

Celebrating Australian Playwriting



Australian Script Centre



# Up and Away

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by Daryl Peebles

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EXTRACT

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CHARACTERS:

DOUG: Basically a "good bloke". Hard working wood delivery truck driver, minimum education but not an idiot. Maybe a little naive.

SANDRA: A country girl trying hard to be sophisticated. Badly wants to do the "right thing" according to her view of the world as depicted in Women's magazines. She is knitting throughout most of the dialogue.

ARTHUR: A wolf. A moderately successful business man who would be even more successful if it wasn't for his obsession with beautiful women. He is on his second shaky marriage but right now can hardly wait to get Simone to Surfers for a "conference".

SIMONE: Physically beautiful. Ambitious but concerned that her rapid elevation in the company may have something to do with Arthur's excessive interest in her. More senior staff were overlooked when she was selected to attend the conference with Arthur. Maybe there is more in this trip than she is aware of?

SCENE: An airport departure lounge. Two couples sit on plastic chairs, one pair either side of a low laminex table upon which rests their cabin baggage. One couple, Doug and Sandra, are a honeymoon couple in transit from Tasmania to the Gold Coast. The other couple, Arthur and Simone are away for a "dirty weekend" but theoretically a business trip. At least Arthur hopes it is to be a "dirty weekend" whilst Simone is after some genuine career goal.

ACT 1

DOUG RUMMAGES THROUGH THE AIRLINE TRAVEL BAG ON THE TABLE, PULLS OUT A TRAVEL BROCHURE AND NUDGES SANDRA FOR HER ATTENTION. HE SHOWS HER SOMETHING ON THE BROCHURE, THEY BOTH SMILE AND GIVE EACH OTHER A QUICK KISS. THEY ARE QUITE RELAXED.

ARTHUR MEANWHILE, HAS BEEN READING A NEWSPAPER, SIMONE HAS A NOVEL. ARTHUR REFOLDS HIS NEWSPAPER, THRUSTS IT INTO HIS BRIEF CASE WHICH IS SITTING ON THE TABLE BESIDE HIM. HE IS AGITATED, LOOKS AT HIS WATCH AND SIGHS DEEPLY.

ARTHUR: Forty minutes late. What is the country coming to? How can one be expected to run an efficient business when we're served by an inefficient transport system.

SIMONE: We should be right Arthur. The conference itself doesn't start until tomorrow morning. Its only the cocktail party and welcome speeches that we'll be missing out on. That's no big deal is it?

ARTHUR: I suppose not. Its just that once my mind is set on something, I hate to see things get in my way, especially the bloody airline industry.

SIMONE: [trying to cheer Arthur up]

We've probably got time for a coffee. I noticed a machine down there between gate lounges. And you've got your hip flask. That'll help you relax a bit.

ARTHUR: Good idea Simone. Although knowing this lot we could easily get pissed before our boarding call. Then the hosties treat you like shit because they think you're just a drunken hoon and overlook the fact that its all their bloody fault.

[Doug shows signs of displeasure at Arthur's language]

SIMONE: [rummaging through her purse]

I've got two dollar coins and a couple of twenties. Won't quite be enough ...

ARTHUR: I'm sure I haven't got any coins. I emptied my pocket when I bought the paper.

[Takes out his wallet and removes a \$10 note]

Here, try and get some change with this - although knowing this industry even that is unlikely.

SFX No.1 - Public Address Announcement

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, MAY I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION. DUE TO A MINOR INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE INVOLVING MEMBERS OF THE AIRLINE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION, FLIGHT 32 TO COOLANGATTA AND BRISBANE HAS BEEN DELAYED.

NEGOTIATIONS ARE CONTINUING AND WE HOPE TO HAVE YOU BOARDING YOUR AIRCRAFT SHORTLY.

THANK YOU.

ARTHUR: So the flight has been delayed. Half an hour after our scheduled departure, they tell us the bloody thing is delayed. Honestly, they couldn't organise a root in a brothel.

[Simone and Doug both react to Arthur's outburst, Simone showing she is ashamed of Arthur's behaviour and Doug offended on Sandra's behalf.]

DOUG: [threatening, stands and points]

Watch your language sport!

SANDRA: [Pulling Doug back in to his seat]

Its all right Doug. Its all right.

ARTHUR: [not fully aware of what Doug has said]

Sorry mate. Its just that the airlines give me the shits. Don't suppose you'd have change of \$10 would you?

SANDRA: [enthusiastic]

I know I have Mister.

[she rummages through her overnight bag]

My mum gave me all her change at the airport - just in case. She said she'd hate herself if we went without anything on our honeymoon.

ARTHUR: [bewildered]

Eh?

[Simone snatches \$10 out of Arthur's hand and exchanges for some coins with Sandra]

SIMONE: [to Sandra]

Thank you, that's very kind of you. I was going to get some coffee from the vending machine. Would you like some?