

# I Dream Before I Take The Stand

by Arlene Hutton

**Director: Susanne Crosby**

**Production dates: Tuesday 19 – Sat 23 September 23**

**Auditions: 2.00pm on Sunday 11 June**

**Rehearsals: 13 Aug – 18 Sept – days of the week to be advised**

In a courtroom, a woman takes the stand and is cross examined by a very clever and highly manipulative defence lawyer. In the world of western justice where an alleged criminal is innocent until proven guilty; the accuser is guilty until proven innocent... What we witness as a result is pithy, poignant, surprising, appalling, brutal, funny and altogether unbelievably believable. This is for any woman – or anyone, taking a walk in the park.

It's a short and beautifully written 2 hander: one man (the lawyer) and one woman (the witness) set in a courtroom. It is classically simple yet deals with complex emotions and takes the audience on a journey which I know will be thought provoking, each person having their own interpretation and experience of the same piece which I'm hoping will be a talking point.

Written in 1995, which in my mind is still only about 15 years ago... it's current, vibrant and fresh. It's utterly ridiculous and at the same time, utterly believable. In a world which glorifies the articulation of the lawyer over and above sourcing the truth, this could, and I'm sure does, actually happen.

This premiered at the Edinburgh Fringe in 1995, then to New York International Fringe Festival in August, 1997, it also won ATHE Lunchtime Theatre Award, 1995 and has been performed and is still being performed all over the US and Canada.

Reviews have called it "A feminist classic." (The List (Edinburgh)) and "...a riveting piece of theatre. The writing is pithy and fierce." (New Jersey Independent).

The audition process:

This piece requires strong character actors so I am looking for people who can show full emotional range. There will therefore be a group activity as well as pieces from the play to read. The exercise does not require any extra preparation and does not require physical exertion, please be flexible and open to the process.

The playwright is American and it is written in American English so an American accent is preferred.

**BLT actively encourages auditionees from ethnic minority communities and any of the below parts could be played by any race.**

**For more information and audition pieces, please contact Susanne Crosby by email [suse@susannecrosby.com](mailto:suse@susannecrosby.com)**

Character	Description	Playing age
The Woman	<p>She starts as someone rather innocent, as to her it is obvious what has happened: she was assaulted in a park, but the details of the assault are never discussed beyond her saying she was grabbed. She is prepared for court, but not prepared to be manipulated and is caught off guard. It is a challenging yet rewarding role for someone exploring a nuanced emotional character arc. American accent preferably.</p> <p>She is described in the text as a petite woman: as her physical characteristics are actually discussed in the play.</p>	20-40
The Man	<p>The defence lawyer. He is professional and charming at least to start with, but is razor sharp with the job he has to do: defend his client and twist the court against the woman. Someone who holds his cool in any given situation as this is his job, not personal, with intellectual not emotional vindictiveness. A really interesting character to explore and play. American accent preferably.</p>	30-60

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