

Monotypes

By Pete Malicki

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MONOTYPES

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Cast

Walter – a young man

Jenny – Walter's middle aged mum

Bev – Walter's young, black girlfriend

TV – an anchor reading the news on the television

Stage

A living room. There is a couch facing a television, a coffee table, any other suitable living room items. There are two exits, the front door and the kitchen. There is a telephone near the couch.

Scene One

Jenny is sitting on a couch watching and listening to the television. She is wearing an ill-fitting tracksuit (Nike / Adidas) and has a baseball cap on backwards. A chain is hanging around her neck. Walter enters the room with a suitcase, dressed in sharp work clothes.

JENNY: Sup my nigger.

WALTER: Hello Jenny. What a surprise to find you in front of the television. You must be taking a rare day off.

JENNY: Nice to see you're in your usual good mood.

WALTER: Oh no, I'm in a good mood, don't you worry. I've just been working all day to pay for your clothes and food and bills, and I've come home just in time to make you some dinner. There's no reason why I could possibly be annoyed that you *haven't* budged all day.

JENNY: That's good, son.

Walter places his suitcase on the ground and exits to the kitchen. Jenny is impassive throughout.

WALTER: (*Calling*) Didn't you notice these dishes, Jenny?

JENNY: Yeah, I noticed them.

WALTER: Did you happen to notice the layers of scum breeding on them?

JENNY: Look son, I couldn't clean them okay? I'm a Buddhist.

Walter returns with a dishcloth and throws it over Jenny.

WALTER: Go and do them now or you're going to be eating off them.

Jenny gets up and walks over to Walter, makes a face at him, and starts walking into the kitchen. As she turns to go, Walter grabs her by the wrist and sniffs her jacket sleeve.

WALTER: What's that smell middle-aged lady? Have you been smoking drugs again?

JENNY: Nah. Look, get offa me, I have to clean the dishes aiight?

Jenny struggles free and snarls at Walter. Walter crosses his arms and shakes his head as she leaves. He sits down rigidly on the couch and looks at the TV, then picks up the remote and starts jamming buttons.

WALTER: Bloody technology! I'll never understand these stupid plasma-DVD-widescreen pieces of trash.

The TV noises stop. The phone next to the lounge rings just as there is a loud clang from the kitchen and an equally loud curse from Jenny. Walter ignores Jenny and answers it.

WALTER: Hello? Oh, hello Beverley! How are you going this afternoon?...
Yeah, I'm not bad. What can I do for you? (*Reasonable pause*)
Well if you want to come around, you're very welcome. (*Short pause*) Okay, see you soon.

Walter hangs up the phone. Seconds later there is a knock from the front door.

WALTER: That was quick. (*Calling*) Come in.

Beverley enters the room. Jenny returns from the kitchen at the same time.

BEV: Hello Walter. Hi there Jennifer.

JENNY: It's Jenny.

BEV: Oh, sorry Jenny. (*Walks over and kisses Walter's cheek*) How are you, sweetheart?

WALTER: I'm well. It's good to see you.

JENNY: (*Rolling her eyes*) Geez, come on guys. Why do you have to be so bloody formal? It's not like someone's filming this and putting it online. So prim and proper.

WALTER: Excuse me, middle-aged lady. You watch how you talk to your youngers.

JENNY: What? You want me to be offensive? Okay fine. Your black trash girlfriend is nothing but a dirty lesbian. I bet she has a stack of Hustler magazines in her bedside...

WALTER: (*Furious*) Go to your room right this instant Jennifer Higgins! I don't want you uttering another foul word in my presence!

JENNY: (*Sticks up her middle finger at Walter and sneers*) Fuck you, tightarse!

Jenny exits via the kitchen. Walter shakes his head angrily, then turns an apologetic look to Bev.

WALTER: I'm so sorry, Beverley. How can I apologise enough?

BEV: Oh, don't worry about it, Walter. I know what they're like at that age. It's all just hormones.

WALTER: Yes, I know. It's no excuse for homophobia, though. I mean what would it even matter if you were gay? It's nothing to be ashamed of.

BEV: Well they say that people become homophobic as a way to deal with their own sexuality. You know, when they're in denial.

WALTER: I can't see my mother being like that. (*Snorts*) It's so hypocritical anyway; she's always raving on about men kissing each other

and how much of a turn-on *that* is. I don't understand what you women find so attractive about gay men.

BEV: Oh I don't know. I think it's *every* woman's fantasy to be with two men at the same time. Just picturing you rubbing nipples with your friend Ted is making me horny.

WALTER: (*Rolls eyes*) You're just like all the girls. All you *ever* think about is sex, isn't it?

BEV: Well, occasionally I think about food.

WALTER: (*Laughs, then shakes his head*) Isn't it sad? Even at your age you can't stop thinking about orgies and playing with yourself. Typical female chauvinist.

BEV: I never knew you were such a masculinist. Everybody knows that all males are bisexual. You're just too ashamed to admit it.

Before Walter can reply, some loud, thrashy music comes from the kitchen exit. Grunge or death-metal or the likes.

WALTER: Jesus Christ. (*Yelling*) Turn that bloody racket down you tone-deaf little imbecile!

The music does not stop and Walter marches out of the room, exiting via the kitchen. Bev stands around for a few moments, then starts pacing. She mimes a boxer and does a few combinations. Walter and Jenny are yelling unintelligibly at each other. Bev sits down and puts her hands in her pants, leering.

WALTER: The little upstart wouldn't... (*resigned*) what are you doing?

Bev stops her sexual pantomime and looks at Walter guiltily. Before she can speak, Jenny storms into the room.

JENNY: Geez you're a fascist prick! Sieg heil! Sieg heil! Why don't you just force me to listen to Beethoven or some of that other crap you dig.

WALTER: Don't fly off the handle, Jennifer. I only want you to show a bit of consideration by not playing it so damned loudly. That's not too much...

JENNY: I hate you sometimes, son. You just want to live your life through me because I'm so much cooler than you.

WALTER: Oh yeah, that's right Jenny. I aspire to lay in front of the television watching soap operas all day.

JENNY: (*Scowling, she walks over to Walter and speaks icily*) You know what, son? I've been skipping Church on Wednesdays. Satan can go and get *fucked*.

WALTER: What?! I will not hear that kind of heresy in my house. You go and apologise to the Underlord right now or you'll be out on your arse faster than you can blink.

JENNY: Fuck you! I worship God.

WALTER: (*Points at the main exit and roars*) Out! Get out of my house and don't you come back until you you're ready to take back what you've just said.

JENNY: Fine. See you never, bro. See you later Beverley, you dirty lesbian.

Jenny leaves the stage and slams the door. Walter puts his head in his hands.

WALTER: I can't believe I've let her grow up like that. I'm such a failure.

BEV: (*Getting touchy-feely*) Aww, don't be like that. It's not your fault. Everyone goes through these little stages. Just leave her be and she'll come to her senses.

WALTER: Did you hear what she said about the Devil? Sometimes I wonder how he forgives people for outbursts like that.

BEV: Well, to be perfectly honest with you Walter, maybe you shouldn't have forced your beliefs down her throat all this time.

WALTER: Oh, sure. I'll just let her inject heroin and rape older men.

BEV: *(Very close to Walter now)* Now you're just being dramatic. Jenny may be a little erratic, but deep down she's got a good soul.

WALTER: I still think it's all my fault.

BEV: No. It's not you. Don't blame yourself for other people, even if it *is* your mother.

WALTER: *(Sighing)* Yeah. You're right. Thanks.

Bev places her arm around Walter's midsection and moves her hand up towards his chest.

BEV: My pleasure, sexy. *(She grabs his pecs)*

WALTER: *(Breaking free)* Beverley! How dare you.

BEV: Oh come on, didn't I just make you feel better?

WALTER: And that's supposed to be an excuse to feel me up? I can't believe you'd play with my emotions just so you can take advantage of me.

BEV: Don't be so frigid. I can tell when you want it. Your nipples go hard.

WALTER: I'm just cold. Besides, I'm strong enough to overcome my basic urges and think with my brain, not my genitals.

BEV: Well *I* can't. Why don't we do it here on the couch? Your little middle-aged woman is gone.

WALTER: Is that why you came round? I thought you said you wanted to talk about something.

BEV: *(Laughing; lewdly)* Nah, but I wanted to use my tongue.

WALTER: *(Disgusted)* Get out. Go and join Jenny. You two can fantasise about men playing with themselves while praying to *God*.

BEV: Maybe I will. Have fun reading your soppy romance novels with your hot water bottle.

Bev turns around and swaggers out of the room. She slaps her butt a few times before she closes the door. Walter puts his hand over his eyes and makes a face as though holding back tears. He sits down on the couch.

WALTER: Women. Oh why did you create the woman, mighty Underlord? Was it so us men would look better by comparison?

Walter sighs and leans back in the couch. He picks up the remote and turns the television on. There are some heavy guitar chords as an introduction to the news. A male anchor starts speaking.

TV: Hey there fuckers, welcome to the six o'clock news. I'm Sandy Anders and this is LZ250.

Some robotic beeps and clicks sound from the TV.

TV: Tonight, United Nations war-talks come to a grinding halt and peace is expected to break out in the Middle East. Immigration Minister Pillock Ruddy – dubbed 'The Minister For Black Australia' by critics – announces controversial plans to free young American tourists from detention. Prime Minister Joan Howard receives another grovelling visit from the President of the land Up Over. But first, three middle-aged women have been arrested after they paid for their groceries using Monopoly money. Police were lead on a two-hour-long low-speed chase which ended when one of the ladies overturned her wheelchair. What do you think about this, LZ250.

There is the sound of a Microsoft error message from the TV. Walter picks up the remote and turns off the TV. He puts his head in his hands.

WALTER: Bloody women. You never see *men* running around paying for groceries with toy money.

Walter gets up and paces into the middle of the stage. He stops, then gets a determined look.

WALTER: You know what? I don't care what anyone says any more. (*He stands erect and proud, speaking very clearly and magnificently*)
I – am going – to have – a drink!... of *cordial*.

Walter leaves the stage.

THE END