

# I JUST WANNA GET TO PHOENIX

BY JOHN LANE

## CHARACTERS

FRANK (mid-30s), very macho (or at least he thinks he is), dressed in an overcoat and business suit; RICHARD, in age and dress somewhat similar to Frank, but more subdued in his behavior

## SCENE

A hotel room in Salt Lake City

## TIME

The present

*En route to a business meeting in midwinter, FRANK and RICHARD are forced to stay overnight in a cheap motel room with one double bed when their flight is grounded. FRANK is clearly agitated about having to share a bed with another man.*

FRANK: (Looks at the bed again.) Tell you what. Why don't I just take some of the bed covers and bunk out here on the floor.

RICHARD: Frank, there's not enough covers, and that floor is cold. This room is cold. Let's get real. When was the last time either one of us actually slept on a floor?

FRANK: I suppose you're right. But Jeez, this bed is—small.

(RICHARD takes off his trousers and socks. HE has on only a T-shirt and shorts. He gets under the covers on one side of the bed and sits up. FRANK awkwardly lies down atop the covers on the other side of the bed with his socks and trousers still on.)

RICHARD: Are you going to sleep like that?

FRANK: Actually, I'm not quite ready to go to sleep.

RICHARD: We're up eighteen hours straight, crammed on a flight, waiting airports for hours, and you're not ready to go to sleep?

FRANK: Give me a minute or two. (Looks around the room.) Is it just me, or do you get the impression that these rooms normally rent by the hour?

RICHARD: Come on, Frank. This is Salt Lake City. Does the word Mormon mean anything to you? They don't even drink coffee, for Christ's sake. Do you think they're gonna allow hookers on the street?

FRANK: You gotta admit, this is the kind of hotel where guys go to get a little action on the side. Hell, most of us get a little on the side now and then. Don't you, Richard?

RICHARD: Not while I was married. And when I got divorced, I was single again. And when you're single, you don't have to get it on the side.

FRANK: I'm not saying I did it a lot—but there were a few times—when Christine and I weren't getting along. Sales is a high-pressure job. A man's gotta have some outlet. And on the road there's no shortage of opportunities. (Pause.) By the way, Richard, I wouldn't want any of this to get back to the company. This is strictly between you and me. Right?

RICHARD: Sure thing. Just two guys talking. It stays in this room.

FRANK: What about you, Richard? You're single now. You're a good-looking guy. You must have to fight 'em off with lead pipes.

RICHARD: Like you said, there's lots of opportunities.

FRANK: That's for sure. This is the new millennium.

RICHARD: But it's not the seventies. You do have to worry about stuff like AIDS. FRANK: Aw, that's just something fags gotta worry about.

RICHARD: Frank, I think *gays* is a better word. *Fags* is sort of—offensive.

FRANK: Well, if it really bothers you. Not that I see the difference. (Pause.) Speaking of this, uh—gay—thing. To be truthful, that's why this goddam bed has got me spooked.

RICHARD: Come on, Frank. We're just gonna sleep here. We gotta make the best of a bad situation.

FRANK: Don't get me wrong. It's not like you're gonna do anything to me, or I'm gonna do anything to you. It's just that—

RICHARD: You just haven't slept in a bed with a man before.

FRANK: Well, not in a long time. When I was a kid, of course, and I think—one came back in college. We went to a basketball tournament in Boston. There were five of us in this hotel room overnight.

**RICHARD:** (*Playfully.*) So did anything happen?

**FRANK:** Hell, no. I mean, who knows? We were all drunk. The only thing I remember is that I woke up with a monster hangover.

**RICHARD:** (*Pause.*) Frank, I don't wanna spook you any further, but I'm curious. Have you ever been—attracted to a man?

**FRANK:** (*Very uncomfortable.*) Jesus Christ. Don't bring that up now! That's not the thing we should talk about here.

**RICHARD:** I'm just curious, Frank. Have you ever been attracted by a man at all?

**FRANK:** Attracted? Well, in a way. But not sexually. Definitely not sexually.

**RICHARD:** And who was this guy?

**FRANK:** There's no *one* person. I mean, every so often you see a really good-looking guy, an athletic guy or something, and you can—appreciate him. You can see why he would attract a woman.

**RICHARD:** But would these guys—attract you, too?

**FRANK:** Attract me? As I said, I can appreciate them. I suppose you could say they attract me—in an intellectual way.

**RICHARD:** Didn't you say good-looking, athletic guys? Doesn't sound like you're attracted to them—intellects.

**FRANK:** Come on, Richard. What are you doing here? Playing shrink? (*Pause*) Hey, I'm really feeling tired now.

**RICHARD:** Sorry, Frank, I guess I'm just giving you a bad time. Pushing you a little. See, it's my theory that we're attracted to both sexes in various ways. Sexually and otherwise. You're attracted to women—primarily—but *men* could attract you, too. Nothing wrong with admitting it. That's all I'm saying, Frank? (*Pause.*) Frank?

**FRANK:** (*Sleepily.*) Yeah. I'm still here.

**RICHARD:** Did you hear what I said?

**FRANK:** Yeah. Look, Richard. Let me lay it on the table. I'm tired, really tired. And yes, pardon me, but I *am* upright about sleeping in a bed with another guy. It's nothing personal. It's not like I think you're actually—gay—*or* anything.

**RICHARD:** But what if I were? What if I were gay?

**FRANK:** (*Bolts up in bed.*) Jesus! You're not, are you? Are you playing mind games with me?

**RICHARD:** Yes.

**FRANK:** Yes? What does that mean? Yes, you're gay? Or yes, you're playing mind games?

**RICHARD:** Yes, to both.

**FRANK:** Jezz! You? You're gay? But you were married. How could you—?

**RICHARD:** As I was just saying, I think all of us are attracted to both sexes in some ways. I was young back then, and marriage was the thing to do, and I loved Tracy, and we decided to get married, and—that's how it happened. Later on, I discovered a lot of things about myself.

**FRANK:** Oh. Christ, now I'll never get to sleep.

**RICHARD:** Why? You're nervous. You're afraid I might—

**FRANK:** No, of course not. (*Second thoughts.*) You *wouldn't* do anything, would you?

**RICHARD:** No, that's not my style—and besides—oh, forget it.

**FRANK:** No—besides what?

**RICHARD:** You're really not—my type, Frank. You can relax. You're really quite safe.

**FRANK:** (*Somewhat calmer.*) Well, anyway I'll just sleep this way—on top. It's more comfortable.

**FRANK:** (*Gets up to get his overcoat. He again lies down on top of the bed and uses the blanket as a cover.*)

**FRANK:** (*Rethinking the situation.*) Uh, Richard, you said I'm not your type? You mean—I don't attract you at all?

**RICHARD:** Well—not really.

**FRANK:** I mean, I look okay, don't I? I'm not ugly. I'm masculine. I try to keep in shape.

**RICHARD:** It's nothing personal, Frank. You're just not my type. (*Pause.*) You sound disappointed.

**FRANK:** No, it's just that—Hell, let's just get some sleep. I just wanna get to Phoenix.

RICHARD: Yeah, let's get some sleep. Good night, Frank.

(Both men turn on their sides-back to back. RICHARD reaches over to turn off the lamp on the nightstand. The lights fade quickly.)

## INDIAN BLOOD

BY A. R. GURNEY

### CHARACTERS

EDDIE (16), a student who has been suspended from school for drawing one of several puerile pictures of *Injun Joe* from Tom Sawyer in a sexual situation with *Calamity the Good Witch* from *The Wizard of Oz*; LAMBERT (16), EDDIE'S cousin and *fox*

### SCENE

EDDIE'S grandmother's large music room with no Christmas tree—due to her "hate." All imaginary: a fireplace with a gas jet and log that's not burning; a piano in the corner and an old cello.

### TIME

Christmas Night, 1946

LAMBERT: You could at least be polite and say hello, Eddie.

EDDIE: Oh right. (*Giving LAMBERT the Indian sign.*) How.

LAMBERT: How what?

EDDIE: "How" happens to be a greeting between Indians, Lambert. As you damn well know.

LAMBERT: I was still thinking about Dickens.

EDDIE: Oh really? (*To audience.*) See what a twerp he is? (*To LAMBERT.*) Maybe you should do some thinking about how you tried to mess me up with my own grandmother.

LAMBERT: By doing what?

EDDIE: Telling her what happened at school, that's what. Thanks a bunch, pal.

LAMBERT: I just said—

EDDIE: I know what you just said. But it didn't work. I'm back in her good graces.

LAMBERT: For now, at least.

(*Sound of party music, offstage.*)

EDDIE: What do you mean by that, Lambert?