

# THE MECHANICS

WRITTEN BY DARREN BREALEY

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## THE MECHANICS

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## THE MECHANICS

Meet old school, all-knowing tradesman, Norbert who works hard at keeping ahead of the next crisis in the car repair workshop. He generously takes new kid, Colin, under his wing, tutoring him in the sacred art of mechanical ethics, love and relationships. Norbert knows a lot of things. He knows. In fact, sometimes, he will tell you too many times that he knows. Norbert attempts to educate Colin about the games men and woman play (or at least the games men think women want them to play.) Colin proves he isn't as stupid as appearances initially indicate.

*The Mechanics* was first performed at Trades Hall in the Annexe Room, Melbourne, on 6 October 1999, with the following cast:

COLIN	<i>Russell Healy</i>
NORBERT	<i>Adrian Nunes</i>

*In the lunch room of a car repair workshop, Colin sits at a table, flipping through a car magazine and eating his meat pie and sauce. Dressed in his coveralls and smelling of oil and grease, Colin is immersed in his own moment as Norbert storms into the lunch room, his only escape from the frustrating yet attractive women he is attending to in the car repair shop.*

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*COLIN sits in the lunchroom eating his meat pie and sauce, as he flips through a car magazine. NORBERT enters.*

NORBERT: Bloody women...

COLIN: What's up, Norbert?

NORBERT: Nothing's up Norbert.

*Pause.*

NORBERT: Bloody women.

COLIN: What's up?

NORBERT: Nothing.

COLIN: Why do you keep saying, 'Bloody women'?

NORBERT: Bloody women.

*Pause.*

NORBERT: She can't make up her mind.

COLIN: Who?

NORBERT: Her.

*Colin looks outside the lunch room.*

COLIN: The brunette?

NORBERT: Red.

COLIN: What's wrong with her?

NORBERT: Nothing. That's the problem.

COLIN: Then why the bloody women?

NORBERT: She can't make up her mind.

COLIN: What about?

NORBERT: She wants her car today.

COLIN: So.

NORBERT: She can't have it today.

COLIN: Why?

NORBERT: It's not finished.

COLIN: Why?

NORBERT: The carburettor needs replacing, I haven't finished the sports' timing belt and the executive's got a problem with its major service I can't finish, because this bloody woman keeps interrupting me.

COLIN: The brunette?

NORBERT: The red. How many times do you need telling?

COLIN: Oh.

NORBERT: Oh? No mate, it's more than bloody *oh*.

COLIN: Oh?

NORBERT: Yeah. She needs to understand how a man functions.

COLIN: Oh.

NORBERT: Yeah. She doesn't know what I got to do.

COLIN: How long have you told her?

NORBERT: What?

COLIN: When did you tell her she could have the car?

NORBERT: Mate, you *never* tell them when the car will be finished...

COLIN: Oh?

NORBERT: Yeah. Tell her it's finished tomorrow and you're stuffed. Then you got to work too hard to get it finished. I got to take my time. They don't understand mate... It's like an art...

COLIN: Art?

NORBERT: Yeah. It's not just as simple as stuffing a sparky back into its casing.

COLIN: Oh?

NORBERT: No, mate. You got to tell them they can have it in a week and when it's finished three days later, they think you're a bloody genius. That's how

you get respect, mate. Women *like* that sort of stuff. They like to be swooned. They like to be told that it will take a little longer, then when it's finished early – bam!

COLIN: Oh.

NORBERT: Mate, you listening to anything I'm saying?

COLIN: Why don't you just tell her the truth?

NORBERT: What?

COLIN: Tell her it's going to take three days.

NORBERT: What are you – mad? Tell her that and you're left with no bargaining power. Mate, you really don't know how to talk to them, do you? Colin, your view on women is limited, mate. Colin. *Colin*. Mate, when a woman asks for something, she doesn't want it.

COLIN: No?

NORBERT: No.

COLIN: So, when the red wants her car today, she doesn't want it today?

NORBERT: She *thinks* she wants it today.

COLIN: But, she doesn't want it today?

NORBERT: No.

COLIN: Oh.

NORBERT: Will you stop that?

COLIN: What?

NORBERT: Saying 'oh'.

COLIN: Oh?

NORBERT: Yeah, *oh*. It's really annoying.

COLIN: Sorry, Norbert.

NORBERT: Colin, the truth will get you in trouble with women. These days, with women's lib and all that sort of stuff. Man, it's just too risky. It's up to the man to work out what she really wants. When she says she wants a new dress, really what she is saying is that she wants you to pay more attention to her. You see that key word, *pay*. Colin, don't buy her that

new dress, she's got four hundred thousand dresses in the overcrowded wardrobe that she never wears.

*COLIN:* Oh?

*NORBERT:* Take her out to dinner. Buy her a bunch of flowers.

*COLIN:* No new dress.

*NORBERT:* She doesn't need one.

*COLIN:* Oh.

*NORBERT:* You're not listening to me, are you?

*COLIN:* Yeah, mate. No new dress – dinner.

*NORBERT:* How long have you been working here, Colin?

*COLIN:* Couple of months.

*NORBERT:* Noticed the women that come in here?

*COLIN:* Oh yeah.

*NORBERT:* I can see you're a man of few words, Colin.

*COLIN:* Oh?

*NORBERT:* Do you get my point, Colin?

*COLIN:* She only wants her car back, mate.

*NORBERT:* Only wants her car...back... You don't get it!

*COLIN:* No. No, mate, she wants her car back by tomorrow...

*NORBERT:* Today.

*COLIN:* When did you tell her she could have it back by?

*NORBERT:* That's not the point, mate...

*COLIN:* ...You told her today, didn't you?

*NORBERT:* Yeah, but...

*COLIN:* She doesn't want any bloody flowers, mate.

*NORBERT:* Not in this case. Don't you see...?

*COLIN:* No.

*NORBERT:* Mate, if I gave her car back today, she'd be back by the end of the week wanting something else fixed on it.

*COLIN:* This is a car repair place, mate. You told her you are a mechanic.

*NORBERT:* That's not the point...

\*\*\*\*\* Truncated \*\*\*\*\*

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