

# FLIGHT

TEN MINUTE PLAY

**By Patrick Gabridge**

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**SYNOPSIS:** Sarah leads an odd existence - - she sleeps at home, goes to work, and spends every other moment at the airport. Tired of the cares and concerns of the world, she seeks refuge in this odd cocoon, but her overachieving, highly-strung big sister, Deedee, can't understand and is determined to drag Sarah back to "normal" life.

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**  
*(2 WOMEN, 1 EITHER)*

P.A. SYSTEM (m/f)  
SARAH (f)  
DEEDEE (f)

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**SCENE:** *An airport gate waiting area. A book and a bag rest on an empty set of seats.*

**AT RISE:** *DEEDEE, in a business suit, stands craning her neck, as if looking for someone.*

**P.A. SYSTEM:** Attention passengers, this is the final boarding call for Flight 597. All ticketed passengers should proceed to the gate immediately. Stand-by passengers should approach the counter for seat assignments.

*SARAH enters, also dressed for business and sneaks up quietly behind DEEDEE.*

**SARAH:** Hello, Deedee.

*DEEDEE jumps with surprise.*

**DEEDEE:** Jeez, what the . . . Sarah.

**SARAH:** What are you doing here?

**DEEDEE:** Nothing.

**SARAH:** I don't think you've ever done nothing in your entire life.

**DEEDEE:** I certainly don't have as much practice as you.

**SARAH:** Why are you here?

**DEEDEE:** I'm trying to answer the same question about you. Why are you here?

**SARAH:** I'm not bothering anyone.

**DEEDEE:** Everyone is worried about you. Mom called me and begged me to fly out here and find you. You don't return our calls. You don't answer our letters.

**SARAH:** I'm perfectly fine. See? You can fly on home to Mother and report that I'm just swell. And look, you're already at the airport. How convenient.

**DEEDEE:** You can't keep doing this.

**SARAH:** I'm not doing anything.

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**DEEDEE:** I've been following you for two days. Is this your life? You sleep at that cesspit of a boarding house, do your little temp job, and then live every other moment here at the airport.

**SARAH:** Exactly.

**DEEDEE:** This is a way station, not a destination. There is no here here.

**SARAH:** There is for me. I'm here.

**DEEDEE:** But why?

**SARAH:** Look around. It's clean, well-lit, warm in the winter, cool in the summer. And it's free. Metal detectors and armed guards. An airport is the safest place on earth. If I want someone to talk to, there is always someone who is lonely, who's been trapped here for hours. And I can be anyone. Yesterday, I was a doctor. The other day I was an astronaut in training, waiting for a flight to Houston.

**DEEDEE:** What you're doing is not normal.

**SARAH:** What is it specifically that you want me to experience? You want me to listen to my neighbor scream at her husband for losing the cap to the toothpaste until he tosses her against the wall? Maybe I should date my boss at work or some guy from the gym or the park or the grocery store. Let him into my life until he robs me or hurts me or leaves me. My family? You're all busy. But that's fine.

**DEEDEE:** Are you happy?

**SARAH:** Why shouldn't I be?

**DEEDEE:** You have no career, no money, no friends. You can't run away from life, Sarah. You can't suddenly say you're not going to do meetings or return phone calls or answer e-mail or establish some basic sphere that connects you with the rest of humanity. It's not healthy.

**SARAH:** How can you have been here for two days and still not understand?

**DEEDEE:** Let's get out of here and go somewhere we can talk. We can try to find someone who can help you.

**SARAH:** I'm not going anywhere.

**DEEDEE:** I won't let you stay here. I am your big sister. I have some responsibility for you.

**SARAH:** You want me to be like you? Bound to the clock, barely speaking to your husband, hustling off from your kids with a list for the nanny and the cell phone ringing?

**DEEDEE:** You, in your pathetic little . . . Don't you dare judge me, you little vagrant. I have a real life. I have a purpose, and . . . my life is filled to the overflowing. I am a role model. People want to be like me, Sarah. They want my job, my house, my kids, my husband. Some of them even want me. Me. You're trying to turn things around, because you're jealous and you want to hurt me. You want . . . I am only here to help you. Because Mom was worried about you. And if you want to be hostile, well, I should have expected that. Because I am happy and you're not. I am happy and you're not. Is that clear? Yes, my life is very full. My life is very full. Because I have so much . . . Just everything. Your life is so very small, and my life is . . . multi-faceted. A whirlwind. A terrible fierce whirlwind. And it is not small, not so very small, Sarah.

**SARAH:** You have a great, big, shiny life, Deedee.

**DEEDEE:** Shut up.

**SARAH:** And did it all crumble while you were here following me? Surely the earth has stopped spinning without you to keep pushing it around.

**DEEDEE:** It has been a great inconvenience to be here.

**SARAH:** Of course it has. Thanks for rescuing me.

*SARAH goes to her seat, opens her bag, takes out a book and begins to read.*

**DEEDEE:** What are you doing?

**SARAH:** This is a book. I open the pages and read the words. You should try it. It's a challenge - - it requires that you be still.

**DEEDEE:** The game's over. I found you. You have to quit now.

**SARAH:** I wasn't playing hide and seek. Or do you want to trade places?

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**DEEDEE:** I couldn't do this. I have some sense of how things are supposed to work in the world.

**SARAH:** Suit yourself.

*She goes back to reading.*

**DEEDEE:** Don't ignore me.

**SARAH:** All right. Sit down. (*DEEDEE reluctantly does as she's told.*)

Put down your bag. Turn off your cell phone. Now relax. Breathe. A deep breath. Let it out. Breathe in. Deeply. Let it out. Let it all out.

**DEEDEE:** I'm not going to meditate in the airport.

**SARAH:** Don't give it a fancy name, okay? Just relax. (*Beat.*) You know what, I'm actually glad you found me.

**DEEDEE:** You are?

**SARAH:** We never see each other. We can be better sisters, don't you think?

**DEEDEE:** I guess so.

**SARAH:** This is our chance to spend a little time together. And for you to relax.

**DEEDEE:** Here?

**SARAH:** Now do what I tell you. Breathe in. Breathe out. No one is going to bother us here. Relax. The world will proceed without you. Just close your eyes.

**DEEDEE:** And then we'll go?

**SARAH:** Close your eyes. Breathe. Relax. In a little bit, we'll have a snack. But first, just let all your tension flow out of you. Breathe in. Breathe out. Let the calm wash over you. We're nowhere.

*SARAH goes back to her book. DEEDEE makes her best effort at relaxing. It's hard work for her. She wriggles. She tries the deep breathing. Suddenly she relaxes completely.*

**DEEDEE:** Oh. Hm. I understand. I understand. Mmm-hmm.

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*DEEDEE is almost limp with relaxation now. SARAH looks up and notices her sister slumping.*

**SARAH:** Are you all right?

**DEEDEE:** Hmm? Me? Fine. Relaxed. I'm not a relaxed person by nature, but this is . . . This is fine. Very fine. I feel so loose. Disconnected. Like I'm floating.

**SARAH:** Flying without ever leaving the ground.

**DEEDEE:** Why would you ever stop?

**SARAH:** Exactly.

**DEEDEE:** I can't do this. *(She opens her eyes, takes some shallow breaths and straightens herself up.)* I have a life. Responsibilities. If I start doing this . . . Oh, it feels good, sure, but is it good for you? This is not right.

*She stands and paces.*

**SARAH:** Calm down. You got too big of a taste too quickly. Turn your phone back on, you'll feel better. Pretend you're on the way to an important meeting.

**DEEDEE:** You and your relaxation, like some sort of zen spider.

**SARAH:** That's okay, you tried it, you didn't like it.

**DEEDEE:** Oh, I liked it. Come on, we're going.

**SARAH:** I'm fine right here. But you wriggle on home, okay? Tell Mom that I'm fine. Tell her whatever you want.

**DEEDEE:** You're coming with me.

**SARAH:** I'm staying.

**DEEDEE:** I will drag you out.

**SARAH:** You will not.

**DEEDEE:** I will not let you do this to yourself. Someone has to say "Enough." Out we go.

*She takes SARAH by the arm, but SARAH shakes her off. They struggle, and finally DEEDEE gets SARAH by the ankle and drags her off stage.*

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**DEEDEE:** *(On the way out.)* You can get a job and a life and suffer like the rest of us. No sister of mine is going to sit around all day in an airport. You can't live your life that way. There is work to be done, Sarah. Work to be done.

**SARAH:** *(Overlapping while struggling.)* I'm not bothering anyone. I'm just watching. Relaxing. Let me go. Let me go. Help! Help!

*DEEDEE gets SARA off stage. Lights out.*

**THE END**