

EXTRACT

Un-Australian Day

a short play

by

Alex Broun

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Cast

BART

LUKE

STAN

Setting

A park, overlooking the harbour, somewhere in Australia.

Time

Morning, January 26th.

Un-Australian Day by Alex Broun

A park, overlooking the harbour. Morning, January 26th.

BART ENTERS. HE CARRIES A BAG AND ESKY.

HE LOOKS FOR A GOOD SPOT THEN PLACES THE ESKY AND BAG DOWN. HE TAKES OUT A LARGE GREEN AND GOLD BLANKET AND SPREADS IT OUT ON THE GRASS, CLAIMING HIS TERRITORY.

NEXT HE PULLS OUT A FREE STANDING AUSTRALIAN FLAG AND PLACES IT ON THE ESKY. HE STANDS BACK FOR A MOMENT LOOKING AT IT WITH SOME PRIDE.

LUKE ENTERS. HE TOO HAS A BAG AND ESKY AS WELL AS A FOLDING CHAIR. HE FINDS A SPOT AT THE BACK OF THE STAGE.

BART: (SEEING **LUKE**) Morning.

LUKE: Morning.

BART: Good day for it.

LUKE: Sure is.

LUKE OPENS UP HIS CHAIR AND POSITIONS IT.

BART: You're all set.

LUKE: Thanks.

BART: Chair looks good. Sturdy. What's a chair like that set you back?

LUKE: Can't remember.

BART: Fifteen bucks, twenty?

LUKE: Maybe ten.

BART: Ten? That's a bargain. Should get myself one – save the bum. Next year.

BEAT. **LUKE** CONTINUES UNPACKING.

BART: See that bloody grey ghost?

LUKE: Ghost?

- BART: Parking ranger. Seven in the morning and she's already handing out tickets.
- LUKE: Didn't see her.
- BART: She's there - pen at the ready, ticket in hand, watching – waiting.
- LUKE: Guess she's just doing her job.
- BART: Filling her quota more like it.
- LUKE: Quota?
- BART: Each ghost has got a certain figure – the number of cars they've got to book each day – or else, goodbye. (SHOUTING OFF STAGE) That's why they're out at seven in the morning, when they should be at home in bed, keeping their hubby warm – if they've got one. Bloody Un-Australian that's what it is. Un-Australian. (TO LUKE) But no fear. I've got a plan.

BART GOES TO HIS BAG. HE PULLS OUT A BAG OF COINS.

- BART: Call it my "Reserve Bank." See what I do is go along and see which cars are about to expire and then I top up their meter. That way the ghost can't knick them.
- LUKE: How often you do this?
- BART: Most days. Pop out of work on my lunch time. And around home on weekends. Do a bit today.
- LUKE: That's very good of you.
- BART: All part of the service. (PUTTING OUT HAND) Bart.
- LUKE: (SHAKING HANDS) Luke.
- BART: Good to meet you. Do you know what one of those ghosts tried to do one day? Book me. Me! Said it's against the law to top up somebody else's meter. Wasn't even Australian. From Sri-Lanka or something. Bangladesh. It's the quota. That's what he's worried about. So I say "Alright, go on. Book me." He looks at me – just looks at me - peeing his bloody pants and he says: "I'll let you off – just this time." Let me off? I'm letting him off. Should go to his boss, the papers, immigration. Get him sent back. One way ticket to nowheresville.

LUKE BEGINS TO UNWRAP A LARGE BANNER.

BART: That's a good one. Need a hand.

LUKE: It's okay. I've done it before.

BART: Garbage. Give me that.

LUKE: Thanks.

BART TAKES ONE END OF THE BANNER AND UNROLLS IT. **LUKE** TIES THE OTHER END UP ON A POLE.

BART: Sheesh, it's a beauty. Nice and thick. How long it take you to make?

LUKE: Couple of months.

BART: Hand painted too I'll bet?

LUKE: Best way to do it.

BART: Puts my humble offering to shame.

LUKE: Not at all. It's the thought that counts.

BART HAS UNWRAPPED THE BANNER THE WHOLE WAY. HE HELPS **LUKE** TIE UP THE OTHER END.

THE BANNER IS NOW VISIBLE. IT HAS AN ABORIGINAL FLAG ON IT AND READS: *"INVASION DAY 2007. SAY SORRY – NOW!"*

BART: Yep – a beauty. Now let me get a good look. Read your patriotic message.

BART STANDS BACK AND PUTS ON HIS GLASSES. HE READS THE BANNER. PAUSE.

BART: You'll need to take that down.

LUKE: Sorry?

BART: I said – you'll need to take that down.

LUKE: No I won't.

BART: Yes you will. Or I'll do it for you.