

FLYING THE FRIENDLY SKIES

By Patrick Gabridge

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CAST: LYNNE and DAPHNE

SCENE: An airplane. Two seats next to each other.

AT RISE: LYNNE is sitting in her aisle seat, carry-on by her feet. SHE reads a magazine.

(DAPHNE enters, a little flustered after making her way through the gauntlet of folks pushing and cramming things into the overheads, etc. SHE looks at her boarding pass, then down at the empty seat next to LYNNE, sees LYNNE, and hesitates.)

DAPHNE: Lynne!

LYNNE: Daphne!

(After a beat, they embrace warmly.)

LYNNE: What a surprise! Are you...

DAPHNE: 24A. We're seat partners.

(They take their seats.)

LYNNE: You just made it. So how are you?

DAPHNE: Fine. How about you?

LYNNE: Great. Great. Where are you coming from?

DAPHNE: Boston. I was here in Boston.

LYNNE: Oh. You were here.

DAPHNE: It was a business trip. Meetings with some new clients. You know how it is.

LYNNE: Sure, but--

DAPHNE: So where are you heading?

LYNNE: Um. Denver.

DAPHNE: I see.

LYNNE: My sister had her baby.

DAPHNE: Right. I saw her at the store a few weeks ago. Beautiful. Looks just like her.

LYNNE: I can't wait to see her. But you know how babies are--so all-consuming. Diapers, feeding, cuddling. Meredith really needs a break. I didn't think I'd have a moment to spare.

DAPHNE: I only live two blocks away from your sister.

LYNNE: I should have told you. But you know how it is.

DAPHNE: How is it?

LYNNE: For example: when did you arrive in Boston?

DAPHNE: Thursday.

LYNNE: It's Monday. Two days of meetings and a weekend for sightseeing? I've been here long enough to know my way around now. I could have given you a private tour.

DAPHNE: I didn't think you'd really want to... to see me.

LYNNE: What are you talking about? We're friends.

DAPHNE: We were. Best friends.

LYNNE: Sure. We're still friends. We talk on the phone. We have e-mails, Christmas letters.

DAPHNE: Right. Yeah. Everyone loved the Christmas letter.

LYNNE: We would have been happy to have you stay with us. Or at least get together for lunch or dinner. Just like old times. What's the problem?

DAPHNE: We just talked on the phone two weeks ago, and you didn't tell me you were coming to Denver.

LYNNE: You didn't tell me you were coming to Boston.

DAPHNE: Exactly. We didn't tell each other. This is not something that best friends should do.

LYNNE: **(looking out the window)** You're right. Oh, Lord, I hate take-offs. They say that's the time you're most likely to crash. That and landing. The air-ground transition, I guess.

(LYNNE grips the hand rests of her seat tightly. Tries deep breathing to calm down. Closes her eyes. DAPHNE watches her closely, then looks out the window.)

DAPHNE: That's it. We're up. No turning back now.

LYNNE: I'm fine once we're off the ground. I'm fine.

(Beat)

DAPHNE: I knew you were coming to Denver. And I knew you hid it from me.

LYNNE: What?

DAPHNE: That's why I didn't call you.

LYNNE: How did you know that I... My sister.

DAPHNE: She can't wait to show you the baby.

LYNNE: It wasn't you. I didn't want her to tell anyone I was coming. I just was going to make time for family. I still miss all of you, the whole gang, but it just gets so complicated. This time I thought I'd just glide in--

DAPHNE: Sneak in.

LYNNE: Sneak in, sneak out. That's all. It wasn't anything about you.

DAPHNE: That would be fine if we were just acquaintances. Just neighbors. But we were best friends for seven years. Who watched Amy and Samantha when Josh had pneumonia? When you and Thomas were... wavering, who did you call at midnight? You helped me decide to quit my job and go back to school. All our girls' nights out at the Coffee Jam. Just talking and sharing every Tuesday night. Tuesday nights were the high point of my week for years.

LYNNE: They were great times. We were close. Really close. I—

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