

RETURN TO BRENDA

V4

A short play by Nick Miller

CHARACTERS (male and female):

1st Robber Angela - Female
Old Woman - Older woman in front in in queue
Chloe - Next behind in queue, carrying several wrapped parcels
2nd Robber Martin - Male
Robin - Further behind in queue
Cashier - Older bloke

SETTING: A Post Office queue.

(Single man and couple waiting in airport departure lounge.)

1st Robber: *(Pushing old woman aside)*
Out of my way.
(Holds up gun)
This is a robbery.

Old Woman: Not before I get my pension.

1st Robber: Sorry old woman. It doesn't work like that.
This is important business.

(Iris clips Wanda around the ear)

1st Robber: Ow!

Old Woman: You'll watch your manners. I've been waiting 20 minutes
and I'm up next.

1st Robber: Ouch that hurt! Alright, but be quick.

2nd Robber: Hang on you can't rob this place.

1st Robber: What?

2nd Robber: You can't rob this place.

1st Robber: Why not?

2nd Robber: *(Holds up gun)*
Because that's what I'm doing.

1st Robber: *(Indignant)*
You are bloody not. I was here first.

Old Woman: Not til I get my pension.

1st Robber: Sorry.
(Talking to 2nd Robber)
Anyway, I'm first ...after this old hag.

Old Woman: *(Hits her across the ear again)*
You are a very rude young lady.

1st Robber: *(Rubbing her ear)*
Ow! Stop doing that.

Robin: I hope you don't mind me saying, but this is rather interesting.

1st Robber: What? What is?

Robin: The fact that you're a woman.

1st Robber: What?

Robin: You're a woman. Normally you expect robbers to be blokes. It's really interesting.

1st Robber: Well, that's just sexist.

2nd Robber: I agree though. It's pretty unusual!

1st Robber: Well, you can shut up. Go and find another Post Office to rob.

2nd Robber: Yeah, right. Like where? They've all shut down. I can't exactly do the one in Smiths.

1st Robber: Why not?

2nd Robber: When you get to the counter they try and sell you book tokens. Or chocolate.

Robin: Well I wasn't meaning to be sexist.

1st Robber: *(Sarcastically)* Oh cheers.

Robin: I'm not suggesting that a violent thug like yourself shouldn't be female.

1st Robber: What? Who said I was violent? Or a thug?

Robin: Yes, fair point. Being a woman I assume you would likely be much more gentle when it comes to violence.

2nd Robber: *(Looking confused)* Gentle violence?

1st Robber: Well, I'm NOT violent. I mean I COULD be violent.

Robin: I'm sorry. I didn't mean to offend you.
(Extending his hand to shake with the Robber)
My name's Robin, by the way.

(Robber shakes his hand, confused)

Chloe: Can I just say... Flying the flag for female robbers! Yay!

1st Robber: What?

Chloe: It's really liberating to see a woman doing a man's job.

1st Robber: Why should robbery be a man's job?

Chloe: Have you been in robbery long?

1st Robber: *(Increasingly agitated)*
What?

Chloe: Have you been doing this for a while? Is it a family business?

1st Robber: Family business?

Robin: Yes, is there much career progression? Family businesses can hold you back.

1st Robber: Hold me back?

Chloe: Is this your main job or is it just part time?

1st Robber: What are you all on about?

Robin: Do you have any other hobbies at all?

1st Robber: Hobbies?

Robin: When you're not holding up Post Offices.

1st Robber: It's NOT a fucking hobby. This is what I do.

2nd Robber: Ooh! Tetchy!

1st Robber: I told you. You can fuck off.

Old Woman: *(Hits her across the ear again)*
You mind your tongue.

1st Robber: *(Rubbing her ear again)*
Ow! Stop hitting me.

(Cashier shuts desk. Everyone turns to look, totally bemused)

1st Robber: What are you doing?

Cashier: Sorry, lunch.

1st Robber: What??

Cashier: It's my lunch.

1st Robber: You can't do that. This is a robbery.

2nd Robber: No THIS is a robbery.

Cashier: It's my lunch. There's only one of us on today.

1st Robber: You can't go to lunch now.

Cashier: I can! It's 1 o'clock. I always have lunch at 1.
I meet my wife. Brenda. At Greggs.

Chloe: Ooh, romantic.

1st Robber: No. I mean, you can't do that in the middle of a robbery.

Cashier: Well, it isn't a robbery yet, is it? You keep wittering on to these other people.

1st Robber: Wittering on...? you can't just leave. I've got you at gunpoint.

2nd Robber: Yes. So have I. I agree with...

1st Robber: Angela.

2nd Robber: Hi Angela. I'm Martin.

1st Robber: Hello, Martin.
(They shake hands)

Cashier: I've worked here 14 years. I know my rights.

2nd Robber: Surely there has to be somebody on the till at all times?

Cashier: Not any more. Not since we introduce the electronic tills.

1st Robber: The electronic tills?

Cashier: Yes, when there are no counter staff you can use the electronic tills.

1st Robber: What? That's no good to me, is it?

Cashier: They are very good.

1st Robber: What? That's no good to me, is it? I can't do a bloody robbery on an automatic till.

Cashier: I can show you the procedure.

1st Robber: What do you mean?

Cashier: If you want to withdraw funds, I can show you how the automated tills work.

1st Robber: Show me how to withdraw funds? Why would I want to to withdraw MY OWN FUNDS, you idiot? That wouldn't be a fucking robbery would it?

Old Woman: *(Hits her across the ear again)*
I've told you!

1st Robber: *(Rubbing her ear again)*
Ow! Will you please stop doing that.

Cashier: Yes. Please refrain from using that kind of language. Haven't you read the sign? We have a strict procedure on abuse.

Chloe: What? Even during a robbery? How do you enforce that?

2nd Robber: Yes, that's ridiculous.

1st Robber: *(Turns to the queue)*
Will you all shut up. This is important business.

(Cashier reaches for his sandwiches and attempts to leave)

Cashier: As a matter of interest, are you Australian?

1st Robber: Yes why?

Cashier: Whereabouts?

1st Robber: Why? Have you been there?

Cashier: No but I've seen it on the telly.

1st Robber: Good for you. I'm from the capital.

Cashier: What? Sydney?

1st Robber: No. Everyone thinks that. It's Canberra.

Cashier: Really? Is that in Australia?

1st Robber: Yes... where else would it be.

Cashier: I've not heard of that. Is that like in the desert?

1st Robber: What? No of course not.

Cashier: It's just that I've seen Australia on the telly.

1st Robber: Don't tell me. Neighbours.

Cashier: No. Like a programme with a Kangaroo.

1st Robber: Skippy.

Cashier: I can't remember the name but it had a Kangaroo in it.

1st Robber: Yes Skippy.

Cashier: And he, like, solved crimes and that.
Can't remember the name of it.

1st Robber: *(Getting annoyed now)*
Yes it's CALLED SKIPPY. Skippy the Bush Kangaroo.

Cashier: Yeah and he made like a clicking noise.
Click click click click.

1st Robber: *(Really annoyed)*
YES FOR THE LAST TIME IT'S CALLED FUCKING SKIPPY.
Skippy the Bush Kangaroo.

Old Woman: *(Hits her across the ear again)*
I won't tell you again. You mind your language.

1st Robber: *(Hurting)*
Ow! Stop doing that.

Cashier: Anyway, this is all very nice, but I must be off.

1st Robber: What? You can't go now...
(Looks at old lady and stops herself swearing)
For heaven's sake!
(She turns back to see the counter closed)

Chloe: I've got an idea.

2nd Robber: What is it?

Chloe: You could hold us all hostage.

1st Robber: What? Why are YOU suggesting that? I'm the robber.

2nd Robber: No, I am.

Old Woman: Stop arguing, you two. Or I'll bang your heads together.

2nd Robber: *(Looking sheepish)* Sorry.

Chloe: It would be like in a film. And we might get on the telly.

1st Robber: What are you on about?

Chloe: As long as it's not for more than half an hour.

1st Robber: What? Why?

Chloe: *(Checking her watch)*
I've got Pilates at 3.

1st Robber: For fuck's sake.

(Old woman clumps her again)

1st Robber: *(Even louder this time)* OW!!

Cashier: *(Checking his watch)*
ANYWAY... As I said, I must be off, but if you'd like to come back after lunch I can help you all then.

1st Robber: Help us then? This is absurd. You'll help us with our robbery?

Cashier: *(Ushering the customers out)* Well, no. Pensions. Travel money. We can also advise on insurance and Broadband.

Chloe: I just need stamps.

Cashier: And stamps.

Chloe: Advise me on stamps?

*(The robbers start chatting animatedly amongst themselves.
The customers and robbers are ushered out)*

Robin: Hey. I've just had a funny thought.

All: What?

Robin: You two are robbers. And I'm called Robin.

2nd Robber: Fucking hilarious.

(Old woman clumps 2nd Robber)

2nd Robber: OUCH!! Don't start on me.

(Old woman clumps 2nd Robber again)

2nd Robber: Get off.

Old Lady: You mind your manners.

Robin: *(To Chloe)*
By the way, if you don't mind me asking, what have you got so many packages?

Chloe: They're all going back to ASOS. Wore them at the club last night. I'm hardly gonna wear the twice, am I?

Robin: Oh right. Do you reckon they'll take back these underpants? I've only had them since September.

(Chloe rolls her eyes and scrunches her face at the prospect. They all leave except the Cashier, first robber and old lady)

Cashier: Ooh. By the way. I reckon I've just remembered the name of that programme. About the kangaroo.

1st Robber: Hallelujah.

Cashier: I reckon it was Flipper.

1st Robber: *(After a pause. Looks at the old lady)*
Go on. Hit him.

(1st Robber and Old Lady hit him as they leave)

Cashier: Ow! Ouch.