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The Layover

By

TRACY WELLS

Dramatic Publishing Company

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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TRACY WELLS

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(THE LAYOVER)

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The Layover was originally performed by the Tabb High School drama department in Yorktown, Va. The show premiered in May 2021.

CAST:

DanaShaili Bedi
MichaelElias Sears
Gabrielle..... Crystal Versluis
Frank Jonathan Cole Hurd
Edith..... Abigail Goodrich
Jackie/Flight AttendantJacqueline Rose
Rick/Flight Announcer.....Hannah Sweazey
Erin/Traveler Semira Thorson
Charlie.....Parker Thorson
Alex..... Faith Mazzuchi

PRODUCTION:

Drama Teacher/Coach/ProducerElizabeth Milne
Student DirectorMadelin Pittman
Cinematographer..... Tamala Hughes
Technical Co-Directors Emma Cantwell, Emily Knaub
Stage Manager Bert Hughes
Tech CrewMaddie Pittman, Brenna Bagelieri
Set DesignMaddie Pittman

The Layover

CHARACTERS

DANA (DAN): Nineteen-year-old with a mixed past who finds herself stranded in an airport.

MICHAEL (MICHAELA): Unusual stranger, sitting and waiting in an airport terminal.

GABE (GABRIELLE): Michael's companion, also waiting.

FRANK: An older gentleman excited for a trip of a lifetime.

EDITH: Frank's wife, calmly awaiting her trip as well.

JESSICA (JESSIE): First-time parent traveling with an infant.

CHRIS (CHRISTY): Jessica's spouse.

RICK (RITA): An acquaintance of Michael and Gabe.

JACKIE (JACK): A troubled young person.

STEPHANIE (STEVE): A parent who is tired and just wants to get home.

AARON (ERIN): Stephanie's spouse—equally tired.

ALEX: Their oldest child who just wants to be left alone.

CHARLIE (CHARLOTTE): Their youngest child who has too much energy, age 8 to 11.

TRAVELER: Traveler wearing earbuds.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT: Enters terminal carrying a mysterious bag.

FLIGHT ANNOUNCER: Offstage voice or can also be played at a small check-in counter.

OPTIONAL EXTRAS: Barista, Passengers, Airport personnel.

TIME: Modern day.

PLACE: This play takes place in a waiting area outside the gate in an airport terminal.

PRODUCTION NOTES

CASTING: Feel free to assign genders or races as needed to any character, except for Frank and Edith. Also, any of the couples can be played as same-sex couples, again except for Frank and Edith. If you need to change other identifying characteristics such as names to better identify with your community, you may do so. Alternate character names are suggested for convenience.

COMBINING ROLES: There are many potential options for doubling or even tripling of roles. All roles above are easy to combine except for Dana, Michael, Gabe, Frank and Edith.

Additional production notes on set, costumes and props can be found in the back of the book.

The Layover

AT RISE: *DANA is sitting in the chair closest to upstage, facing R. She is looking upstage L, watching the planes take off and land. After a moment, MICHAEL enters L and crosses to the bank of chairs opposite DANA. He puts his hand on the chair diagonally facing her.*

MICHAEL. Is anyone sitting here?

DANA (*looks at the chair briefly, then turns back to the window*). Nope.

MICHAEL. Do you mind if I do?

DANA (*turns back, with attitude*). It's not like I own that chair. Sit if you want, it's a free country. (*Turns back to the window.*)

MICHAEL. Thank you, I appreciate it. My legs were getting tired. (*Sits.*)

DANA (*abrupt*). Like I said, I don't own the chair. It wasn't mine to give. No need to thank me.

MICHAEL. All I'm saying is, this is a big airport.

DANA. I guess so.

MICHAEL (*trying to strike up a conversation*). Would've been worse if I was carrying a suitcase. Good thing I always travel light. Where's your bag?

DANA (*turns back to MICHAEL with a sneer*). Are you blind? It's right—

(She points down to the floor next to her; then looks and sees that it's not there. She jumps up, alarmed.)

DANA (*cont'd*). Where is it? It was right here a minute ago!

(She jumps up and starts looking under and around the seats.)

MICHAEL (*calmly, not moving*). I'm sure it's around here somewhere.

DANA (*frantically*). Where? It was right there next to me and now it's gone!

MICHAEL. What did it look like?

DANA. It was bright pink and had a big painted rainbow on one side and a bunch of hearts on the other side.

MICHAEL. Pink with rainbows and hearts, huh? (*Starts to laugh.*)

DANA. What's so funny?

MICHAEL. Just didn't peg you as a rainbow and hearts kind of girl.

DANA (*annoyed*). Oh, and you've gotten to know me so well after meeting me what ... two minutes ago? (*Resumes looking.*) Where could it be?

(She looks around under chairs as GABE enters L and crosses to the seats during MICHAEL's line.)

MICHAEL. I'm sure it's fine. I mean, it's not like airports are known for losing bags or anything.

(DANA looks from around a chair to glare at MICHAEL as GABE approaches.)

GABE. What's going on?

MICHAEL. She can't find her bag.

GABE. What's it look like?

(GABE sits down next to MICHAEL.)

MICHAEL. Rainbows, hearts, pink. You know ... real girly-girl stuff. *(Smirks.)*

DANA *(standing up, annoyed)*. I am *not* a girly-girl.

MICHAEL *(shrugs his shoulders)*. Hey, I'm not the one with the pink rainbow bag.

DANA. It's from when I was a kid. My mom got it for me. It was all I had time to grab.

GABE. So you left in a rush?

DANA. You could say that. *(Continues to look, but less frantically.)*

GABE. What for?

DANA. It was just this thing. I got into some trouble back home. Was blamed for something I didn't— *(Stops, realizing she doesn't even know him.)* Wait a minute, why do you care?

GABE *(shrugs his shoulders)*. Just making conversation.

DANA *(sneers at MICHAEL and GABE)*. You guys are weird.

MICHAEL. Since when is it weird to make polite conversation with a total stranger?

DANA. Since forever!

MICHAEL. Good to know. *(Turns to GABE.)* Remind me next time that it's now rude to talk to strangers.

GABE. Will do.

DANA *(scrutinizing MICHAEL and GABE)*. Do you guys know each other or something?

GABE. Or something.

DANA. What?

GABE. Nothing. *(Chuckles.)* Yeah, I guess we've known each other for awhile.

DANA. Are you going on a trip together or something?

MICHAEL. Or something.

(FRANK and EDITH enter L, slowly. FRANK is carrying a bag. They cross to the seats.)

DANA. You're both acting really strange. *(Thinks for a moment, then comes to an angry conclusion.)* Hey! You guys stole my bag, didn't you?

GABE *(calmly)*. I assure you, we did not.

DANA *(looking around for anyone who will listen)*. Someone help me! These two men are con artists. They stole my bag!

MICHAEL *(looks around)*. And yet there's not a rainbow or heart to be found anywhere.

EDITH *(as she approaches)*. Dear girl, what is the matter?

DANA *(pointing at MICHAEL and GABE)*. It's them! They stole my bag.

EDITH. But they don't have any bags.

DANA. They must've hidden it somewhere.

EDITH. Well what does it look like?

GABE. Pink with hearts and rainbows.

DANA. See! I told you. They've got my bag!

EDITH. Oh no, dear. I saw your bag and it's perfectly fine.

DANA. You did?

EDITH. It's near mine. There's a bunch of bags waiting to be sorted before they load them on the plane.

DANA *(calming down)*. Oh, OK.

(DANA sits down and resumes looking out the window.)

FRANK *(to EDITH)*. Should we sit right here?

(FRANK indicates two seats in the same bank as DANA.)

EDITH. Yes, dear, these are just fine.

(EDITH sits in the chair closest to downstage as FRANK sits next to her.)

GABE *(to FRANK)*. Are you coming or going?

FRANK *(not understanding)*. Excuse me?

GABE. You traveling home or going somewhere exciting?

FRANK. Oh. *(Suddenly excited.)* I'm going on a vacation!

MICHAEL. Where to?

FRANK *(pulls ticket and itinerary out of his shirt pocket and pats them)*. Got a two-month trip across Europe right here. Been waiting all our lives to take this trip— *(Pats EDITH's hand.)* haven't we, sweetheart?

EDITH. Sure have.

FRANK *(holds out his hand)*. Name's Frank, by the way.

GABE *(shakes FRANK's hand)*. Nice to meet you, Frank. I'm Gabe. *(Indicates MICHAEL.)* And this is Michael.

MICHAEL *(with a quick hand wave)*. Hey.

FRANK *(patting EDITH's hand)*. And this beautiful woman is my wife, Edith.

EDITH. Nice to meet you.

GABE. So how long have you two crazy kids lived around here?

FRANK *(chuckles)*. Oh, we don't live around here.

DANA *(with a sneer)*. Then what are you doing in this airport?

EDITH. Layover.

MICHAEL. Layover? That sucks.

FRANK. There weren't any direct flights.

MICHAEL. Gotcha.

FRANK. Doesn't bother me any. Gives me some extra time to just sit quietly and enjoy the company of my bride. (*Pats EDITH's hand.*) Isn't that right, sweetheart?

EDITH. Sure is.

DANA (*scoffs, without looking away from the window*). Good luck sitting quietly with these two around. (*Points her thumb at MICHAEL and GABE.*) They're *real* chatty.

EDITH. What's your name, dear?

DANA. Dana. (*Looks at EDITH suspiciously.*) Why? What does it matter to you?

EDITH (*ignoring the attitude*). Are you from around here too, Dana?

DANA (*not wanting to be bothered, turns back to the window*). No.

EDITH. Ah, you're stuck here on a layover too, then?

DANA (*with scorn, without looking away from the window*). Looks like it, doesn't it?

EDITH (*unbothered*). Where are you headed?

DANA (*turns suddenly, angry and lashing out*). I don't know and I don't care! Anywhere but where I came from. I just had to get out of there, OK?

EDITH (*calmly, unbothered*). OK, dear.

DANA (*stands and crosses to EDITH*). They didn't want me there anyway—knew I was trouble. I would've been locked up for sure if I'd stayed. (*Stepping closer to EDITH—too close.*) How do you like that? Does that satisfy your curiosity? Are you happy now?

(GABE stands and quickly crosses to DANA and takes her arm.)

GABE. Hey there. Just take it easy.

FRANK (*patting EDITH's hand*). She's just fine, aren't you, sweetheart?

EDITH. Sure am.

DANA (*jerking away from GABE*). Don't touch me! (*Crosses back to her chair and sits in a huff.*) Better for everyone that I left.

(Brings up her knees, drawing herself into a ball and turns to face the window, looking to others like she is ignoring them—which she's not. JESSICA enters L, pushing a stroller, followed by CHRIS, who is laden with two small suitcases a diaper bag, another small bag, a purse and perhaps a car seat.)

JESSICA (*looking back at CHRIS*). Hurry up, honey. I think I see a couple seats over here.

CHRIS (*exhausted*). I'm going as fast as I can.

JESSICA (*now near the seating area, she stops and turns*). Let me help you. (*Plucks her purse off his hand and starts rifling through it.*) I need my lip balm anyway. (*Finds her lip balm and starts applying it.*)

CHRIS. Seriously?

JESSICA (*loops the purse on her arm or over the handle of the stroller*). I guess I could take the diaper bag too. (*Peeks in the stroller at the baby.*) This little snuggle muffin needs her bottle soon anyway, doesn't she?

(The sound of the baby laughing is heard.)

CHRIS. Don't worry about it. I've got it.

JESSICA (*turning to CHRIS*). No really, I need to get that bottle.

(She starts to wrestle the diaper bag out of CHRIS' hands.)

CHRIS. Stop, Jess! I said I've got it.

JESSICA. And *I* said I need that bottle, Chris!

(With one final tug, she frees the diaper bag, which causes everything else that CHRIS was holding to go flying.)

CHRIS *(looking down at the mess. With sarcasm)*. Great. As if traveling with an infant wasn't enough of a nightmare.

DANA *(laughs)*. That was awesome.

(MICHAEL and GABE stand and cross to CHRIS.)

MICHAEL. Here, let us help you with those.

CHRIS *(gratefully)*. Thanks.

(CHRIS, MICHAEL and GABE pick up bags and stack them as JESSICA crosses to a chair across from DANA and sits, positioning the stroller so both she and DANA can see the baby.)

JESSICA. Sorry about the noise and the mess. No one tells you how much stuff you need to bring when you travel with an infant.

FRANK. Are you going to check some of those bags?

CHRIS. Heck no! Do you see how much the airlines charge you to check a bag?

GABE. They're not going to allow you to bring all of that on the plane with you, are they?

CHRIS. Sure they will! *(Holds up a suitcase.)* Our suitcases are regulation size to stow in the overhead compartments and the airline allows you one bag per passenger plus a diaper bag as long as they fit under your seat.

EDITH. That doesn't sound right to me.

FRANK. I'd hate for you to get turned away at the gate.

CHRIS. This is our third connecting flight today so trust me, we know they'll let us on.

DANA. Your *third* connecting flight! Are you a moron?

EDITH (*admonishingly*). Dana!

MICHAEL. Why so many connecting flights?

CHRIS. Kids are expensive! We had to save some money, and this was the cheapest flight we could find.

GABE. Couldn't you just drive?

DANA. Or take a bus?

CHRIS. Our car was in the shop.

(CHRIS looks at JESSICA, who is rifling through the diaper bag for a bottle and burp cloth.)

CHRIS (*cont'd*). I did check out some bus routes, but this one—

(He points with his thumb at JESSICA and looks at FRANK.)

JESSICA (*looking up suddenly, with bottle and burp cloth in her hand*). There was *no way* I was getting stuck on a smelly old bus for fifteen hours!

FRANK. Fifteen hours! Where are you from?

JESSICA. Toledo, Ohio.

MICHAEL. And where are you headed?

CHRIS. Cincinnati.

DANA. Cincinnati? Isn't that in Ohio too?

FRANK. How was a bus ride from Toledo to Cincinnati going to take fifteen hours?

CHRIS. *Tons* of stops.

FRANK. Ah, right.

DANA. So you bought a plane ticket with not one ... not two ... but *three* connecting flights to go from the *top* of Ohio to the *bottom* of Ohio?

CHRIS (*to MICHAEL*). I know, I know ... it was stupid to fly with all these layovers.

DANA. And to *Ohio* of all places! I mean ... if it were a tropical island or something then maybe. (*Incredulous.*) But Ohio!

GABE. What I want to know is, if you were flying from one city in Ohio to another, why did they give you a connecting flight all the way over here? You're nowhere near Ohio!

JESSICA. Great question. (*Smiles at CHRIS.*) My husband may be many things, but travel agent he is not.

DANA (*looking into the stroller and speaking in "baby talk"*). You think your parents are morons too, don't you? (*Sound of the baby laughing is heard.*) That's what I thought.

JESSICA (*leaning into the stroller*). Here you go, sweetie.

FRANK. So how long is your layover? My wife Edith and I are on a layover as well. (*Looks at EDITH lovingly and pats her hand.*) Aren't we, sweetheart?

EDITH. Sure are.

(*JESSICA and CHRIS look at each other, confused. They raise their eyebrows at each other, then turn back to FRANK.*)

JESSICA (*overly sweet and a little awkward*). Oh, aren't you just the sweetest?

CHRIS (*awkwardly, not knowing what to say*). Yes. What a lovely ... couple you make.

FRANK. Thank you, but you don't have to say that.

CHRIS (*awkwardly*). No, I mean it ... really.

(CHRIS opens his eyes wide and looks at JESSICA, then looks back at FRANK.)

DANA *(looking in the stroller at the baby)*. Seriously kid, your parents are weirdos.

(Sound of the baby laughing is heard.)

CHRIS. But to answer your question, we don't have a long layover at all. *(Looks at his watch.)* It should be about an hour or so.

JESSICA *(tense, remembering)*. I don't think so, Chris. Remember, our first flight was delayed.

CHRIS. Oh right! I forgot about that.

JESSICA *(starts rifling through her purse)*. And there was that awful incident on our second flight—

CHRIS. Oh yeah! Gruesome affair—the whole thing was just terrible.

DANA. What happened?

JESSICA *(jumps up, panicked, holding a plane ticket)*. Oh no! Our next flight is boarding in ten minutes!

CHRIS. Ten minutes! That can't be right. We just got here!

JESSICA. See for yourself.

(She holds out the ticket for CHRIS to see. He looks at it, grabs it to look more closely, then looks from his watch to the ticket to his watch again to the ticket again and then to JESSICA's face.)

CHRIS *(wide-eyed and panicked)*. Our flight is boarding in ten minutes!

JESSICA *(equally wide-eyed and panicked)*. I know!

PRODUCTION NOTES

SET: The play can be done on a bare stage with two banks of eight chairs set up in rows of four with two of the rows facing the other two rows. If creating a more elaborate set, I suggest that a large window be placed upstage. This could be done with simple framework, as a painted backdrop or with projections that could also feature airplanes taking off and landing in intervals. If using a check-in counter for the flight announcer, that should be placed upstage right so as not to interfere with the main action. If you choose to have a coffee cart with a barista onstage, that should be placed upstage left. Otherwise, when characters reference getting a snack/drink, then can enter/exit to do so.

COSTUMES: Modern-day attire. The flight attendant, check-in officer and any other airport personnel should be dressed in a uniform accordingly. Frank and Edith should be dressed in attire befitting their age. Dana and Alex should be dressed youthfully. Charlie/Charlotte should be dressed in attire befitting their age. Michael/Michaela and Gabe/Gabrielle should wear clothing in shades of white and gray. It shouldn't be overly obvious ... at first. Perhaps they wear gray pants and a gray jacket, but when they take off their jacket they are in a startlingly white shirt/dress. Rick should wear primarily black with red accents but should appear to also be in a uniform befitting a security guard. Traveler should wear a hoodie. If a barista is present on stage, he/she should wear an apron.

PROPS: Bags of various styles (5), plane ticket/itinerary (7), small rolling suitcases (2), diaper bag, baby's bottle, burp cloth, cellphones (2), travel cup of coffee, wallet with photos, earbuds, pink duffle bag with hearts and rainbows on it.