

YOU SEE,
WHAT REALLY HAPPENED IS...
AND OTHER PLAYS

By

Craig Christie

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ORiGiN™
Theatrical

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DO contract ORiGiN™ Theatrical if you have any questions about anything. At all. And we mean anything. One of us that works here (not me) has a peculiar interest in recording the unusual bird calls of the adult hoatzin (a species of tropical bird found in wet forest and mangrove of the Amazon and the Orinoco delta in South America) so we should be able to answer any questions you have about the Hoatzin. Plus we know some things about some other things too.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Connected

Jungle Bungle

Rev It Up!

Eurobeat: Moldova

Craig Christie Songbook

The Web, Wires & Waves

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INTRODUCTION

This collection of short plays was selected from a large number of scripts that were developed with secondary school students in schools throughout the Mallee region of North-Western Victoria during my tenure as Artistic Development Coordinator for the George Fairfax Memorial Arts Festival from between 1998 and 2005. During this time I drove over 40,000 km visiting schools in often remote settings to work with groups of students to help them create a short performance piece for the festival which was held annually in the town of Swan Hill (and occasionally Mildura). This festival brought together students from remote settings to share and enjoy the work of their peers in a celebration of fellowship and creativity. The students would set the agenda of these performances and I variously workshopped, wrote, directed or acted as a consultant for over 100 pieces during this time. The range of topics and styles reflects the particular nature of each of the groups I worked with – some exploring issues of identity, some reflecting popular culture and some just for fun.

One never knows where the impression made by being able to participate in the arts and share the experience with others may lead. Certainly for students in remote rural areas without access to theatres or even qualified staff and facilities within their school the chance to work with theatre professionals and see the work of their peers the affect can be profound. One of my favourite stories from this time is about the young boy living in the small and remote town of Sea Lake who participated in my first Festival in 1998. As a result of that experience he pursued a career in the theatre that has lead to him being one of the most in demand stage managers on London's West End!

As these pieces were created to be able to be performed with a minimum amount of technical support the focus is on what the performers can bring to script. There is a minimum of stage direction and character outlines which hopefully will encourage any group to bring their own interpretations to the fore. In keeping with the original intention of the writing of these scripts in whatever context they may now be utilised the emphasis should continue to be about participation, creativity and enjoyment for all participants.

Craig Christie



For more information on Craig Christie visit www.nomatesproductions.com

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ICE

LOSING MY PATIENTS

ONE NIGHT...

SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN SINS

HUSH

FIFTEEN MINUTES OF FAME

THE GREAT PRETENDER

CHRISTMAS TURKEY

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YOU SEE, WHAT REALLY HAPPENED IS...

CHARACTERS

CHARLIE
SYLVIA
SCARLETT
NED
MS. NIXON
CHANTELLE

The basic setting is four chairs in a semi circle with Ms. Nixon pacing around. The characters move into the centre space to act out their stories then return to their seats. Everyone who is not involved in the action remains frozen.

SPECIAL NOTE: The character of Chantelle was created for a cast member who was profoundly hearing impaired and unable to speak.

* * * * *

CHARLIE, SYLVIA, SCARLETT AND NED ARE ALL SITTING ON CHAIRS
LOOKING UNCOMFORTABLE AND ANXIOUS.
MS. NIXON IS PACING AROUND THE ROOM, HOLDING ONTO A CLIPBOARD.
EVENTUALLY THE SILENCE BECOMES TOO MUCH.

MS. NIXON: Well we all know what we're here for. Someone must have something to say.
NO REPLY. Come on now. You're wasting my time and your own. Who is going first?

NED: I got nothin' to say.

SCARLETT: You never have anything to say.

SYLVIA: At least he's not like you. You never shut up.

SCARLETT: Look who's talking.

CHARLIE: Don't start you two.

SCARLETT: She started it.

CHARLIE: Just shut up both of you. You've got nothing to worry about. I'm going to talk.

MS. NIXON: What do you mean Charlie?

CHARLIE: Like I said. I'm going to talk.

SYLVIA: Be careful. She's writing everything down.

CHARLIE: Yeah, yeah. I know. Anything I say may be held in evidence against me in a court of law. I know the drill. I've heard it a thousand times before.

MS: NIXON: What did you want to say Charlie?

CHARLIE: Look I know why you've brought us all here. The real reason. No need to try and pretend it's for anything else. I guess I've had enough of all the messing around. There's something I want to tell you all about the 13th of August.

SYLVIA: Be careful Charlie. You don't have to do this.

SCARLETT: You don't have to say anything. Sometimes it's better to keep your mouth shut.

CHARLIE: No I want to talk. There's no need in keeping all the others in here. I'm the one you want. The others can all go home.

MS. NIXON: What do you mean Charlie.

CHARLIE: I was there on 13th August. I saw it all. You see, what really happened is I was doing overtime that night and I'd been called in to the hotel to look at a bit of faulty wiring. The hotel was old and I was often called in to check out the electrics. Well when I arrived she was there waiting for me. I can see it all so clearly, as if it was happening right now. HE GETS UP FROM HIS SEAT, GRABS HIS TOOL BOX AND COMES FORWARD. CHANTELLE, THE MAID, COMES OUT.

CHARLIE: Hello Chantelle. Problems with the wiring I hear. Where do I need to go this time? CHANTELLE POINTS THE DIRECTION. Oh how about you show me what is wrong? It will save a lot of time. SHE SHRUGS AND LEADS HIM TO A ROOM AND POINTS TO A POWER SOCKET.

CHARLIE: All right. I'll get to work. HE GETS OUT A SCREWDRIVER AND STARTS TO FIDDLE WITH THE POWER POINT. Chantelle. Could you please go and make sure that the power is turned off. I don't want to electrocute myself. This can be dangerous work. SHE EXITS. It's difficult working with her watching me. Sometimes I think that she suspects that it was I who was responsible for her Grandmother's death. But it was all a terrible accident. How was I to know that the old bag was going to try and turn on her hairdryer just as I was connecting the power? It was a terrible shame that the power surge fried the old woman's brains completely but it wasn't my fault. Besides no-one knows I was there at all that day. If only she wouldn't look at me with those sad, suspicious eyes. Oh well I'd best get the job done and then get away from here. HE STARTS FIDDLING WITH THE POWER POINT WITH HIS SCREWDRIVER THEN IS KNOCKED BACKWARDS AS IF RECEIVING A TERRIBLE SHOCK. CHANTELLE COMES IN TO SEE HIM LYING ON HIS BACK. WHEN SHE GETS CLOSER HE JUMPS UP.

CHARLIE: Ah ha. You thought you had me then didn't you Chantelle. You tried to kill me by turning on the electricity but you weren't counting on me wearing my special rubber soled boots to insulate me against electric shocks. You little fool. You can't kill me off that easily. So you do know about me and your Grandmother, don't you? SHE NODS, TERRIFIED. Well I'll make sure that you never tell anyone else. HE RUNS FORWARD AND STABS HER WITH HIS SCREWDRIVER. WHEN SHE FALLS HE DRAGS HER OFFSTAGE, COMES BACK AND TAKES HIS SEAT.

CHARLIE: And that is what really happened.

MS. NIXON: Are you sure that is what happened? You don't want to add anything else to your story?

CHARLIE: No that's the truth. I've confessed it so you may as well let the others go.

SYLVIA: No Charlie. You don't have to tell them this story.

CHARLIE: It's all right Sylvia. I feel better now that I've told the truth and got it off my chest.

SYLVIA: But it's not the truth. You know it. Tell her the real story Charlie.

MS. NIXON: What is the real story Sylvia?

SYLVIA: You see what really happened is on that night I was at home watching to see when Charlie got home. You see he lives down the road and sometimes I pop over for pizza and Netflix on a Friday night. Well I waited and waited because he usually gets home at about 5.30 and by 5.45 I decided that he must have had a work call. I decided to go into town to pick up the pizza for when he finally got home. I know he loves Hawaiian. When I got there I noticed Charlie's car out the front of the hotel so I went in.
IN THE HOTEL. CHANTELLE IS THERE.

SYLVIA: Chantelle. Have you seen Charlie anywhere?
SHE POINTS DOWN THE HALL. SYLVIA FINDS CHARLIE AT WORK AT THE ELECTRIC SWITCH.

SYLVIA: Charlie. What are you doing?

CHARLIE: Hello Sylvia. Sorry about pizza but I had a late call.

SYLVIA: A late call eh. A likely story.

CHARLIE: What do you mean? I was called here to fix the electric switch in this room.

SYLVIA: Called here by whom? It was Chantelle, I bet.

CHARLIE: Chantelle? What do you mean?

SYLVIA: I have long suspected that you and Chantelle have a relationship that is more than simply professional. Those nights that you come home late. Don't try to tell me now that you have been out working. I know that you have been here with her.

CHARLIE: And what if I have been here with her. What business is it of yours?

SYLVIA: Oh you heartless man. Don't you see. I have been waiting for you to notice me for all these years, hanging out for those nights of pizza and watching Netflix with me, hoping that some romance may come about.

CHARLIE: But Sylvia. I thought we were just friends.

SYLVIA: But I want to be so much more. But how can that ever happen when you keep on rushing after Chantelle all of the time.

CHARLIE: No. You've got it all wrong.

SYLVIA: Have I? We'll see about that. CALLS OUT. Chantelle. Come here.

CHARLIE: What are you doing?

SYLVIA: I'm going to settle this one and for all. CALLING. Chantelle. Come here now! CHANTELLE ENTERS. Now I want you to tell me - are you having a secret affair with Charlie? No, there's no need to say a word. I can see it in your eyes. You are in love with him.

CHARLIE: You're imagining it Sylvia. It is you that I love.

SYLVIA: Oh it's all very well to say that now I have caught you out.

CHARLIE: No it's true. I have treasured those Friday nights with you eating pizza and watching Netflix. You have always been my one true love. I just never knew how to tell you. SYLVIA: Liar. I know that she has stolen your heart. But I won't let her get away with it. SHE PULLS OUT HER NAIL FILE.

CHARLIE: What are you going to do with that nail file? Sylvia, control yourself.

SYLVIA: Control myself. Where is your self control? Where is hers? I am putting an end to this once and for all. SHE STABS CHANTELLE WITH HER NAIL FILE. CHANTELLE COLLAPSES TO THE FLOOR. Oh dear. I have been rather hasty. What I have I done?

CHARLIE: CHECKING. She's dead. Oh Sylvia. What are we going to do now?

SYLVIA: I'm sorry Charlie. I don't know what came over me.

CHARLIE: We'll have to hide the body. Come on. HE DRAGS THE BODY OUT.

SYLVIA: And that's what really happened. It was me. A crime of passion. I don't know what came over me but you have to see now it was me that murdered Chantelle. Don't listen to Charlie. He is just trying to cover up for me.

MS. NIXON: What do you have to say about that Charlie?

CHARLIE: Don't believe her. She is just trying to take the blame for something that I did. But it was me.

SYLVIA: No. Me.

CHARLIE: Me.

SYLVIA: Me.

SCARLETT: Enough. Be quiet both of you. You don't need to cover up anything anymore. It's time we let her know, let her know the truth.

NED: Oh here we go.

CHARLIE: What are you talking about?

SYLVIA: I don't understand.

SCARLETT: It's no use. They're going to work out together all the pieces of the puzzle in the end. I did it. I killed Chantelle.

MS. NIXON: Would you like to tell me about it Scarlett?

SCARLETT: You see what really happened is I had checked into the hotel where everything happened the night of the murder. I knew that Chantelle had been working there for a while. In fact I knew more than anyone could suspect. You see, I am Chantelle's sister. And I knew exactly what she was up to. SCARLETT ENTERS THE HOTEL. SHE CALLS.

SCARLETT: Chantelle. CHANTELLE ENTERS. There you are. I thought that you'd be surprised to see me. Yes you thought that you'd managed to hide yourself away but you couldn't hide forever. Don't bother saying anything. I'm not interested in hearing any more of your lies. You can talk later once I have had a chance to catch up with my lawyers. CHARLIE ENTERS.

CHARLIE: Hello Chantelle. Trouble with the electricity again is it? How about you show me where the problem is. CHANTELLE LEADS CHARLIE OUT OF THE ROOM. SYLVIA ENTERS.

SYLVIA: Scarlett. What are you doing here? I thought you were away overseas.

SCARLETT: That's what I wanted everyone to think. It gave me time to take care of some unfinished business.

SYLVIA: What are you talking about?

SCARLETT: It's Chantelle. You might know her as the maid here at the hotel but there are many dim, dark secrets in her past.

SYLVIA: There aren't just secrets in her past. I reckon she's up to something with Charlie, the electrician from down the road who I have secretly been in love with for years.

SCARLETT: That doesn't surprise me. People think that she is so sweet and quiet but I know that inside she is rotten to the core.

SYLVIA: What do you mean?

SCARLETT: It all began when Grandfather died suddenly. No-one suspected anything at first because he was old and frail anyway, so it wasn't surprising that he would trip and fall down the stairs, breaking his neck. After Grandfather died, people weren't surprised that Grandmother followed soon after, although I thought it was odd that she should electrocute

herself in such a peculiar way while drying her hair. It was even possibly only just a coincidence when the brake cable broke in the Mercedes when Mother and Father were coming home from Grandmother's funeral and they drove right off the side of the cliff. However, when our brother died supposedly from belting himself in the head with a hammer I began to think that there was too much going on for it all to be just chance.

SYLVIA: What do you mean Scarlett?

SCARLETT: I suspect that Chantelle has been murdering all of our relatives so that she can inherit the family fortune. Now there is only her and me.

SYLVIA: Then what is she doing here then, working as a maid if she is in line for a fortune.

SCARLETT: After our brother's funeral the police started to ask a few questions. I think that Chantelle left home to try and keep out of their way for a while until the police finished their investigations. But I have followed her here to try and get her to confess to her crimes.

SYLVIA: But if she really is a cunning killer then Charlie may not be safe at all. We must go and help him. **THEY GO INTO A ROOM TO FIND CHARLIE WORKING ON A POWER POINT WHEN HE SUDDENLY IS THROWN BACKWARDS BY A POWER SURGE. SYLVIA RUNS FORWARD.**

SYLVIA: Charlie. Are you all right? **SCARLETT FOLLOWS CLOSE BEHIND.**

CHARLIE: I'm fine, I think. Who turned the power back on?

SCARLETT: We all know the answer to that. There's no use in hiding Chantelle. You can come out now. **CHANTELLE ENTERS.** The game is up. I have here a document for you to sign admitting your guilt in the murder of our family so you could get your hands on the inheritance. **HOLDING OUT A PEN.** Come over here and sign it now. **CHANTELLE MOVES TOWARDS SCARLETT SLOWLY THEN SUDDENLY PULLS OUT A GUN.**

SYLVIA: Watch out Scarlett.

CHARLIE: She's armed and dangerous.

SCARLETT: Put it away Chantelle. You're only making things worse for yourself. **CHARLIE MAKES A GRAB FOR THE GUN. CHANTELLE DROPS IT AND RUNS TOWARDS SCARLETT WHO STABS HER WITH THE PEN.**

SYLVIA: What have you done?

SCARLETT: It was revenge for our family. She's paid the price for her wicked ways.

CHARLIE: But you killed her.

SCARLETT: I can always say it was self defence.

SYLVIA: But don't you see. With her dead without signing the confession everyone is bound to think that it was you who did away with the family to get the inheritance.

SCARLETT: Oh you've got to help me. What am I going to do?

CHARLIE: Look I'll hide the body. With a bit of luck we can all be far away before they find the body. HE DRAGS THE BODY OFF.

SYLVIA: Let's go. We don't want to get caught hanging around here.

SCARLETT: And that's what really happened

MS. NIXON: Is there anything else you'd like to add to this story Scarlett?

SCARLETT: Only that it really was me that did it and that Chantelle deserved it.

SYLVIA: This is just ridiculous. Surely it's obvious that I'm the guilty one.

CHARLIE: Don't listen to them. It was me.

SCARLETT: There's no need to cover up for me. I'm ready to pay for my crime.

SYLVIA: It's not your crime.

CHARLIE: It's my crime.

MS. NIXON: Ned. Have you got anything to add to this?

NED: Nope.

MS. NIXON: Are you sure? Everyone else has had their say.

NED: Well I've got nothing to add. I don't even know why you've brought me here with them. I shouldn't be here in the first place.

MS. NIXON: Well why do you think we have brought you here then Ned?

NED: I don't know. You might have been able to get a confession out of the others but you'll get nothing from me.

MS. NIXON: You sound like you're hiding something.

NED: Look I might have something to say but I just don't see the point when no-one will believe me.

MS. NIXON: What do you mean?

NED: Well you see, if you want to know what went on the night of the 13th of August there's no point in asking them. They don't really know.

SCARLETT: Liar!

SYLVIA: We do so know what went on.

CHARLIE: We were there. I don't remember seeing you anywhere near the hotel that night.

NED: I'm not surprised. But I was there. You see, what really happened is I was waiting in the bar of the hotel for a drink. There was no-one serving and I got sick of waiting so I went looking for someone to get me a beer. I walked into a room just in time to see something strange.

SCARLETT, SYLVIA AND CHARLIE ARE ALL STANDING IN THE ROOM.
CHANTELLE IS POINTING A STRANGE GUN AT THEM.

CHARLIE: I knew we should have called the Men in Black earlier.

SCARLETT: Now this alien has us in her power and there is nothing we can do about it.

SYLVIA: We've tracked her half way around the world only to be caught.

CHARLIE: If she fires that special mind gun at us, we'll forget everything that happened. Our minds will be blank and she'll be able to program any memories she wants. We won't remember what happened - only what she wants us to think.

SCARLETT: We're going to have to try and jump her.

SYLVIA: Are you ready? On my signal. Now! THEY JUMP FOR CHANTELLE BUT SHE FIRES THE RAY GUN AT THEM AND THEY FALL DOWN UNCONCSCIOUS.

NED: I don't know what you've done to them but you're not going to get away with it. Watch out. I'm armed. I have a fork here. CHANTELLE LUNGES AT NED WHO STABS HER WITH A FORK. SHE COLLAPSES. Now what am I going to do? Those people will be no help. They will have different memories planted in their brains by now. I'll just have to get rid of the body and hope for the best. HE DRAGS THE BODY OUT. THE OTHERS GET UP SLOWLY AND TAKE THEIR SEATS. NED COMES BACK IN.

NED: And that's what really happened. THERE IS SILENCE FOR A MOMENT.

CHARLIE: Well that is one of the most stupid stories that I have ever heard.

SYLVIA: Surely you're not going to listen to that pile of rubbish?

SCARLETT: He obviously watches too much television.

NED: Of course that's what you think. You've had your brains scrambled.

CHARLIE: There's only one person in here with scrambled brains mate.

MS. NIXON: There's no need for that. Look I don't think we're going to get any further with our session today. It's probably time for your medication anyway everyone. CALLS. Nurse. We're going to finish the session now. ENTER CHANTELLE. Thankyou nurse. You can show the patients back to their wards now. I'm afraid we don't seem to be making much progress at the moment. We'll see you all next week.

CHARLIE: Hello Chantelle. Is it time for our medicine now?

SYLVIA: I don't really want to go back just yet. Can we stay out for a bit longer?

SCARLETT: We'll tell you a story.

NED: If we tell you a story will you let us go to bed without restraints tonight?

CHARLIE: Did I tell you how I murdered the Doctor last week.

SYLVIA: No you didn't. It was me. I killed her.

SCARLETT: There's no need to cover up on my behalf. I'm the one who killed Doctor Nixon.

NED: Dr. Nixon is an alien. Didn't you know?

TOGETHER: You see, what really happened is....

THE END

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