



# Lost Child

By *Jacquelin Melilli*

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Written by Jacquelin Melilli © 2002

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# *Lost Child*

**An Australian Drama**

**Written by**

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## **Cast**

**Jade.....in her mid to late teens, sensitive, confused**  
**Lexie..... Jade's best friend, quietly rebellious, strong**  
**Skye.....Jade's younger sister, loyal, resilient**  
**Cass .....late teens, tough, streetwise**  
**Tarik.....early 20's, tough, bad tempered, tattoos**  
**Matt.....late teens, sensitive, easily lead**  
**Doubt..... Jade's conscience**  
**Hope..... Jade's conscience**

**Doubt and Hope can be Jade's pre-recorded Voice Over instead of using actors.**

## *Lost Child*

A dark and shocking play centered around Jade, her friend Lexie, the undesirable and dangerous Tarik and Cass and the ill effects of drug addiction and the consequences attached. Jade, since losing her father at the age of ten, feels that she has also lost her identity. She numbs her pain by slowly self destructing, almost taking her best friend Lexie with her. Her younger sister, Skye is caught in the middle, bailing Jade out when things get tough.

### **ACT ONE:**

*Stage curtain remains closed as Lexie walks down center stage and addresses the audience. Her face is heavily made-up with lots of black liner and mascara. She looks much older than her age. She is wearing a singlet top and short skirt.*

### **LEXIE:**

My name's Lexie but this is Jade's story. Jade's father drowned when she was ten. I was playing on the beach with Jade and her younger sister Skye when it happened. Jade idolised her father and when he died, she became wild and reckless. I always felt I owed her my loyalty and somehow, I got caught up in her self destruction. The turning point came when we started high school. Jade met a sixteen year old guy called Tarik. He talked Jade into lying to her mother about going to a sleep over at our friends' house. Instead we went to a party he'd arranged. I never knew if it was something we ate or drank, maybe everything was spiked, but before I knew what was happening, Jade and I were high. We woke up naked alongside about ten other naked bodies. I wanted to die then and there. I was so scared. All I could do was cry. Tarik told us that what went on at the party had been filmed and if we told anyone about it, he would show our parents a copy of the film. It wasn't until years later, the day I almost died that I finally came clean.

*Lexie exits stage. There is a pause before stage curtain opens. The stage is set with a few cushions, cans of drink and Jade's backpack and belongings scattered on the floor. Tarik is sorting drugs into small plastic satchels. Matt is helping him. Lexie is seen center stage left getting dressed. She is buttoning her blouse or buckling on a belt. Jade and Cass are lying around a pile of cushions. They are high. Jade is restless. She begins to thrash around on the floor, mumbling about her father.*

### **JADE:**

*(Shouting)* Dad! Come back. I'm over here.

*Jade's banging her foot on the floor. Her behaviour is irritating Tarik who's about to lose his cool and bash Jade.*

### **TARIK:**

Shut up!

### **JADE:**

*(Continues)* Dad! I found him!

### **TARIK:**

I'm sick of hearing about your old man, now shut up.

*Tarik starts to hit Jade. Lexie pulls Tarik away.*

### **LEXIE:**

Leave her alone. I'll ring her sister to come get her.

**TARIK:**

She's gives me the shits when she gets like this. She's too wasted. She'll have to clean herself up or she'll be no use to me tonight.

*Lexie takes a mobile phone out of a backpack and dials it.*

**LEXIE:**

She'll be no use to you if you mess her up either.

*Tarik, drinking out of a can, sticks his middle finger up at Lexie.*

**LEXIE:**

*(Speaking into the phone)* Hey, Skye...Is your Mum at work? Yeah, good. Listen, you'll have to come get Jade. She's freaking out about your Dad again. You know what happens when she gets like this..... We're in the 'Attic'..... I know you hate it here.....Don't worry about him.

**TARIK:**

*(Snatching the phone)* I'll protect you, baby.

**LEXIE:**

*(Snatching back the phone)* Shut up, Tarik. You want Jade home or not? *(Talking into phone)* Come on, Skye. She needs you... I know you're in the middle of something but this is urgent...

*Lexie moves out of earshot from the others, covering the phone's mouthpiece.*

**LEXIE:**

Look, Jade's freaking out and Tarik's about to snap. You don't want Jade hurt again do you? I'll look after you. I can handle him... Thanks Skye. Love ya.

*Lexie walks back and sits down near Tarik.*

**TARIK:**

That Skye's a hot little babe. I wouldn't mind a piece of her.

**MATT:**

She's still a kid.

**TARIK:**

She's the same age these girls were when they pulled down their panties. *(Laughs)* Now they don't even wear panties.

*Tarik runs his hands down the back of Lexie's skirt. Lexie pushes him away.*

**LEXIE:**

Lay off, Tarik.

**TARIK:**

I'd rather lay on, baby. Skye's ripe for the picking. There's nothing like a new piece of ass.

**LEXIE:**

You ever touch her and I'll blow the lid on your little operation.

**TARIK:**

*(Grabs Lexie by the throat)* Try it, bitch, and you won't live to see another day. You hear me?

**MATT:**

Ease up, Tarik. You know she'd never do that.

**TARIK:**

What the hell would you know? Mama's boy.

*Lexie frees Tarik's hand from her throat and moves away from him. She knows Tarik well enough to think carefully before speaking so as not to set him off.*

**LEXIE:**

Just leave Skye alone. As if it wasn't hard enough losing her father, now she has to watch her sister turning schizo. The last thing she needs is you on her back.

**TARIK:**

*(Mimics playing a violin)* Oh. Lets get the violins out. That's the saddest story I ever heard!

**LEXIE:**

Jerk.

**MATT:**

*(Kicking at Jade)* She's schizo cause she can't handle her drugs.

**LEXIE:**

Then maybe you should stop pumping them into her.

**MATT:**

She loves it. Jade would do anything to stay high. She'd take on a whole football team for a fix.

**TARIK:**

Yeah, she's a profitable piece. That's why I want her cleaned up for tonight. If she gets too wasted she'll be no use. I've got a heavy night lined up. We're gonna make a killing. You wanna get yourself ready Lexie, I got a new stash. Cass has tried it already.

**LEXIE:**

Is that why she hasn't moved for the last two hours? She looks wiped.

**TARIK:**

Cass is as tough as they come. Nothing would break her.

*Lexie goes over and sits in front of Tarik, with her back to the audience. She pulls her sleeve up. Tarik ties a band around her arm and injects her.(out of audience's view) Tarik looks smug as he watches Lexie reacting. There is a slight pause. Lexie rolls her head back and slowly lies herself down on the floor.*

**MATT:**

Man, that hit her fast. What the hell's in that stuff?

*Tarik laughs.*

**MATT:**

Is she gonna be ok by tonight?

**TARIK:**

She'll be high enough not to care and sweet enough to make us some money.

**MATT:**

*(Laughing)* You're a heartless bastard. Are you sure you've got a mother?

**TARIK:**

She taught me everything I know before she pissed off.

**MATT:**

So, what's your old man like?

**TARIK:**

*(Angry)* You think my life was a frigging fairytale, mate?

**MATT:**

I dunno. You never say much.

**TARIK:**

Yeah, well there's nothing to say. My old lady's a hooker. My life was crap from the start. But what would a prissy boy like you know? You had everything going for you and ya stuff it all up cause your oldies split. How pathetic are you?

**MATT:**

*(Angry)* You think that's nothing?

**TARIK:**

You're damned right I think it's nothing. Who the hell do you know whose parents haven't split up? That's frigging life mate. Nothing's permanent.

**MATT:**

Not everyone's parents split up.

**TARIK:**

Yeah, well if they don't they're screwing around behind each other's back. Life sucks, mate. *(Takes a sip of drink)* You're a wanker if you ask me. Your parents are loaded. You've got the world at your feet and you're no better than me. That's what heroin does mate, it makes us equal. Won't be long and you'll be grovelling like a pig in mud. Your own family won't recognise you.

**MATT:**

I've got things under control.

**TARIK:**

Yeah, that's what we all say. The truth is, this crap's got us under control. Once you're hooked, it's easier to just go with the flow than to try and swim against the tide. Reality is what you make it. You mess with drugs and they become your reality. Nothing seems normal unless you're high.

**MATT:**

You ever been able to stop?

**TARIK:**

I don't wanna stop. This is my life. I make the rules. Nobody tells me what to do. You think I want to get myself a job at McDonald's and get paid peanuts to take orders from some pimple head manager? What for? I've got a good little set-up going here.

*A voice is heard offstage.*

**SKYE:**

Jade?

*Skye walks onstage. She's a beautiful girl, around twelve years old yet wise beyond her years. She plays mother to Jade, covering up her drug abuse and cleaning up after her. She is tired of it, yet remains loyal, unaware of her co-dependency.*

**TARIK:**

Hey, Skye, you wanna join us?

*Skye ignores Tarik. She is nervous but tries not to show it. She walks over and kneels beside Jade.*

**SKYE:**

Jade, get up. *(Gently shaking her)*

*Jade mumbles and tosses around. She looks up at Skye.*

**JADE:**

Skye?

**SKYE:**

Yes, it's me.

**JADE:**

I saw Dad, Skye. He was coming out of the surf. He freaked me out, hey. His face was all blue.

**SKYE:**

*(Having heard it all before)* Come on, Jade. Don't start this again.

**JADE:**

He smiled at me.

**SKYE:**

Stop it Jade. You were dreaming.

**JADE:**

No I wasn't. I touched him and he was all wet.

**SKYE:**

Get up, I'm taking you home.

*Jade doesn't move. Skye picks up Jade's shoes and puts them on her. She picks up Jade's belongings, which are scattered on the floor, and puts them into Jade's backpack.*

**MATT:**

So, what's the deal with your old man? Jade's always talking about him coming back one day.

**TARIK:**

He's dead you moron.

**MATT:**

I know that, I found a newspaper clipping about him in Jade's bag.

**SKYE:**

Where?

**MATT:**

She's got it stashed in some book.

**SKYE:**

What book?

**MATT:**

Some kids book. It's in one of the side pockets of her bag.

*Skye quickly looks through Jade's bag. She finds the worn book and gets emotional.*

**MATT:**

That's it. 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe'. Cool book that. It's between one of the pages. *(Notices Skye's upset)* You ok?

**SKYE:**

This is the book Dad was reading to us before he died. It was his favourite. Jade always made him read it.

*Skye turns the pages until she finds the newspaper clipping. She takes it out and looks at it. She starts to cry quietly.*

**SKYE:**

Mum kept looking everywhere for this. Jade had it all this time.

**TARIK:**

Cut this emotional bullshit out and take your sister home.

*Skye continues to pack Jade's bag.*

**MATT:**

*(Ignoring Tarik)* I think it's really cool that your Dad saved a surfer's life.

**SKYE:**

What's so cool about it? The surfer was stoned. He made it to shore but my father didn't. He wore himself out trying to save a dope head. It was hours before they found his body.

**MATT:**

Yeah, well, he sacrificed his life to save another man's life. That makes him a hero.

**TARIK:**

Yeah, he's a regular Jesus! *(He laughs)*

**SKYE:**

*(Angrily)* I hate you! It's because of you Jade's in this mess.

**TARIK:**

It was free choice, sweetheart. No one loves her hits as much as Jade. It's her escape to paradise.

**SKYE:**

How could you say that? To any normal person, this is hell.

**TARIK:**

You have no idea what you're talking about. Why don't you give it a try and see how much fun it is.

*Tarik takes a pill and holds it up to Skye.*

**SKYE:**

Go to hell.

*Tarik stands up and walks over to Skye. He grabs hold of her and tries to put the pill in her mouth.*

**TARIK:**

Come on, try it. It'll blow your mind! You'll be begging me for more.

*Skye struggles to free herself.*

**MATT:**

Leave her alone, Tarik.

**TARIK:**

One little hit won't hurt her. Come on, baby. I'll look after you.

*Skye is frozen with fear. She starts to cry. Matt tries to intercede.*

**MATT:**

Let her go!

*Tarik pushes Matt. He stumbles and lands on the floor. Tarik grabs hold of Skye's hair and pulls her head back. Skye struggles to free herself. Tarik cajoles her and is about to put the pill in her mouth when she kicks him in the groin. Tarik doubles over.*

**SKYE:**

I'm calling the cops.

*Skye starts to run offstage when Tarik grabs her.*

**TARIK:**

You just try it, sweetheart and I'll hunt you down and kill you. You hear me?

*Skye nods in fear.*

**TARIK:**

I made a deal with Jade. She keeps working for me and I'll leave you alone. But don't get on my bad side or I'll have to break our little agreement. You won't want to mess with me.

**MATT:**

Leave her alone, Tarik. She's just a kid.

*Tarik pushes Skye away and starts punching into Matt.*

**TARIK:**

You better learn to keep your big fat mouth shut. I run the show here!

*Matt blocks off Tarik's punches.*

**MATT:**

Ok, ok.

**TARIK:**

*(Turns to Skye)* Take your sister home and get her cleaned up. She's frigging useless. Throws up every time she gets a hit. I need her back here tonight.

*Skye moves quickly towards Jade.*

**SKYE:**

*(Shaking her)* Come on, Jade, get up.

*Lexie's body starts convulsing. Tarik freaks out. He gets everyone stirring.*

**TARIK:**

She's had a bad hit!

*Tarik tries to slap Lexie's face to wake her. She doesn't move. He looks at Matt.*

**TARIK:**

We got to get outta here. Get hold of her. We'll take her down Finns Lane. *(Kicks at Cass)* Get up, Cass!

**CASS:**

*(Groaning)* What?

**TARIK:**

*(Looking at Skye)* Call an ambulance and tell them she's in Finns Lane. Use Cass's phone then turf it down the drain.

**SKYE:**

*(Afraid)* You can't leave her there!

**TARIK:**

I can't have the cops in here, can I?

**MATT:**

Leave her out of it, I'll call.

*Matt takes the phone from the backpack and puts it in his pocket.*

**TARIK:**

*(Kicks at Cass again)* Move ya ugly ass!

**CASS:**

*(In a stupor)* Goddamit!

**TARIK:**

We'll have to use the back exit so no one will see us.

*Cass drags herself off the floor and follows them offstage.*

**SKYE:**

Don't do this! You animals!

*Skye is panicked and crying. Jade is coming to her senses. She speaks slowly, in a stupor.*

**SKYE:**

Jade, quick, get up. I think Lexie's overdosed, I'm really scared.

**JADE:**

*(Drowsy)* Shit.

**SKYE:**

Why do you do this to yourself? How can you live like this?

**JADE:**

It's the only way I get to see Dad.

**SKYE:**

Stop it! Dad's dead. He's not ever coming back.

**JADE:**

I'd rather have a bit of him than nothing at all.

**SKYE:**

I'm so sick of this obsession you have. It's one thing to destroy your own life but it's not fair to drag Mum and me with you.

**JADE:**

I know. I'll go away so you won't have to worry about me anymore. I'll start fresh.

**SKYE:**

You know that doesn't work. It's worse when we don't know where you are. You have to stop. You need to get help.

**JADE:**

I know, I will. Where did they take Lexie?

**SKYE:**

They're leaving her in Finns Lane and calling an ambulance to pick her up there. Jade, we've got to call the police and turn Tarik in.

**JADE:**

Dammit, Skye, we can't call the cops. You don't know who you're dealing with. Tarik will frigging kill us.

**SKYE:**

*(Crying)* I can't take this. This is the last time, I help you. I'm telling Mum everything. I'm not covering for you anymore.

**JADE:**

Don't do this to me now. We've got to see if Lexie's all right. We'll wait downstairs. If the ambulance doesn't come past soon, you'll have to get help.

*Skye helps Jade as they exit. Lights black out. Stage curtains close.*

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