

PLEASE STEP OFF THE PLANE SIR.

By Herbert Midgley

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TIME: Present, Late December.

PLACE: Airport in Chicago.

CHARACTERS:

DUNCAN: Male in his late 20's early 30's, musician. Preferably a Non-Causian.

BARTENDER: Female in her mid 30's, looks attractive in a sleazy way.

CLERK AT THE GATE : Female in her mid 20's, kind of dumb, perhaps a blonde.

STEWARDESS : Really good looking blonde, could be a model if she was taller.

THE AIRLINE CAPTAIN: Male in his mid 50's, military look.

SECURITY GUARD: Male in his mid 30's, looks like he hates his job.

OLDER WOMAN: An older women. Doesn't have any spoken lines.

PLAYWRITES' NOTE:

You could have one actor play all the parts.

SCENE 1

DUNCAN is sitting in the smoking section of an airport lobby.

DUNCAN

Why did there have to be a smoking section? Why a smoking section? I wish I was in L.A. Can't smoke in that whole town. Even in the bars. Chicago, you can smoke anywhere. Just like Europe.

(DUNCAN walks to the smoking section and sits down)

Ok, one cigarette. Just one, and I will sit down and wait for the plane.

(DUNCAN stands up and starts to pace.)

God, I have so much stress, why is there a smoking section?

(DUNCAN looks down the hall.)

Is that (Beat) a bar?

(DUNCAN shakes his head.)

Why is there a bar near the smoking section? Why couldn't it be a juice bar? Or better yet, a Burger King. I could go for a Whopper. When was the last time I ate?

BARTENDER

Good morning Sir, would you like a drink.

DUNCAN

(Muffles)

No, I shouldn't.

(DUNCAN'S hand is shaking.)

BARTENDER

Let me know if I can get you anything. You look like you could use a drink honey.
(The BARTENDER winks at DUNCAN as she walks away.)

(DUNCAN walks back to the smoking section. Sits down. Wrestles with his seat and starts to walk back to the bar.)

DUNCAN

It has been three months. Three months without a drink. Three *long* months, and for what? Nothing. Not a thing. What has it giving me? Nights where I can't sleep, and me sitting alone in my hotel room as my band mates are out having the time of their lives. Nothing...I'm not an alcoholic. I've went three months without a drink. I can go on another three years if I want to, but for what?

Why am I not drinking?

(DUNCAN starts to walk back away from the bar)

Forget it! My flight leaves in fifteen minutes. I'll deal with it when I get back home.

(DUNCAN walks away from the smoking section and passes the bar to his gate.)

CLERK AT THE GATE

Attention, the 7:20 Flight to Austin Texas has been delayed for three hours. Sorry for the inconvenience, you will receive a complimentary set of earphones for the in-flight movie.

DUNCAN

What!?! Three hours! Not three hours stuck here! What am I going to do for three hours?

(DUNCAN looks at the bar.)

No, I am going to sit right here by the gate and wait for the flight. Maybe I should buy a magazine or something.

(DUNCAN sits down at the gate.)

CLERK AT THE GATE

(Talking to an OLDER WOMAN passenger.)

Sorry Ma'am, there is nothing I can do. The flight has been delayed. It happens all the time. But look at this way, you get a free movie.

(The OLDER WOMAN sighs and sits back down. CLERK AT THE GATE looks at DUNCAN and gives him a stupid smile.)

DUNCAN

What's the movie?

CLERK AT THE GATE

(The CLERK AT THE GATE is looking at a magazine.)

What's that?

DUNCAN

The movie. What is it?

CLERK AT THE GATE

I don't know, but it should be good. And what does it matter, it is free.

DUNCAN

Three hours of my life wasted for some movie that may or may not be good. What a deal. And lady it better not be a Rob Schneider movie, because that's not a bonus, that's a nightmare. (Beat) I hope my guitar isn't on board yet.

CLERK AT THE GATE

So you play guitar? You're in a band or something?

DUNCAN

Yeah. I am in a band. It might even be a band that you've heard of.

(DUNCAN looks at her closer)

No, no you like a Brittany or Justin fan. You won't know my band. You probably don't even know who the Beatles were.

CLERK AT THE GATE

Are you in the Beatles? My dad plays that old music all the time.

DUNCAN

(Deadpan) Yeah, I'm in the Beatles. I started the band. I am George, the quite one.

(The CLERK AT THE GATE doesn't even look at DUNCAN)

(Beat)I've been on the road for six weeks and I can't wait to get back home to see my family and friends. I'm burned out. And I'm so tired, I haven't slept a wink.

CLERK AT THE GATE

That's nice. I love music. I used to play piano when I was younger. That sounds like a catchy tune. Did you write it?

(The OLDER WOMAN starts to yell at the CLERK AT THE GATE.)

(DUNCAN gets up while shaking his head and pulls out a pack of cigarettes.)

DUNCAN

Why did there have to be a smoking section? Although I'm so tired, I'll have another cigarette. And curse Sir Walter Raleigh, he was such a stupid get. Oh no no.

(DUNCAN walks pass the bar and pauses, but then walks on to the smoking section. DUNCAN hears a glass clang together then his hands start to shake. DUNCAN then walks over to the bar.)

BARTENDER

So you're back. What will it be mister? What's your poison?

DUNCAN

(Muffles)

Three months.

BARTENDER

What's that?

DUNCAN

(DUNCAN looks up and smiles)

A rum and coke (Beat) and a shot of tequila. (Beat) And an ashtray, darling. This is going to feel great! It's going to be the best day ever.

(DUNCAN gives her a bigger smile.)

(FADE OUT)

SCENCE 2

(DUNCAN is walking on the airplane.)

STEWARDESS

Welcome to Dream Airlines. What's your seat sir?

DUNCAN

(DUNCAN pauses, gives a big smile and starts to talk loud. DUNCAN is intoxicated. As he speaks, he slurs his words only slightly.)

I'll in first class. No, I be in first class. No, wait. (Beat) I am in first class. You sure look cute, don't you? Do you have a boyfriend?

STEWARDESS

Sir, Let me see your ticket.

(DUNCAN fumbles in his coat to find it, then gives it to the STEWARDESS)

Ok, you are in row six seat two. This way to first class sir.

(The STEWARDESS points to DUNCAN's seat.)

DUNCAN

Thank you cutie pie. Cutie, cutie moon pie. Blondes always do it for me. Well sometimes. But most of the time (Beat) no.

(DUNCAN slurs his words a bit more heavily.)

I think that I'm in love again! Love America Style.

(DUNCAN starts to walk to his seat)

(The STEWARDESS walks over to the AIRLINE CAPTAIN and points at DUNCAN)

STEWARDESS

He's drunk and he's hitting on me. And I don't have to put up with it. It's *in* our contract. Do *you* understand?

AIRLINE CAPTAIN

All right, calm down missy. (Beat) Let's get security up here. I don't know why people drink if they can't hold their liquor. Aren't there any *real* men left in the world?

(AIRLINE CAPTAIN walks towards the cabin.)

(The SECURITY GUARD walks up to DUNCAN and smells DUNCAN'S breathe and jerks back his head.)

SECURITY GUARD

(Quietly) Sir, I need to ask you to step off the plane.

DUNCAN

(DUNCAN has a big smile)

Did I win something? Let me guess, that cute blonde over there. (DUNCAN points at the STEWARDESS) It's my lucky day.

SECURITY GUARD

Please step off the plane, sir. I need you to come with me.

DUNCAN

What's the problem officer? Is it because I'm a musician? Man, I'm about to go to sleep. I was just about to pass out when you came over. I haven't had any sleep in over twenty-four hours. So, please let me go to sleep, and there will be no problems.

SECURITY GUARD

The stewardess said that you were stumbling, slurring your words and you smell of alcohol. You have to get off this plane, sir. NOW!

DUNCAN

(DUNCAN pauses, takes out a cigarette and puts it in his mouth and lets it dangle without lighting it.)

Ok, let's go talk to your manger.

(DUNCAN gets up and walks towards the entrance of the plane with the SECURITY GUARD.)

STEWARDESS

Sir, do to the 9-11 tragedy, if you are under the influence, you have to sober up and take another flight.

DUNCAN

(Loud, but not mad)

Listen lady. It is two days before Christmas, I have been on the road for six weeks, and I have to see my family and friends before I go out of my mind. Please just let me go back to my seat and go to sleep. I'm not making a sound for the rest of the flight. I won't even look at you. I was only trying to be friendly. (DUNCAN winks at the STEWARDESS)

SECURITY GUARD

Sir, lower your voice. Let's discuss this off the plane.

(The AIRLINE CAPTAIN walks by)

DUNCAN

Sir, I am too drunk to fly? All I want to do sir is to get back home for Christmas. *Please* let me stay on this flight.

AIRLINE CAPTAIN

(The AIRLINE CAPTAIN looks at him, then at the SECURITY GUARD with a frown. The AIRLINE CAPTAIN waves his arms wildly.)

Get him off my plane so we can take off. If the people working the gate would do their jobs I wouldn't have to deal with this mess. I wished I was back in the military.

(The AIRLINE CAPTAIN continues to walk his cabin.)

(FADE OUT)

SCENCE 3

(DUNCAN and the SECURITY GUARD are off the plane back at the counter.)

DUNCAN

(DUNCAN appears not to be as drunk now.)

So, what can I do now?

CLERK AT THE GATE

Well, there isn't another direct flight to Austin until tomorrow. But, I can get you to Dallas, an hour lay over, then to Austin. You'll be home in five hours. The ticket is only \$923. Would you like to book that flight sir?

DUNCAN

What!?

CLERK AT THE GATE

Since you were removed from the flight, it is the policy of this airline not to give you a refund. If you want to buy a new airline ticket, it's \$923. Would you like to book it now or wait until tomorrow's flight?

DUNCAN

Hold on. (DUNCAN reclaims his composure) I have to get out of here. I'll take the ticket. But will call your manager. (Beat) No, I will call your manager in the morning when I get home. Man, I might also call my attorney. No, I am going to call my boss. This will be the *last* time we'll fly this airline! And I thought you were cute. Not as cute as that blonde on the plane, but cute enough.

CLERK AT THE GATE

Yes sir. What card would you like to charge it on?

DUNCAN

(Sigh) I guess that I'll have to *discover* the possibilities.

(DUNCAN hands the CLERK AT THE GATE a credit card)

CLERK AT THE GATE

Yes sir. I guess you do.

DUNCAN

(DUNCAN goes sits down at gate.)

Why couldn't I have waited? Why was there a smoking section? Why was there a bar that sold tequila? Tequila. Mas tequila. Mas tequila is *good* for the soul.

(DUNCAN gets a big smile on his face. DUNCAN stands up and walks back to smoking section and takes out a cigarette.)

I guess I have to call my sister and tell her not to pick me at the airport so early, and give her the new flight number. I hope I didn't lose it.

(DUNCAN takes out his cell phone and dials.)

Yo, sis. This is Duncan, man my flight has been delayed. Can you believe that? What? I sound drunk, no sis that's the jet lag. And I'm tired. Listen girl, I'll be on another flight going out of Dallas. I can't wait to see you. I miss you sis. I miss you all. Ok, I'm on flight, let me see. (Stubbles for the ticket) Oh here it is, flight 475 landing at 9:30pm. Tell Mom hi for me and tell her I can't wait to see her. I love you. Ok, peace out sis. Later. And there had better be some pecan pie left when I get home.

(DUNCAN hangs up the phone and lights another cigarette and looks like he is thinking.)

She's not worth it. She doesn't even like me. I hate her for what she has done to me. I am a wreck because of her. Why did Bruce hire her? She's not worth losing my gig over. She isn't even that pretty. I mean... What's she thinking hanging over Max that way? He knows how I feel about her. That Max, sometimes I think that he is doing it on purpose. Disses me at every turn. Max you... What would my dad do?

My dad would tell me to... My dad, I miss you. It has been over a year now since I have lost you. I miss you *so* much dad. (Looks up in to the ceiling) You never knew how much I cared about you and needed you. You were my foundation. My rock that I could always depend on. God, I can't believe it. I still can't believe it. You're gone. And there is so much more I needed to learn from you. Why?

(DUNCAN grabs his stomach.)

This has been the worst tour I can remember. The food was horrible. I can't sleep and I can't eat. And I haven't drank *one* ounce of alcohol. No wonder I am about to lose my mind. I am going out of my mind. I have to get back home before I do.

When I get back home, I am going to sleep. Then go get me a chicken fried chicken, with gravy on the side and a tub of French fries. I love French fries, or freedom fries or whatever you want to call them. Texas is the only place in the world to get a good chicken fried chicken or chicken fried steak. It just sucks everywhere else. Chicken fried sucks everywhere else except for Texas.

I remember that time I was in Paris with Max. He said that there was a KFC up the hill from our hotel. That's the only KFC in all of Paris. We must've walked five miles. And I was craving those mash potatoes and gravy all the way up there. And when I got there, you know what they had instead of mash potatoes and gravy. French fries! I about flipped, but it was all well and good. It's all gravy, right Max.

That's it. I'm done. I'm not playing guitar no more. I'm out. (Claps hands together then shows palms face out.) I'm going to use my teaching degree. I spent five years getting it, I might as well do something with it. I'll teach and stay at home, get married and have a lot of kids. Yeah, a wife and house with a steady job. That'll be good for me. My dad always wanted me to settle down. To have a family.

One day. One day, I'll be happy. One day. And I'll get this monkey off my back. I can do it. Robert. Man, you are my inspiration to kill this habit. You lost one hundred pounds through pure will power. No drugs, no surgery, no fad diets, no nothing but the drive to lost weight. Robert, you worked out and started to eat better. You the man, G. The R-machine. (Laughs) I wished that you could have hooked up with Tiffany. I knew how much you loved her man. It is almost as much as I love Sera. Man, why does this girl blow my mind? I have to get over her. Right now! I have to know what she thinks about me. Right now! It either ends or begins right here in this airport lobby. I have to know. A drunk man's words are a sober man's thoughts. And I'm drunk right *now*.

(DUNCAN takes out his cell phone and dials. It takes a few moments before the call goes through.)

Yo, Sera. How are you doing girl. I have to tell you something...

(FADE OUT)

THE END

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