

Cuttlefish



By

Greg Buist

WHY I LIKE IT: *Drama Editor JOHN SULLIVAN writes...* This piece brims with ambition: metaphysics, science, a challenging linguistic component, and live audience interaction. What I like the most about Cuttlefish is its metaphysical premise and how every aspect of the plot, most of the dialogue and the improvised connection with its audience is tightly woven into the playwright's conception of a possible afterlife. Because the audience is directly involved, this play serves as a laboratory for group dialogue around such ideas as the limits of science and our scientific models of reality, the pitfalls of our saturation in / obsessions with media, and eternal questions regarding the why's, wherefores and what's next that round our earthly existence like a set of parentheses. This play resonates with a longer piece, *Hotel des deux Mondes*, by the French playwright, Eric Emmanuel Schmitt, though the interactive moments in Cuttlefish set it apart. The live interactions and the use of some hybridized Gaelic / Elvish terminology will pose some production challenges, but nothing insurmountable. Though the playwright anticipates a twenty-minute running time for Cuttlefish, given the interactive moments with the audience, it could go an indefinable bit longer with lively responses from all the yet-to-be-realized Watchers. Since the audience is implicated in the premise, they may have quite a bit to say about their situation.

Cuttlefish

The stage has a very rudimentary set. No proper tables and chairs just boxes to give the impression of what the furniture is.

Jacob/ Milly is talking on a mobile phone. We join in mid- conversation.

Jacob/ Milly

Kai/ Rani I'm sure you're fine, but this is my fifth call. It's after 8.30 and you said you'd be home by 5.00. I hope you're not still mad at me. I'm sorry, you were right and I was being a bit of an idiot. Please call me.

Knocking on door FX

Jacob/ Milly exits. The following dialogue is offstage.

Harry/ Emma

Jacob/ Milly Moseley?

Jacob/ Milly

Yes

Harry/ Emma

I'm Sergeant Harry/ Emma Moore and this is Lieutenant Charlie/Carla Davis

Charlie/Carla

May we come in please sir?

Jacob/ Milly

Y-yes. *(Re-entering with the police officers)* What is this about?

Harry/ Emma

Would you like to take a seat please sir? *(Jacob/ Milly sit)*

Charlie/Carla

Are you the husband/ wife of Kai/Rani Moseley?

Jacob/ Milly

Yes.

Harry/ Emma

I am very sorry to inform you madam, that at approximately 6.45 this evening, your husband/ wife Kai/Rani was involved in a motor vehicle accident.

Jacob/ Milly

What! Is she all right? I've been trying to phone her all night and trying not to panic as the traffic on the M1 can sometimes be heavy and I know that she sometimes will be delayed no matter how early she sets out.

Charlie/Carla

Mr Moseley? I'm afraid it is bad news. I am so sorry, but Kai/Rani is dead.

Jacob/ Milly

No she can't be. There must be a mistake.

Harry/ Emma

I'm sorry Mr Moseley. Is there anyone who we can contact to come over to be with you? Friends? Family?

Jacob/ Milly

What? Why would I want someone over here?

Charlie/Carla

It is a huge shock Mr Moseley. The support of loved ones can help during this horrible time.

Jacob/ Milly

Kai/Rani is the only loved one I want. Thank you. Please leave.

Harry/ Emma

I'm sorry Mr Moseley, but is advisable at times like this to...

Jacob/ Milly

Leave me alone. Get out. Get out!

The officers exit.

Jacob/ Milly

(drops to her knees. There is a slow blackout, just as it gets full blackout she screams:)

Kai/Rani!

Jacob/ Milly

(Sometime has passed - it is a new season winter? Jacket and tracksuit pants? Jacob/ Milly is drinking some tea and speaking to the room.)

You know my darling it actually is just a little bit easier. They said it is healthy to speak to you as long as I can accept that you are truly gone. I've been back at the Uni for two weeks now. I've been trying to lose myself in my research.

(There is the faint sound of rustling.)

Right on cue. And yes I know that that is just the leaves outside or the wind or anything! It's not you making contact from beyond, because it can't be. *(Pause)* But I keep on asking myself what if it is? OK. It's going to be like this. I know what direction my private research is going to take at home. If you're there I'm going to try and contact you. And not through some bloody ouija board or seances, but through science. If my science can do it then... and if not then I can move on. Yes I know they'll say I'm crazy, if they saw me right now talking to... but I keep coming back to, what if? What if you are still there? Well if you are there you can watch me and give me a rustle or a rattling to let me know I'm on the right path. And if I'm doing the wrong thing then give that cliched ghostly cry of "Woohoo!" *(Pause, listening, waiting)* Yeah I thought not.

Blackout

Jacob/ Milly

(She is wearing some sort of head piece with wires connected. She has a laptop set up recording video.)

This is Jacob/ Milly Moseley. Experiment Number 8.3. I am going to wear the Diatonal amplifier *(She puts on some sort of scientific looking headpiece as she speaks)* . I'm confident it's going to work this time. I know mistakes have been made before but I'm sure that I've got the bugs worked out. I continue to believe that if I can prove this, it will change everything. Yes I know I have said it before, but this time I predict it'll work. I've got the Anodyne capacitor aligned to a reading of 15 farad's per becquerel, the Isomagnetic collector is operating within accepted parameters and yes I've replaced the conduit seals

that caused the problem last time. Whatever happens, I leave this recording open to observe the results.

(Jacob/ Milly mime fiddling and adjusting knobs and levers on the boxes representing the tables. Then adjusts the headpiece. After a bit more checking she then looks out to the audience with wonder and shock. She can't believe what she sees.)

Jacob/ Milly

(Looking at audience) Where did you come from? What, what are you people doing in my unit. How come I can see through the wall?

(There is then the sound of electrical shorting she grabs her head as if she is in agony there is then a bright flash and she falls down supposedly dead.)

Blackout.

Two people enter carrying torches.

Charlie/Carla

(sniffing) Do you smell that?

Harry/ Emma

Yeah there seems to have been a fire.

Charlie/Carla

Well there sure is a burning smell but I can't see evidence of fire except over here *(the torch picks out a blackened headset and Jacob/ Milly laying down)*.

Harry/ Emma

Ah here we go. *(Lights on. Jacob/ Milly gets up looking around confused)* Mmm there are some scorch marks on the carpet and on the surrounding furniture. *(Jacob/ Milly looks where Harry/ Emma is pointing)*

Charlie/Carla

And this ash. From a body? What do you make of this chief?

Jacob/ Milly

What do you mean a body?

(They ignore her as if there is no one speaking)

Harry/ Emma

I'd like to wait until we get forensics to have a look at it, but to me it looks like it could be something that I've not heard of for quite a few years.

Jacob/ Milly

Hello?

Charlie/Carla

Well don't leave me in suspense chief. What do you think it might be?

Harry/ Emma

Spontaneous combustion. Ever heard of it?

Jacob/ Milly

Spontaneous what?

Charlie/Carla

I thought that was just one of those conspiracy theories. It's not true is it?

Harry/ Emma

Well to be honest I'm not entirely sure. I've never actually seen a case myself, but Ross McNeil, the boss I first worked with, said he came across a case similar to this. From memory, no one would go on the record to say that it was spontaneous combustion, but no amount of forensic investigation was able to offer another explanation. But that was back in the 90's

Charlie/Carla

Well it seems as though spontaneous combustion or whatever it was, happened to poor Jacob/ Milly Moseley.

Jacob/ Milly

What do you mean was? I'm still here. Can't you see me? Can't you hear me? *(turns around auditorium light come up and sees the audience again)* You people again! What do you want? What are you doing here?

Harry/ Emma

Yeah let's continue with a visual check of the rest of the property see if there's any other clues about what happened to poor old Jacob/ Milly Moseley.

Jacob/ Milly

What do you mean old?

Charlie/Carla

Well one thing that's certain, she won't be using this weird hat thing again.

Jacob/ Milly

What the hell is happening?

Josh/Serena *(who has been sitting in the audience. House lights come up as she speaks.)*

That is what I'm here to tell you

(Throughout the dialogue of the rest of the play, Harry/ Emma and Charlie/Carla continue miming investigating the crime scene on stage, whilst most of the dialogue between Jacob/ Milly and Josh/ Serena happens at the front of the stage or on the carpet surrounds.)

Jacob/ Milly

You can see me? Who, who are you? Where am I? What is happening to me? Am I dead?

Josh/Serena

I'll answer your last question first. "Dead" is what they call it over there. *(Indicating the stage)* But now you're over here, we say that you have "passed over". Which is a more accurate term.

Jacob/ Milly

Passed over? I don't understand. I'm just really confused. And what are these people *(meaning to audience)* doing here?

Josh/Serena

Here drink this, it'll help. *(Hands a drink to Jacob/Milly)*

Jacob/ Milly

Actually I am quite thirsty. *(Drinks)*.

Josh/Serena

OK let's take some small steps. First of all my name is Josh/Serena. And I am your guide now that you have passed over. Many of the people around us are "The watchers". And they will not answer you because what they do is watch. You might get the occasional one who will say something back, *(if anyone in the audience has called out anything in reply Josh/ Serena can nod in their general direction, but don't outright point them out)* but to them this is all just part of a trip to the theatre. They are watchers. That is what they do.

Jacob/ Milly

O K. So, are you a Watcher?

Josh/Serena

Well, sort of...

Jacob/ Milly

OK you know what? Forget that. More to the point am I dead? What does passed over mean?

Josh/Serena

That is going to take some time to explain Jacob/ Milly. Let's start with the biggie. Are you dead? Over there, where you were, humans accept that they are mortal. They live for about 80 - 90 years if they're lucky, then they accept that they die. In part they are correct because the body is mortal. The mind however, or soul or essence or whatever they want to call it, is immortal. You have passed over. You have left your mortal body behind. As those two detectives rightly said your body has been burned by spontaneous combustion, but it has now released or more correctly "freed" your, let's call it your soul for want of a better word for now.

Jacob/ Milly
So I'm dead but also not dead?

Josh/Serena
It's difficult try to explain to you at the moment, you're barely more aware than the watchers here. You asked what I am. The most accurate name that you could understand at the moment is "Witnesses".

Jacob/ Milly
(Sarcastically) What like a Jehovah's Witness.

Josh/Serena
No, absolutely no connection, but as I said at the moment it is the best term I can use to explain things to you.

Jacob/ Milly
So you "witness" you don't just "watch". Look I don't believe you that I'm dead. I also don't believe these people, the audience are your so called. "Watchers" they are just audience members. *(to audience)* What do you think? *(The actor has to be prepared to possibly ad lib depending on the audience response. Again if someone has already called out the actor may aim their question in that general direction.)*

Josh/Serena
So if they are the audience. What are you?

Jacob/ Milly
I'm an actor playing a role in Woy Woy Little Theatre's Flash Festival for 2022.

Josh/Serena
And what about me?

Jacob/ Milly
You are *(Use actor's real name)* who is also in the Flash Festival play I'm in.

Josh/Serena
And you feel sure of that? You don't think it's odd at all?

Jacob/ Milly
I don't know what is or isn't odd at the moment. Go back to explaining how I'm dead but not dead, Mr Witness.

Josh/Serena
Look I get it. I was just like you when I first crossed over; angry, confused. Nearly everybody is. It just takes a little time. Just have a look around you and describe to me what you see. *(Jacob/Milly hesitates)*. Come on, just for a few minutes.

Jacob/ Milly

OK. I can “witness” the audience sitting here (*pointing*) and there and there (*sarcastically*) looking very much alive I might add. I can see Lloyd (*or which ever tech is on duty*) up in the Bio box controlling the sound and lighting.

Josh/Serena

What about up there? (*pointing up to the lights*)

Jacob/ Milly

That is the lighting rig with all the lights on it that Lloyd controls.

Josh/Serena

Look again. Look closer. Look the way you were looking just before things went black. Don't just look “witness”

(As the word “witness” Jacob/ Milly gasps in wonder at what she sees and can't believe it. she stares in wonder all around the theatre. If the actor can bring up tears to show the beauty of the revelation that would be great.)

Jacob/ Milly

It's true! it's all true! I understand. And you're telling me even though they can hear and see us talking, the watchers can't see it?

Josh/Serena

You know the answer.

Jacob/ Milly

But what about describing it to them. Maybe they could witness as well.

Josh/Serena

Well go on describe it to them. Describe to the watchers what you can now observe and witness.

Jacob/ Milly

(The following contains elvish language, so that it will sound gibberish to the audience. There are a number of videos on youtube that can give a guide on pronunciation)

(To the audience). Up there look carefully you can see the A mae g'ovannen. Can you see the beauty of Man I eneth lin? Pedil edhellen Goheno nin. (Pauses to observe the reaction from the audience) Does that make sense? No well what if I said that I quite often enjoy having diarrhoea in my pants. *(To Josh/Serena)* Why are they reacting like that?

Josh/Serena

Think about what you just said and what they heard.

Jacob/ Milly

Why did I say that about diarrhoea? That's not what I was saying. How could they hear something I never said?

Josh/Serena

Watchers can't comprehend all this. (*Gesturing up at the lights and then around*) When you try to explain it, many of the words sound like incomprehensible gibberish. And because the watchers want to be entertained, after a while to the watcher's ears, the gibberish gets changed to random lines to try to make them laugh and keep them entertained.

Jacob/ Milly

But if they could just see...

Josh/Serena

Don't beat yourself up. Nearly every new witness tries to help the watchers see.

Jacob/ Milly

I think I get it. It's like trying to describe the colour blue to someone who's been blind since birth.

Josh/Serena

Not bad, but that analogy falls short because a blind person can use their other senses to try to come to some sort of understanding about what "blue" could be. They can feel and hear the sea. They can taste and smell a blueberry. Plus there are enough people with sight who can tell them that the sky is blue. So even though they can never experience it for themselves, they can accept it as a fact.

Jacob/ Milly

Yeah I suppose so.

Josh/Serena

Have you ever seen those cuttlefish whose skin can change to perfectly blend in with its surroundings or create light effects more elaborate than at Vivid.

Jacob/ Milly

(*Not sure where this is going*) Yeah.

Josh/Serena

So a better analogy might be a cuttlefish trying to explain to a human how they can use the pigments in their skin to create these incredible effects. But even that analogy falls short because even though there is the obvious communication barrier and humans lack the specialised pigments to even attempt what cuttlefish can do, humans can see the effect and appreciate it. Perhaps an even better analogy might be a human trying to explain to a cuttlefish how to drive a car.

Jacob/ Milly

So no witness has ever been able to explain it in a way for a watcher to comprehend.

Josh/Serena

Cuttlefish.

Jacob/ Milly

(Looks up at the lights) Yeah Cuttlefish. *(They both laugh)* So why was I convinced before that I was an actor in a play? I can still remember my absolute sureness of it, but now I see it for the hollow illusion it was.

Josh/Serena

When you first cross over you are barely more aware than the watchers and until you witness the truth for yourself you are still confined to the narrow mind of the living.

Jacob/ Milly

So when I was convinced I was an actor in a play it was because my “ape” brain couldn’t handle the truth.

Josh/Serena

Yeah, but don’t be too harsh on the old human brain. There is no context in the world over there to help them understand. It takes a leap of faith.

Jacob/ Milly

Or spontaneous combustion.

Josh/Serena

(Smiles and nods) So now you have joined the ranks of witnesses. We are the ones who know the truth that man is actually immortal. Yes the body dies, but the soul or now that you understand the term, the “U chenion” *(another elvish phrase form the you tube clip)* continues to exist. This elemental, immortal nature of man, the “U chenion”, is not something that living humans are ready to accept. There might come a time in the future when they will accept this, but at the moment for most people when they die they become watchers.

Jacob/ Milly

So is everyone in the audience dead?

Josh/Serena

No. Many of the audience are alive but there are watchers among them. If you look carefully, “witness” you can tell who is who. Focus on their “U chenion”. *(Jacob/Milly looks, mouths ahh and goes to point, but Josh/Serena grabs her arm)*. Not a good idea not to point them out. Remember they think they are alive. There’s no need to upset anyone.

Jacob/ Milly

But if they’re pointed out, it might help them observe and witness.

Josh/Serena

It has been tried many times before. Not only does it not convince them, but it can cause problems when they pass back.

Jacob/ Milly

Pass back?

Josh/Serena

I haven't explained everything to you yet. The watchers don't stay in this form for ever.

Jacob/ Milly

Oh.

Josh/Serena

What are your earliest memories? Do they go back to when you were a baby. (*Jacob/ Milly shakes head.*) There are a couple of reasons for that. When a baby is born they can either be a newborn or a reborn.

Jacob/ Milly

Newborn? Reborn? I assume we're not talking about the meaning that those terms have over there.

Josh/Serena

No. A newborn will have no memory of when they are born because as the name suggests this is their first time round. They are essentially a "clean slate". A reborn is actually a watcher who has moved on and although they are the same soul when they move on to rebirth, they don't retain the identity of who they were. Although as in most things there are exceptions to the rules. Some people do retain an echo of their past lives. However not even we witnesses can explain why so many of them claim to have once been Cleopatra.

Jacob/ Milly

So why am I a witness and not just a watcher?

Josh/Serena

It's to do with glimpsing the truth over there and also the way you awakened and passed over. You "died" over there because you observed and witnessed the watchers. Remember seeing the people through the wall of your house?

Jacob/ Milly

Ahh. That.

Josh/Serena

The detective called it spontaneous combustion and in a very crude way she is right. Your physical body was burnt as a result of you seeing the truth which consumed the mortal body and allowed your "U chenion" to fully exist. *We* call the process spontaneous awakening.

Jacob/ Milly

I feel sorry for the watchers. Is there nothing we can do to help them?

Josh/Serena

Spoken like a true witness. As difficult as it is, you will come to the understanding that the only thing we can do is to allow the watchers their natural cycle. The watchers must watch and although it can seem to us an eternity doing nothing, to them it seems completely normal.

Jacob/ Milly
I suppose.

Josh/Serena
And by the way, don't feel sorry for the watchers here because at least they're on the path to becoming a witness. Watchers nearly always repeat the habits from their life. The watchers here at the theatre, by and large attended the theatre when they were alive. where they had to use their imagination and be active audience participants even if it just meant applauding. Now that they are watchers, that same participation and use of imagination engages part of their "U chenion" which takes each watcher closer to being able to witness the truth. You need to save your pity for the watchers who spend their time on such things as reality television or YouTube clips of conspiracy theories.

Jacob/ Milly
Dare I ask why?

Josh/Serena
The natural cycle of watchers has been altered in the past 15-20 years by the increasing numbers of people watching this "stuff", because it either warps or atrophies their brains. There has never been a period like this in all of human existence. In extreme examples some of these watcher's minds are regressing to that like early man. We call it primate change.

Jacob/ Milly
Was that meant to be a joke?

Josh/Serena
What?

Jacob/ Milly
Climate change- primate change? (*Absolutely no reaction*) Never mind. So why is it so bad? Surely a bit of mindless diversion can't hurt.

Josh/Serena
A little, no. But this is starting to become a bit of a vicious cycle. Each time a soul: "U chenion", is rebirthed it gets closer to the point where they will be able to witness the truth, but the period for these effected watchers between watching and rebirth is getting longer with the result that it is less likely for them to experience a spontaneous awakening. In some cases these watchers "U chenion" is fading into non existence.

Jacob/ Milly
Can I ask, when did you pass over?

Josh/Serena
1916.

Jacob/ Milly

1916?!

Josh/Serena

“U chenion” i.e. *Immortal* Soul remember?

Jacob/ Milly

Well that explains Primate Change.

Josh/Serena

Pardon? You’ve lost me.

Jacob/ Milly

Let’s move on. So what have been doing since 1916?

Josh/Serena

You’ll get to understand that time is not the same here as over there. Our main task is to witness and aid newcomers cope with their loved ones either being still alive or having become watchers.

Jacob/ Milly

Arghh! How could I forget. Kai/ Rani! That’s what I was trying to do when I... How could I forget?

Josh/Serena

That was actually me. The drink? Sorry, but it’s standard procedure to give new arrivals a short term blocker. Just to give you time to witness the truth so that you can now accept the truth about Kai/ Rani.

Jacob/ Milly

(Looking around the audience.) She isn’t here, why not?

Josh/Serena

Well that’s the thing, watchers are everywhere.

Jacob/ Milly

Is she a watcher or is she a witness?

Josh/Serena

You already know. *(Pause as Jacob/ Milly tries to reject the painful truth, but eventually sighs and drops her head).*

Jacob/ Milly

So where is she?

Josh/Serena

When watchers pass over because of a traumatic or unexpected event they often stay drawn to...

Jacob/ Milly

*(Cutting Josh/Serena off)...*where she had the accident. I've got to go to her. I'll show her the way. Show her how to witness the truth. Don't try to stop me! *(Jacob/ Milly goes to leave the theatre and just as she is going to exit she stops and drops to knees because she knows that she can't do anything to help.)* Damn it! It's not fair!

Josh/Serena

It isn't. Yes we get to witness the incredible beauty of how wonderful human existence really is, but it is very much a two edged sword because we can't escape the truth about our loved ones.

Jacob/ Milly

(Walking slowly back to Josh/ Serena) So there is no chance for Kai/ Rani?

Josh/Serena

No, not this time round, but you'll be there to witness when she does.

Charlie/Carla

Hey boss, I've found a recording on his computer. *(Play back starts, the detectives look at the video on the laptop which should be pointed away from the audience, so that the only effect of the video are moving lights from the screen.)*

Jacob/ Milly

(Audio recording) This is Jacob/ Milly Moseley. Experiment Number 8.3. *(“Number 8.3” is the cue for the actors to speak, but the recording should continue under them.)*

Jacob/ Milly

Hey that's personal!

Josh/Serena

Not anymore. Is it?

Jacob/ Milly

I suppose not.

(Jacob/ Milly and Josh/ Serena walk on stage and join the detectives watching the laptop.)

Jacob/ Milly

(Audio recording continuing) I am going to wear the Diatonal amplifier. I'm confident it's going to work this time. I know mistakes *(At this point on the recording the actors start speaking again with audio continuing under the dialogue)* have been made before but I'm sure that I've got the bugs worked out. If I can prove this, it will change everything. Yes I know I have said it before, but this time I predict it'll work. I've got the Anodyne capacitor aligned to a reading of 15 farad's per becquerel, the Isomagnetic collector is operating within accepted parameters and yes I've replaced the conduit seals that caused the problem

last time. *(Actors need to stop speaking just before the next sentence)* Whatever happens, I leave this recording open to observe the results.

Josh/Serena

You recorded your experiment? Interesting.

Jacob/ Milly

So you didn't see what I was doing over there? Were you not "witnessing"?

Josh/Serena

Sarcasm noted and not appreciated.

Jacob/ Milly

Sorry. That was wrong of me. Maybe I'm just not witness material.

Josh/Serena

I've been there and there *(meaning life)*. You'll get to understand that there isn't much to "witness" over there. It was only just before you passed over that you became interesting enough to observe and witness.

Jacob/ Milly

(Audio recording continuing) ... Whatever happens, I leave this recording open to observe the results. *(There is the sound of nob's been turned, headset being put on and then the sound of a fireball.)*

Josh/Serena & Harry/ Emma

Now that is interesting. A recording of the event.

Charlie/Carla

I can't believe what I just saw.

Harry/ Emma

Unbelievable. Play it again, slower. *(They watch the laptop intently.)*

Charlie/Carla

What does this mean boss? *(They continue a miming dialogue)*

Jacob/ Milly

Could this change things?

Josh/Serena

Possibly, but unfortunately, at the present stage of human development anything which can't be verified by their crude science, won't be believed for long.

Jacob/ Milly

But surely if there's video evidence.

Josh/Serena

But it only shows up to your awakening. Yes it does show you talking to the watchers, but look, they can't be seen in the video and neither can you, after you passed over. The video might cause a stir for a while and if we're lucky in might cause some more witness awakenings, but remember... cuttlefish.

Jacob/ Milly

Yeah the old cuttlefish.

Blackout

PRODUCTION NOTES: The 4 characters each have an alternate name as each can be played by either a female or male. I have used all female pronouns, so they will need to be changed for male actors.

Jacob/ Milly Moseley

Main character. Has the most dialogue. Needs to be able to convey a range of emotions and needs to be able to cope with improvising and getting replies from the audience.

Josh/Serena

The calm, unflappable guide. Needs to be willing not to draw focus from Jacob/ Milly.

Harry/ Emma Moore and Charlie/Carla Davis

There are two requirements for these two characters. Firstly there should be an age difference, with the Harry/ Emma character being at least 10-15 years older than Charlie/Carla. Secondly these characters don't have a lot of dialogue, but they need to be comfortable with miming "investigating a crime scene" whilst the other character dialogue occurs.

Setting is a flat, but props are to be kept to a minimum with any furniture implied with the use of drama boxes or simple furniture.

Approximate running time 18 minutes.

THE PLAYWRIGHT SPEAKS: *I wrote this play using the theme "What If..." and took as inspiration, an idea outlined in the Sci-Fi trilogy by Peter F Hamilton, "Night's Dawn": For all of humanities incredible advances in understanding many of the fundamental principles of life and the universe, the question of "is there anything after death?", remains as unknown as it did to the very first self-aware human beings thousands of years ago. In "Cuttlefish", I set out to weave in this idea with my love of and belief in the power of live theatre for both the actors and the audience, whilst also not being able to resist a couple of gags at the expense of conspiracy theorists and social media junkies. As a technical exercise, I wrote every character in "Cuttlefish" as non-gender, age or race specific. You may be left wondering what's with the cuttlefish? That I'm afraid, I truly can't answer. This inspiration came from somewhere as mysterious as the "U cheniion"...*

AUTHOR BIO: Greg has worked as a primary school teacher for over 30 years. He lives in beautiful Umina Beach on the Central Coast of New South Wales, Australia. He has acted with local theatre groups- Woy Woy Little Theatre and Gosford Musical Society for over 20 years. He has only got into play writing in the last five or six years. He loves science fiction and this play was very much influenced by the original and innovative imagination of Peter F Hamilton, that wonderful English author of space opera. One the great loves of his life is the weekly "Comedy Club" that he runs each Friday morning before school with the kids from his school.

As he is nearing his 60th birthday and he is at the point of his life where there is no doubt now less of his life on the road ahead than of that behind, the question of what next seems like a good question to ponder.

Are there "Witnesses" or "Watchers"? Who knows.

Go ask a cuttlefish.