

EXTRACT

Recovery

a text for theatre

by

Alex Broun

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Lights up.

Meeting. Lunchtime.

TOBY sits on a chair. He stands.

TOBY: My name is Toby and I'm an alcoholic. And I'm three years sober today.

We hear **APPLAUSE**. **TOBY** sits again.

TOBY: Thanks. I wish I could sit here and tell you how great the last three years has been, how I passed my bar exams and how grateful I am to be sober, and I am, but I've got a few other matters that I need to talk about. I've had an ... interesting week. Got a little surprise.

I'm adopted, I've shared about that before so most of you know that. It's not a big drama. I've known since I was eight. My parents were going to tell me when I was ten but they thought that I was a smart kid and I might work it out before so they told me on my eighth birthday. Last week I turned twenty eight so they decided to give me another informative little gift. Again they were going to wait till I was thirty five, till I'd fully matured, but they thought I needed to know now. So last Sunday I go there for dinner and after the apple crumble birthday cake they hand me an envelope. I think - a cheque. How nice? In it is a card and on the card a name and a number. "Thought you might want to know who your real parents were". I look up and Dad's smiling sweetly. Mum squeezes his hand. I look back at the card. Just who do they think they are to make that decision. It's a pretty big thing. Meeting your birth parents. Pretty traumatic. Who says that I'm ready for something like that or even that I want to meet them? Just what gives my mum and dad the right to choose. I try to put it on the programme. Hand over. Let go let God. Okay maybe the time is right. Maybe my higher power is guiding me towards my birth parents for some reason. So, next morning, I ring the number. It's the agency. "My name's Toby Walsh. I'd like to be out in contact with my birth parents." They ask me to come in and see them. I go in that afternoon, listen to some spiel about being prepared, great shock, blah blah blah. Nod my head, look very serious and about half an hour later - a name and an address. Duffy. Maroubra. My name is Toby Duffy and I come from Maroubra. From the Walshs of Gordon to the Duffys of Maroubra. Okay so I guess I could write them a letter or look up their phone number - but that's not my style. Not dramatic enough. So the next night, Tuesday, I get in the car.

Eventually I find the house. Drive past it three times. Finally I park the car. Look around for muggers and make a quick dash for the front door. Knock knock knock.

Wait. Wait some more. Nothing. Just about to make a dash back to the car when the door creaks open. There's a ... woman on the other side. "Clearly I must have the wrong house. I'm looking for the Duffy family." "Not here. Gone up north. Cairns." "Do you have their new address?" "Come in." I'm led into a surprisingly comfy living room just off a well ordered