

AIRLINE CALAMITY

By Joanna Dell

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AIRLINE CALAMITY

A Ten Minute Comedy Duet

By Joanna Dell

SYNOPSIS: “*Come fly the friendly skies with us.*” That’s a popular airline slogan, but with all the new security procedures, cancelled flights, and outrageous airfares, just how friendly are the skies these days? Exhausted and stressed to a breaking point even before she boards a plane, Katie just wants to get some sleep, but that’s not what happens as she encounters one zany character after another on a crazy misadventure she won’t soon forget.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(2 females)

PLAYER ONE (f).....KATIE. *(47 lines)*
 PLAYER TWO (f)..... STEWARDESS, MAGGIE
 MARPLE, LITTLE GIRL,
 PREGNANT LADY. *(47 lines)*

PRODUCTION NOTES

The scenes will require blocking out of characters, and movement of two chairs to show the audience the transitions between Player One’s interactions with Player Two’s different roles. The setting is an airplane, and creative use of chairs will enhance the humor and interest in the performance. The skit is designed for two characters in forensics competition using only chairs as props. In other settings, a larger cast of up to 5 females or 4 females and 1 male could be used to portray the different characters along with a cast of extras who could portray airplane passengers without speaking roles. A variety of props such as rows of chairs set up to illustrate seats on an airplane, a food cart for the stewardess to push down the aisle, and magazines, vomit bag, pack of gum, asthma inhaler, earphones, cell phones, laptops and food trays could be used as props for the passengers.

Katie is intended to be portrayed as a young career woman. Player Two requires transition of roles between a snippy (and sometimes overly emotional) stewardess who's a stickler for the rules, country-bumpkin Maggie Marple who knows no social boundaries, a defiant, spoiled-brat child, and a near hysterical pregnant woman about to give birth.

Do Not Copy

SCENE 1

AT RISE: *On an airplane, we are introduced to the first of four characters that will wreak havoc on KATIE'S best efforts to catch up on some much needed sleep. KATIE puts her bag in the overhead bin and takes seat. Closes eyes and instantly dozes off.*

STEWARDESS: *(Shakes KATIE'S shoulders.)* Can I get you a pillow so you can get a little shut-eye?

KATIE: *(Startles awake.)* Actually, I was already...

STEWARDESS: Oh, it's no bother really. Just doin my job. *(Goes on a rant.)* Yep, wouldn't want anyone to accuse me of being a 'rude, snippy' stewardess. *(Shares as if conversing with a friend.)* My supervisor called me in and said that I broke the record of the most complaints ever issued by passengers on a single flight. 43... Can you believe it? People just can't take directness these days. Tell a guy to put on his seat belt, and next thing you know, you're getting written up. I should've let his head hit the ceiling during that turbulence. Then he'd have a legitimate...

KATIE lifts her hand and interrupts here.

gripe.

KATIE: *(After interrupting.)* Actually, I could use that pillow.

STEWARDESS: *(Sarcasm in southern accent.)* Yes ma'am. I'm your humble servant at your service. Is there anything else I can do for your high and mighty majesty while I'm at it? *(Tone turns snippy.)* I mean, it's not like I'm busy with 150 other passengers to serve. None so special as you though, I'm sure.

KATIE: But... you're the one who offered to get me the pillow.

STEWARDESS: *(Whiny.)* Yes, and then I poured my heart out to you, and what did I get for it? Dismissed! Just like my last boyfriend, Joey, and Ricky before him, and then there was *(Starts counting on fingers.)* Dan and Sam and Bobby Lee. Men are all alike. And so are passengers. Take everything and give nothing back.

KATIE: *(Apologetically.)* You don't have to get the pillow.

STEWARDESS: You don't get it. *(Yells.)* It's not about the pillow!

KATIE: *(Under breath.)* Okay, then.

SCENE 2

STEWARDESS exits and returns as MAGGIE MARPLE, a lady with thick southern accent and the gift of gab. KATIE is just about to doze off again, when MAGGIE approaches.

MAGGIE MARPLE: Hello dear. Can I scoot past you? (*Points.*) I have the window seat.

KATIE: Oh sure.

MAGGIE MARPLE: I've been in the bathroom this entire time. (*Lowers voice as if sharing a secret.*) You see, I have irritable bowel syndrome, and before we boarded, I ate a triple jalapeno chili cheese dog. It gave me the 'runs,' and (*Louder here.*) I don't mind saying my butt's on fire. Soiled my underpants, and it was no easy feat tryin to wash them out in that little sink, I can tell you for sure.

KATIE shrinks back in seat as MAGGIE puts rear in her face getting to seat.

KATIE: So sorry to hear about that.

MAGGIE MARPLE: Well, aren't you just the sweetest little thing?

Pinches KATIE'S cheek.

Most people these days aren't exactly the friendly type. But you know, IBS—That's an acronym for irritable bowel syndrome—really ain't so bad. Now my sister-in-law Ethel, she's the one with the real problems.

KATIE *Yawns.*

Well my goodness child, you look like you're plum tuckered out.

KATIE: I haven't had any sleep in two days, so if you don't mind, I'd really like to get some rest.

MAGGIE MARPLE: If there's one thing you'll learn about Maggie Marple, it's that I can take a hint. Now Ethel, there's a different story. Once my sister-in-law gets her fat jowls to gabbin, there's no stoppin her. But don't let it be said that Maggie Marple doesn't know when to button up her lips. (*Demonstrates buttoning her lips.*) Course I shouldn't be speakin ill of Ethel. Poor thing. You want to talk about someone with troubles. Have you ever heard of staphylococcal bacteria?

KATIE: No, I can't say that I have.

MAGGIE MARPLE: Ethel's daughter, Penelope, contracted it while swimming with her boyfriend, Raymond. We told them they shouldn't go skinny dippin in the sewage-treatment lake, but you know how teenagers are. (*Waves a hand.*) Don't mind a word we say. Well, anyway, staphylococcal bacteria is where you get these puss-filled boils all over your body.

KATIE: (*Grimaces.*) Oh, please...

MAGGIE MARPLE: At our Thanksgiving dinner, one of those babies popped, and sprayed blood and puss across the table and landed right in Ethel's dinner plate. She got so sick that she spewed a spray of vomit plum across the room. It started a chain reaction around the table and before I knew it, everybody was upchuckin left and right of me. Didn't faze me one little bit, though. My Mama always said I got an iron stomach. (*Rubs large belly.*) I just kept right on gnawin on a turkey leg. You should've been there. It was a hoot.

KATIE: (*Subdued sarcasm.*) Sorry I missed it.

MAGGIE MARPLE: Yep, never a dull moment in my family, that's for sure. The stories I could tell you... like the one time my son Bubba...

KATIE: (*Interrupts MAGGIE and stands.*) Would you excuse me, please.

SCENE 3

KATIE enters aisle where STEWARDESS is pushing the food cart-chair could be used as food cart.

STEWARDESS: (*Moving Food Cart.*) The seat belt light is on. You need to take your seat.

KATIE: (*Looks over shoulder and whispers.*) I'm moving to a different seat...

STEWARDESS: (*Interrupts.*) Take your seat, please.

KATIE: But there are several empty seats.

STEWARDESS: No.

KATIE: Excuse me?

STEWARDESS: Take your seat please.

KATIE: I want to move so I can get some sleep.

STEWARDESS: (*Sarcastically.*) Oh, that's right. You're the special one. (*Firm tone.*) It's against the rules. Now, take your seat before I call security.

KATIE: Seriously?

STEWARDESS: Take a seat, please.

KATIE: Fine.

SCENE 4

STEWARDESS takes window seat as LITTLE GIRL. KATIE sits next to her.

LITTLE GIRL: Stranger Danger!

LITTLE GIRL karate chops KATIE'S arm.

I have a white belt in tae kwon do.

KATIE: Ouch! (*Looks around.*) Are you flying by yourself?

LITTLE GIRL: I'm not supposed to talk to strangers.

KATIE: It's okay. We're fellow passengers on this plane.

LITTLE GIRL: You're old.

KATIE: Thank you.

LITTLE GIRL: And you have a pimple on your nose.

KATIE: I do not.

LITTLE GIRL: Do too. Would you read me a story?

KATIE: Oh, sweetie, I can't read right now.

LITTLE GIRL: You don't know how to read?

KATIE: Of course I can read, but I haven't had any sleep in quite some time, and I've taken a beating on this flight.

LITTLE GIRL: Your husband beat you?

KATIE: No, why would you say such a thing? I'm not even married.

LITTLE GIRL: Your boyfriend beat you?

KATIE: I don't have a boyfriend... *(Hesitantly.)* either.

LITTLE GIRL: Is it because you're ugly?

KATIE: That's not a very nice thing to say.

LITTLE GIRL: My dad beats u

p my mom. That's why I'm going to live with my Aunt.

KATIE: I'll be glad to read you a book.

LITTLE GIRL: I want some candy.

KATIE: *(Pulls gum from pocket.)* I have gum.

LITTLE GIRL: Is is bubble gum?

KATIE: No, actually it's Winter Fresh.

LITTLE GIRL takes gum, chews, and then spits it in KATIE'S lap.

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