



BULL

BY MIKE BARTLETT



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.

BULL
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SPECIAL NOTE

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The first performance of BULL took place on 6 February 2013
at the Crucible Studio Theatre, Sheffield.

BULL transferred to 59E59 Theaters, New York City, as part of
the Brits Off-Broadway Festival on 25 April 2013

BULL was presented at 59E59 Theaters in New York City as part of the Brits Off-Broadway Festival, opening on April 25, 2013. It was directed by Clare Lizzimore; the set design was by Soutra Gilmour; the lighting design was by Peter Mumford; the sound design was by Christopher Shutt; and the choreography was by Alistair David. The cast was as follows:

TONYAdam James
ISOBEL Eleanor Matsuura
CARTER Neil Stuke
THOMASSam Troughton

CHARACTERS

TONY

ISOBEL

CARTER

THOMAS

PLACE

An office.

NOTES

There is a minimum of scenery, props, and furniture.
Instead the focus is entirely on the drama of the scene.

(/) means the next speech begins at that point.

(—) means the next line interrupts.

(...) at the end of a speech means it trails off. On its own, it indicates a pressure, expectation, or desire to speak.

A line with no full stop at the end indicates that the next speech follows on immediately.

A speech with no written dialogue indicates a character deliberately remaining silent.

Blank space between speeches in the dialogue indicates a silence equal to the length of the space.

BULL

ISOBEL. You've got ...

THOMAS. What?

ISOBEL. You've got something just ...

THOMAS. What?

ISOBEL. No the other side.

THOMAS. There?

ISOBEL. Yes. No it's still there.

THOMAS. Gone? Has it gone now?

ISOBEL. Well ...

THOMAS. Where is he?

ISOBEL. He's coming. Look at you.

THOMAS. What? What are you talking about?

ISOBEL. Step left step right —

THOMAS. Stop it.

ISOBEL. — dancing all over the room. Calm down.

THOMAS. I am calm. I'm standing perfectly still.

ISOBEL. You are now. But before you were like a spaz in a sweet shop. Oo oo oo.

THOMAS. Stop criticising me.
I'm very cool about all this.

ISOBEL. You're not cool about anything.

THOMAS. It's just of one of those days, one of those meetings you know, there's no reason to be particularly fussed about it.

ISOBEL. now you're fussed

THOMAS. I mean he's just a man, isn't he?

ISOBEL. I believe so.

THOMAS. With a job to do.

ISOBEL. Did you wear that deliberately?

THOMAS. Did I wear what deliberately?

ISOBEL. Your suit.

THOMAS. Yes I wore my suit deliberately yes, I didn't accidentally wear it, what would that even mean —

ISOBEL. It means your suit looks cheap.

THOMAS. Yeah. Well. I didn't wear it for you.

ISOBEL. No I think you wore it because you think it's your best one, but actually I think the other one, the one you wear every day, I think that's better.

THOMAS. You really are a bitch.

ISOBEL. Hey.

Hey.

I'm just saying, since we're waiting, since we're making conversation best as we can, I'm simply saying your suit isn't as great as you think it is. That's allowed. Expressing my opinion. Your suit, whether you like it or not, is a talking point. I'm not being a bitch. You should be grateful I was making conversation at all.

THOMAS. You've never liked me.

ISOBEL. Where the fuck is this coming from?

TONY. Are we ready?

THOMAS. We look ready don't we? Stupid fucking question.

TONY. Is he going to wear that suit?

THOMAS. For fuck's —

ISOBEL. Yes he is.

THOMAS. TALK TO ME! I'm here. Look.

TONY. Why isn't he wearing his best one?

ISOBEL. This is what I was / saying.

THOMAS. This is my best one.

TONY. Oh right. Really?

ISOBEL. Look you see you have to accept it now, I'm not fucking with you, your suit will count against you. And Tony agrees so —

THOMAS. Alright, I won't make an effort next time.

ISOBEL. I don't think there'll be a next time. Not for you. I mean from my point of view your suit is good news. Your suit is exactly what I want to see you wearing. Means I'm one up before we've begun. I was just trying to be nice.

THOMAS. He should be here. Have you heard anything from him?

TONY. What?

THOMAS. We're in the same room. You heard what I said. So why did you just say what?

TONY. What?

THOMAS. I said had you heard anything and instead of replying you said what? So it wasn't that you didn't hear me, it's implying a contempt for my question.

TONY. What?

THOMAS. I could hit you sometimes.

TONY. Why would he call me?

THOMAS. You're the team leader. Officially anyway.

TONY. Officially oo owch I'm offended. No. He knows the time we're meeting so why would he call? He's always on time. He knows we'll be here, I don't understand your question. Hence my reply: "What?"

ISOBEL. It's still there.

THOMAS. What?

ISOBEL. The thing. Just ...

THOMAS. Where? I thought you said it was ...

ISOBEL. Yeah but it kind of —

THOMAS. Have you got a mirror?

ISOBEL. Sorry.

THOMAS. Yeah if I looked like you I wouldn't bother either.

ISOBEL. A compliment. Thank you.

THOMAS. I meant —

ISOBEL. I know what you meant.

 There's a mirror in the bathroom.

 Thomas?

 You know where the bathroom is?

THOMAS. Yeah but I don't want to leave do I? In case he gets here when I'm gone. So.

ISOBEL. Okay

 Fine.

 Fine.

 ... but I really think you should have a look. Right?

TONY. Yeah.

ISOBEL. I mean it's ... it's really ... isn't it?

BULL

by Mike Bartlett

3M, 1W

This vicious comedy is an allegorical deathmatch between business colleagues — full of bizarre power plays and one-upmanship — wherein one of three employees is allegedly going to be fired. The odds against our protagonist are stacked from the outset: rumple-faced sad-sack Thomas never quite gets his footing against opponents Tony, a shark in wolf's clothing, and Isobel, a snaky number with a talent for undermining. In savvy fashion, Mike Bartlett's BULL caters to our baser instincts.

"A modern morality — or amorality — play that keeps its adrenaline level high and, at the very end, raises it off the charts."

—The New York Times

"Bartlett applies his down-and-dirty, black-humored and trenchant approach to the concept of business employment as survival of the fittest ... the play is like a protracted death scene among a group of wild animals, with the strong ones — a pair of smartly-dressed, smirking thugs — mercilessly circling and taunting the weak until it's time to deliver the inevitable fatal blows."

—Associated Press

"Fast-paced, fanged and darkly funny ... BULL charges and makes impact."

—New York Daily News

"Vicious comedy ... astonishing."

—Time Out New York

Also by Mike Bartlett

COCK

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