



Joanna Murray-Smith's plays have been produced throughout Australia and all over the world. They include *Switzerland*; *Day One*, *a Hotel*, *Evening*; *True Minds*; *Fury*; *Honour*; *The Female of the Species*; *Songs for Nobodies*; *Rockabye*; *Ninety*; *Bombshells*; *Rapture*; *Nightfall*; *Redemption*; *Love Child*; *Atlanta*; and *Flame*, many of which have been translated into other languages and adapted for radio. She has also adapted Ingmar Bergman's *Scenes from a Marriage* for Sir Trevor Nunn. Her novels include *Truce*, *Judgement Rock* and *Sunnyside*, all published by Penguin. *Sunnyside* was also published by Viking UK. Her work has been nominated for and won many awards.



*Claire Lovering as Rose and Jacob Allan as Ray in the Black Swan State Theatre Company's 2013 production of DAY ONE, A HOTEL, EVENING at the Heath Ledger Theatre, Perth.
(Photo: Gary Marsh Photography)*

Stories of
*Love &
Deception*

Three plays by Joanna Murray-Smith
DAY ONE, A HOTEL, EVENING • TRUE MINDS • FURY



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*For Chris Wallace-Crabbe
with love and admiration*

DAY ONE, A HOTEL, EVENING

For Cleve and David

Day One, a Hotel, Evening was first produced by the Red Stitch Actors Theatre, Melbourne, on 18 November 2011, with the following cast:

MADELEINE

SAM

STELLA

TOM

ROSE

RAY

Kate Cole

Dion Mills

Sarah Sutherland

John Adam

Anna Samson

Ryan Hayward

Director, Gary Abrahams

Set Designer, Sophie Woodward

Costumes, Stephanie Hooke

Red Stitch Wardrobe, Olga Makeeva

Lighting Designer, Stelios Karagiannis

Sound Designer, Chris Wenn

CHARACTERS

MADELEINE, Sam's wife, around 40

SAM, Madeleine's husband, around 40

STELLA, Tom's wife, around 40

TOM, Stella's husband, around 40

ROSE, Ray's wife, 20s, free spirit

RAY, Rose's husband, 20s/30s, working-class

NOTE

The pace of this play is fast and filmic. Scene changes should be swift and immediate.

SCENE ONE

A three-star hotel room, slightly dismal. Today. Evening. Lamplight.

MADELEINE and SAM, *dishevelled. We see enough of their clothes to know they are expensive, quite conservative, workwear. There's a small suitcase on the floor through which a rather elegant feather and some red silk is peeking.*

They are delighted in each other.

MADELEINE: So you see, why I'm here—

SAM: I think so.

MADELEINE: Here with you.

SAM: Yes.

MADELEINE: Instead of with him.

SAM: It makes sense.

MADELEINE: Instead of longing for a thrill, I want shelter, I want shelter from interesting things. It's all *too* interesting. *Life* is too interesting. I need to be somewhere where the excitement feels contained, it's ours, it belongs to us, in this enclosed space, here. Here with *you*—

SAM: Good.

MADELEINE: Do you see?

SAM: Whatever it takes.

MADELEINE: What do you want?

SAM: Now?

MADELEINE: What do you want from... *this*?

Beat.

SAM: I want a woman who could drive a Mustang from Albuquerque to San Jose.

MADELEINE: Is that so?

SAM: I want a woman who can wrap a telescope to send through the mail.

MADELEINE: Oh.

SAM: I want a woman who could build an irrigation system.

MADELEINE: I can't do that.

SAM: How do you know?

MADELEINE: True.

SAM: You could learn.

MADELEINE: You don't own anything that needs irrigating.

SAM: I might.

MADELEINE: Do you?

SAM: I might... one day. What do *you* want?

MADELEINE: I want a man who could rob a bank.

SAM: Is that so?

MADELEINE: Looking stylish. A stylish man who could rob a bank. A man who could rob a bank stylishly.

SAM: Quite a tall order.

MADELEINE: Doesn't have to be tall. Just brave.

SAM: Still.

MADELEINE: Plenty of men can rob banks. Quite a few do. Just not my husband.

SAM: Not much of a heist guy?

MADELEINE: He could build a bank. He could sell a bank. He could definitely manage a bank. But I don't think he could rob a bank.

SAM: Ouch. 'Manage' a bank?

MADELEINE: I think it's a reasonable assessment.

SAM: Bit of a 'bank manager', is he?

MADELEINE: Nothing wrong with that.

SAM: No.

MADELEINE: Unless it's a bank *robber* you want.

SAM: He might surprise you.

MADELEINE: It's been twelve years. A long build.

SAM: That's depressing.

MADELEINE: That's why I'm here.

SAM: True.

MADELEINE: If it weren't for him, I wouldn't be here with you.

SAM: He *causes* me?

MADELEINE: Husbands. Lovers.

SAM: You were loitering.

MADELEINE: Was I?

SAM: Standing in the lobby looking like a hooker.

MADELEINE: [*indicating her outfit*] In this?

SAM: Hooker who could make a hollandaise.

As they talk, he pours two little bottles from the minibar fridge.

Where is he?

MADELEINE: Somewhere else. I'm supposed to be meeting him. Dinner.
Where's she?

SAM: Somewhere else. I'm supposed to be meeting her. Movie. You
looked exciting. In the lobby.

MADELEINE: Shall we go back there?

SAM: I love a public space.

MADELEINE: Yes, they're underrated, I find. Like radishes.

SAM: A public space reminds you of the thrill of the personal. We could
be part of that—that blur of other people's lives. The clip clop of
women's heels navigating the marble floor, the man you only vaguely
register reading the *Atlantic Monthly*, the desk clerks, the bellboys,
the taxi drivers yelling out someone's name... We could be just two
parts of that background but we're not. Some unknown choreogra-
pher has drawn a thread between us. When we glimpse each other
in this hurried painting, we have a meaning for each other. A history,
an expectation, an awareness, an awareness that you there, standing
there, you drink your coffee extra hot, you hate figs, you want a man
who can rob a bank. We are singled out for each other. What a blast
that is.

MADELEINE: 'A history, an expectation, an awareness...'

SAM: Yes.

MADELEINE: No 'future'.

SAM: Didn't I say 'future'?

MADELEINE: Do we *have* a future?

SAM: There is no future. It's just 'the present' *in a minute*.

MADELEINE: I like it that you remembered the figs.

SAM: What were you thinking about? In the lobby.

MADELEINE: Volcanoes.

SAM: Is that a metaphor?

MADELEINE: No. I was thinking about volcanoes and the aviation industry.

SAM: That's terribly impressive. I was rather expecting you to say some
new 'It' bag. Or a large cocktail. Or even a large cock.

MADELEINE: I'm actually rather into current affairs.

SAM: Is that a metaphor?

MADELEINE: No. I'm well-informed.

SAM: And what else are you?

MADELEINE: I'm loyal.

SAM: To a point.

MADELEINE: I'm good.

SAM: How?

MADELEINE: I'm real fun.

SAM: Is that a metaphor?

MADELEINE: No, an anagram.

SAM: Real fun?

MADELEINE: Funeral.

Beat.

SAM: Yours or mine?

SCENE TWO

At the same time: Today. Evening. Lamplight. A city cafe.

TOM, *well-dressed, sits at a neighbouring table to ROSE, very pretty, in a dress and floppy pink socks with platform sandals. Both have coffees. On Rose's table is a closed laptop and a bunch of amaryllis. On Tom's table is a bunch of violets, nicely wrapped.*

ROSE: It's not the coffee.

TOM: Probably not, no.

ROSE: It's not the cup.

TOM: No.

ROSE: It's not the atmosphere.

TOM: Definitely not. You're right there. It's not the atmosphere. No way.

ROSE: It's not even the machine.

TOM: I don't think it's the machine, no.

ROSE: It's the barista.

TOM: Really?

ROSE: It's all about the barista.

TOM: It's not the barista.

ROSE: No? Go on. Don't hold back. Go to bat for your 'world view'.

TOM: There's a cafe I go into every day. Not this one. And the coffee is routinely excellent. And cheap. And the baristas change daily. The barista is neither here nor there. Within reason.

ROSE: What reason?

TOM: Well, if it was my mother, for instance. Who thinks a short macchiato is a small Florentine breed of... whippet. If *she* were the barista, we'd be ordering an Irish Breakfast. What is that?

ROSE: Amaryllis.

TOM: Sounds like an antibiotic.

ROSE: Sometimes called belladonnas. Colloquially.

TOM: That's more like it.

ROSE: Or even 'naked ladies'.

TOM: Why?

ROSE: They, ah, bloom after their foliage has died.

TOM: That sounds faintly scandalous. Do you?

ROSE: I rarely discuss my foliage with people I haven't met before.

TOM: That's disappointing.

ROSE: Sometimes you see them in shops saying 'Ready to bloom for the holidays', but they're usually hippeastrums. Incorrectly called amaryllis by incompetent florists. These are the real thing.

TOM: [*indicating*] She loves violets.

ROSE: They're very pretty, violets. But I've a thing for amaryllis.

Beat.

TOM: You have quite a lot to say. It seems. Seems you're a bit of an Opinionated Miss.

ROSE: You thought: *There's one. There's one of those blank ones for whom I will be riveting. There's one of those women who will never challenge me. Who will always placate me. Who will look up to me.*

TOM: Feminist, are you? One of the new-wave feminists who say they aren't feminists. Because they wear garter belts.

ROSE: Men often like women who look a bit blank. I've found. And I don't wear a garter belt.

TOM: Still time.

ROSE: I'll thank you not to talk to me like that.

TOM: What?

ROSE: That's what they say. You know, in the classics. The girl says: 'I'll thank you not to talk to me like that'. That's what they say, to forward men. Men like you are 'forward' men in the classics. They make impertinent remarks and women in—in muffs, in bustles, thank them not to push the envelope.

TOM: Muffs and bustles. Mmm.

ROSE: Honestly! Look, do you mind?

TOM: I don't know how many Victorian trollops crusaded against pushed envelopes. Although I'd love to see it.

ROSE: Are you hanging around striking up conversations with lonely women? Is that your thing?

TOM: Are you lonely?

ROSE: No. I've been stood up.

TOM: Me too! Hence the wilting violets. Wilting violets for a shrinking violet. Actually she's not a shrinking violet but she is a shrink. Hussy's stood me up.

ROSE: Are you serious?

TOM: What are the odds, eh?

She laughs.

Anyway, not that you need to hear it from me, but he's dead.

ROSE: Who?

TOM: He who stood you up.

Beat.

ROSE: He's dead?

TOM: He'd have to be. Hear that siren? He was on his bike and someone opened their car door and I'm afraid it's over for him.

ROSE: That's a really awful thing to say.

TOM: Alright. Fair enough. I don't know how he died, but he's obviously dead. Because even if you were on your last legs you wouldn't stand *you* up.

She smiles, despite herself.

ROSE: Is *she* dead?

TOM: Who?

ROSE: She who stood you up?

TOM: Wishful thinking. No. She just got a better offer.

ROSE: Wife?

TOM: Oh, good God, no. No. Not a wife. No. If I had a wife, I'd be at home. Wearing the slippers she put out for me after a hard day's work.

She laughs.

ROSE: Who stood you up then?

TOM: Lover.

ROSE: Lovely lover?

TOM: Until she stood me up. Now I hate her. Now I want to run off into the sunset with you.