

## NOTES

*The transitions in scenes should be energetic and inventive within the world of football. Time passes. Games are played. Dialogue moves at a fairly fast clip, particularly in the group scenes. The 'GAMES' should be realised in a theatrical way. It should feel spiritual like in those moments we've entered another plane. Everything is suspended. Time works differently.*

I encourage the producer of this work to be inclusive and diverse with the casting of the characters. Casting should reflect the diversity of Australia.

*"The success of every woman should be the inspiration to another."*

Serena Williams.

## Prelude

*Rosie stands alone, in the middle of the field.*

*Light halos around her. A frozen moment.*

Rosie            It's almost done.  
                  No time to think  
                  Just –  
                  React  
                  Respond  
                  Find the space  
                  Make the space  
                  Hold your own.  
                  It is going to come.  
                  You know this.  
                  Brace, but don't be scared.  
                  It hits.  
                  The moment you and the world collide.  
                  You feel it.  
                  But you know how to land.  
                  You know how to get back up.  
                  It's all up to you.  
                  To keep going.  
                  No matter how far behind  
                  You keep going.  
                  Because you want it.  
                  You've decided.  
                  You want it.

## Scene 1: Post match.

*Locker rooms.*

*Kyle cups his mouth and stares intently at the floor. Shaking his head a little.*

*They all look at him. Waiting. Not exactly sure what is to come.*

Kyle (seething but holding it in) Well. How do you think you went?

*Small pause. The girls look around at each other.*

Rosie (treading carefully) I think we can admit, it wasn't our best game.

Kyle (losing it) It was despicable!

Rosie We had third quarter issues that-

Kyle Third quarter issues, did you?

Rosie (continuing) -that threw us, and we had trouble finding our feet again.

Kyle Or the ball!

Or your positions!

Or the play! What happened to the play!?

Rosie There were some fitness concerns.

Kyle Are you masochists or something? Get off on it, do you? Self-inflicted fucking torture!

Alex You do know we won, right?

Kyle ONE GOAL!! You're an experienced team. You should have smashed them into the ground. Obliterated them into space.

Rosie We could work on our structure.

Kyle What does it matter?! We plan one thing and then you get on the ground, and everyone's got situational amnesia. Repeating the same mistakes that almost cost us the game the week before.

I want you all to have a long hard think about what team you're on and how we, as a group, are going to play. Get out of here.

*Brigid, and Bee leave.*

*Rosie, Alex and Kyle stay.*

Kyle I just don't know what will get through. Four goals we gave up in that last quarter coming back in the corridor. If there was more money in it, I'd think Porter and Leigh were trying to throw it, letting Rickson through like that. Don't get me started on the way you shook her hand at the end.

Rosie (indignant) What about the way I shook her hand?

Kyle A little intimate, don't you think?

Rosie No?

Kyle It looked like you were gossiping about Tuesday brunch, get your face closer to her ear I think you were giving her a wet willy.

Alex I think we're losing sight of the problem.

Rosie Yes, but I agree, you're right.

Kyle Sorry? Can you say that a little louder?

Rosie (*ignoring Kyle*) We should have had a bigger margin and we made silly mistakes. We need to take responsibility. We took the game for granted and there are no excuses.

Kyle No.

Rosie But-

Kyle NO excuses.

Rosie I say this as a friend as well as a colleague. It's possibly an *approach* issues.

Kyle Meaning?

Alex Your approach might need to change-

Kyle So, it's me?

Rosie It's not you.

Kyle It's *my* fault?

Rosie The messaging around strategy is tense.

Kyle I've kept it so simple, it hurts!

Rosie Some of the girls don't respond well to your ...demeanour.

Kyle My demeanour?

Rosie It makes them nervy, so they make nervy fumbles.

Kyle They've told you this have they?

Rosie People confide in me.

Kyle That's another thing, how many times *must* you process your feelings? Every drink break is a therapy session.

Rosie We're not in Kansas anymore. The toxic masculinity doesn't *sing* around here.

Kyle Ohhh! Give me a break!

Alex Sometimes you can be...

*Kyle glares.*

Kyle ?

Alex (*Backing off*) Direct.

Kyle Direct?

Alex *Unhelpfully* direct.

Rosie You can come across as aggressive.

Kyle (*To Rosie*) You think I'm aggressive?

Rosie I don't *love* the screaming but I'm used to it.

Kyle So I'm screaming now?

Alex You broke an iPad yesterday.

Kyle The piece of shit couldn't even get back to the home screen!

Alex It was a borderline tantrum...

Rosie All I'm saying is a bit of encouragement wouldn't go astray.

*Kyle takes an angry breath like he is about to respond explosively. Then controls it. Swallows it. Does some internal nodding.*

Kyle Ok. Ok.

*(a little stiff) I hear your feedback.*

*(A phrase he has learnt from respect training)*

*Kyle stews on it for a moment.*

Kyle Look. We've – you've – got a real shot this year and we're in good stead, but I refuse to let us get sloppy because we're cocky.

*(quickly correcting himself) I'm not saying we are cocky. I'm just saying I've seen it happen.*

Rosie Maybe we try switching Porter and Greevy.

Kyle I'm going to put Casey on the list.

Rosie Casey?

Kyle I should have done it last week.

Rosie She's a bit *fresh*, don't you think?

Kyle We need something to wake everyone up!

Rosie Or throw them off kilter.

Kyle Not if you take her under your wing.

Rosie Of course.

Kyle She'll vault quickly under a guiding mentor, such as yourself.

Rosie Who will you swap her with?

Kyle Thompson.

Rosie Thompson?

Kyle She's passed her *best before* date.

Rosie She's not that old.

Kyle I don't risk it with yoghurt, I don't risk it with footy.

Rosie She's experienced.

Kyle She's injured.

Rosie She's almost fully recovered!

Kyle Not quick enough.  
Rosie I thought she played well.  
Kyle Because you were taking hits that should have been hers.  
Rosie I was responding to play.  
Kyle You can't be overcompensating trying to cover Thompson because she's your friend.  
We need you forward. That's what you're here for.  
Rosie But -  
Kyle Do you want to make finals this year or not?

*Small pause. Of course she does.*

Kyle Then RIP Thompson.  
Rosie Is Casey the right replacement?  
Kyle Alex, what do you think?  
Alex Ah, Casey's certainly got fire, she's fire-y.  
Kyle She's faster than a cockroach with the light on!  
Rosie Ok. Yeah.  
Kyle Plus she's hungry. She's salacious.  
Alex Do you mean rapacious?  
Kyle What?  
Rosie She's great... for a 19-year-old.  
Kyle She reminds me of you.  
Rosie Don't.  
Kyle What?  
Rosie Bit cliched don't you think?  
Kyle I'm serious.  
Rosie She's nothing like me.  
Kyle When you were *younger*, I mean.  
Rosie Oh. Right. Then. Of course. *Then*.  
Kyle In front of a crowd, you and her will be symbiotic. Trust me.

## **Scene 2: GAME DAY: Pre-game prep.**

*There's a nervous energy in the air. They're all doing their own thing to get ready. Bee, wearing big headphones, sits by herself and journals.*

*Alex is stretching, Brigid is drinking pickle juice.*

Brigid It's good for you!

Alex I just don't understand how you can drink it?  
Brigid I like it. (*she doesn't*)  
Alex (*baiting*) Really?  
Brigid It's... tangy.  
Alex Kinda seems like you're struggling to get it down.

*Rosie walks in, stretching her neck.*

Rosie (*Telling the whole room*) 5 minutes!

*Brigid takes another sip, she's not enjoying.*

Brigid It's an acquired taste but I have *acquired* it.  
Rosie You know, there's a whole esky full of Gatorade just sitting there.  
Brigid Pickle juice has the same electrolytes as Gatorade but without the sugar and neckne.  
Rosie Neckne?  
Brigid Neck acne. Bee would agree.

*They all look at Bee. Bee notices the attention shift towards her. She moves an earphone off.*

Bee Huh?  
Brigid Pickle juice is good for you, from a medical perspective.  
Bee Ahh? That's not something we really learn about.  
Brigid But there are benefits, aren't there?  
Bee I couldn't say. How much have you had?  
Brigid This is my third game on it. So *nine* bottles?  
Alex Nine bottles!?  
Brigid I have to admit the smell of my urine is... unpleasant.  
Bee What kind of unpleasant? Actually, I don't want to know.  
Alex Is this a hangover from pregnancy?  
Brigid No, although I did go through the chalk phase.  
Alex Chalk phase?  
Brigid I started craving chalk. Dunno what that's about. Bee?  
Rosie Leave Bee alone. She's trying to focus.

*They look at Bee.*

Alex But do you know what it's about?  
Bee I think it's to do with craving minerals. Craving non-food items usually indicates some sort of deficiency.  
Brigid Figures. I had three fillings in the last trimester.  
Alex Wait, what do you do with all the pickles?

Brigid I eat them.  
Rosie Surely you can't be eating them at the same rate as drinking the brine.  
Brigid Louie eats them as well.  
Rosie Louie?  
Alex Her greyhound.  
Rosie Oh yeah.  
Bee That seems bad. You should probably run that by the vet.  
Brigid He loves them! Can't get enough of them. Seriously try it.  
Alex I'd rather suck off my sweat filled sock than scull that.  
Brigid It really does help the cramping.  
Rosie Let's hope so.

*Casey walks in carrying a towel or a football. The girls start cheering and hollering, half cutting off Rosie's line.*

Alex Here she is!  
Brigid You must be excited.  
Casey Should be good.  
Rosie How are you feeling?  
Casey Jazzed.  
Bee Not nervous?  
Casey Nup.  
I've been itching to get a game since I got drafted.  
Bee I vomited three times before my first professional game.  
Brigid I didn't know you were a spewer.  
Bee Was a spewer. Guts of iron now.  
Rosie Got any rituals yet?  
Casey Nah. Don't really believe in that shit.  
Brigid Really? You're not superstitious?  
Casey I'm an atheist.

*The girls laugh.*

Rosie Ok.  
Casey What sort of *higher power* is looking over me to help me play football? And if there is, it's like, *go end poverty, maybe?* I can catch a ball on my own.  
Alex Bee, you're religious, what do you think about that?

Bee I'm not religious *religious*, just *culturally-whatever*. And I think it's a very logical-mentally-healthy way of thinking.

Casey Clean my teeth, do my lashes, drink some water. That's about it.

Brigid Lucky you. I must have three pairs of clean socks in the locker before I can even think about going on.

Rosie That's only since you've become a mum.

Brigid No it isn't.

Alex Rosie always puts her right boot on first.

Rosie Alex always has a banana and five Weetbix for breakfast.

Alex SIX, thank you very much. I'm not weak.

Brigid And Bee listens to -

ALL (all singing in tune) *Highway to Hell*

Brigid before every match.

Casey Why?

Bee (*getting embarrassed*) Ahh, it's stupid. It was playing on the radio when I won my first game and it stuck with me, I guess. Something about it helps me focus.

Alex It's a great song, that's why.

Brigid And no sex the night before!

Casey Serious?

Rosie That's just a joke.

Brigid Not to me!

Alex Really?

Brigid Never.

Casey Why?

Brigid You know! Tapping into that primal frustration. Let it rear its head on the field. It's what the men do!

Rosie I think that's just a myth.

Alex I heard it was true.

Brigid See!

Alex Something about letting testosterone build up?

*In sync, they all turn to Bee for the answer.*

Bee I can neither confirm nor deny that science.

**End of excerpt**