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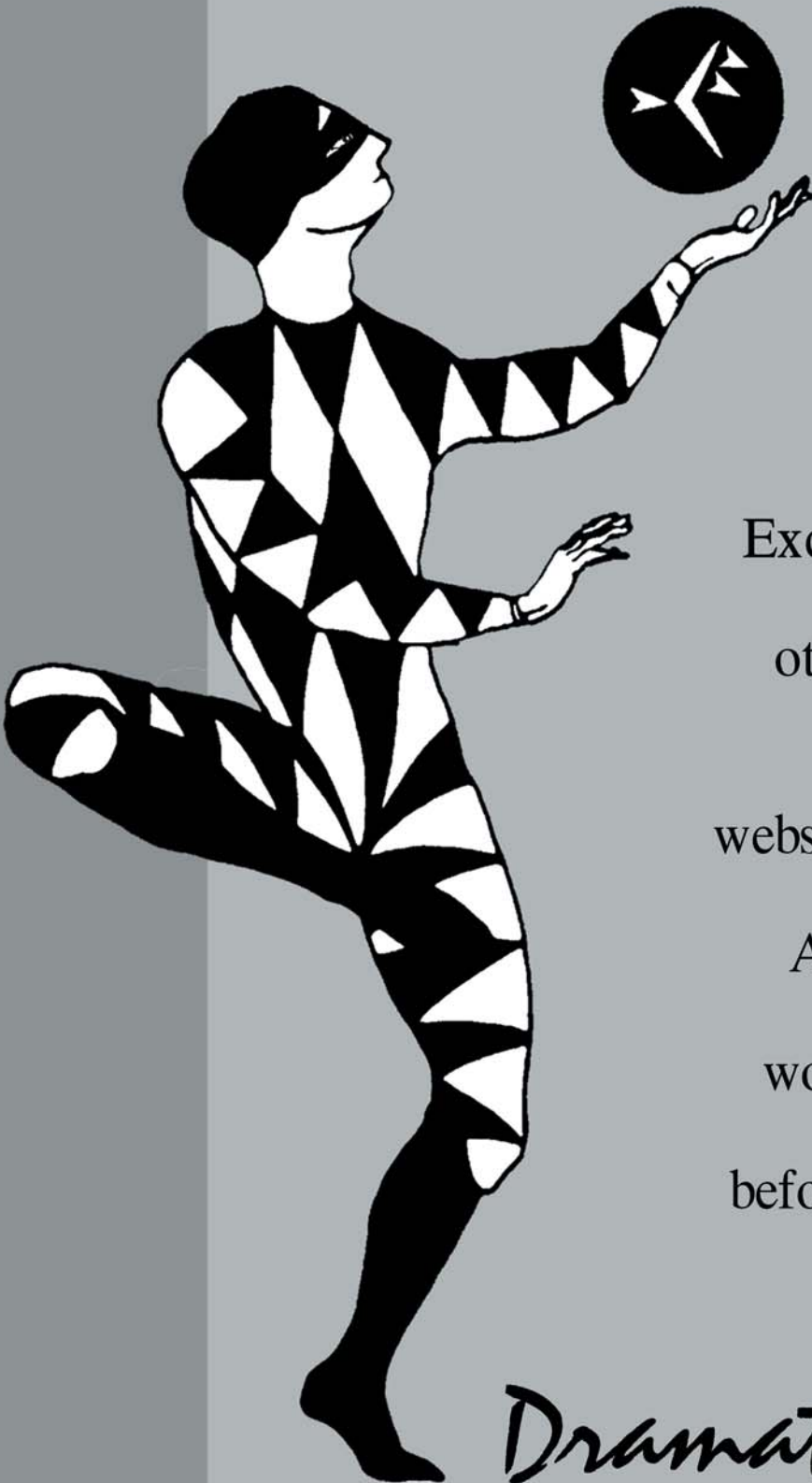
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*Dramatic Publishing*



# **PILGRIMS**

The Radio Play

By  
DIANE NEY

**(Manuscript)**



**Dramatic Publishing**

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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PILGRIMS was presented on BBC World Service Drama in July 1992. The director was Gordon House, sound balance was by Chris Lewis and the production assistant was Jo Hill. The cast was as follows:

MIKE ..... Dominic Ricard  
CELIA ..... Sue Broomfield  
DRAKE ..... Neil Roberts  
FEMALE CO-WORKER ..... Anne Winsor  
MALE CO-WORKER I ..... Peter Penry-Jones  
MALE CO-WORKER II. .... Peter Gun

# PILGRIMS

A Radio Play in One Act  
For 3-4m., 2w.

## CHARACTERS:

CELIA

MIKE

DRAKE

FEMALE CO-WORKER (briefly)

MALE CO-WORKER I (briefly)

MALE CO-WORKER II (briefly)

NOTE: The Male Co-worker characters can be reduced to one Male Co-worker.

TIME: The future.

PLACE: An office.

# PILGRIMS

FEMALE VOICE:                    On your Woman's Birthday, you must blow out the candle and make a wish. This is to caution you that the wishes you make from this time forward are a woman's wishes, and may come true.

MALE VOICE:                    *(Whispers something under his breath, as if practicing. Has the cadence of poetry, stops as:)*

CELIA:                                *(Entering)* Blest day, Mike.

MIKE:                                Blest day, CELIA. *(Hesitates)* And it's a beautiful day, isn't it?

CELIA:                                Yes, it is. We have been favored with weather—

MIKE:                                Suiting an auspicious event.

CELIA:                                What event?

MIKE:                                *(Hesitates)* Finishing our project for the Festival.

CELIA:                                Do you think we'll finish today?

MIKE:                                Absolutely.

CELIA:                                Oh. Well, good for us. Festival projects aren't due until next week, and we had the hardest Restoration of any of them, or at least I thought we did. So, if we finish it,

that shows, well, what a good team we are, as Literary Restorers, I mean, and that we work well together, and so maybe then we'll have another project.

MIKE: Yes. Yes, and I agree this may have been the hardest—

CELIA: Where's the box?

MIKE: —with the poetry and all. (*Pauses*)

CELIA: The box?

MIKE: Oh, I didn't take it out yet.

*FX: Cabinet being opened, box being set on table, opened*

CELIA: I liked the poetry.

MIKE: Careful.

CELIA: This ancient paper tears so easily. Did you like the poetry?

MIKE: Oh, yes.

CELIA: You hardly ever see it anymore. My mother won't have it in the house. But I like it. Especially when it's like this, in a play.

MIKE: Well, we think it's a play.

CELIA: I don't see how it could be otherwise. Stage directions— You said yourself we never see—

MIKE: I know, I know, stage directions



are rarely seen in poetry. It's just that this poetry is so potent. For a play. At least for what we think of as—

CELIA: And beautiful. It's a shame people don't poet anymore.

MIKE: Actually,—

CELIA: You never see it, except in greeting cards—to you, a few, how do.

MIKE: True. But—

CELIA: I wonder if the Ancients watch us?

MIKE: When?

CELIA: Well, this whole idea of the Festival of the Ancients— I mean, haven't you ever thought at it? Trying to replicate everything they did—digging up utensils and vision boxes and reconstructing cooking rooms. Or this. Taking little pieces of faded paper someone's hidden in a tin box and trying to piece them back together in some semblance of their original plotting. It's funny the things people save, hide away in tin boxes. Do you ever hide anything?

MIKE: *(Hesitates)*

CELIA: Maybe that's—

MIKE: *(Over her line)* Actually,—

CELIA: —too personal. It's just one of those things

I think about—the Ancients watching us, not what you're hiding—when we're—not that I think you're hiding something—when we're working together, as I said, that's one of the things— Do you ever think about things, when we're working together? I wonder sometimes about that, too, and other things, not that I'm not thinking about what we're doing at the time. Why am I doing all the talking?

MIKE: You're faster.

CELIA: *(Laughs)* I guess. I'm—in a kind of mood today.

MIKE: I read a book last night.

CELIA: Did you? One you'd already read?

MIKE: No.—

CELIA: Really? It's so hard to find new ones, with no one processing books anymore.

MIKE: That's true. I—

CELIA: Maybe it's because we don't have wars anymore. They used to say that all good processors come after a war.

MIKE: Or love—processors come from. The point is—

CELIA: Maybe that's it. No more wars, and, some would say, no more love, with so many arranged couplings. Although I guess it happens sometimes. But you weren't equating love with war, were you?

MIKE: No, I was trying to tell you about this book I read last night.

CELIA: Oh, yes, was it a whole book you read?

MIKE: Yes. I just got started and I couldn't stop. I'll tell you why.—

CELIA: I'm like that with salted nuts.

MIKE: Celia!

CELIA: What? Oh. Sorry. I'm just kind of—  
Today's kind of different, for me. I'm not calm. It's— Well, I guess you wouldn't know, but—

MIKE: It's your birthday.

CELIA: Yes, it is.

MIKE: Right. Well, that's— (*Stops*)

CELIA: What?

MIKE: I knew it was your birthday—I just wasn't ready to talk about it. I don't understand why it is that we can work so well together on Literary Restoration but when we try to work on something personal we plot in completely different directions.

CELIA: What personal?

MIKE: (*Overlapping*) You never let me build. You just jump in.

CELIA: I'm a jumper—I'm sorry.

MIKE: I worked so hard on this last night. I had it all worked out.

CELIA: I thought you were reading last night.

MIKE: That's what I'm talking about. Switching subjects.

CELIA: But I thought you wanted to talk about—

MIKE: I need to build up to it, OK? I'm not a jumper.

CELIA: OK.

MIKE: A little subtlety, a little nuance—not just—  
Look at these papers.

***FX: Rustle of papers***

MIKE: Touch them—feel their ancientness, their— It's not just A to B to C—it's an intangible—something—that builds in you—that carries you with it and then you're there and you can't even see the path you've come by. It's wonderful!

CELIA: It is kind of exciting. Even in these fragments, you pick up on their intensity—on the electricity between them—especially in that scene we figured must be a party, where they first meet and there's— (*Stops*) Did you want to say something?

MIKE: Yes.

CELIA: Please, go ahead.

MIKE: OK. OK. Well, seven months, we've been

doing this. Working—together. And, occasionally, we've had lunch—together.

*(Pause, as CELIA waits for him to continue.)*

CELIA: *(Finally)* And I've already admitted how much I've enjoyed it.

MIKE: Yes. *(Hesitates)*

CELIA: And I see, from my point of view, no stopping ahead. I intend to continue enjoying it—working together. *(Waits)* Is that what you wanted to say?

MIKE: Damn! *(Moving away)*

CELIA: There's a problem.

MIKE: *(Coming back)* No, no. Let's get to work—finish this. Complete it. End it. Do it and have done with it.

*(Slight pause.)*

CELIA: Maybe it was that book you read last night. Maybe that's why people don't read anymore. It gets them too excited.

MIKE: I am not excited.

CELIA: *(Close to him)* Aren't you?

MIKE: Well, I wasn't last night. Well, I was, but it—there wasn't— *(Stops)*

CELIA: *(Closer)* Won't you tell me about it?

MIKE: OK. *(Deep breath)* I was reading—

CELIA: Yes.

MIKE: And as I was reading, I felt an almost passionate—

*FX: Door bangs open*

DRAKE: *(Thundering voice)* Blest day!

CELIA: Drake!

*(He strides to her, lifting her off her feet, and kisses her)*

MIKE: Drake!

DRAKE: *(To CELIA, as he puts her down)* I have brought lunch.

CELIA: *(Catching her breath)* It's a little early for lunch.

MIKE: *(Overlapping her line)* Drake, I do not appreciate your coming in here and distracting my associate just as—

DRAKE: I am a very distracting man. This I cannot help.

MIKE: We're trying to work here.

DRAKE: *(Overlapping end of line. To CELIA)* I'm going to be in the Festival. I've been chosen for the Team.

MIKE: Pulling a cart?

DRAKE: No, Basket-Bat-Ball—a game compiled from Ancient sports pages.

MIKE: Like the motorcycling mud wrestling last year.

DRAKE: But much more complex.

CELIA: And interesting, I'm sure. You can tell me—

DRAKE: All right,—

CELIA: No, not—

DRAKE: (*Overlapping*) —two baskets sit on a floor—there and there. A ball, round as the cycle of winning and losing, there is which must be dropped into the baskets to score points. And between all, two armies of men clashing to prevent it.

MIKE: Prevent it how?

DRAKE: With bats.

CELIA: Bats!

DRAKE: Not to worry. They can only hit us on the head.

MIKE: Good thing.

CELIA: Drake, you could be hurt.

DRAKE: Not where it counts. My heart can only be hurt by you.

MIKE: She can jump on it later. We have to work now.

DRAKE: (*To CELIA*) I wanted you to know my honor, Celia.

CELIA: I'm very happy for you.

DRAKE: And also that our mothers are expecting us tonight. Lots of celebrating, birthday girl.

CELIA: Uh-huh.

DRAKE: Lots and lots.

MIKE: Lots and lots. But in the meantime—

DRAKE: *(To MIKE)* When is lunch?

MIKE: We just got here.

CELIA: *(To DRAKE)* I'll signal you.

DRAKE: All right. I have much more to tell you.

CELIA: OK, but—

DRAKE: I'll tell you later.

CELIA: All right— *(Cut off as—*

*(He picks her up, kisses her, sets her down.)*

DRAKE: Be ready.

*(He strides out.)*

***FX: Door slams shut behind him***

MIKE: That man is an idiot.

CELIA: Our mothers think we're well-matched. *(Laughs)*

*(No response.)*