.gov.au](http://www.nla.gov.au)

Typeset by Emily Ralph and Paul O'Beirne for Currency Press.

Printed by Fineline Print & Copy Service, St Peters, NSW.

Cover design by Katy Wall for Currency Press.

Front cover shows Bruce Morgan as Kennett Boy in the 1998 Melbourne Workers Theatre production. (Photo: Viv Méhes)

# Contents

---

	<b>Introduction by Julian Meyrick</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>1. Suit</b>	<b>Kennett Boy Monologue</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Money</b>	<b>Scene 1: Money</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Suit</b>	<b>Scene 1</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>4. Dream-Town</b>	<b>Scene 1</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>5. Suit</b>	<b>Scene 2</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>6. Trash</b>	<b>Scene 1</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>7. Dream-Town</b>	<b>Scene 2</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>8. Trash</b>	<b>Scene 2</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>9. Money</b>	<b>Scene 2: Train</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>10. Trash</b>	<b>Scene 3</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>11. Dream-Town</b>	<b>Leon Monologue</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>12. Money</b>	<b>Scene 3: Break-In</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>13. Dream-Town</b>	<b>Scene 3</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>14. Trash</b>	<b>Scene 4</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>15. Trash</b>	<b>Rhonda Monologue</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>16. Dream-Town</b>	<b>Scene 4</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>17. Suit</b>	<b>Scene 3</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>18. Money</b>	<b>Scene 4: Comfort Monologue</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Music</b>	<b>Requiem</b>	<b>68</b>

**ANDREW BOVELL** has received numerous awards for his work in stage, film, television and radio. His stage credits include *Speaking in Tongues*, *Distant Lights From Dark Places*, *Scenes From A Separation* (co-written with Hannie Rayson), *Ship of Fools*, *After Dinner* and *The Ballad of Lois Ryan*.

**PATRICIA CORNELIUS** is a founding member of Melbourne Workers Theatre. Her plays include *Lilly and May*, *Jack's Daughters*, *Max*, *The Aftermath*, *Taxi*, *No Fear*, *Last Drinks*, *Opa—A Sexual Odyssey*, *Home of a Stranger*, *Platform*, *Hogs Hairs* and *Leeches*. Patricia also works as a director and dramaturg.

**JULIAN MEYRICK** is a freelance director. His previous work includes *Grace Among the Christians*, *St Rose of Lima*, *Fun and Games with the Oresteia*, all by Luke Devenish; Garcia Lorca's *The Love of Don Perlimplin*; Reinhardt Goering's *Dreadnought*; Douglas Stewart's *Ned Kelly* (adapted by Pam Leversha); *Barry Collins Judgement* and *Quarter Hour Stories* for Melbourne University. In 1998 he received the Victorian Green Room Award for Best Director on the Fringe.

**MELISSA REEVES** is a Melbourne playwright. Her plays include *In Cahoots*, *The Girl I Love* (co-written with Margaret Mills, Maude Davey and Nicki Redlich), *Sweettown* (awarded the Jill Blewitt Playwrights Award in 1993), *Great Day*, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, *The Sign of the Phantom*, *Storming Heaven* and *Road Movie*.

**CHRISTOS TSIOLKAS** is the author of the novels *Loaded* (filmed as *Head On* by Ana Kokkinos) and *The Jesus Man* and has published with collaborator Sasha Soldatow the dialogue *Jump Cuts*. He directed the short film *Thug* with Spiro Economopolous. His plays include *Viewing Blue Poles* and a contemporary adaptation of the Electra myth.

**IRINE VELA** has worked as a composer on dozens of music theatre productions with companies such as the Melbourne Workers Theatre, Playbox, Canto Coro, IRAA, Arena, the Victorian College of the Arts, Deckchair Theatre and Circus Oz. Some of her credits include *The Ballad of Lois Ryan*, *Opa—A Sexual Odyssey*, *Black Cargo* and *Kate 'N' Shiner*. She is a founding member of the Greek-Australian music group the haBiBis.

## INTRODUCTION

So seamless was the evolution and production of *Who's Afraid of the Working Class?* that it is impossible to separate out individual achievements from the impact of the show as a whole. Born from anger, tempered by craft, it is also hard to believe that such a significant piece of work could be *fun* to produce. Yet it was. The lead in this, as in the form and content of the show, came from the writers. For me the conventional image of the playwright as the person at the back of the auditorium squirming in pain as 'their' play is murdered in performance, was buried forever by the patience, skill and flexibility of the four writers and composer who together made up the *Who's Afraid...?* creative team. It was the creative team who advised my employment as director; who set deadlines for drafts and gave advice on re-writing, cuts and scene order; who assisted through an excruciating casting process; who understood when things went wrong, applauded when things went right, and provided practical help when things hung in the balance. Working with such a group is like riding a rocket: you go where it is fired, hanging on as best you can. Once or twice you kick your ankles and steer a bit. But right from the start you know that an extraordinary creative unfolding is taking place and the job of the production process is to give it the fullest possible stage expression.

The script reproduced here marks the end of what in effect was a three-year development period. During this time many forces came together to realise the original scripts and in turn to influence them. Not the least of these were the cast themselves who, comprising only six actors, had to portray nineteen different characters in eighteen separate scenes. The first months were spent in researching the project and agreeing core values. By the time I came on board these had been settled and the significance of the creative team's artistic and political direction was apparent. It flowed from one key experience. Early in 1997 the writers and composer went to a pub in West Melbourne famous for its vibrant, resistive, blue-collar atmosphere. What they found was a commercial shell, rattling with cable TV and pokies. In its hollowness and venality it seemed to sum up the vast betrayal the Kennett Government had perpetrated on all Victorians. Here indeed was an answer to the question the writers had been briefed with: who was afraid of the working class—*no-one*.

The choice of the aesthetic entailed considerable risk. It meant breaking with the upbeat, celebrational mood of so much Australian community theatre, a style with which the commissioning company, the Melbourne Workers

Theatre, was partially identified. There was always the fear of being negative, regressive even, painting things as worse than they were. But how could they be any worse than what we saw, daily, around us? As rehearsals for the first season got underway it was easy to research the characters in the play. All you had to do was walk down the street. The most frightening thing was that the notion of poverty itself had changed. What was once simple deprivation is now hedged about by the torments of a hundred concocted consumer needs. Not to be able to afford a certain style of clothes, or car, or level of service, is to spiral down into a social void where traditional notions of class and consciousness give way to a broader experience of loss and devastation. Australia has indeed become a more 'open' and 'flexible' society. Now anyone has the right to be marginalised.

Trashed, crushed, frustrated, full of hate and pain, the men and women of *Who's Afraid...?* are demonstrably *not* working—or working, at best, in the dark pockets of an urban world. Only six of the characters we meet are employed, and of these two are prostitutes and two police. They are not potential revolutionaries waiting for a Great Red Dawn to sweep the way to a better world order. They are, if not 'ordinary' people, then certainly average. They focus on themselves because the pressures under which they labour are so unrelenting they have little energy for anything else. Sometimes this is expressed in behaviour towards others that is angry, cruel or self-destructive. Sometimes despite outward circumstances, generosity, kindness and sympathy assert themselves. But it is always touch and go. These are lives balanced on a knife edge. A great deal of rehearsal was spent trying to understand the emotional complexities of compromised lives and feeding the results into the structure of the production. As in all important theatre experiences, the journey was both an inward and an outward one. The more we struggled to realise the play, the more we were forced to look around at the world we imagined we were speaking about.

There were many conversations about who these characters represented. New-style underclass or old-style lumpen proletariat? As the latter did they deserve our sympathy since they were—without exception—entirely lacking in traditional notions of class consciousness? Indeed, they hardly seemed to be political at all. It is highly unlikely that any of them would do anything as positive as join a union picket line. Instead, they present an entirely different side of political oppression: its cost. These are men and women who struggle not politically, heroically, resistively, but baldly, personally, in anguish. They struggle not to overcome but simply to stay alive. If they had a choice perhaps they wouldn't be political at all. But they don't have a choice. They have had, as it were, politics thrust upon them. Or rather, they have had visited on their ordinary but nevertheless coherent lives, the costs of an economic and political system which doesn't seem to care

anymore how many families it wrecks, lives it smashes or careers it destroys as long as it can achieve its increasingly abstract goals.

The play opened on 1 May 1997 at Trades Hall, smack in the middle of the MUA wharf dispute. The building was alive with the comings and goings of officials and pickets, with news about Patrick Stevedores, workers' rights, employers' duties and political resistance. It was a galvanising moment for many people, including some who until then had thought of themselves as non-political. The play, with its message of structurally-induced personal pain, appeared in the right place at the right time. For any show to touch a nerve it needs more than the skills of the artists producing it, however talented. It needs the sympathy and understanding of its intended spectators and it is hard to say at the end of the day which was the more amazing: the fact that *Who's Afraid...?* was produced in the way that it was, or that Melbourne audiences heard it.

The form of the plays is 'cool' and realistic. This was the choice of the writers and it suits the subject matter. The ultimate goal, simply stated, was to put stories on stage which would not otherwise be heard. Theatre can do this. In the current passion for mixed-media and performance-style events, it can be forgotten that theatre, a public medium, operates not only visually and physically but intellectually, as a vehicle for ideas. With courage and skill these ideas can make a leading contribution to contemporary debates. The challenge this presents theatre artists is not only one of style but one of truth. How to say what must be said yet stay true to the experience of putting it on stage? In this respect, the audacity, even savagery of the writing, deserves comment. The late critic Harry Kippax once called theatre the home of old ideas. And so it often seems when show after show paraphrases what has been said earlier and to greater effect by television and film. Over the years and without much of a struggle, theatre has gone onto the back foot, more afraid of what it stands to lose by tackling accepted stereotypes than what it has to gain by broaching fresh perceptions. As a result, it has often compromised its immediacy, lucidity and emotional force.

This is not the case with *Who's Afraid...?*. Grappling with the dark underbelly of contemporary urban living, the writing pulls no punches in showing the resulting conflict. This is not a desire to shock for its own sake. It is a considered choice, one which saw everyone involved in the development of the project examine their consciences before committing themselves to material whose reception might well be very negative (and on occasions was). The costs of representing threshold material are high, both for artists and audience. In the words of Augusto Boal: 'the image of the real is real in so far as it is an image'. The courage of the writers had to be matched by the courage of everyone

involved with the production, and it is to the credit of the actors especially that they so willingly engaged with the frequently painful task of portraying complex and troubled behaviour on stage.

Once *Who's Afraid...?* started touring conventional theatres for audiences who did not share the frame of local awareness of their Melbourne counterparts, the meaning of the show changed. From being a play for Victoria it became a play about Victoria. From being a cry of anger it became a cry of warning. Though the form of the show remained the same, the thinking behind it was reshaped. The creative team used to say that if a play is political then it must be *better* in every way than a non-political one or else it will simply be dismissed as propaganda. Likewise, the production had to work hard to seamlessly adapt to the different physical circumstances and expectations of mainstream theatre. Again history came to the rescue. 1999 was not 1997. By now serious doubts about the political and economic agenda of the New Right were making themselves heard all over the country. Once again, the show found itself in and of its time.

Born from Jeff Kennett's Victoria, it was fitting that the first production of *Who's Afraid...?* ended at the same time as the political regime which it so trenchantly criticised. If the popular reaction to the show was a surprise, who could have guessed that a government tipped for another eight years in office could be so unceremoniously cast aside? It is too much to hope that any theatre can ever be directly responsible for such a reaction. But if it helps focus thoughts and feelings marginalised by the major media, then the place of the art form in society at large is now more important than ever.

The *Who's Afraid...?* project aimed to serve its immediate community at the highest level of skill and imagination. If it represents anything it is less a perfect product than a perfect process. It was the outcome of a team of dedicated theatre professionals who proved beyond all doubt that achievement in the theatre is *always* the result of collaboration. The scripts were part of a living whole, the DNA structure by which the body of the production was brought into existence. This is how they should be read now: not as words on a page, but as voices in the head; as an indication, an invitation, a resolution, a world waiting to happen.

*Julian Meyrick*  
*Director and editor*  
*Melbourne Workers Theatre production*



*Who's Afraid of the Working Class* was first produced by Melbourne Workers Theatre at the Victorian Trades Hall, Melbourne, on 1 May 1998 with the following cast:

O'MANNEY, COP 2, LEON, MAN IN BED	David Adamson
MAN, JAMES	Glenn Shea
STACEY, TRISHA	Daniela Farinacci
RHONDA, WOMAN IN BED, PROSTITUTE, GINA, COP 1	Eugenia Fragos
DANIEL, ORTON, YOUNG BOY	Bruce Morgan
WOMAN, TRAIN GIRL, KATINA	Maria Theodorakis

Musicians: David Abiuso (bass) and Helen Mountford (cello)

Director, Julian Meyrick  
Composer, Irine Vela  
Assistant Director, Jude Sears  
Designer, Greg Clarke  
Lighting Designer, Paul Jackson  
Production Manager, Chris Harris  
Stage Manager, Meg White

## CHARACTERS

### SUIT

BOY  
JAMIE  
CLAIRE  
MR O'MANNEY  
GINA

### MONEY

MAN  
WOMAN  
DANIEL  
GIRL  
MAN  
MUSICIAN  
OLD WOMAN

### DREAM-TOWN

KATINA  
TRISHA  
LEON  
COP  
COP TWO

### TRASH

ORTON  
STACEY  
JAMIE  
RHONDA

The program was originally presented by an ensemble of six actors.

*SUIT*

*KENNETT BOY MONOLOGUE*

*A YOUNG BOY in his mid-teens comes onto the stage.*

I love Jeff Kennett. I think he's a good guy, a sexy guy. I like it that he's tall, I like it that he's smart, I like it that he doesn't give a shit about anyone. He's an arsehole, I know that. He's a cunt. It's obvious. He's a silver-spoon-up-his-arse cunt, he can't hide that, but I don't care. He's not whingeing all the time, not bludging, not making excuses. He's got style; he looks good and he knows it; he's got class. It's written all over him. But, he's not soft. He's not soft at all.

Not like my dad. No, not at all like my dad. My old man is one of those guys who's wasted his whole fucking life. He works a shit job, has for thirty fucking years, since he was a kid, pouring concrete. And, man, you should listen to him, listen to him go on about it. 'I'm so tough, we brickies are so special.' Yeah, right. Hasn't done a fucking thing with his life. Hasn't seen the world, hasn't had an original thought. Nothing tough about him except his mouth and his forearms and even they're going to fat. My mum's no different. She's brain-dead as well.

My father hates Jeff Kennett, calls him scum, says he's destroying the unions and the working class. But I can tell that deep down inside he respects him. You've gotta. Kennett doesn't give a shit about anyone, does whatever he likes. He even stands up to that ugly piece of shit, Howard. And that's the leader of his fucking party! Kennett is a legend. Bet my old man wouldn't mind being like that, instead of following orders all his fucking life. Weak cunt! Just a day, just one day, I'd like to see my father be like Kennett. Just fucking once.

I want to go down on Kennett. When I do go down on a guy, when I come to that, it'll *have* to be someone like him. Tough. Arrogant. Knows what he wants. That's my favourite wank dream. I'm with school, an excursion to Parliament House. Somehow—I skip over this bit while I'm pulling off—Kennett and I end up in a lift. It's him and it's me. Sometimes there's this other guy, some suited, young, wog guy I saw on the Channel Nine News, some wog guy who hangs around Kennett. Sometimes he's there, banging away with us, sometimes he just watches. And then sometimes he's not there at all.

The lift stops. There's a moment that the light flicks off, then it flickers back on again. Kennett puts a hand on my shoulder. He's way tall, way taller than me. He notices I've got a stiffie in my school pants, I'm stretching the cotton. He's dressed real fine. Beautiful suit, slim tie. He winks at me and then it's on.

Every time I wank to this, it changes. Sometimes he's hairy, blonde curls, all over his chest and stomach. Sometimes he's smooth. He doesn't take off his clothes, just opens his shirt, unzips the pants. I dream that his dick is squat and thick, and that when he comes, he comes in fucking buckets. Just pours the come over me, over the wog guy. That's my favourite wank.

Fuck! I could come now. Man, I could come all over this fucking stage.

I wish I could tell my father about this dream. Maybe that would get the cunt alive. Poofster son, father, you've got a poofster son who wants to fuck a real bloke like Kennett, not some boring working stiff like you. He'd crack, I know he'd crack it. How to tell his mates on the job? 'My son's a faggott.' Gutless cunt. He could never do that.

Kennett, when he got elected, there was this big rally in the city. It was fucking enormous, about a hundred and fifty thousand people. He had closed down my old high school, that fucking waste of space. It was nothing but a factory churning out dole casualties. They should've torched the place long ago. But Mum and Dad, of course, Mum and Dad were angry. [*Mimicking*] 'You got to come to the rally, it's important.'

So I had to go, with Mum and Dad. Dad kept bumping into all his scuzzy alco mates; even the young ones looked sick from their shitty useless jobs. I liked the crowd, it was exciting, I loved being there in all that mass. I thought we could do anything, fucking pull apart this shithole of a city if we wanted. I wanted it to get angrier, I wanted it to get bloody, like it happens on the news overseas. The cops were there, waiting. I wanted it to get bloody, so I could bash some cunt cop right in the middle of his fat, ugly face. I wanted to kill a cop, then go right off and torch fucking Chinatown. That would have been a fucking winner, man. Kill a cop and kill a gook. But it wasn't that kind of rally. It was [*contemptuously, in an effeminate accent*] *political*.

I managed to get up close, near Parliament steps, next to this really drugged-out feral chick and her dread-head, dead-head mates. I sat near the steps, bored now that the marching had stopped. Some union wanker was going on, whingeing about what everybody already knew. 'The government doesn't care about hospitals, Kennett doesn't care about education. This government sucks.' [*Shouting*] All governments suck, you brain-dead cunt!

I looked up. In the window there was Kennett, looking down. Some ponsey guys around him were nervous, shitting their pants because of the crowd. But not Kennett. Nah, not Kennett. You know what he was doing, you know what the cunt was doing? Kennett was laughing. He was watching us and he was laughing at us.

That moment, that's the moment I knew he was a God. That's the moment I thought you are one smart mother-fucker. All around me people were singing

union songs. Crap hippie shit. We shall bloody overcome for Christsakes. I looked around, looked around, saw my old man. There he was, little Sammy Destanzo, little Sammy who hasn't done one thing of any note in his whole wasted fucking life. Little Sammy Destanzo who is forty-six and fucking looks sixty-eight. There's my old man, chanting along, doing the old nazi salute to Kennett who doesn't know who the fuck Sammy Destanzo is and who will never know who Sammy Destanzo is because Sammy Destanzo is a big, fat nothing.

I couldn't wait to leave this crowd of morons, these fucking sheep.

Dad says to me, do you want a job on a building site, and I just look at him. A real dirty look. He goes ape-shit, calls me a bludging cunt. I don't listen. He wants me to work on a building site, he wants me to be like him. I'd rather sell my body for twenty bucks in St Kilda, I'd rather be a fucking whore. Work, grog, sleep. Work, grog, sleep. Work, grog, sleep.

That's it, that's my old man. Three lousy little words.

I'd like to fuck Kennett. That would be the best. I reckon he's got a hairy arse and big red balls. I'd like to fucking ram it right up him. I'd like to do it again and again. That would be cunt worth fucking.

One day I'm out of here. I'm not going to be trapped in fucking Dandenong watching that dumb, plastic arsehole Ray Martin night after night. One day I'm going to have lots of money. I'll steal it, I'll beg for it. Fuck, to get out of here, I'd kill for it. I'll get style, I'll learn about the coolest places to be, I'll have all the best-looking guys hanging on me, begging to have a go at sucking my dick.

One day I'll be above Jeff Kennett. I'll be above all of you, you'll all be little specks, little nine-to-five, seven-to-three-thirty little earthworms.

Work. Till you drop.

Drink beer. Till you rot.

Sleep. That's the best part of your lives.

*He spits on the stage.*

I can't wait to vote.

*He exits.*



*MONEY**SCENE ONE: MONEY*

*Three figures, a MAN, a WOMAN and an adolescent boy, DANIEL. The MAN and WOMAN stand together, but apart. They are quietly agitated. DANIEL stands alone.*

MAN: Ask someone, just a loan, just for a while, we'll pay it back as soon as we can.

WOMAN: Who?

MAN: Ask your mother.

WOMAN: I've asked her. We didn't pay her back the last time.

MAN: Ask your sister.

WOMAN: She asked us.

MAN: Ask your friend with the money.

WOMAN: We've lost touch.

MAN: Ask your uncle.

WOMAN: He's got none.

MAN: Ask Mrs Sands.

WOMAN: She's as skint as we are. You ask.

MAN: Who?

WOMAN: Try the bank.

MAN: And let them know we've got none.

WOMAN: Ask your mother.

MAN: I've asked her. We didn't pay her back the last time.

WOMAN: Ask a friend.

MAN: They've got none.

WOMAN: Ask anyone.

BOTH: What about...? No. What about...? No. There's no one.

*Silence.*

MAN: I know what you're thinking.

WOMAN: You're wrong, I'm not.

MAN: You think about it all the time.

WOMAN: I don't.

MAN: I'm trying.

WOMAN: I know you are.

MAN: I don't like it any more than you do.

WOMAN: I know that.

MAN: Then get off my back for a while.

WOMAN: Who's blaming you?

MAN: You are.

WOMAN: You couldn't help it.

MAN: I couldn't.

WOMAN: It was bad luck.

MAN: See, see what I mean?

WOMAN: What?

MAN: Luck had nothing to do with it.

WOMAN: All I meant was—

MAN: You meant it was me, it was my lack of judgement—

WOMAN: I didn't.

*Pause.*

MAN: There's an easy way out, you know.

WOMAN: Here we go.

MAN: Sell it.

WOMAN: Here we go.

MAN: It's a load of crap.

WOMAN: I don't think so.

MAN: It will solve the problem.

WOMAN: No it won't.

MAN: Of course it will. Every month it's the same. If we dump the place we don't have to face it. Every month! Every bloody month.

WOMAN: And then what?

MAN: What?

WOMAN: And then what? Pay rent, that's what. Every month. Every bloody month.

MAN: It'll be cheaper.

WOMAN: No it won't and it won't be mine.

MAN: We'll get something smaller.

*DANIEL looks at them for a moment.*

WOMAN: What do you mean smaller? How can we go smaller? [*Pause.*] I'm on to you.

MAN: A flat. We'll get a flat.

WOMAN: We've got a house.

MAN: We can't afford it.

WOMAN: What's it got to do with you?

MAN: What do you mean by that?

WOMAN: It's not your problem. I find it. I always do.

MAN: You find it?

WOMAN: Yes I do.

MAN: I'm not contributing anything, I suppose.

WOMAN: No, not much.

MAN: Bullshit.

WOMAN: Not much.

MAN: I own half of it, you know. *[Pause.]* I'm just telling you, it's half mine.

WOMAN: This house is mine.

MAN: Half yours.

WOMAN: All mine.

MAN: Not by law.

WOMAN: I pay the payments on this house. Always have done.

MAN: All I'm saying is that by law this house is half mine.

WOMAN: You don't give a damn about this house. I wanted it, it was my deposit,  
I pay the mortgage, it's mine.

MAN: If I left I'd get half this house. By law. I'd get half.

WOMAN: Well, we're stuck with each other then.

MAN: Is that what we are?

WOMAN: What?

MAN: Stuck? Stuck with one another?

WOMAN: Yes, that's what we are.

MAN: Is that all we are?

WOMAN: Yes, yes that's about it.

MAN: That's it?

WOMAN: Yes, yes, that's it... Oh, I don't know. I think so.

MAN: You never touch me anymore.

WOMAN: *[astounded]* You never touch me! You haven't touched me for years.

MAN: You don't want me to touch you.

WOMAN: You don't want to touch me.

MAN: I do.

WOMAN: Since when?

MAN: I want to touch you now.

WOMAN: How come?

MAN: I don't know. I just do.

WOMAN: Come on then, touch me.

MAN: Now?

WOMAN: You said you wanted to, come on, touch me then.

*They come together tentatively and kiss. The kiss is tender but lifeless  
and they part.*