

THE 3AM CLUB
A three-minute monologue
By JANE CAFARELLA

Comedy

VERA, 50s–80s, tells her devoted audience how The 3am Club came about.

Three am. Regular as clockwork. No matter how early or late I go to bed, that's when I wake up.

The other day I went to bed at 11pm. I dreamt a whole movie. Then I looked at my phone.

Midnight. Seven hours to go.

But of course, I woke again – at 3am.

Karen's in the 3am club too. And Fiona. We all are. We wake up and start thinking – about the kids, the world, climate change... and we can't get back to sleep.

I think about how different things are now. Nobody wears stockings anymore. Kids don't wear hair ribbons. People don't flirt. The major relationship for most people today is with their phones.

There's a whole generation of people for whom the name John Lennon means absolutely nothing!

The world is run by dictators who don't care about anything except competing for power. Sometimes, when I read the news, nothing makes sense until I get to 'Healthy weeknight dinners'.

Everything's changed. Including me.

I watched a Shirley Temple movie the other day. I was horrified. There she was at the age of about six, all dressed up like a doll in a frilly crinoline, bossing around a black man, who was saying 'Yes, miss! No, miss!' I used to love Shirley Temple movies.

The world looks different to me now. Sometimes worse, sometimes better.

I'm not as scared. I see other younger women doing things we never did when we were young – starting businesses, creating art, music and theatre, entering politics, running for President. I'm in awe! Inspired!

Laying there at 3am every morning, I started to think about how much time I have left to do things myself. To help – and create.

And then I realised, waking up at 3am was a gift.

I put a notebook by my bed and started to write down all my crazy thoughts.

And that's how *The 3am Club* came about.

My first novel.

Thanks so much for coming to the launch.

I'd like to thank my publisher, Penguin Random House, and my doctor, who refused to give me any more sleeping tablets, and of course, my husband.

If it wasn't for his CPAP machine – like sleeping next to someone on life support! – I'd have never moved to the spare room, where being awake at 3am wasn't a problem.

I'm working on my second novel now.

Every night. At 3am.

403 spoken words

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