

# STRANGERS ON A PLANE

## **CHARACTERS:**

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: perky socialite with a loud voice, her life and job aren't going the way she thought they would.

JEREMY: Hopeless romantic, 30-something, has had bad luck in love.

SAVANNAH: 30-something gay women in happy relationship.

GIRLFRIEND: Savannah's girlfriend, the reason Savannah doesn't like Jeremy's advances.

30-something that loves her girlfriend very much.

MARY: middle-aged women, late 40s-early 50s, on her way to see her sick sister.

ANDREW: Small boy, about 10, riding alone on his way to see his sick grandmother.

CHRIS: 20-something-year-old vlogger with anxiety issues, feels he needs fame to be needed.

CHRYS: real name is Chrysanthemum but shortens to Chrys, also 20 something, dedicated to

Chris, but wants a good relationship free of distractions.

KEVIN: 40 something Vet from the beginning of the Afghanistan War, first time on a plane since 2003.

ED: an older man (about in his 80s) mellow but excited for trip, married to Millie.

MILLIE: an older woman (in her 80s but older than Ed) is very sick with a chronic condition but is excited for the trip.

*We open on a FLIGHT ATTENDANT about to give her standard safety speech. She is hyping herself up, and is very excited to go to Paris. She has a passion for traveling but she is held down by her job, so she hasn't been able to fulfill her dreams. She starts her speech.*

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: *(overly excited and happy)* Hello passengers! Welcome to flight #840 from Dallas to Paris on one of our modern Bermuda Airlines jet planes, now with safety features at no extra cost to our passengers! Your flight includes complimentary magazines featuring the beautiful sights and destinations of the Austrian Alps. Maybe I'll get to visit someday... Or maybe you'll decide to visit! Before we take off, I'd like to go over some of our modern safety features you'll need to know about. First, fastening your seatbelt is the number one way to prevent accidents. Please put them on whenever you see the fasten seatbelt light turn on. *(quiet side note)* sometimes the lights don't turn on, so if you feel unsafe, just use your better judgment... Anyway, your exits are located to the side both behind and in front of you. *(yelling at interrupting passengers)* Sir! Please put down the camera and pay attention to this announcement! And Ma'am, just wait a minute to put your luggage in the overhead compartment. Hey kid! Sit down! Sir, the beverage trolley will be coming any minute, please be patient. *(fed up)* Okay, will nobody listen to me? *(everyone freezes, she goes into an inner monologue)* I have always wanted to visit Paris. And now I'm on a flight there. But I won't even get to step off the plane before we have to reboard passengers and head back to Dallas. To be honest, I don't even know if we'll make it across the Atlantic. A couple flights ago, we had to make two emergency landings because the pilot fell asleep. God, I wish I could just quit this job. *(people unfreeze, she continues safety speech)* Thank you for your attention now please take a seat as we prepare for take off.

*People move to sit in their seats, FLIGHT ATTENDANT exits. Lights down.*

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*Lights come to focus on SAVANNAH, who is standing in the aisle, still struggling to get her luggage into the overhead compartment.*

JEREMY: *(gets elbowed in the side by SAVANNAH)* Ow!

SAVANNAH: Crap!

JEREMY: Oh god, do you need some help with that?

SAVANNAH: Oh, no it's fine, I got it *(luggage falls on her)*

JEREMY: Oh um, here *(offers hand up, has sudden realization, love at first sight sort of thing)* Oh wow, wow *(takes another look)* WOW

SAVANNAH: Hey, what? *(snaps at Jerry, who's staring, waves hand in front of face)* Hey!

JEREMY: Huh?

SAVANNAH: Why the hell are you staring at me like that?

JEREMY: *(enchanted)* I just... I can't help but notice... your eyes are just so... beautiful

SAVANNAH: *(very uninterested and put off)* Oh, um, okay. Well..

JEREMY: This just feels... so right. This is fate, isn't it? *(realization)* Wait... is this your seat? Wait... this is my seat. Omigod, this IS fate!

*SAVANNAH and JEREMY sit, SAVANNAH clearly annoyed while JEREMY is clearly love struck and staring at her.*

*They tableau.*

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*Lights down, now focusing on a ANDREW and MARY who are sitting next to each other. ANDREW looks out the window, down at his shoes, up at MARY and stares for a minute, then decides to speak.*

ANDREW: Hi I'm Drew

MARY: Hi, I'm Mary

*Awkward long pause*

ANDREW: I'm all by myself. I'm going to see my grandma! She's sick and I'm gonna go and help her get better! I hope she is happy to see me.

MARY: OH, alright. *(pause)* Are you okay?

ANDREW: Actually, I'm scared now. I miss mommy and daddy. When are we gonna be in the sky? When can we come back home?

MARY: Oh, um... we should be taking off soon. I don't know when you'll be back home, though. Do you want me to help you call your parents when we land?

ANDREW: No. Oh, I shouldn't be talking to you. *(picks up a magazine and starts concentrating a little too hard)*

MARY: Alright then

*MARY looks out the window, slightly confused and ANDREW continues to focus on the magazine in his hands.*

*They tableau.*

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*An older couple getting situated on a plane. Ed is excited because he has wanted to take his wife Millie to Paris forever. Millie is excited but not feeling good but is putting on a happy face for her husband.*

ED: *(walks on with bags)* Oop here are our seats Millie *(excited)*

MILLIE: *(walks on with a hobble)* Okay sweetie

ED: Here hmmm...*(helps Millie settle in)* There. *(process to struggle to put a bag in the overhead bin to only drop it)* Ohh... umm...

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Hello sir would you like some help? *(picking up the bag)*

ED: Oh thank you Ma'am. My wife and I are going on our dream trip to Paris. *(explaining like the flight attendant doesn't know their destination)* We have wanted to go ever since we've gotten married. And now we're finally going!

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: *(leans down to Millie)* Well it looks like you got a real gentleman here taking you to Paris. I don't know if anyone would ever do that for me.

MILLIE: *(nods)* He is quite the gentleman *(pauses well she looks at him)* He's the love of my life. He has always been here for me, right by my side for 60 years. *(smiles recalling good times looking at Ed)* And he should not have done all this work to take me here because I'm such a burden // because of my sickness and...

ED: No you stop right there *(hushing her up)* We have always wanted to go and now it's time to make our wish come true.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Well it sounds like your husband is going to treat you like a queen. *(smiling at her)* And it is the perfect time of year to go, it sounds like you will have the best weather there too, so you should have a blast.

*The flight attendant pats Ed on the shoulder and shows him his seat and starts to move down the aisle. He sits down/relaxes and holds hands with Millie. She looks out the window seeing her hometown and looks back at Ed and smiles. Ed kisses her on the forehead.*

*They tableau.*

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*Lights up on CHRIS and CHRYS, a couple sitting side by side. CHRYS is looking out the window, anxious to take off. CHRIS is fiddling with his camera and starts to take a video.*

CHRIS: *(vlogging)* Hey guys! Chris and Chrys coming at you from first-class babyyyyyyy! Haha totally kidding, we're in economy, we're relatable like that

CHRYS: (*hits camera*) Hey, put that away! This is supposed to be a week away from everything

CHRIS: Ugh, babe, come on, you know I have to do this

CHRYS: Look, we have to disconnect a little sometimes. Your followers will still be there in a week.

They understand that we're people too and we need vacations just like anyone else

CHRIS: I guess. But babe, I don't think that's us. This channel needs us. Like, I wouldn't be anything without this channel

CHRYS: Well, you know, that's not what I think. Just put the camera away, for me, please

CHRIS: (*sighs, and grabs hands*) Babe, you know I'd do anything for you, but I have to put my work above these kinds of things

CHRYS: (*let's go and looks away, mumbles*) You always do this

CHRIS: Babe, come on, we've talked about the mumbling, communication is key, that's what Tom said, remember?

CHRYS: I don't care what your therapist said, Chris

CHRIS: He's just there to help

CHRYS: I know, I know you're going through things and I've been there for you. It's just...

CHRIS: What? It's just what?

CHRYS: Nevermind

CHRIS: And you say I'm bad, at least I tell you when I'm upset

CHRYS: No you don't, you're so passive-aggressive it could kill me

CHRIS: Oh, I'm the passive-aggressive one, really? (*pauses and takes a long breath*) Look, I don't want us to be angry at each other babe. This vacation, we both really need this, I know that, but we wouldn't be here without my channel, so I will need to work. Whether we like it or not

CHRYS: Well maybe I'm not happy with the channel anymore

CHRIS: What? Babe, why not?

CHRYS: It's become too much, I'm suffocating

CHRIS: We can change it up, try and make it better

CHRYS: That's the thing Chris, I don't want to try. I'm not happy anymore, can't you see that? And to be honest, I haven't been happy in a long time. I don't think I will be anytime soon

CHRIS: *(looks down)* Babe, are you still talking about the channel?

CHRYS: *(also looks down)* I don't think I am

*Not knowing what to say, they look away from each other. Both unintentionally copying each other's body language.*

*They tableau.*

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*Lights down, then focus on KEVIN, who is trying to get flight attendant's attention.*

KEVIN: *(to flight attendant, snaps fingers)* Hey, lady! Sorry, that was rude. I didn't mean to be rude.

I'm just nervous that's all. Got anything in that lovely little cart of yours that could ease some nerves.

*Flight attendant takes out a bottle and glass, pours drink*

You know, this is the first time I've been on a plane since 2003. 17 years ago, wow. I was fresh meat, ready for anything. I thought it was gonna be a cake walk. In and out, I'd be home by Christmas. But no, 2001 to 2003. Good god, to be young again, am I right? The whole world at my fingertips, able to take whatever you wanted. You've got it all. And you've definitely got it all, if you know what I mean.

*Flight attendant moves to leave with the cart*

No, no, no, no, no, no, no. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that. The nerves. Now that we're up in the sky, they're real bad. I'm sure you are a lovely woman and I don't wish to offend. It's just the sound of the plane is bringing so much back. The sounds and the smells and the situation. I won't be on this

plane right now if my buddy from the war hadn't died. Moved to Paris with his fiance and then has to go and die on me. If he had just stayed in Dallas.... He took my humanity with him. So I'm going to get it back. Somehow. He was always stronger than me, could always deal with the terrors better than me. And he had to go and... I'm sorry, I shouldn't be bothering you. You have a job to do. I apologize.

*Flight attendant gives a concerned look as he downs his drink and then walks off.*

*KEVIN tableau's.*

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*Lights back on ANDREW and MARY again. ANDREW is trying his best to stay silent (stranger danger), but can't contain his questions.*

ANDREW: Can I ask you something?

MARY: I thought you weren't supposed to talk to me

ANDREW: Well no. Can it be our secret?

MARY: I think we can manage that

ANDREW: Okay

MARY: So, what did you want to ask me hon?

ANDREW: Oh right! Have you been to Paris before?

MARY: Yes, I go to visit my sister quite often

ANDREW: Why don't you just live there then?

MARY: Well, my partner's job keeps me in Dallas with them, so I just get to visit her sometimes

ANDREW: Oh, that's sad

MARY: A little, but it's alright. My sister isn't doing to well right now, and like you with your grandmother, I'm going to help her get better

ANDREW: That's nice of you. I'm excited to see my grandma, are you excited to see your sister?

MARY: Yes, I am (*pause*) Why do you ask?

ANDREW: Well, I don't know, I'm excited but nervous. I haven't seen her in so long and what if she doesn't like me?

MARY: Now that is not a thought that should be filling your head. She's your grandmother, there is nothing to be worried about

ANDREW: Okay, if you say so, I trust you (*gives hug*)

MARY: I'm glad hon (*hugs back*)

*ANDREW lets MARY go and they read the magazine together.*

*They tableau.*

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*Lights back on ED and MILLIE, still in their seats.*

ED: We're on our way! (*excited*) Can you believe that, after all these years we are finally going.

MILLIE: I know I can't believe it.

ED: Are you ok sweetie? (*seeing she looks really tired*)

MILLIE: Yeah I am just feeling a little under the weather but I'm really excited too

ED: Yeah, just think in a few days we are going to be standing on the top of the Eiffel Tower

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: (*moves down the aisle with notepad taking drink orders*) Hello there, can I get you two love birds something to drink?

ED: I will take a coke please

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: And anything for you ma'am?

MILLIE: No thanks I am good

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Alright (*looking at Ed*) I will have that coke right out for you

*The flight attendant moves away. Ed looks and sees that Millie is still not feeling well*

ED: You should try to get some sleep. We have got a long trip still so you can

MILLIE: Ok I think that I will, I love you (*kisses his cheek*)

*She falls asleep while Ed looks at a magazine.*

*They tableau.*

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*Lights back on CHRIS and CHRYS. They are avoiding each other as much as they can for two people seated next to each other. Very awkward silence, finally broken by CHRIS.*

CHRIS: Can we please talk about this? (*pause*) Is there anything I can do to change how you feel?

CHRYS: I don't think so

CHRIS: So...

CHRYS: So...

CHRIS: Yeah

*Long pause*

CHRIS: Does this mean...?

CHRYS: Yeah, I think it does

CHRIS: Oh

CHRYS: I'm just gonna find a flight back when we land

CHRIS: Are you sure?

CHRYS: Yeah, I'm sure

CHRIS: Okay

*Another long pause*

CHRIS: I don't want this to end

CHRYS: I know you don't

CHRIS: Can't you think about this?

CHRYS: I have thought about it and this is what we both need

CHRIS: Maybe, but it's not what we want

CHRYS: Chris, don't you get it? We are not a thing anymore, there is only you and I, separate. When we land I will get a flight back and start a new life. One of my own. One I have made for myself, that I can be proud of

CHRIS: Because you're not proud of us, what we have accomplished?

CHRYS: What have we accomplished? Really? A couple hundred thousand subscribers that don't give a damn about our actual lives or who we are. And they are numbers to us, clout that we convinced ourselves that we needed. *(pauses, and seems to have an epiphany)* Go on this trip, without me. Find your happiness as I plan to find mine. Please, I may not be happy but I don't want that on you. Find your happiness.

CHRIS: I can't see that without you

CHRYS: You have too

*CHRYS takes CHRIS'S hand and gives him a reassuring look. They give half smiles at one another and once again look away.*

*They tableau.*

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*Lights back on SAVANNAH and JEREMY, who is now smiling childishly and resting his head on her shoulder. She is trying to look out the window, and decides to stop him.*

SAVANNAH: Um, could you maybe like... not rest your head on my shoulder. Like I totally get that you want to take a nap, but like...

JEREMY: But this is just so US. I just really feel this connection.

SAVANNAH: Yeah, um... // about that (*trying to tell him something, he interrupts*)

JEREMY: You get what I'm saying? Like, this is just great! It's just that before today, I'd never met anyone quite like you and you just know exactly what to say and do and you just GET me!

SAVANNAH: Yeah, this is all just a big misunderstanding // you see

JEREMY: Like when my last girlfriend broke up with me, I just really thought she was, you know, **the one**, and I was just SO devastated and now, I just feel like this one time it might work out for us!

SAVANNAH: Look, you're not really making any sense, I'm sorry about your girlfriend // and all...

JEREMY: (*clarifying*) EX girlfriend

SAVANNAH: I really do hope you find someone, but I just don't think this is going to work out.

JEREMY: What do you MEAN this won't work out, this is how it's supposed to be! Clearly there's a reason we were put next to each other // and there's nothing...

SAVANNAH: (*mumbling*) Or the plane was overbooked and they moved me

JEREMY: to stop us from just throwing caution to the wind and truly appreciating this gift the universe has given us!

SAVANNAH: (*sarcastically, trying to be understanding, but also confused*) Gee, **buddy**, I really like your enthusiasm there, but I think it's my obligation to tell you that I really am just not interested, I'm really sorry, but this is just kinda getting creepy and (*sees FLIGHT ATTENDANT walking past*) Hey!

Um excuse me, ma'am, could I talk to you for a second? Maybe somewhere else?

*SAVANNAH follows FLIGHT ATTENDANT off,*

*JEREMY tableau's.*

### **PLANE LANDS**

*Lights flash signifying landing, lights focus on MARY and ANDREW, who are getting ready to get off of the plane.*

MARY: Well, I guess we're here, it was so nice to meet you and such a pleasure to talk to you, young man.

ANDREW: (*proud of being called a young man, trying to act grown up*) Thank you madame!

MARY: (*laughing*) Any time! And let your grandmother know that she has a wonderful grandson that clearly is so devoted and cares for her very much.

ANDREW: You should tell your sister hi from me, Andrew to... wait what is her name?

MARY: Camille. It's such a beautiful name don't you think?

ANDREW: That's so funny, my grandma, her name is Camille too! I have to tell her this story, I think she will think it's funny! I like it when she laughs cause then I know that she's happy!

MARY: You know what? I bet she would find that funny. (*gears turning in her mind*) You said your name was Drew?

ANDREW: Yeah! But some people call me Andy. And some people even call me Andrew! Isn't that so funny! I have three names!

MARY: (*pieces coming together in her mind*) Andrew Culligan?

ANDREW: (*still not understanding*) Hey! How do you know my name? Are you a mind reader?! Can you do magic? Do a trick!

MARY: Oh my lord, Andrew, I haven't seen you in 7 years! Oh my, you've grown up so much!

Goodness, you must've been, what? Two? Oh, you must not remember me, it's your great aunt Mary!

ANDREW: Wait, you're my Nana Mary?

MARY: Yes, baby, it's me! (*he hugs her*)

ANDREW: Do you think Grandma is waiting for us?

MARY: Oh, yes, I think she will be very happy to see you. After all, you've got a pretty wonderful story about your adventures on the plane.

*They exit*

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*Lights focus on JEREMY, who is sitting alone, reading airline magazine. SAVANNAH enters, muttering about now being able to change seats. JEREMY spots her and calls for her.*

JEREMY: Hey! There you are! It's time to get off, do you want to go grab a drink? (*Sees her grabbing luggage*) Hey, umm, leaving so fast?

SAVANNAH: (*at this point bordering on fed up with him*) Yep, I'm leaving. I gotta find my...

JEREMY: Wait, c'mon just give me a chance!

SAVANNAH: Look, this **really** is not "meant to be" or whatever, I think you just need to move on.

Again, I'm sorry about your girlfriend//

JEREMY: Ex girlfriend

SAVANNAH: Yeah, sure. But I have someone I have to find...

JEREMY: (*coming to the realization that this was all in his head*) Wait! Where are you going? At least stay and... you know what? Nevermind. It's okay, you just go on...

SAVANNAH: I really am sorry. It was (*trying to be enthusiastic, but failing*) sort of nice to meet you, I guess. Good luck with... ya know...

(*JEREMY exits, GIRLFRIEND walks up behind SAVANNAH and gives her a hug and kiss on the cheek, surprising her*)

GIRLFRIEND: Hey babe! How was the ride without me... Horrifying? Life-changing? Did you have an **unfillable** void in your life? (*Sarcastic gasp*) Did you move on? Find someone better? Am I not good enough for you now that we're in Paris, the city of LOVE?

SAVANNAH: (*laughing*) Oh, you know, just your average flight to Paris, nothin' extra special. Now let's go get some food, I am **starving**.

*They exit*

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*We see KEVIN getting ready to leave the plane. He is still nervous and anxious to get off. He grabs his bag and spots the FLIGHT ATTENDANT, who is helping CHRIS and CHRYS off of the plane. There are only a few people left. He walks up to her and tries to gain the courage to say something.*

KEVIN: Hey, I just wanted to apologize about earlier again. I really hope I didn't offend

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Really, it's no trouble

KEVIN: If it wouldn't be any trouble, I have some time before the funeral. I've never been to Paris before and I think it would be more enjoyable if I had someone to spend this trip with

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Are you asking me?

KEVIN: Yes, if you'd like to

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Well... my job, I can't just...

KEVIN: *(crestfallen)* Oh, yeah, right.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: *(deciding to go with her heart instead of her head)* Actually... I'd love to.  
*They grab hands and run off and exit.*

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*ED is getting the luggage from the overhead compartment and MILLIE is still in a sleeping position.*

ED: *(waking up)* Ooo, we made it. Did you see that Millie our dream came true, we're here... *(looks at Millie and sees she still has her eyes closed)* Millie we're here *(she shakes her arm only to get no response)* Millie... Millie wake up, we made it, we're here...*(no response)* sweetie our dream came true, we're here... *(realizes that she will not wake up. He falls into despair.)*

*Black out.*

END