

# **HELICOPTER**

**DRAFT 7**

**5TH JULY 2012**

**By Angela Betzien**

**A RealTV commission for Melbourne Theatre  
Company**

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*Mother hovers over me like a helicopter.*

**From *Between Parent and Teenager*, Dr Haim Ginott, 1969.**

*They hid in the grass from helicopter gun ships and were attacked by wild animals in the night. Of 30,000 who began the trek, only 11,000 survived. **The Lost Boys of Sudan** foundation website.*

**Characters**

**She, 40**

**He, 40, married to She.**

**Jack is their 14 year old son.**

**Alice is their 2 year old daughter.**

**Thomas is a 25 year old African man who lives next door.**

**Three boys from Jack's private school.**

**Australia's Got Talent Judges**

**These characters are played by the other actors .**

**Scene**

*Darkness.*

*An African man stands alone.*

*He speaks in his own language.*

Thomas      Listen to me.  
                  Listen  
                  to  
                  me.  
                  Hear  
                  me.  
                  Hear my voice.  
                  Hear my story.  
                  It will give you nightmares.  
                  I am a survivor.  
                  I survive so that I can tell my story.  
                  This is my dream.  
                  This is my destiny.  
                  Listen to my story.

*Light reveals he is cradling an African toy.*

*An African woman's grief stricken cries.*

*A helicopter.*

*The sound of the helicopter intensifies until it is deafening.*

*Perhaps the sound morphs into a domestic sound.*

*Light.*

*A white room.*

*An affluent home in a Western city.*

*A cage on a small section of manicured grass contains a white rabbit.*

**Scene**

*He is staring into space.*

*She enters with scotch bottle and two glasses.*

She            We'll have to get a new X5.

*He is wrenched back to reality.*

He           What?

She           We can't keep the old one.

He           It's brand new.

(She          We'll get the optional extra of the rear tracking this time.

He           I'm keeping my car.

*She*          We've learnt our lesson.

He           There's nothing wrong with my car.

She          Oh god  
we've learnt it the hard way.

He           It's not a pit bull.  
It's not an animal that has to be destroyed.)

She          And we'll get counselling.  
Yes.  
Yes.  
We'll all see a therapist.

He           Will we?

She          We're at risk of post-traumatic stress.

He           I'll be fine.

She          I'm calling our therapist.

He           I'm not seeing a therapist.

She          If it goes to court ...

He           It's not going to court.

She          If it does...

He           It won't.

She          But if it does  
god forbid  
if it does...

*Pause.*

He           What?

*Pause*

She           It'll look better if you talked.

He           Do you think?

She           Much better if you've opened up...

He           Really?

She           ...expressed yourself.  
all the emotional stress...  
Yes?

*Pause.*

He           Call the therapist.

She           I will  
first thing in the morning.

*Silence*

*He goes into a zone.*

*She reaches out and touches him, he jumps.*

She           Are you..?

He           What?

*Pause*

She           We have to tell him.

He           Do we?

She           Oh god.

He           Why do we have to tell him?

She           He'll find out anyway.

He           He might not.

She           We could be on the news.  
Our house our car our driveway our street.

He            He doesn't watch the news.  
Who watches the news?

She            Some people watch the news.

He            Who?

She            Well not you.

He            No news is good news.

She            It's important to stay informed to stay alert.

He            We could wait we could tell him later.

She            Oh god his exams are coming up.

He            That's right.  
He doesn't need the stress.

She            Oh god.  
There'll be an investigation.

*He ~~pops up~~ pours two drinks.*

She            There'll be a court case.

*He holds out his hands, he sees that they are shaking.*

She            A process.

*He goes to ~~pop up~~ pour another drink.*

(She            That's enough.  
Don't you think?)

*He glares at her pops it anyway.*

She            We'll tell him it was an accident.

He            It was.

She            That's what we'll tell him.  
We'll tell him it was no one's fault.

He            It wasn't.

She            We'll tell him these things happen to people every single day.