

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



Backpacker!

by Christopher Johnson

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

Three Men, Two Women:

CORISANDE

English, mid-twenties, ethereally beautiful.

CLIVE

English, late twenties, tough, rugged.

PHIL

Australian or expat English, late 20s – early thirties, well mannered, handsome, clean cut, corporate

PHOEBE

Australian, late 20s – early 30s, sexy, smart, corporate

JASPER

Late 20s – early 30s, a bit unkempt, looks unimportant, funny, caustic wit, overweight / balding etc. okay

ONE: HERE COMES THE WEEK-END

Jasper and Phil are at their separate offices, talking by phone. Phil's a banker; Jasper collects debts.

JASPER

Dude, I am soo horny.

PHIL

So have a wank.

JASPER

I just did. Didn't help.

PHIL

Aren't you at work?

JASPER

Yeah.

PHIL

You had a work wank?

JASPER

Yeah.

PHIL

Where'd you have it?

JASPER

At my desk.

PHIL

You have a cubicle.

JASPER

Yeah.

PHIL

Doesn't that make you uncomfortable?

JASPER

Why?

PHIL

Well someone could see you.

JASPER

I don't make a big song and dance about it.
Anyway, I think everyone's been fired.

PHIL

What?

JASPER

I haven't seen anyone for yonks. Maybe we're in receivership and nobody told me. Anyway, the point is I need to get some action.

PHIL

Right.

JASPER

It's been six months.

PHIL

It hasn't been that long.

JASPER

It has! Paula left me six months ago.

PHIL

Yeah, but you screwed that girl you met at Duncan's party a few months ago didn't you?

JASPER

She didn't count.

PHIL

Why not?

JASPER

Dud root.

PHIL

Dud root?

JASPER

Dud root. Dud roots don't count.

PHIL

When's a root a dud?

JASPER

C'mon, you've had a dud root.

PHIL

I don't think so.

JASPER

Alright, we all know your sex life's great. But the point is I don't have one.

PHIL

Well I can't help you mate.

JASPER

No, see, you can. Because every Friday night I go to the same pub with you and Phoebe, and it's wonderful and we always have a great time and we get drunk but it's always the same crowd and I've fucked the only two of 'em that are ever going to fuck me.

PHIL

What, the bouncers?

JASPER

Ha-ha. Look, tomorrow night, can we go somewhere else?

PHIL

What'd you have in mind?

TWO: PERFECT COUPLE

Phil and Phoebe in their loft-style, expensive Darlington apartment.

PHOEBE

A backpacker pub?

PHIL

The Coogee Bay Hotel.

PHOEBE

That place?

PHIL

Sure, why not?

PHOEBE

Because you're not 17, I'm not British, and we're not single.

PHIL

Jasper is.

PHOEBE

He wants to pull a backpacker.

PHIL

Yeah... It'll be a hoot! It'll be weird, and different... they have cheap drinks, and they do wacky games like Toss the Boss...

PHOEBE

Ok.

PHIL

Really?

PHOEBE

One thing, though. If I'm gonna be around five hundred drunk young backpackers, I'm gonna get shitfaced.

PHIL

Now you're talking.

PHOEBE

And I might start dancing on tables.

PHIL

Sweet.

PHOEBE

And who knows what I might wear...

THREE: COOGEE BAY HOTEL

Phil, Phoebe and Jasper are jammed together, holding drinks, at the Coogee Bay Hotel. It's really crowded and loud. 80s pop plays loud.

PHIL

Holy shit. This is another world.

JASPER

It's fuckin' great!

PHOEBE

I smell spew.

JASPER

Quick, look at her tits.

PHIL

Which one?

JASPER

Her.

PHOEBE

Where?

JASPER

Wait, we can't all look. Look away! (THEY ALL LOOK AWAY) Aw, wait! Look at hers!

They all look. Obviously the girl shows them her tits. Jasper gives two thumbs up.

PHOEBE

She showed us her tits.

JASPER

I am so glad we came here.

PHOEBE

I might have to try that later.

PHIL

Dancing on a table?

JASPER

Aw, look – one of those drink promo chicks.
(RUSHES OFF)

PHOEBE

She's not wearing much.

PHIL

Well she's got that drinks tray.

PHOEBE

Maybe I should quit the bank and do that.

PHIL

I've heard it's a great way to meet people.

JASPER

(COMING BACK) Hey, guys, check it out!
Appletini!

PHIL

What is it?

JASPER

It's like a traditional martini, but with apple.
Here, you have it, Phoebes.

PHOEBE

You don't want it?

JASPER

Nah, chick-drink. Anyway, I've got to get to
work.

FOUR: ANOTHER PART OF THE HOTEL

Jasper is in another part of the huge hotel.
He spies Corisande.

JASPER

(TAPPING HER ON THE SHOULDER)
Excuse me.

CORISANDE

Yes.

JASPER

I'm Jasper.

CORISANDE

Corisande.

JASPER

I'm sorry.

CORISANDE

What?

JASPER

Oh, that's your name?

CORISANDE

Last time I checked.

JASPER

I'm sorry. I've never heard that name before
is all.

CORISANDE

No, that's okay. It's rare.

JASPER

It's beautiful.

CORISANDE

Thank you.

JASPER

So do you get Cor for short?

CORISANDE

Not if I can help it.

JASPER

Sandy?

CORISANDE

Come on, be bold - resist the Aussie temptation to shorten everything.

JASPER

We love it.

CORISANDE

So what are you, "Jaspo"?

JASPER

People call me Jasper!

CORISANDE

Jaspo! What in the world are you doing here, Jaspo?

JASPER

It's Friday night.

CORISANDE

You're trying to pick up a backpacker, aren't you?

JASPER

I'm here for the music.
Where are you from?

CORISANDE

Where do you think?

JASPER

No, but which part?

CORISANDE

Surrey.

JASPER

Surrey? This is too weird. I'm from Surry Hills.

CORISANDE

Did you think that up all by yourself?

JASPER

Call me amazing. What's Surrey like?

CORISANDE

It's outer London... where the city sort of meets the country.

JASPER

You're a country lass.

CORISANDE

No.

JASPER

You're an English Rose.

CORISANDE

(LAUGHS) Wow.

JASPER

Sorry, am I being too honest?

CORISANDE

Just don't try so hard.

JASPER

Sure. But can I say one thing?

CORISANDE

Of course.

JASPER

I really did not expect to meet someone as beautiful as you here tonight.

CORISANDE

Well that's pretty good...

FIVE: YET ANOTHER PART OF THE HOTEL

Phil and Phoebe.

PHOEBE

All right, so this is kind of fun.