



Written by Philip Crouch

Tasmania, 2020

A One Act Play for Three 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

Characters: Three Adult/Mature-Age Persons, Any Gender

PERSON 1: A very pleasant congenial easy-going person who works as an administrative officer within the Hobart Council and regularly has lunch in St David's Park. Their brother has just recently passed over from cancer. This underpins the conversation in the play.

PERSON 2: Very outgoing, no-nonsense type of person, a painter and decorator with a hidden but interesting passion involving conscious spirituality. Until today, their friend (person 1) was not previously aware of this.

PERSON 3: A visitor to Hobart is walking through the park carrying a suitcase. Being of an inquisitive nature they overhear an interesting conversation between two people sitting on a park bench discussing the merits or otherwise of an afterlife. They interrupt and join in.

PROPS

Large to medium suitcase

Two drink containers, sandwich bags, and edibles

COSTUMES

Person 1: Smart casual, as might be worn in an office setting

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

Person 3: Casual holiday clothes

SETTING

Park bench-style seat, or three plastic chairs pulled close together.

Small tree or similar artificial (or real) foliage, simulating park surrounds

RUN TIME

15 minutes. Optional: *time for audience/group questions to be discussed.*

SYNOPSIS

Two long-time friends are meeting for lunch in St David's Park, Hobart. One of them has recently lost their brother who 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 friends' discussion with deep interest. Without warning and somewhat apologetically, they interrupt and join in the afterlife discussion.

PRODUCTION NOTES

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

- (1) Theatrically, three amateur actors perform the play as scripted.
- (2) Three competent confident readers presenting the play as a fully rehearsed reading. This format style could include a workshop, community discussion group, or similar style event activity.
- (3) Audience participation, where people have an opportunity to ask either the actors, readers, or appointed facilitator about the play's content material at the conclusion of any performance. *No prior knowledge or experience of conscious spirituality literature materials is assumed necessary.*

Intentionally, the primary objective of this narrative is to raise community awareness of *conscious spirituality* literature. Whilst the writing and setting is based in Tasmania, Australia producers or presenters of this one act play are encouraged to localise geographical location names in the production script.

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ACT ONE - SCENE 1

It's lunchtime in St David's Park in Hobart, although it could be a park anywhere in Australia. A person with a lunch bag and drink beside them is sitting on a park bench and is deep in thought waiting for a friend to arrive. It's a warm sunny day in Hobart, and the park grass had recently been mown providing an aroma of freshly mown grass permeating the air. Birds are flying through the trees oblivious to the fact Tasmania is like the rest of the world, experiencing a COVID-19 pandemic. Looking up a pleasant smile comes over their face as they see their friend coming towards them.

A person dressed in trade-work gear, carrying a lunch bag and a drink approaches person sitting on a park bench.

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

The friend rises and each gives the other a huge 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 Why's that?

PERSON 1 With the pandemic, it seems like everything in life is changing - work, people, family, 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 of him, and that's really important.

PERSON 2 (*Empathetic*) I'm really sorry though for your loss.
It must be hard thing to come to terms with?

(BEAT)

PERSON 1 (*In a hesitant voice*) Yes, it is! At least as a family
we did share some good times with him.

PERSON 2 Are you okay now though?

PERSON 1 Sort of!

(BEAT)

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 just "*passed away.*"
I wonder where they're supposed to pass to.

PERSON 2 That 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. You know
most people look at me as just being
a house painter right? I'm sure they're thinking
"what would they know about anything?"

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

PERSON 2 Sad, but true. Anyway, being just 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, of course. We've been friends a long time now.

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

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

PERSON 2 Well, I had this nightmare dream. I now know that people call this a precognitive dream. Anyway the whole dream was like an unreal science fiction movie. Things were happening that seemed totally weird. I remember waking up in the morning, sweating and shaking like a leaf.

PERSON 1 Sounds scary.

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

The friends moves closer to the other paying close attention to what is being said.

PERSON 1 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 after death.

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

PERSON 2 Well I started with various churches, but they couldn't really help me. Then, right out of the blue, somebody I've never met before said, "Why don't you go and see a psychic medium or someone like that?"

PERSON 1 *(With a really surprised look of total disbelief)*
What!?!?!?

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

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

PERSON 2 Yes I did! But all that seems so long ago now.

PERSON 1 So, what happened?

PERSON 2 Well! The one thing this experience did do for me was to set me on a journey.

PERSON 1 Like a journey of discovery?

PERSON 2 Yes, a journey of what I now call *conscious spirituality*. There are many people who have these life changing experiences. Since my precognitive dream experience I've *never ever* looked back.

PERSON 1 *(Poking fun)* Fancy you, a humble house painter believing all this stuff about spirituality, psychic, spirit worlds. Ooohhh, and destinies!

PERSON 2 Yes, even little old me!

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

PERSON 2 That's what I first thought too! But I've been to meetings, workshops and seminars, and doing research online, reading books on the afterlife, dreams, spirituality, healing etc. And the fact that ordinary people can have out-of-this-world experiences; it all just seems to make sense.
(Pause) You know, even Shakespeare knew about these 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? You've *really got me curious* now?

PERSON 2 *(As if preparing to give a speech)* Well many years ago I listened to a highly gifted psychic medium speaking at a local spiritualist church meeting.

I'll never forget what she said (*emphasis*) "Life is like having "A Soul in a Suitcase". The contents are reflections of your *real self* (the soul or spirit) within a human body (the suitcase) which is on one continuous progressive journey, always travelling and experiencing, moving through many layers or *suitcases* until eventually it reaches its final destination.

(BEAT)

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

Both eat more of their lunch, and take a drink from a container.

PERSON 2 Well, it's brought me something money can't buy, and given me considerable inner strength especially when facing life's many challenges, or coming across new opportunities and potential pathways.

While having a drink they casually look up at the passing parade walking through the park. They notice a person carrying a suitcase who seems 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?

That is the idea that our consciousness - the sum total of us - progresses through a series of life experiences in which we're supposed to learn from earthly lessons in order to progress our soul-spirit. The knowledge or wisdom we might experience on earth contributes to our afterlife journey too. *There are no limitations!*

PERSON 1 I'm not sure what you mean.

PERSON 2 Well, according to Buddha, Silver Birch, and Spiritual Light teachings, spending an incarnation on earth allows our spirit, the *real self*, to learn lessons in compassion, humility, empathy, love, suffering, poverty and wealth so our soul continues to grow.

PERSON 1 Really? Hey, you know that person over there (*Looks along the park's pathway*) carrying a suitcase, well they've been staring at us while we've been talking.

PERSON 2 (*While looking at the person, in a raised voice*) You're right you know. Maybe it's a coincidence or even synchronicity that they're carrying a suitcase while we're discussing this stuff. The *Universal Laws of Attraction* at work eh!

Act One - Scene 2

By this time the person holding the suitcase has moved much closer to their bench. They put the suitcase down and suddenly interrupt the friends' conversation.

PERSON 3 Sorry to interrupt your lunch but I couldn't help overhearing your discussion. I'm from Victoria and visiting Hobart and I was just on my way to the hotel. As it's a nice sunny day, I thought I'd walk through this lovely park. But I couldn't help overhearing your interesting discussion.

PERSON 1 That's okay! *Welcome to Tasmania!*

PERSON 3 Thanks. Just listening to your conversation about reincarnation and the lessons we have to learn has really intrigued me. Do you really *believe* in all that?

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

PERSON 2 Well I'm definitely a firm believer. From what I've read, there are millions across this world who follow similar ideas. According to the teachings of the Spiritual Light book and Silver Birch for example, they say before we enter a new life we not only choose the country we are born into, but our parents, family grouping, and even our personal relationship experiences. Our chosen life

experiences help us meet the trials, tribulations and joys which enable our spirit to grow.

Person 1 and 3 look at each other with a startled look at this sudden revelation, and respond 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 want to come back a wealthy business person, maybe even a movie star, or how about a famous scientist?

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

PERSON 2 Well there are ***Universal Laws that Govern*** how everything works. The things you might wish for may or may not ever transpire. *(Pause)*
We all live in a reciprocating universe and are here to gain wisdom, acquire spiritual knowledge, and contribute to community before returning once again to our spirit home.
(Emphasis) Life really is just like "The Soul in a Suitcase" only the luggage we carry is the lessons learnt from our earthly experiences.
Upon returning to an *Afterlife or etheric realms* we once again meet our loved ones, old friends and others who we might have experienced a

close spiritual bond with.

PERSON 3 Wow! I never expected a visit to Hobart would entail a lesson on spirituality, but thank you for sharing.

Picks up the suitcase, looks at it as if there is something different about its contents ...then walks away smiling from ear to ear.

Must be off now got to book into the hotel.
Sorry for disturbing your lunch conversation.
Maybe we'll meet again some day? You never know what life has in store for you, do you, or just what's waiting around the next corner?

Both friends pack up their lunch bag and containers, and get ready to head back to work.

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

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

But one of the best things you can really do right now is to create an awareness of your *inner self*. Think of this as a piece of valuable precious luggage or “**The Soul in a Suitcase**” going on a journey to infinity visiting and experiencing many places before reaching its final destination. Got to get back to work myself - a lot of painting to do this afternoon!

They both get up from the bench, smile at one another then embrace and slowly walk along the pathway together.

----- CURTAIN -----

(All cast and crew take a bow)

OPTIONAL: *Audiences, small groups or workshop participants are invited and encouraged to ask questions relating to the central themes raised in this narrative. A facilitator, actors, or performers then respond to raised questions.*

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). Contributing to this play I acknowledge the loving and creative assistance of 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 2021-2023.

FOOTNOTE:

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

RESOURCE READING:

- (1) *More Philosophy of Silver Birch*, Compiled by Ortzen, Tony, ISBN: 9780853841043
https://tsbookshop.36-400.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_kBQnjZGUqGCN9jZwQTFfX2Y7IzIPO63. 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
<https://www.whiteeagle.org/shop/books/white-eagle-publishing-book-list/arthur-conan-doyle-s-book-of-the-beyond>
- (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>

CONSCIOUSNESS - MAX PLANCK

"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 prizewinning German Physicist

- (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/>
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