

# FERGUS' ENVY

WRITTEN BY DARREN BREALEY

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## FERGUS' ENVY

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## FERGUS' ENVY

In the days when older women took on the role of turning a young girl into a lady, these lunatic women would find any excuse for a party. Titiana finds there is nothing worse than waking up from passing out due to narcolepsy, and not remembering where she is, or who she's with. On day three of Lord Florian Thrust's house party, held in honour of Fergus, his Valium-medicated dog, Titiana wakes up to find she is in a mysterious house. Gertrude attempts to save Titiana from herself, and lure Florian into donating a large sum of money to her 'cause'. Lucinda tries to lure Florian into the same fate, yet he dismisses their attempts. Florian becomes smitten for Titiana when she says she likes Fergus.

*Fergus' Envy* was first performed at the Monash Secondary College Theatre, on 21 August 2004, with the following cast:

LORD FLORIEN THRUST	<i>Ross Ditcham</i>
GERTRUDE	<i>Chris Davies</i>
LUCINDA UNDERCARRIAGE	<i>Juliet Hayday</i>
TITIANA	<i>Olivia Hogan</i>

*Day three of Lord Florian Thrust's house party, held in honour of Fergus, his Valium-medicated dog. Titiana wakes up to find she is in a mysterious house. Titiana enters the drawing room, wearing a busty dressing gown and an inconspicuous wig. Frantically, she tries to open locked external glass doors.*

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*TITIANA enters the drawing room, wearing a busty dressing gown and an inconspicuous wig. Frantically, she tries to open locked patio doors.*

**TITIANA:** One of these doors has got to be unlocked. I don't know what you want, lunatic, but stay away from me!

**GERTRUDE (off):** Titiana? Titiana, are you in there? You must be there.

*Titiana hides behind the piano. GERTRUDE enters wearing a flowing dressing gown.*

**GERTRUDE:** Titiana, Titiana, are you here or anywhere? Titiana, you must be here, or maybe you're in Lord Thrust's room. No, that would be immoral. Oh, there you are, Titiana; I can see you behind the piano. Now, out you come.

**TITIANA:** I don't know how, or why, I woke up in your room. Whatever you're selling, lady, I don't want any...

**GERTRUDE:** Titiana. I can understand why you might find this very difficult to accept, but you know it's my role to make you into a lady. Now, in six months' time from now, all the finest gentlemen in the country will be coming round to see you and ask for your hand.

**TITIANA:** They'll have to fight the rest of me first.

**GERTRUDE:** When I found you amongst the clothes, in the Brotherhood of St Lawrence Olivia, you were lost, lonely and confused, but I thrust you to my bosom. I promised myself there and then that I would look after you, and one day I would make you a better person.

**TITIANA:** I don't want to thrust your bosom. I want to go home.

**GERTRUDE:** Now that's not very grateful. What would Lord Florian Thrust say about that, about you being so ungrateful? I mean, he's gone to great effort to make you, to entertain you – and here you are, and isn't it three days after his birthday party? And hasn't he made us most welcome for breakfast.

**TITIANA:** The party was for his *dog*.

**GERTRUDE:** Shhh! Keep your voice down.

**TITIANA:** I'm not interested in being one of your hoity-toity fancy-pants protégées. I wasn't delivered in linen to be saved by you, to be shagged by your snotty-nosed little wet-pants.

*During the next speech, TITIANA backs away slowly, and makes a hurried exit.*

**GERTRUDE:** My family comes from, a long line of tradition. The Botrytis clan has for centuries been – has always helped – people who are in need. My family line actually trickles down to Dangling Upper Bottom, and for centuries we've been called upon to help those who are in need of themselves. So you see, it's useless for you to refuse – you just can't run away from it. You're here for me to save, and save you I will.

*LUCINDA enters. She wears a slightly revealing dressing gown and carries a hip flask. Her voice is hoarse and she walks with a lean to one side.*

**LUCINDA:** My God, Florien certainly can throw a party! Thought I heard voices down here. Haven't you got any sense of volume?

*TITIANA enters upstage, searching for an exit towards the other side of the stage. Gertrude and Lucinda do not see her.*

**GERTRUDE:** Titiana says that she doesn't need saving.

*TITIANA exits.*

**LUCINDA:** Sweetheart, she'll need someone to save her from that voice of yours. Don't fool yourself into thinking that you're the one to save her.

*TITIANA enters, defeated.*

**GERTRUDE:** It's my duty.

**LUCINDA:** Can someone pour me a Bloody Mary?

**TITIANA:** I just want to go home.

*Gertrude holds Titiana by the shoulders to face her.*

**LUCINDA:** Oh, lighten up, sweetie.

*Titiana recoils from Lucinda's breath.*

**TITIANA:** Oh, yeuch.

**LUCINDA:** Is Florien awake, yet?

**GERTRUDE:** Oh yes, I think he must be, because Fergus is on the piano. They always rise together.

*Gertrude moves to Fergus and pats his head.*

**GERTRUDE:** Oh Fergus, you have grown.

*Lucinda takes a swig from her hip flask.*

**LUCINDA:** He can't hear you. He's medicated to the hilt on Valium. We must launch our assault on Lord Florian. I'm going to invite him to morning tea this morning, so if you've got any plans, forget them.

**GERTRUDE:** Why should I?

**LUCINDA:** He's a catch for the bagging. My Henry, God bless him, didn't have the brains or the brawn to create wealth such as this. Not that we lived in a hovel, like little Titiana, mind you; we lived in the lap of luxury. This is the warmth of that lap of luxury, you little social-climbing parasite.

*Lucinda takes a long swig from her hip flask.*

**GERTRUDE:** Lucinda Undercarriage. I feel I must tell you that I am a lady of repute and will challenge you, fairly.

**LUCINDA:** What challenge could you offer to Florian's love for me?

**GERTRUDE:** I am the defender of the lonely. I provide homes for the homeless. There are times when I would say that I almost admire you – well, I might even go as far as to say that I almost envy you – but he will love me, because I am a philantha...philantha...philanthropist.

*Lucinda takes a long swig from her hip flask.*

**GERTRUDE:** Whereas you are just pissed.

**TITIANA:** I can't believe you two windbags. For crying out loud, all this carry on. You don't love him. You can't love him. You just want him for his money. Oh yeah, do you love him? Well then, give up...

*Titiana falls asleep standing up. She falls into a chair, in the spread eagle position, snoring with her mouth open.*

**GERTRUDE:** Don't worry about her; she suffers from narcolepsy.

**LUCINDA:** Remember when I taught you how to be a lady?

**GERTRUDE:** Yes. I followed in your shoes.

**LUCINDA:** What fun, eh?

*Gertrude tidies Titiana's sitting position; she crosses her legs and places her hands in her lap. She then closes Titiana's mouth, giving her a ladylike posture.*

**GERTRUDE:** *Hysterical.* You left me at the after party at the, at what you called the major theatrical society. Only, it turned out to be the *minor* major theatrical society. And it was full of dirty old men.

**LUCINDA:** It was an education, Gertie. Taught you how to keep your skirt on and your hands to yourself.

**GERTRUDE:** I don't know how you could have done it to me, Lucy. Leaving me with those dreadful men! They were so drunk, they couldn't stand up straight.

**LUCINDA:** That reminds me of those charity nights and fundraising events. What was it, opening nights and art galleries?

**GERTRUDE:** Those were the days.

**LUCINDA:** I bought you those days, Gertie. They were all me. Otherwise you'd still be sitting in your bedroom, soaking your toes in Epsom Salts. So you should be envious of me. I'm going...to get...a refill.

*LUCINDA exits with her empty hip flask. FLORIEN makes a dramatic entrance, wearing red silk pyjamas and an open green silk dressing gown with gold dragon symbols. His hair is heavily slicked back. He dashes towards Fergus with open arms and embraces him. He talks to and focuses only on Fergus.*

**GERTRUDE:** Good morning, Lord Thrust.

**FLORIEN:** Florian.

**GERTRUDE:** Florian, of course. Did you have a fun night, last night?

**FLORIEN:** Fergus had a nice night. We've called to the kitchen for some Bloody Marys.

**GERTRUDE:** Wonderful.

*Florien sits at the piano and begins to play Modern Cubist Expressionist music – a single note at a time.*

**GERTRUDE:** What style did you say that was?

**FLORIEN:** Modern Cubist Expressionist.

**GERTRUDE:** Would you like to hear my song? I've been rehearsing it, for the fundraiser for the Brotherhood of St Lawrence of Arabia. It's called, 'Come Home, Fanny Brice'. Would you like to hear it?

*Gertrude picks up her sheet music from underneath Fergus.*

*FLORIEN:* If you like.

*Florien continues to stroke Fergus.*

*GERTRUDE:* Would you like to take my lead?

*Florien prepares himself to play. Once ready, Gertrude lets out a strained off-key note. Florien plays Middle C on the piano.*

*GERTRUDE:* No. No. Listen.

*Gertrude lets out the same strained off-key note. Florien plays Middle C on the piano.*

*GERTRUDE:* One more time.

*Gertrude lets out the same strained off-key note. Florien plays Middle C on the piano. Gertrude clears her throat. Pause. Florien begins to softly play Modern Cubist Expressionist music. As Gertrude sings, Florien's playing gets louder and louder, eventually drowning out Gertrude.*

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

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