

HOLIDAY

RAIMONDO CORTESE



Currency Press,
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CHARACTERS

ARNO

PAUL

The space is non-representational and contains a wading pool, a beach ball, a chaise lounge and, up front, a couple of bar stools. The actors have full awareness of the audience. The baroque songs that intersperse the dialogue are delivered directly to it.

SONG: 'My Heart Ne'er Leaps with Gladness'.

ARNO: My mum sent me this parcel the other day.

PAUL: What's that?

ARNO: My mum sent me this parcel the other day.

PAUL: In the mail?

ARNO: Yeah.

PAUL: She spot something... out shopping?

ARNO: You know those plastic thingummies?

PAUL: No.

ARNO: The ones you used to find in the cereal.

PAUL: The funny creatures?

ARNO: She sent me a whole bag of them.

PAUL: Why she send you those?

ARNO: I don't know.

Silence.

I was looking at the moon the other night.

PAUL: Yeah?

ARNO: Yeah through a telescope... up close. The full moon.

PAUL: I should buy one.

ARNO: You can make them.

PAUL: Not too hard?

ARNO: No... I don't think so.

PAUL: You really need to live in the country.

ARNO: Yeah... too many lights.

PAUL: It must have some effect us.

ARNO: The moon?

PAUL: We're ninety-nine point whatever per cent water.

ARNO: Oh... sure. That's why we like beaches.

PAUL: Right.

ARNO: Ever meet anyone doesn't like the beach?

PAUL: I prefer mountains actually.

ARNO: Well they say we're attracted to our opposites... you must want solidity.

PAUL: You think so?

ARNO: That's what those spiritual health books say.

PAUL: I must buy one.

ARNO: I went through a phase of reading that stuff.

PAUL: That's embarrassing.

ARNO: I read about ten in a row then I realised these people are psychotic.

PAUL: And greedy. That's a nice combination.

Silence.

ARNO: Do you pack your toothbrush when you go away?

PAUL: Away from home?

ARNO: Yeah.

PAUL: Yeah... usually... why?

ARNO: I always forget mine. I always have to buy one when I get there.

PAUL: That's so annoying.

ARNO: Yes it is... and in one of those books there's a whole paragraph about people like that.

Silence.

PAUL: Have you ever been to the Himalayas?

ARNO: No but I'd like to.

PAUL: I have. This five-day thing through Nepal.

ARNO: Must have been incredible.

PAUL: Yeah you're literally up there on top of the world.

ARNO: Was it fun?

PAUL: No. Not really. I wouldn't say fun.

ARNO: Why?

PAUL: Just the whole perspective. You're looking down at the earth sort of labouring... the way it squeezes and folds all these giant mountains like they're playdough or something. It's like flying over a city... but it's mountains... home to mythical demons.

ARNO: Wow.

PAUL: Yeah five days was as long as I could handle.

ARNO: Yeah?

PAUL: I couldn't have stayed longer. I would've left after the first day if it were possible. I had insomnia the whole time. I was shaking. At night my whole body was shaking. And when I slept I had these terrifying nightmares.

ARNO: What about the others?

PAUL: The other tourists?

ARNO: Yeah.

PAUL: They were all anxious too. No-one was talking to each other... it was weird. Except this Swiss guy. He beamed at everyone the whole time. Helped the guides do the cooking. The rest of us huddled in our tents. We hated him.

ARNO: Sounds like it was still worth it.

PAUL: Yes... it was extraordinary. When I came back I felt... I don't know how to describe it. I was enthused about... I was just happy... lighter... for a while.

Silence.

I love the sound of playgrounds.

ARNO: Yeah.

PAUL: Wild isn't it?

ARNO: Soothing.

PAUL: Wild cacophony... like all these crazy birds or something.

ARNO: Cacophony of delight.

PAUL: There's an hysteria there... but it's okay.

ARNO: Yeah it's pure... thrill.

PAUL: Imagine being able to be as silly as you like. To express yourself so joyfully.

ARNO: The intensity of every experience.

PAUL: I mean someone out there's getting their first kiss.

ARNO: It's delightful isn't it?

PAUL: I like the way you can't distinguish any particular sound.

ARNO: Yeah.

PAUL: Like a yell. Is that one and a half sounds?

ARNO: Sort of confetti.

PAUL: Delight pouring through. And there's desperation too. Anxious to impress someone or...

ARNO: Pure delight.

PAUL: Yeah.