



Australian Script Centre



# Baby Boomer Blues

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by Alan Becher

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EXTRACT

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## BABY BOOMER BLUES

### ACT ONE

#### SCENE 1

*BOB and CAROL'S living room, late one afternoon. CAROL enters home from work. She is blonde, mid 40's. She carries some mail, and a laptop computer in a shoulder bag. She flops into a chair and looks at the envelopes. She sighs and stares into space. After a few seconds she pulls herself together and takes out a newspaper and some magazines from her bag. She selects the newspaper and reads. From off, a door is heard slamming shut.*

BOB (*Off*) Hallo!

CAROL (*Sotto voce to herself*) Are you in then?

BOB (*Off*) Are you in then?

CAROL No, I'm at the dentist.

BOB (*Off*) I'll come back later then.

*BOB enters. He is in his early 50's, wearing a tracksuit and carrying a small plastic carry bag.*

BOB No, you are.

CAROL So I am. How careless of me.

BOB Want a drink?

CAROL Yes.

*Pause*

BOB Could you narrow it down a bit?

CAROL Cold.

BOB A bit further?

CAROL Mother's ruin.

BOB No gin. I just looked.

CAROL Nothing, then.

BOB Right.

CAROL      Been down the beach?

BOB         Yep. Wasn't bad. No rain for a change.

CAROL      Getting fit are we?

BOB         Oh, sure. Power walking.

CAROL      Power perving more like.

BOB         Exercising the eyes, yes.

CAROL      That'll be right.

BOB         Beach combing. *(He holds up bag)*

CAROL      Looking for what?

BOB         Inspiration.

CAROL      You often inspire me.

BOB         You never told me that.

CAROL      Inspire me to migrate.

BOB         Oh. I see.

CAROL      Sorry. I'm just tired. It's been a long week.

BOB         No worries.

*BOB leans down to kiss the top of CAROL'S head.*

BOB         Any mail?

CAROL      Just bills.

BOB         Ah.

CAROL      We never get any proper mail these days.

BOB         It's the communication age. Everybody's so busy on the net they can't be fagged to write.

*BOB sits and sorts through the items in his carry bag.*

BOB         What's on the box?

CAROL      Bugger all. Until the movie.

- BOB Typical. What 's happened to TV these days? Watched this show last night. You were asleep. Supposed to be very thought provoking. The only thought it provoked in me was why was I sitting there watching such rubbish.
- CAROL You should try SBS.
- BOB Swedish soft porn and steamy Italian flicks from the sixties. And all in a foreign language.
- CAROL That's rather the point. Anyway, there's subtitles.
- BOB TV is for bludging in front of. Not for reading. Too much like work. Can't see the damn things most of the time. Half the films are set in winter when it's snowing and the subtitles are white. Someone ought to tell them. What is the movie anyway?
- CAROL Aldomovar.
- BOB Sounds like subtitles to me.
- CAROL A bizarre look at the seamy side of Madrid.
- BOB If it's Spanish, it will be full of drag queens and naked bums bobbing up and down.
- CAROL And the problem with that is?
- BOB Nothing *but* sex on TV these days or those home improvement shows. Changing Rooms, Changing Gardens, Changing Nappies. And as for those shows with your actual, real people. Who wants to watch Terry turkey slap Terrina in the toilet.
- CAROL How about a nice wee cup of tea, granny? Might calm you down.
- BOB Too hot.
- CAROL Cold shower then.
- BOB Anything else on?
- CAROL One for you. Peter Weir's *Fearless*. Jeff Bridges is the sole survivor of an air crash and then thinks his life is charmed. The crash scenes are very realistic, apparently. Very detailed. Horrific decapitations.
- BOB You're a ghoul you know that?

- CAROL Now there's a director. *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. What a glorious film. A classic.
- BOB Six simpering maidens vanish in the bush. Good riddance. Boring as bat shit.
- CAROL How can you say that?
- BOB Easy. Should have been called *The Big Snore*. *Gallipoli* is much better. The quintessential Australian film.
- CAROL Two young hooligans enlist in the army to get their arses shot off. Didn't do it for me.
- BOB They weren't hooligans. They were tearaways, larrikins. A hooligan is someone who throws beer cans at the cricket. A larrikin is someone who when the umpire gets it wrong, merely suggests where he can put the stumps.
- CAROL Glorification of war doesn't do it for me. Besides, there's no women in it.
- BOB If anything it de-glorifies war. It's about sacrificing oneself for the greater good; a meditation on the formation of the Australian character. At least it's for grown ups.
- CAROL What is that supposed to mean?
- BOB Too many flicks these days are aimed at imbecilic-teenage-gun-toting-males or randy girls.
- CAROL Nothing wrong with action movies.
- BOB Sure, if you've got half a brain.
- CAROL You don't need half a brain to appreciate them. That's the point. They work at a visceral level. All those gleaming pecs and rock hard buns...
- BOB They're all aimed at half-wits. Where are all the great flicks, like, *Some Like It Hot*, *Lawrence of Arabia*? Where are the great directors like Billy Wilder and David Lean?
- CAROL Six feet under.
- BOB The only good director's a dead director?
- CAROL They're a bit old fashioned.

BOB Masters of the Cinema. My first job, after leaving school, was as a projectionist's assistant. I saw dozens of movies, four times a day. *Easy Rider*, *The Wild Bunch*, *Midnight Cowboy*. I must have seen *Age of Consent* about fifty times. I worked extra shifts.

CAROL James Mason?

BOB Mmmm. And Helen Mirren. All those abundant curves floating freely in the crystal clear waters of the barrier reef. Hell of a turn on for my raging hormones. What a year. 1969. Vietnam Moratorium marches, *Hair* up at the Metro in King's Cross, *Woodstock*. Now *there* was movie...social commentary, great music. Captured the spirit of the times. The Zeitgeist. Nothing's been the same since.

CAROL Don't know whether you've noticed Bob but there's been quite a revolution in the movie world these past few years. Lots of independents nowadays, breaking the Hollywood mould.

BOB I've seen some of those. Artsy-fartsy twaddle. Some of them are no better than home movies.

CAROL Some of those home movies have made millions.

BOB Doesn't make them good. Just because a thing is popular doesn't make it good. Look at the latest comic superhero brought to life. Biggest box-office of all time. Absolute tosh. Should keep children away from it in case it softens their brains. Movies used to be able to entertain, elucidate, educate.

CAROL Some still do.

BOB All movies do these days is fill your head up with senseless information and stupid expectations. If a character is young, blonde and beautiful, she'll be a world expert on nuclear fission, then either get totally naked, or eaten by a shark in the first ten minutes.

CAROL Why is it that movies always show every part of a woman's body but never the man's dick?

BOB Who wants to look at a man's dick?

CAROL Some of us haven't seen one since the flood.

*Pause*

BOB (*Picks up magazine*) Is this the latest? (*Looking closely at the cover*) How much? Seven dollars ninety five?

CAROL It's all right. I borrowed it from the shop.

BOB Angelina Jolie says, "I hate my breasts".

CAROL She would.

BOB I'll have 'em.

CAROL Wouldn't know what to do with them.

*Pause*

BOB You need a holiday.

CAROL I do.

BOB Get away from it all.

CAROL A romantic hideaway.

BOB Port Stephens?

CAROL Further.

BOB Barossa Valley.

CAROL O.S.

BOB Ah.

CAROL Away from here.

BOB Yes.

CAROL And my life.

BOB Away from me?

CAROL Tempting but no, darling. I'd miss the dulcet tones of your snoring. Greater love hath no spouse than to suffer the honking of her husband's hooter.

BOB Must be love.

CAROL Must be. Listen to this. A recent survey reveals that Aussie men prefer sport to sex.

*A beat.*

BOB Which sport?

- CAROL      Fifty percent of men would prefer to watch sport than play it. Ninety percent would prefer to watch sex than do it. Did they interview you?
- BOB         I don't watch sex.
- CAROL      You don't do it, either.
- BOB         I'm creative.
- CAROL      Collages?
- BOB         My hobby.
- CAROL      Your entire life has become your hobby. You used to play the piano, at least. Croaking out those geriatric rock songs...
- BOB         Talking of hobbies. How's the book business?
- CAROL      Quiet today. Quiet all week.
- BOB         I don't know how you keep at it.
- CAROL      Someone has to pay the bills.
- BOB         Don't start. You know what I mean.
- CAROL      It's all I've ever wanted to do. I love books. The different worlds they offer.
- BOB         With your degree you could be making real money instead of living in genteel poverty.
- CAROL      I like being my own boss and as you know, we don't have to be so poor...
- BOB         Yes, all right. Change the record.

*Pause*

- CAROL      Bought myself a present today.
- BOB         Packet of prunes?
- CAROL      Ha, ha.
- BOB         Humour relieves stress.
- CAROL      Your jokes cause it.

- BOB I read that somewhere. People can earn a living holding laughter workshops. I should try it.
- CAROL Your jokes are so tired they need a nurse.
- BOB No sense of humour, you.
- CAROL Is that so? What's the difference between a clitoris and a hotel bar?
- BOB Pardon?
- CAROL It's a joke.
- BOB It's not very funny.
- CAROL It will be when I get to the punch line.
- BOB It's a bit early in the day for words like clitoris, isn't it? Words like that should only be whispered in the dark. Or in a clinic.
- CAROL Why would anyone whisper clitoris in a clinic?
- BOB You know what I mean.
- CAROL Nevertheless. What's the difference between a clitoris and a hotel bar?
- BOB I don't know. What *is* the difference between a clitoris and a hotel bar?
- CAROL Most men can find a bar in under five minutes.
- BOB *laughs*
- BOB Pathetic.
- CAROL Do better.
- BOB Easy. Adam's in the Garden of Eden and he's lonely. So he says to God. "Hey, bigfella! I'm lonely." Right", says God, " I'll send you this fabulous creature to keep you company. She'll be beautiful, sexy, intelligent. She'll cook, clean, bring you your slippers and she'll never, never argue." Great!" says Adam. "What will it cost?" God says, "An arm and a leg". Adam says, "Jeez, what can I get for just a rib?"
- CAROL I win.
- BOB Only on Red Faces. What did you buy then?