

**Emily**

John is. Was. Our hope.  
“The Freedom to be Authentic”. Remember?  
He taught us that.

**Drew**

But what does it mean?

**Susan**

It means that you’re free to crawl out of whatever tiny closet you squirmed into whenever you were old enough to realise there are some things you shouldn’t share with the world.

**Drew**

I never crawled into a closet.

**Susan**

Of *course* you did. *We all* did. Everybody drags a closet behind through life. The problem with John’s “freedom to be authentic” was that *his* freedom usually caused someone else’s captivity. When he opened *his* closet door, it made us damn sure that *ours* were locked tight. Some freedom.

(beat)

**Drew**

Listening to his speeches is like standing near while someone throws a match into a three year old box of fireworks: When the bombardment of irritating noise, misfires, duds and smog is over, all that’s left is an unfocussed stench in the air. And they love it!

He’s a mudguard.

All shiny and glossy on the outside – that’s what they see.

But *we*’ve been living on the inside with all the rust and mud and grime.

**Emily**

And that’s the huge problem. While we’ve been living on the inside, nobody knows who we are.

**Drew**

The market is in an uproar.

**Emily**

Exactly

**Susan**

The great experiment will be in ruins.

**Drew**

If it isn't already.

**Emily**

STOP! We've gone off track. In the next few minutes one of us has to make a statement either supporting him or throwing him to the wolves. What's it gonna be and who's gonna present it?

**Susan**

Can't we just go away? Ignore it. Go to Noosa.

**Drew**

Susan, all three of us are in this cesspit up to our armpits and nobody is about to pull us out unless we face it ourselves.

**Susan**

Okay, okay, okay. I get it.

God, we need John. What would John do now?

**Emily**

He would go into full attack mode. No question. He would go the whole Trump and bludgeon his way through.

(beat)

*The others look to Susan.*

**Susan**

I can't do that.

*The others look to Drew.*

**Drew**

I can't do that.

*The others look to Emily.*

**Emily**

I can't do that.

(beat)

**Drew**

Look. All we have to do right now is to make a decision to either support John or not and go out there and make an impassioned empathic announcement.

**Emily**

Okay Drew, Susan and I will agree with whatever you decide to announce, won't we Susan?

*Susan nods*

**Drew**

Oh no you don't. Don't lay all the crap on me. As soon as I go out there you know what will happen? I'll be halfway through my little speech and John will walk in the back of the room. And it doesn't matter what I am saying, he will just disagree out of spite. And you two will say: It was all Drew's idea!

No way, Jose.

I want full agreement. Not even a vote. It has to be unanimous before I go out there.

And I want to record it so there's no going back.

Better yet, why don't all three of us make a joint announcement.

**Susan**

He's right, Em. Even if John doesn't show up, neither one of us is enough on our own to fight him off in their eyes.

But after all that's happened ... whatever's happened ... the three of us, together ... might *just* be strong enough to stop the panic.

In fact, we *must* be.

**Emily**

Wait a minute. Wait a minute. What about a third option?

**Drew**

What third option?

**Emily**

My dad always said to me: Em, there's always a third option. You've been saying support him or don't support him. But maybe there is a middle position.

Do we have to support anything?