

Written by Philip Crouch, Tasmania 2022

A One Act Play for 3 Players

"The great ones of your world are not the great ones of my world. We see greatness as greatness of soul, greatness of spirit, greatness in desire to serve. These things will endure long after the glitter of the material world has disappeared."

—Silver Birch Teachings



THE SOUL IN A SUITCASE

A One Act Play

By

Philip Crouch



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CHARACTERS: 3 Adults-Either Gender

PERSON 1: An administrative assistant who works in the office of Hobart City Council. Although a congenial outgoing person they are inwardly reflective today because of the passing of a brother from cancer. Today, all this comes to the surface underpinning the lunch time conversation with a good friend.

PERSON 2: A painter decorator tradesperson who whose working in the city today and is meeting they're friend for lunch. Although they have an outgoing no nonsense temperament, inwardly they harbour a deep and passionate interest in conscious spirituality matters. This experience arises during lunch time conversation.

PERSON 3: A casual holiday visitor to Hobart is walking through St David's Park carrying a suitcase, when they stumble across two friends sitting at a bench having an intense lunchtime discussion. Being of an extremely inquisitive nature draws closer to the bench. Finally, it's all too much and interrupting the two friends joins in the discussion of an afterlife and conscious spirituality matters.

PLACE

A city park bench, two people are sitting down having lunch and are deep in conversation. Later approached by a third person.

TIME

Lunch time present day 2022

THE SOUL IN A SUITCASE

ACT ONE – Scene 1

Setting: St David's park, Hobart, Tasmania, although geographically this location could be a city park anywhere in the world. A person is sitting on a park bench set downstage centre, surrounded by a tall bushy plant box situated stage left centre. Behind the bench, upstage centre a green-black stand reflects background.

At rise: Its lunchtime someone is sitting on a park bench nibbling away on a sandwich and sipping coffee waiting patiently for their friend to arrive. It's a beautiful sunny day, the smell of freshly mown grass mixes with scent of trees and flowers in the air. They are feeling very relaxed, are smiling and taking in the atmosphere. Soon, their friend arrives and rising from the bench they warmly greet them with a huge embrace, at the same time smiling broadly.

(Dressed in trade-work gear, carrying a lunch bag and coffee container approaches the person sitting on a park bench)

PERSON 1 Oh hello there, haven't seen you for a while, how are things?

(The friend rises from the bench both warmly embrace)

PERSON 2 Well, work, work and more work. I'm even starting

to look like a paint brush, (*Laughs*). Least I can save up for a holiday this year despite the pandemic, and we've been told our state borders are opening up again soon.

PERSON 1 You lucky thing! Wish I could have a holiday. Mind you I'm lucky to have a job at all these days.

PERSON 2 Oh, why's that?

PERSON 1 With the pandemic, it seems like everything in life is changing, work, family, people's attitudes, everything! You may not know this but my brother passed away the other week from terminal cancer, sometimes I wonder where life is taking us all right now.

PERSON 2 Oh! I'm sorry to hear that. Were you two very close?

PERSON 1 Yes we got on very well, I loved him very much and I have some good memories and that's really important to me.

PERSON 2 (*Empathic*) I'm really sorry though for your loss, it must be a hard thing to come to terms with?

(BEAT)

PERSON 1 (*Hesitantly*) it was, at least as a family we did share some good times with him.

PERSON 2 Are you okay now though?

PERSON 1 Sort off! (*Pause*) Can I ask you something?

PERSON 2 Sure, that's what friends are for isn't it?

PERSON 1 Well, I have often wondered when someone dies, why people say they have passed away, wonder where they are supposed to go?

PERSON 2 Depends on your point of view, I guess. Some people say that when you die you're either buried or cremated that's the end of it. Finito!

PERSON 1 Well, what do you think then?

PERSON 2 I've thought a lot about these things over the years. You know, most people just look at me and see a house painter right?

PERSON 1 Do they?

PERSON 2 I'm sure they're thinking: "what would they know about anything in life, except painting?"

PERSON 1 It's really sad when people make judgements like that especially when they don't even know you.

PERSON 2 Sad, but true. Anyway, being a house painter hasn't stopped me from thinking about life's big questions. *(Pause)* Hey, can I tell you something that I've never told you before?

PERSON 1 Yes, why not we've been friends a long time now, ever since our school days as I recall.

PERSON 2 Well, remember many years ago when my first marriage broke up?

PERSON 1 Yes, that was a really tough time for you.

PERSON 2 Well, I had this weird nightmare dream. I now know people call this a precognitive dream. Anyway the images and events in the dream resembled a sci-fi movie totally unreal. Even now I can remember waking up in the morning, sweating and shaking like a leaf.

PERSON 1 Sounds scary.

PERSON 2 Not only that, but when the events in this dream actually came true the following year, I can honestly say my whole life totally transformed.

(The friends move closer to each other paying attention to what is being said)

PERSON 1 Do you mean it was like destiny, or something?

PERSON 2 Not sure about destiny, but I began looking everywhere for answers about what the dream might mean, and even what happens to you after death.

PERSON 1 So where did you look? Where do you even start?

PERSON 2 Well, I started looking at various churches for some answers, but they couldn't really help me. Then one day, right out of the blue, somebody I'd never met before said: "Why don't you go and see a psychic medium or someone like that?"

(With a look of surprise and total disbelief)

PERSON 1 What!?!?!?

PERSON 2 Yeah! That's what I thought at the time.

PERSON 1 (*Surprised*) Well, did you go and see this, psychic medium?

PERSON 2 I did, but all of that seems a long time ago now.

PERSON 1 So, what happened?

PERSON 2 Well, the one thing this whole experience did for me was to set me on a journey of truth seeking.

PERSON 1 Is that like a journey of self-discovery?

PERSON 2 I call it a journey of conscious spirituality. There are thousands of people everywhere in the world that have had similar self-transformation experiences.

PERSON 1 (*Jokingly*) Fancy, you, a humble house painter believing in all this stuff about spirituality, psychic, spirit worlds, destinies oooohh!

PERSON 2 Yes, even little old me!

PERSON 1 But seriously, aren't there a lot of charlatans out there pushing all this stuff? I reckon some people will believe anything they're told.

PERSON 2 That's what I first thought too! I'm convinced after having been to spiritual circles meetings, workshops, seminars, doing research online, reading books, exploring the afterlife, dreams, and spirituality. Ordinary people have experienced these out-of-this-world experiences. *(Pause)* Even William Shakespeare knew about these sort of things. *(Dramatically)* "There are more things in heaven and earth Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." ¹

PERSON 1 Not that I believe in that spirituality stuff but you said something about an afterlife. What did you mean by that? Now you've really got me curious?

PERSON 2 *(Inspirationaly)* Years ago I listened to a highly gifted psychic medium speaking at a local spiritualist church. I'll never forget what she said: *(Emphasised)* "Life is like having "A Soul in a Suitcase" where the contents are mere reflections of your real self, soul, spirit which are like layers in a human body. The layers in a suitcase represent experiences of self-transformation experiences.

(BEAT)

PERSON 1 Wow! You really surprise me, your right into all this stuff aren't you?

(Both begin eating lunch, taking a drink from their coffee containers)

PERSON 2 Well, this knowledge has brought me something money can't possibly buy. Besides that it has given me considerable inner strength especially when overcoming life's many challenges, or when awakening to new spiritual pathway opportunities.

(Casually both look up at the people walking through the park. They notice someone carrying a suitcase who appears to be observing them with intense curiosity)

PERSON 1 Tell me have you ever heard of karma or whatever it's called, where people are supposed to live lives over and over again?

PERSON 2 Do you mean like reincarnation?

PERSON 1 Yes I suppose.

PERSON 2 Our individual consciousness, meaning the sum total of who we are transgresses through a series of earth life

experiences in which we're supposed to learn assists
are spirit-soul's progress. The knowledge or wisdom
experienced on earth then contributes to our afterlife
journey, there are no limitations!

PERSON 1 I'm not sure what you mean?

PERSON 2 According to Buddha, Silver Birch, and Spiritual
Light teachings incarnating on earth provides
opportunities for our spirit or the real self, to learn
valuable lessons. These could range from
understanding things like compassion, humility,
empathy, forgiveness, love, and suffering, to
poverty or wealth. All these contribute to our
individual soul's growth.

(Both look away from the bench and gaze along the park's pathway)

PERSON 1 Really!

Hey, you know that person over there carrying a
suitcase they've been observing us while we've
been talking. They appear to be moving closer to
our bench. Wonder why?

(Looking at the person carrying a suitcase and in a raised says)

PERSON 2 Your right you know, maybe it's a coincidence or even synchronicity that they're carrying a suitcase just when we're discussing this spiritual stuff. The Universal Laws of Attraction at work eh!

ACT ONE Scene 2

(The person holding the suitcase has now moved much closer to the park bench. Suddenly they putting their suitcase down, and without warning interrupts the two friend's conversation)

PERSON 3 Sorry to interrupt your lunch but I couldn't help overhearing your interesting discussion. I'm from Victoria and visiting Hobart for the first time.

(Both respond simultaneously)

PERSON 1 No worries, welcome to Tasmania.

PERSON 2 No worries, welcome to Tasmania.

PERSON 3 I was just on my way to the hotel, and thought as it's a nice sunny day I'd walk through your lovely park. I'm an inquisitive sort of person and couldn't help overhearing your interesting discussion about reincarnation. Do you really believe in all that?

PERSON 1 Sort of, but this stuff is still all new to me.

PERSON 2 Well I'm definitely a firm believer, and culturally millions of people globally follow similar ideals. According to the USB's Spiritual Light book, Silver Birch, or Buddhist teachings along with others they suggest that before we enter a new life on earth we plan to have a series of experiences. This includes choosing our parents, country of birth, soul groupings and even necessary personal relationships.

(Person 1 and 3 give each other a startled look at this sudden revelation, responding Simultaneously)

PERSON 1 Really!!!!!!

PERSON 3 Really!!!!!!

Well if that's the case, when I die and pass over to wherever I'm supposed go to then I'm coming back as a wealthy business person, maybe even a famous movie star, or, a great scientist.

PERSON 1 Yeah, the same goes for me too I don't want to work in an office all my life and stay poor. There must be some other way to move through this life?

PERSON 2 You have to consider there are Universal Laws that Govern and the things you might wish for may or may not ever transpire. *(Pause)* We all live in a reciprocating universe and are here on earth to gain wisdom, acquire spiritual knowledge, and contribute to this planet before returning before once again returning to our spirit home, heaven or etheric world.

PERSON 1 Does this mean we are constantly having to improve ourselves for the whole of our lives?

PERSON 2 *(Emphasised)* Think of it as journey not a destination or like being “The Soul in a Suitcase” only the layers and luggage we carry are the lessons learnt from our earthly experiences. The benefits we gain continually contribute to our spirit-soul’s development. Then, when we return to spirit or etheric worlds, we once again meet our loved ones and others we have shared a spiritual bond with.

(Picking up the suitcase, looks at it as if there is something different about its contents, then walks away slowly with a huge smile on their face)

PERSON 3 Wow! I never expected a visit to Hobart would entail a lesson on spirituality, but thank you for sharing. Must be off now got to book into the hotel. Sorry for disturbing your lunch conversation, maybe we'll meet again someday? You never know what life's pathways have in store for you or what's waiting around the next corner?

(The two friends prepare to leave picking up their lunch bag wrappings and coffee containers getting ready to head back to work)

PERSON 1 Must be getting back to the office now. Wow! Didn't expect all this to happen at lunch time. *(Pause)* If I wanted to know some more about these spiritual things, and I'm not saying I do, what do you suggest?

PERSON 2 I can lend you some books and articles, but why not explore conscious spirituality matters for yourself. For starters, you can do some research on the internet. Try Googling "Philip Conscious Spirituality."

PERSON 1 Thank you for those suggestions.

PERSON 2 My pleasure, one of the best things you can really do

PERSON 2 My pleasure, one of the best things you can really do right now is to begin creating an awareness of your inner life by contemplation, meditation or inner reflection. Consider the whole of life as a journey carrying piece of precious luggage or, “The Soul in a Suitcase.”

(Both rise from the bench, smile at one another embrace and slowly walk off along the park’s pathway in opposite directions.)

----- CURTAIN -----

(All cast and crew take a bow)

OPTIONAL: *Invite the audience to participate in an open discussion or question and answer session, based on the central narrative themes of this play. This development can be facilitated by the actors, readers, or a third person facilitating a moderator role. In context this activity raises an awareness of the central narrative themes of the play. However, no previous experience of conscious spirituality matters is assumed necessary for this activity.*



PROPS

Bench seat, alternatively 3 plastic chairs, a green cover or similar, Medium or large suitcase Two coffee drink containers, accompanying sandwich bags, and edibles. A small tree/shrubs/other with foliage, simulating park surrounds.

COSTUMES

Person 1: Smart casual office style attire

Person 2: Hi-Viz top, jeans, or similar working clothes

Person 3: Casual clothes or holiday attire

SETTING

Park bench

Run time 18 minutes.

SYNOPSIS

Two long-time friends are meeting for lunch in St David's Park Hobart. One of them has recently lost their brother who has recently passed over from terminal cancer. As the friends eat their lunch and share general social conversation the tone suddenly changes into a more serious discussion revolving around the merits or otherwise of an afterlife. Does one exist? Why? For what reason? A person walking through the park carrying a suitcase, suddenly stops and appears to be listening to the friend's discussion with deep interest. Without warning and somewhat apologetically interrupts and joins in their afterlife discussion.

PRODUCTION NOTES

This vignette is a one-act play developed to encourage initial informal open discussion of *conscious spirituality* subject matter. In performing this narrative there are three possible options presenters or producers could action.

- (1) Theatrically, three amateur actors perform the play as scripted.
- (2) Three competent confident readers present the play as a fully rehearsed reading. The format style could suit a workshop, community discussion group, or similar awareness raising activity.
- (3) An optional component could include an audience question and answer component following the play's conclusion based on core themes presented. This provides an opportunity for open discussion amongst audience participants, actors, readers, or through an appointed facilitator.

In developing this play no prior knowledge or experiences are assumed necessary, the purpose is to provide a medium for open discussion.

AUTHORS NOTES

Conscious Spirituality is a non-religious awareness project raising public awareness of subject matter that includes: *Afterlife, Dreams, Consciousness, Spirituality, Aging/Wisdom, The Universal Spiritual Brother&Sisterhood, USB, Beyond UFOs and related topics*. The complete script of "The Soul in a Suitcase" is available as a free download from www.philipcrouch.org (as a service to community).

Acknowledging the loving and creative contribution in developing this narrative are the following people: *Alwyn Lewis, Rogan Brown, Jacqui Crouch, John Finnemore*, and universal spiritual inspiration. In addition, previous participants of Act Your Age Seniors Theatre,(2006-2012) Acorn Players (2013-2019), and fellow theatre creatives from Hobart Repertory Theatre. Similar production narratives to above are being considered for 2022-2023

FOOTNOTE 1. William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, 1.5.167-8: Hamlet to Horatio.

SUGGESTED RESOURCES:

- (1) *More Philosophy of Silver Birch*, Compiled by Ortzen, Tony, ISBN: 9780853841043 https://tsbookshop.36400.com.au/?pg=proddetails&prod_id=9780853841043

http://whitecrowbooks.com/ebooks/page/more_philosophy_of_silver_birch/ [e-book]

<https://thesearchforlifeafterdeath.com/2019/12/29/spiritual-but-not-religious/>

- (2) *Spiritual Light*, 2014, *Spiritual Light: Universal Teachings from the Highest Spirit Realms*, compiled by Michael Flagg, and John Finnemore, www.theusb.org, <https://www.bookdepository.com/Spiritual-Light/9780991242221>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8Sv52Hb6A0&index=1&list=PL_kBOnjZGUqGCN9jZwOTFfX2Y7IzIPO63.

Also-Derwent Group of the USB, Hobart www.philipcrouch.org

- (3) *Arthur Conan Doyle -Book Of Beyond*, Edited by Ivan Cooke, Mediumship Grace Cooke, White Eagle Publishing, ISBN: 978-0-85487-147-6.
- (4) Victor Zammit Afterlife Report-Australian Based Research
<https://www.victorzammit.com/>,
<https://www.victorzammit.com/archives/index.html>
- (5) *Five Stages of the Soul*, Moody, H, Carrol, D, 1997, Anchor Books, USA, ISBN: 0-385-48677-4. [Especially relevant for persons over the age of 55+]. <https://www.bookdepository.com/Five-Stages-Soul-Harry-R-Moody/9780385486774?ref=grid-view&qid=1583280002962&sr=1-2>
- (6) *CONSCIOUSNESS – Resourceful you tube video – 75 minutes*
<https://anthonychene.com/project/who-we-are>
- (7) *Swedenborg, The Dynamics of Transformation*, Dr Philip Groves, Swedenborg Association of Australia.
<http://www.swedenborg.com.au/philip-w-groves>
- (8) *Beyond UFO's, Editors: Science of Consciousness* Hernandez, Rey, Klimo, Dr Jon, Schild, Dr Rudy, 2018, Foundation for Research into Extraterrestrial Extra Ordinary Experiences, F.R.E.E.ISBN: 13 978-172 - 1088652. <https://www.consciousnessandcontact.org/>
<https://www.bookdepository.com/Beyond-UFOs/9781721088652>

OTHER USEFUL SOURCES

IONS - Institute of Noetic Sciences, <https://noetic.org/experience/>

FMBR – Foundation Mind Body Research, <https://fmbr.org/>

SAI - Spiritual Awakening International,
<https://spiritualawakeningsinternational.org/affiliated-groups/>

Contact Modalities –

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Ckk8xO_wbE&ab_channel=NewThinkingAllowedwithJeffreyMishlove

Victor Zammit Afterlife Report-

<http://www.victorzammit.com/archives/>

Conscious Spirituality Tasmania – www.philipcrouch.org

IANDS – <https://iands.org/groups/affiliated-groups/find-a-group/291-iands-down-under.html># Institute and <https://iands.org/>

IASD - International Association of Dreams, www.asdreams.org

Victor Zammit Afterlife Report-
<http://www.victorzammit.com/archives/>

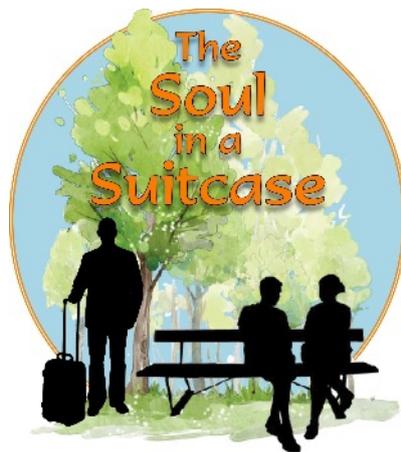
Conscious Spirituality Tasmania – www.philipcrouch.org

“I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing postulates consciousness.”

- Max Planck 1858-1947, Nobel prize winning German Physicist



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