

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



A Most Desirable Property

by Patricia Harris

EXTRACT

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CAST:

In order of appearance.

PAUL WAVERLY: A well travelled man of thirty. Confident, attractive and articulate. Writes travel books and articles for a living.

SARA REDWAY: A small town girl who is attractive and intelligent. She dresses well, and at twenty-five has her own small, interior design business. As a side-line she shows houses for the local real estate.

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SCENE ONE:

As curtain rises PAUL enters through door at the top of the stairs, pauses for a moment, then descends. He crosses to the tea-chest, picks up the newspaper and glances at one or two pages. Angered by what he reads he slaps the newspaper down on the chest and moves quickly SR. Reaching entrance to room just as SARA enters he can't avoid a collision. Receiving quite a jolt, SARA drops the clipboard that she is carrying. PAUL retrieves it.

PAUL: I'm so sorry. Are you hurt? [taking SARA'S arm he leads her over to the stool] Won't you sit down for a moment, and take a deep breath or two? You'll soon feel better.

SARA: [feeling embarrassed, she jerks her arm free and replies sharply] I'm perfectly all right, thank you. You startled me, that's all. I didn't see a car outside, so I didn't expect to find somebody creeping about in here.

PAUL: [trying hard not to smile] I thought it best to park my car around the back, out of the way. [pause] And I never creep about.

SARA: Well, you could have fooled me.

PAUL: Really, I am surprised. I thought you would have noticed that I'm more inclined to crash about.

SARA: Perhaps I should have said crashing about.
[she sits suddenly, and takes the deep breath suggested]

PAUL: [fanning her with the clipboard] That's more sensible. You're quite safe you know. However, as a general rule I'd advise you against wandering around alone in such an isolated spot.

SARA: I'm not wandering around. I happen to be here on business. [holds out her hand for clipboard which PAUL returns] You are Mr Waverly I presume?

PAUL: [smiling] I am indeed.

SARA: [extending her hand she stands, and is suddenly very businesslike] I'm Sara Redway, Mr Jarad's representative. Mr Jarad sends his apologies for not being able to keep your appointment in person. He was called away unexpectedly.

PAUL: [in a disparaging tone] Really? So he sent you out into the middle of nowhere, alone, to meet a man neither of you knew. [shakes his head] Luke must really want to sell this place.

SARA: The house may be quite isolated, Mr Waverly, but I have driven out here before. It has never been a problem.

PAUL: You mean it hasn't been a problem so far.

SARA: [gives him a startled look then covers by quickly consulting her clipboard] I understand that this is the only time that you are free to view the property, so somebody had to come. [slight pause] Would you like to hear some of the history, or do you consider that unnecessary?