

3b- Anne's Story from *Stolen* by Jane Harrison, 1998 (the stories have been mixed and not in the original order of the play)

ANNE'S TOLD SHE'S ABORIGINAL

ANNE'S PARENTS *are anxiously discussing something off to one side of Anne's bed while she is sitting slumped on the bed, filing her nails.*

FATHER: [to MOTHER] Do you think it's the right thing?

MOTHER: [to FATHER] I think it's for the best.

They agree, then speak to ANNE.

FATHER: Princess, we need to tell you something...

MOTHER: It's not been an easy decision for us...

FATHER: We feel we have no choice and we want you to hear it from us.

MOTHER: We don't want you to hear rumours...

ANNE: What are you talking about?

MOTHER: We want you to know we'll always stand by you.

ANNE: What are you taking about...?

FATHER: There's no easy way to tell you... you know we adopted you, Anne. We chose you at the Cranby Children's Home.

ANNE: So... I knew that...

MOTHER: Anne, there's something else... it's about your mother... she's dying and she wants to see you and... she's an Aboriginal lady.

ANNE: Why haven't you told me that she's—?

MOTHER: [*tentatively*] —Aboriginal?

ANNE: Alive! And that's she wants to see me?

MOTHER: Oh.

MOTHER starts to weep.

FATHER: We thought it was for the best. You know we love you like our own daughter.

MOTHER: We love you and want the best for you.

FATHER: Anne, there's no reason why anything should change. You only have to see her... once.

MOTHER: No one need ever know.

ANNE: *I* know. And I want to know why you didn't tell me about this before.

MOTHER: [*sobbing*] The shame...

ANNE: [*angrily*] You *should* be ashamed—

ANNE'S FATHER *draws himself upright and puts his arm around MOTHER.*

FATHER: *We've* nothing to be ashamed of. *We've* always acted in your best interests! Look what you've done to your mother!

They walk away, talking amongst themselves. Alone, ANNE is so confused.

ANNE: Mum... Dad! Mum! Dad! Why? This is a nightmare!

She breaks down as the lights go down.

AM I BLACK OR WHITE?

ANNE: [*a little bitter*] So I finally went to meet my real mother. I thought they'd live in the country or the outback or something. You know—'at one with the land'. But here they were in a Housing Commission flat, all crowded in. I just thought it would be different, somehow.

The sheet is held up and we see the silhouette of a woman and a man, first the white parents and then black family members.

FATHER: [*off*] You're one of us, Anne—we've brought you up as one of our own.

MOTHER: [*off*] We've given you everything—a home, an education, a future.

FATHER: [*off*] Don't you appreciate all we've done?

She runs over to the other side of the stage.

FIRST BLACK VOICE: [*off*] But we're your real family.

SECOND BLACK VOICE: [*off*] Yeah, and you have to come back to us—it's where you belong, girl.

FIRST BLACK VOICE: [*off*] We lot have got to stick together, you know.

She runs back to where she began.

MOTHER: [*off*] Are you going to just throw away everything we have taught you?

FATHER: [*off*] If you go back, we won't have you here.

MOTHER: [*off*] How can you do this to us, you're breaking our hearts?

She turns away, holding her head as if in pain.

FIRST BLACK VOICE: [*off*] Of course, don't just think you have an automatic right to be here.

SECOND BLACK VOICE: [*off*] You have to earn your place if you wanna be involved in our community.

THIRD BLACK VOICE: [*off*] We wanna know who your family is, where you're from and what you've done.

Voices are crowding in on her.

WHITE VOICE: [*off*] You know nothing about them.

BLACK VOICE: [*off*] You know nothing about being a Koori.

BLACK VOICE: [*off*] Maybe ya just wanna jump on the bandwagon.

WHITE VOICE: [*off*] Maybe ya just wanna get a cheap loan or a handout.

They laugh. She's shaken and confused.

WHITE VOICES: [*together, off*] Who do you think you are?

BLACK VOICES: [*together, off*] Who do you think you are?

ANNE'S SCENE

ANNE addresses the audience, speaking to them directly.

ANNE: S'pose you want a happy ending from me. You blackfellas want me to be reunited with my family, learn to love them, and move back home, all of us living happily ever after. You whitefellas want my adopted parents to become loving and tolerant of my black family and invite them around for a Sunday barbie—and wear badges for Reconciliation Day. Sure... Don't you? Admit it. What about me? What do I want? I don't know. I don't know where I belong anymore... But hey, it's Mother's Day and I've got to make tracks. *[She pulls out a box of gift-wrapped chocolates.]* I got Mum some milk chocolates. *[She pauses, then pulls out another box.]* And I got my mother some dark chocolates. *[She laughs and pops one in her mouth.]* Either way, I love them both.

3c- Shirley's Story from *Stolen* by Jane Harrison, 1998 (the stories have been mixed and not in the original order of the play)

SHIRLEY *gets on the phone and speaks.*

SHIRLEY: Yes, I'm ringing about one of my children, Lionel, who was taken from me in 1966 when he was just two years old. Why was he taken? Well, you tell me...

VOICE: Yes, I hope you can help me. My name is Shirley Thomas and I'm searching for my son Lionel...

VOICE: Hello, I spoke to you some time back about my son Lionel... I know you don't hold records from back then but...

VOICE: I'm just following up in the hope that you might know of an Aboriginal boy who was adopted or fostered in 1966 by a white family in your area. His name was Lionel...

VOICE: Look, I've been trying to find out about my son Lionel... He was taken with his sister...

After a minute of talking over one another they end their calls. SHIRLEY *stands isolated, spotlight.*

SHIRLEY: Put me on hold... [*She laughs bitterly.*] You people have been putting me hold for twenty-seven years...

3d- Ruby's Story from *Stolen* by Jane Harrison, 1998 (the stories have been mixed and not in the original order of the play)

In the dark RUBY cries out.

RUBY: Where are you?

The lights rise on RUBY in the hospital bed. The chorus, representing her family, are crowded around her—they are excited to see her.

LEN: Ruby. We're here. It's your dad Len. And your sister Joanie. We've come a long way.

RUBY: Don't want no trouble.

LEN: Ruby, we finally tracked you down.

RUBY: Yeah... what happened to me?

They misunderstand, thinking she's talking about the past.

LEN: Well... We was real young, Ruby. They made your mum sign a bit of paper.

SISTER: She couldn't read or nothin'.

LEN: They said that she'd signed you up for adoption.

Pause.

RUBY: What happened to me...?

She indicates the institution bed.

LEN: Oh... you mean... love, you had a bit of a turn...

RUBY: [*reverting to the child, screaming*] Where are you?

LEN: We're here now, Ruby. Ruby, we wanna take you home.

RUBY: Don't live in no home any more. I work for the Hardwicks.

SISTER: Sis, we've come to take you home.

Her SISTER holds her hand, but RUBY pulls it away.

RUBY: Mmm. Don't need no trouble.

Her family stands there awkwardly while RUBY rocks and mutters to herself.

Got enough to do.

The lights go down.

3d- Jimmy's Story from *Stolen* by Jane Harrison, 1998 (the stories have been mixed and not in the original order of the play)

JIMMY: What do you do when you meet your mother for the first time in twenty-six years? Shake her hand? Give her a hug? Do I show her me footy trophies, and me school reports?

JIMMY'S MOTHER: Twenty-six years is a long time. Gees, what if I don't recognise him? What'll I say to him?

They pull out the twenty-six presents from the box and lay them slowly on the bed.

JIMMY: Do I say, 'Hi, Mum, what's new? How have you been? Where have you been all my life?' Do I give her twenty-six Christmas presents and twenty-six birthday presents? Bloody hell, I don't even know when her birthday is...

JIMMY'S MOTHER: Maybe we'll be like strangers. Maybe he'll be ashamed of me. He probably doesn't even know how much I've missed...

She breaks down. They both hang their heads, then stand up straight as if putting on a brave face.

JIMMY: [*making a joke of it*] Hey, when you meet your mother for the first time, do you put on your best gear... or go casual?

JIMMY'S MOTHER: His foster mother's probably real smart looking.

They simultaneously indicate their simple gear.

JIMMY: What do I tell her? Good stuff? Or all the bad stuff?

JIMMY'S MOTHER: I know I'm gunna cry...

They start putting the presents back in the box.

JIMMY: Maybe she'll wanna come and live with me and bring all the rellies.

JIMMY'S MOTHER: Maybe he'll be one of those flash blacks with a mobile phone.

JIMMY: God, I hope she's not real dirty or something.

JIMMY'S MOTHER: Will he like me?

JIMMY: She might not even like me.

JIMMY'S MOTHER: Will he love me?

The boxes go back under the bed. They stand there facing one another.

JIMMY: Will she feel like my mother...? [*Pause.*] I don't even know what having a mother feels like.