

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



Underworld

by Lian Tanner

EXTRACT

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This script is distributed by The Australian Script Centre
77 Salamanca Place Hobart 7004 Tasmania Australia
email admin@ozscript.org
www.ozscript.org
ph +61 3 6223 4675
fax +61 3 6223 4678

SCENE ONE

FX OUTSIDE ON A SUNNY MORNING. IN THE BACKGROUND A
MAGPIE WARBLER. CLAIRE – IN THE FOREGROUND - IS
PICKING FLOWERS, SUSIE IS SITTING SOME DISTANCE AWAY

CLAIRE -- and some honeysuckle -- mmmmm that smells gorgeous -- and some --
(CALLING) Susie? Do you want the white daisies?

SUSIE I think so. And lots of greenery!

CLAIRE Of course madam! Is madam quite comfortable on her blanket in the
shade?

SUSIE You're the one who offered to help.

CLAIRE Don't worry, if *I* ever get pregnant I'll have *you* running around after *me*!

SUSIE That's what sisters are for.

CLAIRE Though with the total lack of romance in my life I probably won't get the
chance -

FX SOMEWHERE DEEP IN THE EARTH A RUMBLING HAS BEGUN

CLAIRE (CONT) - what's that noise?

SUSIE I don't know, it sounds like - it's coming from underground.

FX THE RUMBLING GROWS AND CULMINATES IN AN ENORMOUS
CRASH AS THE EARTH OPENS. SUSIE GASPS

SUSIE (CONT) Watch out!

FX A POWERFUL SPORTS CAR ROARS OUT OF THE EARTH
TOWARDS THEM

SUSIE (CONT) That car! Look out Claire!

FX THE CAR SCREECHES TO A HALT.

GRAHAM Hiya gorgeous. Like a lift?

CLAIRE Wh -- where did you come from?

FX GRAHAM JUMPS OUT OF THE CAR AND GRABS HER

GRAHAM Here we go.

CLAIRE (STRUGGLING) Stop it! What do you think you're doing? Let go of me!

GRAHAM (STRUGGLING WITH HER) Feisty little thing! Shit! She bit me!

CLAIRE (YELLING) Susie! He-elp!

SUSIE (YELLING) Leave her alone! Let her go! Claire!

FX CLAIRE IS DRAGGED INTO THE CAR, SCREAMING. THE CAR ROARS BACK DOWN INTO THE EARTH, WHICH CRASHES CLOSED BEHIND IT.

SUSIE (CONT) Claire! Claire!!!

FX SUSIE FRANTICALLY DIALS ON HER MOBILE PHONE.

SUSIE (CONT) Police? It's my sister, she's been abducted! I don't know, some sicko in a black sports car! I told you I don't know, he just appeared out of a crack in the earth -- I said a crack in the -- I know it's impossible! What? Yes, he took her back down into the earth -- still in the car, yes. No, no the crack closed up after they -- what? No, of course it's not a hoax! No wait! Hello? Hello? Hello?

FX SHE'S LEFT WITH JUST THE DIAL TONE. AFTER A BRIEF PAUSE, THE MAGPIE RESUMES ITS WARBLING. FADE OUT

SCENE TWO

FX TEA IS Poured INTO TWO CUPS. A SPOON CLINKS AGAINST CHINA.

JEAN You know Marj, I've been thinking about the garden, it's so overgrown. If we both got into it, we could --

MARJ I'm old Jean.

JEAN What's that?

MARJ Old and tired.

JEAN Oh Marj.