

Sensation

A monologue by Pete Malicki

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Cast

Ro-Wanda: a young woman who wants to be an internet star. She sits on a seat, recording videos on her invisible laptop. She puts on headphones whenever she speaks to a friend.

Note: all pauses are quite brief unless noted.

Sensation

Ro-Wanda sits centre stage and leans forwards to press 'record' on her laptop. She steels herself, then sings 15 seconds of a modern pop song. She is out of tune and woefully bad but there's something endearing about her self-belief. She stops singing and presses the stop button on her laptop.

Alright. Nailed it. That was good. Ooh, it's Shayla.

Puts headphones on and talks to her friend.

Baby girl! How you? *(pause)* Yeah, swell. I just posted it on my account. This one is definitely going all the way. *(pause)* You can record it straight to YouTube, sister. Don't you know nothing? Go onto my account and check out the new upload. *(slightly longer pause)* Yeah, that's the one. *(pause)* Hon, I *know* it's awful, that's the whole point. Keep watching. *(pause)* Worst thing you've ever seen? Babe, thank you *so* much. That's the nicest thing you've ever said to me. If this doesn't go wild I have literally no idea how to be an internet celebrity. *(pause)* Are you kidding? Babe, *all* publicity is good publicity. Anyways, I gotta roll. Need to post a response to my Tony Abbott is Hot¹ video – it's getting flamed like Joan of Arc on the cross and I have to publish something while it's still getting views. Byeles!

Takes her headphones off and starts recording a new video with a very sombre look on her face.

Hey internets. It's Roanna Wanda here: Ro-Wanda. Y'all saw my Tony Abbott is Hot video.

I just wanted to say, you guys need to tone down the hate speak, okay? First of all, you people like Morpheus 0110 and Aussie Politics Guy, you aren't even hating on the right thing. I don't care about politics. All I was saying was how hot Tony is. Okay? You can spread your hate about him in someone else's comments section because this is all about looks.

Ro-Wanda gets progressively more upset throughout the following passage to the point of tears and total hysteria.

But you haters who talk about him being ugly, you are *so mean*. He's not ugly. Some of us girls find confidence and personality really sexy. How many like fifty-year-olds do you know who would happily go on camera in Speedos, huh? Have any of you even seen how he talks? He's so full of self-confidence. What if he reads these comments and gets upset by them? Did you ever think about that, Stuart The Third?. He has feelings just like you do, you... you stupid

¹ Feel free to substitute this for any well-known and unattractive politician.

person! How do you like it when I call you that, huh?! I bet you're just jealous because *you're* not attractive, right? Am I right? You're probably like really unfit. I'm right, aren't I? How can you insult an athlete on his looks when you're fat and lazy and stupid? I hate you Stuart The Third! You're a stupid idiot! You're a total stupid moron idiot jerkface! I HATE YOU!

Ro-Wanda presses the stop button on her video and immediately calms down.

Awesome. That's going to be as big as Leave Britney Alone.

Ro-Wanda takes out her phone. She rolls her eyes and speaks into it.

Hey mum. Sorry I missed your call. What's up? *(pause)* Who? *(pause)* I don't know who that is. Was she calling from somewhere? *(pause)* Are you serious? Oh my god, that's amazeballs. What's her number? *(pause – types the number into her laptop)* Thanks mum, I'll call her in a minute. How's things anyway? *(very short pause)* Oh, sorry mum, Trev's Skyping me. Gotta go. Byles!

Ro-Wanda puts her phone down and puts on her headphones. She is Skyping again and her manner is now coy.

Hey Trevvy baby. How you? *(pause)* I'm good, sexy. Whatcha doin'? *(pause)* Uh huh. I just posted another *two* videos. I know they've already been done before but they're the kind which will always go mega-viral. Then you know what happens, right? I make loads of sugar and I can take my babe of a boyfriend to Fiji for a week of hot sex on the beach. *(pause)* What do you mean? We *are* talking. How can you want to do what we're already doing babe? *(pause)* You *what*?! Are you serious? *(pause)* Have you realised you're gay or something? *(Ro-Wanda becomes desperate)* No, Trev, babe, you aren't serious. You can't be serious. We love each other, remember? You can't break up with me. *(pause)* No, we're perfect for each other. And I've been trying to take you on a holiday to Fiji so we can have lots of beach sex. You really want to throw that away? *(pause; angrily)* Okay, fine. You know what? I'll go by myself and I'll find a tonne of other guys to have sex with on the beach. How will you like that, huh? You're going to be *so* angry at yourself when I'm rich and famous and you're just a loser on the dole or whatever. Like you'll ever have a career in music. You can't even sing. You know that? You're worse than half the fat-teenage-girl-thinks-she's-Madonna-but-can't-sing videos. *(pause; guilty and scared she's offended him)* Oh baby, Trevvy, I didn't mean that. I'm just upset. You're really, really good. You have such a unique voice. I totally won't have sex with anyone but you on the beach. I love you, Trevor. You can't leave me, okay? Please. Please don't leave me. *Please!* I'll do anything. I'll... I'll even do it, you know, up there. I'll do anything to make you happy. *(pause)* Babe? Babe, are you there? I think we have connection problems. *(pause)* You hung up on me? *(angry)* You bastard!

Ro-Wanda jams down on her keyboard, throws off her headphones and crosses her arms, hurt and angry. She is holding back tears, looks down at her phone, then is filled with sudden resolution. She makes a call.

Hello, Janice? This is Ro-Wanda. *(pause)* Oh, sorry. Roanna Berkley. You called my mum earlier because you wanted to talk about my videos. *(pause)* Yes, that's right. I recently released my five hundredth video. *(pause)* Well, the internet is changing the way the world works. I am very serious about becoming famous and making a living from my videos. *(pause)* Okay, yeah, so with the internet it's not about quality. It's about *views*. See, people watch your videos and ads come up, and if they click on them you make money. Some people are millionaires just from this. So I'm trying to make something which people *watch*, not what

people *like*. Either way I'm still an entertainer. *(pause)* Most of my videos have a few hundred views each but I have this one which is on over *eight thousand* views. *(pause)* I know, right? My user name is RoRoRo-Wanda. Be awesome if you can print that. *(pause)* Thanks so much. Byeles!

Hangs up phone.

Hells yeah! Ro-Wanda is in the papers!

Puts on headphones.

Hey Dannie. What up, my girl? *(pause)* Oh man, are you for real? The bastard just dumped me by *Skype* and he's already updated his Facebook status to single? *(pause)* Nah babe, he didn't even say. Just that I wasn't the girl for him. *(pause)* As if I care *(she really does)*. I deserve way better. Hey, did you know I posted two new videos just now and one of them's already up to... *(checks)* oh my god, it's on forty views already and it's been like 10 minutes. I can't believe how quick that's going. It's totally spreading like AIDS. *(pause)* Nah babe, I'm all good. Thanks for... oh, hey, wait, Trev's just emailed me. He says... nothing. It's just a link. Hey, I gotta go check this out. Talk soon hon.

Ro-Wanda takes the headphones off and leans forwards. She looks at her screen in growing horror.

I can't believe it. I seriously can't believe it.

She puts her headphones on again.

(distracted) Shayla, what you want? *(pause)* What do you mean have you seen his video? I'm watching it right now. How the hell do you know about it? *(pause)* He Facebooked it? He filmed our breakup conversation and *Facebooked* it?! You have *got* to be kidding? *(pause)* Tonya shared it with you? Oh my god, this *just* happened and you didn't even see it firsthand. How many people... hang on, you've seen it second hand in like three minutes? That means...

Ro-Wanda takes off the headphones. She is in awe, but also ambivalent about what is happening.

It's going viral. I can't believe it. *(angry)* That bastard posted our private conversation all over Facebook and *(excited)* and it's going viral! Whoo hoo! Trev, you are such a... *(can't decide whether she's happy or mad)* lovely arsehole. *(pause)* I've done it. I'm going viral. I'm going to be famous!

Ro-Wanda smiles, then looks pained, then leans back, self-satisfied. She's ambivalent.