

EXTRACT

Jade

a short play

by

Alex Broun

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abroun@bigpond.net.au

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Characters

CRAIG – a High School English teacher

BRYAN – the Principal

Time

Afternoon.

Setting

Craig's office.

Jade

Craig's office. Cluttered, untidy.

CRAIG, sits behind his desk, marking some papers.

After sometime **BRYAN**, enters, without knocking.

BRYAN: ... You're here?

CRAIG: Yes.

BRYAN: What are you doing?

CRAIG: Marking.

BRYAN: I thought you'd be at home.

CRAIG: No. I'm here.

BEAT.

BRYAN: They're on their way.

CRAIG: Thanks for letting me know. (BEAT) Can I help you?

BRYAN: I just thought I'd come and ...

CRAIG: Tidy up?

BRYAN: It's been awhile since I've been in here. I was unsure what I'd find.

CRAIG: Some kiddie-porn on the walls.

BRYAN: How can you be so blasé?

CRAIG: How else would you like me to be?

BEAT.

BRYAN: I think I came in here looking for ...

CRAIG: What?

BRYAN: Craig – we are friends.

CRAIG: Thanks for acknowledging that.

BRYAN: And I'm trying to understand how my friend – my good friend – could ...

CRAIG: Do what he's done.

BRYAN: Alleged to have done. (BEAT) Are you sure you wouldn't rather be at home?

CRAIG: And be arrested in front of my wife and child? Much rather they arrest me here.

BRYAN: Poor Katherine. How will she ...

CRAIG: I'm not sure.

BEAT. **CRAIG** CONTINUES MARKING.

BRYAN: I wish you would stop that.

CRAIG: They need to be marked. Some of them are quite good actually. The romantic period of Keats.

BRYAN: I supposed that's going to be your excuse. Romance, love.

CRAIG: Love – no. (LAUGHS) Not love.

BRYAN: You're laughing?

CRAIG: It's funny so I'm laughing. Then I guess when you find yourself in the position I find myself in – you don't know why you do anything any more.

BRYAN: Or did?

CRAIG: No. I know exactly why I did what I did.

BRYAN: So you don't deny it?

CRAIG: Is there any point?

BRYAN: You committed this act on school grounds. They have security cameras. How could you be so ...

CRAIG: You were going to say 'stupid' but that doesn't quite cover it does it? (BEAT) Is she ...

- BRYAN: The student in question has been taken home by her parents. She'll have to go undergo a full barrage of tests. If she hasn't been through enough already.
- CRAIG: I'm sorry to hear that.
- BRYAN: Not as sorry as you will be.
- CRAIG: Or am.
- BRYAN: Craig – she's ...
- CRAIG: Age can be deceptive.
- BRYAN: Try to rationalise it all you like – but I can not understand why a teacher in my school, a friend, could do something so hideous.(SUDDENLY) Please tell me this is the first time. I desperately hope this is the first time.
- CRAIG: The first and only.
- BRYAN: You can't say that though, can you? People like you. You can't help yourself.
- CRAIG: Bryan – I'm not a paedophile.
- BRYAN: Jade Robinson is twelve years old!
- CRAIG: So you keep saying.

BEAT. **CRAIG** PICKS UP A PIECE OF PAPER ON HIS DESK.

- CRAIG: (READING) Sweat on your forehead
Glistening in the creases of your skin
Your eyes wary
Look at me
Why won't you look at me?
I hunger for you.
For your gaze
Your scent
Your touch
You can not escape me."
It's beautiful, don't you think?
- BRYAN: Did you write that about her? Sick. I suggest you destroy it. Quickly.