

# **Baggage Claim**

**by**

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## **CHARACTERS**

ERIN, 25, short and pretty. Strong-willed, a student nurse.

JAMES, 28, tall and handsome. Hard working, a dreamer.

TERRY, 30, tall and strong. Lazy, a joker.

## **SETTING**

Present day. West midlands. England.

## **ACT ONE**

### **SCENE ONE**

An apartment.

The kitchen.

Around a small table ERIN and TERRY stand.

TERRY

How's work going?

ERIN

Fine. I've just come off three nights in a row, so I'm happy for a few days of rest now.

TERRY

I bet.

ERIN

You're not working with James anymore are you?

TERRY

(he smiles.)

No, I quit.

ERIN

Didn't enjoy it?

TERRY

No, not really.

ERIN

Where are you working now?

TERRY

(he smiles.)

Nowhere at the minute. Might have to ask James to help me get my old job back if things don't change soon for me. Living back at home with your parents at my age isn't the most fun of things to be doing with your life.

ERIN

Yeah, I can imagine.

TERRY

Can you really? Could you imagine having to go back to live with your parents?

ERIN

(she smiles, tired.)

My parents are both retired, moved out of the country and are both living the good life in sunny old Spain. So I'm thinking it might not be too bad to live with them again for a little while.

TERRY

(he laughs.)

You'll have to ask James?

ERIN

(she shrugs)

He'll be back soon.

TERRY

Mind if I keep waiting here with you?

No.

ERIN

A pause.

TERRY

So is it true?

ERIN

As far as I know.

TERRY

He's really gone for one of the bags?

ERIN

I asked him not to.

TERRY

But he found one?

ERIN

He said he did.

TERRY

(he laughs)

That's so crazy.

ERIN

That's what I said.

TERRY

And he's bringing it back here?

ERIN

Yeah.

TERRY

He really said that?

ERIN

He promised me he would bring it back, that we would decide what to do together.

TERRY

What do you want him to do?

ERIN

I want him to destroy it.

TERRY

But it's kind of exciting don't you think? Don't you want to see one up close?

ERIN

No, I think it's stupid.

TERRY

But the odds are good though aren't they?

ERIN

How do you figure when so many people have been killed? Children too.

TERRY

This has been going on for the last two weeks now. That's how long the news has been covering it for. I've tried to watch and read everything I can about it.

ERIN

So?

TERRY

It's made a lot of people rich. That's a simple fact.

ERIN

It's also killed a lot of people. Even those lucky enough to survive still lost an arm, a leg. Been blinded. All kinds of things. These bags have turned the city into a war zone. That's something the news always seems to skip past. Forget the people who are losing their lives and lets look at the people who have got money now. And who's money it is, no one knows. And no one seems to care.

TERRY

So who do you think is doing it?

ERIN

Well everyone thought it was a terrorist thing at first.

TERRY

So did I.

ERIN

But then the money doesn't make any sense. Why would a terrorist group give people money?

TERRY

Apparently it really is fifty, fifty though. Straight down the line. Half get, half don't.

ERIN

I don't know about that.

TERRY

No, it is. From all the bags that have been found. And every single day new ones are being put down, half of them had two hundred thousand in cash whilst the other half had explosives in. It's fifty, fifty. If you're lucky enough to find one.

ERIN

Well James said he found one.

TERRY

(He smiles, claps his hands together above his head)

Wow, amazing.

ERIN

No, it's dumb. I asked him not to do it. To just to leave it for someone else to take.

TERRY

But he didn't listen?

ERIN

No, he said we need the money.

TERRY

And do you?

ERIN

Two hundred thousand?

TERRY

Yeah.

ERIN

Doesn't everyone need that kind of money?

TERRY

(he laughs)

I know I'd be happy with that. No other way people like us could make that kind of money just by unzipping a bag.

ERIN

Then what do you need money for?

TERRY

A car, clothes, a home. Everything I've got now just a better version of it. Everyone wants the same things. That's what connects humans I think, we all want the same things in life. And I think we already have the same things as each other. It's just the rich can afford the best versions of it and that's why they're considered better people. You know, and I want to be rich just like everyone else.

ERIN

I don't want to be rich.

TERRY

Of course you do.

ERIN

I just want James to come home.

TERRY

He'll be back soon.

ERIN

I just need to see him to know that he's alright.

TERRY

But what would you do with two hundred thousand pounds?

ERIN

Why?

TERRY

Don't you think it's interesting to think about?

ERIN

(she shrugs)

Me and James would have to have a sit down and think about it.

TERRY

(he smiles, points at her)

That's not what I asked. What would YOU do with it?

ERIN

And if the bag is filled with explosives?

TERRY

Answer my question first.

ERIN

I don't know, it's not a real question. I'd have to speak to James.

TERRY

Why?

ERIN

It's just what I'd want to do.

TERRY

You have to ask him about everything before you know the answer?

ERIN

No, not for everything.

A pause.

TERRY

Are you sure you're really in love with him?



What? ERIN

He's your first isn't he? TERRY

She laughs at him.

I'm serious. TERRY

My first what? ERIN

You know what I'm asking. TERRY

No, I don't. ERIN

JAMES enters the stage, carries a large duffel bag and places it down on top of the table.

Look what I found. JAMES

TERRY and ERIN part, JAMES stands in between them.

No way, awesome. You really found one. TERRY

Sure did. JAMES

That's it? ERIN

(he nods) JAMES

There it is.

ERIN

What happened?

JAMES

There was a massive crowd, I almost got it taken off me. The whole scene turned crazy.

ERIN

Someone attacked you?

JAMES

I'm OK, I didn't get hurt.

ERIN

So who nearly took it off you?

JAMES

Just some people, it was hectic.

TERRY

How many people were there?

JAMES

Who knows, but I mean a massive crowd gathered, it was crazy. So quickly as well.

TERRY

Any serious trouble?

JAMES

Of course, think about it. Only thirty bags on the floor and a couple hundred people turn up all wanting one. I was there pretty early so I just ran to get one and then other people tried to take it off me. It all kicked off and turned crazy when one of the people there opened their bag straight away and it was filled with money.

ERIN

So it's true?

JAMES

Yeah.

ERIN

How much?

JAMES

No idea. Money spilled out everywhere. I guess they got so excited that they dropped the bag. Money flowed out onto the floor and so a lot of people rushed and took what they could.

ERIN

What happened to the person who opened it?

JAMES

They got attacked, pretty bad. Don't think they had anything left. So another person opened their bag right there and boom. Off it went. Took out about four or five other people around them.

ERIN

Oh my god.

TERRY

Unlucky.

JAMES

Then the police turned up and tried to collect all the bags up. They must have gotten most of them. I just managed to get mine out in time.

TERRY points at it.

TERRY

And this is it?

JAMES

It sure is.

ERIN

We should just give it to the police now if they're out looking for them.

JAMES

(he shakes his head)

Then I'd get in trouble.

ERIN

But what if someone saw you?

JAMES

A lot of people ran off with bags, I wasn't the only one.

ERIN

But what if the police saw you?

JAMES

They didn't.

ERIN

James! But what if they did?

JAMES

I don't know Erin. But they'll be knocking on our door pretty soon if they did. I'm just saying I don't think I was followed.

ERIN

Then you should just dump it somewhere.

JAMES

I can't.

ERIN

Why not, let someone else worry about it.

JAMES

And what if it's filled with explosives?

ERIN

I just don't want it here.

TERRY

And what if it's filled with money?

ERIN

I don't know.

JAMES

They'll be another thirty bags out there tomorrow morning.

ERIN

You're so sure?

JAMES

That's how it is. Every day in a random location thirty bags are stacked up on top of each other. Half are filled with explosives whilst the other half are filled with money. Only way to find out is to pull down on the zip.

TERRY

How did you find these bags?

JAMES

I saw it. On the bus home from work. I saw thirty bags stacked up on top of each other. I got off and ran back to see closer and by the time I got there people were already starting to gather.

TERRY

Why did you pick this bag out of all the others?

JAMES

I don't know.

TERRY

But what was it about this bag?

JAMES

I honestly don't know. They all look the same. There's nothing different. All the same size, same colour and same weight.

TERRY

So you think money is in here?

JAMES

I hope there is.

TERRY

What makes you think that?

JAMES

Nothing, I just hope there is.

Shall we see?

TERRY

No, not yet.

JAMES

TERRY ignores him, he moves to the bag, reaches down as if he's going to open the zip.

ERIN

Stop it!!!

TERRY stops.

TERRY

But Erin we have to find out.

ERIN

Just wait. Not like this.

JAMES gently pushes TERRY away from the table.

JAMES

Terry, just move over there.

TERRY

What?

JAMES

It's my bag, I found it. I decide what we do with it.

TERRY takes a couple of steps back.

TERRY

Fine.

A long pause.

TERRY

So what are you going to do?

JAMES

I think I'm going to open it.

ERIN

Wait James, don't.

TERRY

Erin, you need money right?

ERIN

I said just wait.

TERRY

Just tell him what you need the money for?

ERIN

It's James who found it.

JAMES

No, if there's money in there it's ours. Mine and Erin's.

JAMES reaches over and takes ERIN by the hand.

JAMES

And we spend it together.

ERIN

I just don't think we should open it James. I think we should get rid of it. I'm serious.

JAMES

But with this money we can move out to the countryside. Get ourselves out of this god damn city. Get away from my job, start again. Start fresh. Two hundred thousand Erin, there's a lot we can do.

TERRY

If it was my find, I'd just open it.

JAMES

You've made that clear Terry.

TERRY

Two hundred thousand, don't you two know how much that is. And all you have to do is unzip a bag. Just open it now.

JAMES

OK, I hear you. But this is for me and Erin to work out.

TERRY

But you're the one who asked me to be here?

JAMES

Yeah, because I thought you'd be of some help. I first heard about all this from you.

ERIN

You said one of the bags exploded, and it killed people?

JAMES

Yeah.

ERIN

Did any of the others go off?

JAMES

I only saw one.

ERIN

What happened, tell me again?

TERRY

Don't answer it James, you're just looking at an excuse not to do this. Just open it and get it over with.

ERIN

Shut up Terry, I want to know.

TERRY

I'm only saying it for you Erin, you need the money. So he should do it for you.

ERIN

I don't need you to talk for me... James, tell me again.



JAMES

It was small flash and a loud heavy bang. I didn't see it go off. I heard it.

ERIN

But what did it do?

JAMES

It took the guys arm off. And a couple of other people around it were hurt too.

ERIN

You said people died?

JAMES

(he shakes his head)

I don't know. I was too far away.

ERIN

Tell me the truth!

JAMES

I don't know. A lot of police started turning up so I ran. There was a flash, a loud bang. I turned around. People on the floor bleeding. I heard a few screams and then the police sirens drowned everything else out.

ERIN

Who's doing this... everyday. Thirty bags. Fifteen of which have two hundred thousand pounds in. How much is that all together. It doesn't make any sense.

JAMES

No one knows.

TERRY

What does it matter?

ERIN

It matters everything. Someone, or some group picks a random spot in the city. Stacks thirty bags on the floor. Fifteen of which are going to kill you whilst the other fifteen are going to make you rich. I want to know who's doing it?

TERRY

What does it change?

ERIN

I want to know. Everyone should want to know.

TERRY

Why ask questions?

ERIN

Because people are dying!

TERRY

But what if there's money in that bag

ERIN

And what if there's not?

TERRY

But what if there is? What do you need the money for, you've still not said Erin.

ERIN

I want to know who's behind all this.

TERRY

What would you do with the money?

ERIN shakes her head, tired.

JAMES

Go on Erin. What would you do with it?

ERIN gives up.

ERIN

Get a better place to live, move closer to my job.

TERRY

(he laughs)

And James wants to get out of the city.

JAMES

Eventually yeah.

ERIN

And we will, but things are going well for me at work at the moment. Eventually we'll move. Right now I'm still learning everything. It's the best hospital in the whole country, I can't not be there right now. Eventually I'll be able to move where ever. But I can't have spent all those years studying at university to not be here.

TERRY

So you don't need the money for that. That's not what I asked.

ERIN

Fine, I want to be able to pay for our wedding too. Not that we were planning on telling anyone about it yet.

Terry's shocked.

TERRY

What?

James laughs.

JAMES

You want to be my best man Terry?

TERRY

You're getting married?

JAMES

I was going to tell you. But we still haven't even picked a date.

TERRY

Why?

JAMES

Lot's of things to think about first.

TERRY

No, I mean why are you getting married? I didn't even know this things between you two were that serious.

ERIN

(she's shocked)

What?

TERRY

Why are you getting married?

Erin laughs at him.

JAMES

I do love her you know?

ERIN

And because James asked me and I said yes.

TERRY

James?

JAMES

It's true. What's wrong?

TERRY

What's wrong... why didn't you tell me?

JAMES

Because there was no way of it happening until now. I work in a shitty warehouse whilst my soon-to-be wife is in her first year of nursing. Neither of us has any family that could help us out. Her parents are in Spain and my family doesn't speak to me. It wasn't going to be happening any time soon. But I told you. I was on the bus home and saw them. I saw the bags piled high. I knew that maybe this was the answer to everything. A new life.

TERRY

The bag is the answer?

ERIN

But only if there's money in it.

TERRY

James?

JAMES  
What?

TERRY  
You called me to see if I could help right?

JAMES  
Yeah.

TERRY  
Then let me help. I'll do it.

TERRY moves back to the table.

ERIN  
Don't open it!

ERIN turns to JAMES.

ERIN  
Don't let him!

TERRY  
It'll be OK Erin.

JAMES  
Terry just wait.

TERRY  
I'm not going to touch the zip I swear. Everything I know about these bags that's the trigger. The only way of setting it off is pulling down on the zip.

TERRY places his hands on the bag, checks it.

ERIN moves closer to JAMES, scared.

TERRY  
What if we stabbed a hole in it?

ERIN  
No!

Cut a hole in the bottom?  
TERRY

No!  
ERIN

TERRY places an ear to the side of it, gently slaps it.

It feels like money packed in tight.  
TERRY

And how does that feel different from explosives?  
ERIN

I don't know?  
TERRY

So stop touching it!  
ERIN

TERRY comes away from the bag.

It feels like money to me.  
TERRY

Why?  
JAMES

It just feels that way. You picked it up?  
TERRY

I wasn't thinking.  
JAMES

There must have been something about it?  
TERRY

I'm telling the truth. They were all the same. Nothing different about one from the other a part from what's inside.  
JAMES

TERRY

There must be something to give it away. Something we're not seeing.

JAMES

There's only one way to find out.

TERRY

I vote we open it.

ERIN

But you don't get to decide!

JAMES

I think we should open it too.

ERIN

James!

JAMES

This could fix everything for us Erin. We get married, move to a bigger house. Get out of this shit apartment. Start fresh. This money will do it.

ERIN

And if it's not money?

JAMES

We have to think positive.

ERIN

That's stupid, this is real life!

TERRY

OK, I'm saying yes and James is saying yes.

ERIN

Oh my god.

TERRY

Open it James.

ERIN

James no just wait.

JAMES

I'm going to do it. Both of you step back against the wall. Stay behind me.

ERIN

Wait.

JAMES

There's money in here. There must be. I can't die like this. It wouldn't be fair.

ERIN

You're not thinking.

JAMES

It's money.

ERIN

You don't know that.

JAMES

It's money.

ERIN

Think James. You're not thinking straight.

JAMES

It's money.

JAMES moves to the bag, grabs a hold of the zip.

ERIN screams at him.

ERIN

I'm pregnant!!!

The rooms stops and falls silent.

TERRY turns to her first.

JAMES stays staring down at the bag, frozen.



What?  
TERRY

James, this isn't a game!  
ERIN

JAMES still hasn't moved.  
TERRY

You're pregnant?  
ERIN

James?  
TERRY  
Getting married and you're pregnant. When did you two become so serious. Have you told anyone?

James, look at me!  
ERIN

Erin?  
TERRY

Terry shut up!  
ERIN

Erin, what the hell?  
TERRY

James!  
ERIN

JAMES turns around.  
JAMES

Is it true?  
TERRY  
If you're just saying that just to stop him from opening that bag, that's messed up.

ERIN

This isn't a game, you don't what's inside there. Stop pretending like you know!

JAMES

Erin?

ERIN

James just think, you can't open it. I won't let you.

TERRY

Are you telling the truth Erin, you can't make stuff like that up just to get you're own way?

ERIN

Shut up Terry!!

JAMES

Is it true?

ERIN

Yes.

JAMES

How long?

ERIN

Two months.

JAMES

How long have you known?

ERIN

For a couple of days.

JAMES

And you're telling me now?

ERIN

I'm sorry.

TERRY

Just open the bag.

Wait. JAMES

Why, just do it. TERRY

I said wait. JAMES

James, are you angry at me? ERIN

No. I just don't know what to think. My head is all over the place now. JAMES

Are happy? ERIN

I don't know. JAMES

Wish I never told you? ERIN

No, I glad you told me. Just. The timing is all. JAMES

All what? ERIN

All messed up. JAMES

James? TERRY

What? JAMES

You can't open it now can you? TERRY

JAMES

What?

TERRY

The bag. You can't open it any more.

JAMES

Why?

TERRY

Erin. You're really pregnant aren't you?

ERIN

Yes.

TERRY

And you're keeping it?

ERIN

What kind of question is that you idiot!

TERRY

I don't know.

ERIN

What's wrong with you?

TERRY

What, are you telling me people never get rid of kids, it's a real question.

ERIN

Of course I'm keeping it.

TERRY

Then James can't open it. You're right Erin. I think there's money in there. There has to be. But you're right. There is a chance. I'm sure it's money, but if it's not.

JAMES

Jesus Christ... What do we do now?

ERIN

I don't want you opening it James. If something happened to you, what would I do?

JAMES

But if there's money in there? I feel it in my stomach Erin. I know the chance is there that something could go wrong. But my heart tells me it's the money. I never would have thought to open it if I wasn't sure.

TERRY

You two are really serious about each other aren't you?

ERIN

Why do you keep asking that?

TERRY

I don't know. I didn't think you two were that in love.

JAMES

(he laughs)

No?

TERRY

No, I don't know. Getting married and pregnant, no going back for either of you is there?

ERIN

Just stop talking now Terry, please.

TERRY

It's intense.

JAMES

You sound disappointed?

TERRY

(he nods)

I am.

JAMES

Why?

TERRY

I never knew any of this.

Some of it is news to me too.

JAMES

JAMES moves over to ERIN, wraps his arms around her.

But I'm happy.

JAMES

ERIN'S face lights up.

You are?

ERIN

I am.

JAMES

You're not disappointed?

ERIN

No.

JAMES

But?

ERIN

Just shocked. It's crazy. I thought we were being careful.

JAMES

Not all the time.

ERIN  
(she smiles)

But pregnant. Damn.

JAMES

I've just been waiting for the right time to tell you.

ERIN

Is everything going to be OK for you at work?

JAMES

ERIN  
It'll be fine.

JAMES  
Who else knows?

ERIN laughs.

JAMES  
I'm serious.

ERIN  
If I was too scared to tell you what makes you think I've gone and told anybody else?

JAMES  
I don't know.

ERIN  
No one else knows.

JAMES  
Why keep it a secret?

ERIN  
I thought you'd freak out. Just talking about leaving you job, moving out of the city. I was scared if I told you, you'd just go and I'd never see you again.

JAMES  
Don't be silly. I'd never leave you. Not now, not ever.

ERIN  
Well... you're going to be a dad.

JAMES  
Crazy... and you're going to be a mum.

ERIN  
I'm excited about it.

TERRY

Alright guys fine, good for the both of you. But what about now. As much as I'd love to stand around whilst you two talk about marriage and babies names that's not what's important now. You have to open this bag, you have to know what's inside it.

All three turn and stare at the bag.

JAMES

OK.

TERRY

So?

JAMES

What do we do about this?

TERRY

You were going to open a second ago.

JAMES

I know.

TERRY

So?

JAMES

What if not the money?

TERRY

But you just said...

JAMES

... I know. But what if it explodes. I remember now. The explosion must have been pretty big. Maybe fill the whole of this room?

TERRY

I say it still gets opened.

JAMES

There's the chance it's explosives though. I wasn't thinking before. But I'm thinking now. It's a big explosion.



TERRY

It has to get opened sooner or later.

ERIN

No!

TERRY

Hear me out Erin, just listen.

ERIN

What?

TERRY

I'll open it. And I'll do it alone. Both of you wait outside. You won't get hurt. Let me do it.

JAMES

But I'm the one who found it. I should be the one who does it.

TERRY

But you're not going to are you?

JAMES

I don't know.

TERRY

No, you're not. So let me. Let me help you. You're the one who asked for my help in the first place, remember?

JAMES

You'd do this?

TERRY

I wouldn't be saying it if I didn't mean it.

JAMES

I really do think there's money in there. But there's still a chance.

TERRY

Erin?

ERIN

What?

TERRY

What do you think?

ERIN

You already know.

TERRY

Then tell me again.

ERIN

I think we should just get rid of it. Give it to the police.

TERRY

But I think there's money in there too.

ERIN

So what?

TERRY

I say, you and James should wait outside and think about what to spend the money on.

JAMES takes ERIN by the hands.

TERRY

And I'll open it.

JAMES

The wedding you've always wanted and put the rest to a better house in the city?

ERIN

You don't want to move out to the countryside anymore?

JAMES

Yes, but it can wait. I can wait for you.

ERIN

You really think there's money in there?

JAMES

Yes.

ERIN  
How can you know?

JAMES  
I don't know, I just feel it.

TERRY  
Then it's agreed, I'll be the one who opens it.

JAMES  
OK.

ERIN  
But what if it's explosives?

TERRY  
I'm willing to take the risk.

ERIN  
But what if something happens. An exposition?

TERRY  
Call an ambulance for me.

ERIN  
This isn't a joke Terry.

TERRY  
We have to find out what's in here.

ERIN  
But why?

JAMES  
He's right.

TERRY  
So I'll open it?

JAMES  
OK.

TERRY

Are you both going to wait outside?

JAMES

Yes.

TERRY

And I'll only take half of it.

JAMES

What?

TERRY

I want half.

JAMES

Half of what?

TERRY

I want half the money that's in here. One hundred thousand for you and the other one hundred thousand for me.

JAMES

No, I found it.

TERRY

And I'm the one who's taking the risk.

JAMES

I thought you wanted to help us?

TERRY

I am. I'll be the one who's opening it.

JAMES

But taking all the money, how the hell is that helping anyone?

TERRY

I'm not taking all, I said half.