

EXTRACT

# ERROL FLYNN'S GREAT BIG ADVENTURE BOOK FOR BOYS

---

Rob George

australian *plays*.org

ERROL FLYNN'S GREAT BIG ADVENTURE BOOK FOR BOYS

© Rob George 1978

**AUSTRALIAN SCRIPT CENTRE**

This playscript is published and distributed by the Australian Script Centre, trading as AustralianPlays.org. The Australian Script Centre, a national not-for-profit organisation, has been selectively collecting outstanding Australian playscripts since 1979 and is home to a comprehensive and extraordinary catalogue of production-ready plays.

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED**

This work is protected by Australian and international copyright law. You have a legal obligation to obtain permission before making copies of this script or performing the play. Contact details for further information are provided below.

**MAKING COPIES**

Your script purchase entitles you to print the script once only. Beyond this single use, you may not copy or print more than 10% of this script without permission, even if you are covered by a Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) statutory licence. Additional copies may be made with the purchase of a [Copy Licence](#) from AustralianPlays.org.

**COPYRIGHT ADVICE**

For detailed information on copyright issues, please contact the [Australian Copyright Council](#).

**PRODUCTION RIGHTS**

Before producing or performing any play you must obtain the permission of the relevant rightsholder. Fees will vary according to the nature and scale of the proposed production. They are set at the discretion of the relevant rightsholder (usually the playwright or their agent). As a general guide, AustralianPlays.org recommends 10% of gross box office receipts or \$100 per performance, whichever is greater, as the minimum fee for amateur production. Your [production enquiry](#) for this play may be submitted through the AustralianPlays.org website.

**PERMISSIONS FOR SOUND RECORDINGS & MUSIC**

Some playscripts will require specific published sheet music or sound recordings for which performing rights may need to be separately licensed. Producers are advised to contact the [Australasian Performing Rights Association](#) (APRA) for more information on music licensing requirements.

**NOTE ON THE SCRIPT**

This is an unedited manuscript as provided to us by the playwright. We distribute it in good faith; however it may contain layout inconsistencies or typographic errors

ERROL FLYNN'S

GREAT BIG ADVENTURE BOOK FOR BOYS

A stage play in two acts.

By Rob George

ACT 1

SCENE 1 - HARRY'S PIANO BAR - LATE 1950'S

THE BAR IS SEEDY AND PAST IT'S PRIME - A BIT LIKE ERROL.

A PIANIST IS PLAYING AND A GIRL SINGING A SLOW, BLUES NUMBER  
'ONE MORE TIME'.

HARRY, THE BAR MANAGER IS IN ATTENDANCE.

LOIS IS WAITING PATIENTLY AT A TABLE.

THIS SETTING IS THE 'REALITY' OF THE PLAY.

SINGER

Just one more time  
You haven't learned it yet  
It's there, right there on your face.

Just one more time  
And it will burn you yet  
It's not the time or the place.

Sparkling eyes, more than you can endure  
You're too old  
Still you need to ensure  
Just one more time

You've hit the high spots  
And you've been low  
What else is there to do.

Just one more time  
You know you can't go slow  
But one's too many for you.

DURING THE SONG, ERROL FLYNN BURSTS IN SHOWING OFF TO HIS  
CONSORT BETTY AADLAND, WHOM HE CALLS 'WOODSIE'.

WOODSIE IS 16 YEARS OLD, ERROL IS 50. HE IS INTOXICATED BUT  
NOT EXACTLY DRUNK.

ERROL

Here we are Woodsie, Harry's Piano Bar, the entertainment centre of the Universe.

WOODSIE GIGGLES.

ERROL

I say old sport, don't you know any other songs? Do you have to keep playing that depressing shit?

HARRY

Would you like a drink Mr Flynn?

ERROL

(ignoring him)

Why don't you play something up-tempo like ...  
(sings)

'She's five foot two and her eyes are ...'

HE PEERS INTO WOODSIE'S EYES. SHE GIGGLES.

ERROL

'..... Umm, greyish green. She's eighteen years old, with the biggest fanny you've ever seen!' Ha, ha ...

HARRY

No one under the age of twenty-one is allowed on these premises Mr Flynn, you know that.

ERROL

Of course I do - and in fact this little hunk of quivering sensuality is exactly twenty-two years old. I always insist on seeing their birth certificates these days. Woodsie's on her thigh - would you like a look?

WOODSIE

(giggles)

No it's not ...!!

HARRY

Do you want a drink?

ERROL

Yes old boy, two whiskies - one straight, the other double and fill it up with lemonade and raspberry ...  
(whispers to HARRY)

.... Tell you what sport, I'm supposed to be meeting someone here but I'm bugged if I can remember who.

HARRY

(indicates LOIS)

It's the lady at the table. She's been here a long time.

LOIS IS AWARE OF THE CONVERSATION. SHE LOOKS AT ERROL.

LOIS

Mr Flynn. I liked the song.

ERROL IS UNIMPRESSED BY HER PLAIN, RATHER DOWDY APPEARANCE. HE WHISPERS TO HARRY.

ERROL

(whispers)

My God, I couldn't have been that drunk could I?

LOIS

Mr Flynn, we did have an appointment for five o'clock, it is now nearly seven.

ERROL

Oh did you mean local time? I always operate under Greenwich Mean Time like every good sailor.

LOIS

If we could get down to business.

ERROL

Can I get you a drink honey?

LOIS

No thank you I don't indulge.

ERROL

You don't what?

LOIS

I don't drink.

ERROL

I don't drink either, I bloody well drown in the stuff! Now what did I promise I'd do for you?

LOIS

We were going to start work on your book.

ERROL

Ah the book, the book .... I knew I recognised your face from somewhere. You weren't wearing glasses last time were you?

LOIS

Yes.

ERROL

Ah .... you'd look a lot better without them. What do you think Woodsie?

WOODSIE

What?

ERROL

Don't you think .... umm .... what's your name again?

LOIS

Lois Tudor.

ERROL

Don't you think Lois would look a lot sexier without her glasses?

WOODSIE

She looks okay.

LOIS

Mr Flynn, if we could ignore your sordid lusts for a short while we might be able to get down to business.

ERROL

I thought it was my sordid lusts that interested you!

LOIS

We intend producing an entertaining and hopefully educational product for adolescent boys Mr Flynn.

ERROL

The lovely lady here is going to write a book of stories based on my own fascinating and incredible life.

WOODSIE

What sort of stories?

ERROL

Exciting ones! Full of big words that you wouldn't understand, with adventures like 'On the Trail of the Smugglers' and 'The Witchdoctors of Rattlesnake Rift'.

WOODSIE

Oh!

ERROL

And the book is going to sell millions of copies and make us all very rich.

WOODSIE

Does that include me?

ERROL

When I say we, I mean Miss Tudor and all my various creditors and wives.

WOODSIE

(confused)

Do we have to get married?

ERROL

Listen Woodsie, why don't you catch a cab, go home and get the bed warm and yourself hot with anticipation for my early arrival.

WOODSIE

Oh but .... all right .... but don't drink too much.

ERROL

Right, now run along like a good girl.

WOODSIE

'Byeee ...

WOODSIE KISSES ERROL, GIVES LOIS A JEALOUS LOOK THEN LEAVES.

ERROL

(to LOIS)

The perfect female - big arse, big tits, and no brain.

LOIS

(abruptly)

Mr Flynn, I would like to check one or two details if you don't mind.

ERROL

Fire away.

LOIS

Correct me if anything is wrong. Full name Errol Leslie Thomson Flynn.

ERROL

Never did like the Leslie. Bit effeminate don't you think?

LOIS

No.

ERROL

Listen this stuff can be found on the back of any old Fantales wrapper.

LOIS

Perhaps, but I want the truth.

ERROL

What on earth for? I always find fiction much more exciting than fact.

LOIS

Let's say it's for posterity.

ERROL

The only posterity that interests me darling is the one you're sitting on!

LOIS

(very bland)  
Really!

ERROL

Yes .... umm ... didn't you find that witticism just a teeny bit amusing?

LOIS

No.

ERROL

I see .... I gather you're not a fan of mine then?

LOIS

No. Quite frankly I find your films simplistic, unconvincing, sentimental and stupid.

ERROL

So why are you doing this book?

LOIS

For money. Why did you make your films?

ERROL

(sarcastic)

In order to make an artistic statement about the cultural milieu of which I am a part, of course .... and money!

LOIS

(pause)

You were born in Hobart, Tasmania, on the 20th June 1909 at the Alexandra Private Hospital.

ERROL

No sooner did I get out than I wanted to get back in, and that's what I've been trying to do ever since.

LOIS

Pardon?

ERROL

Don't worry sweetheart, you wouldn't understand.

LOIS

Your father ....

ERROL

Anyway you're safe, I prefer younger stuff.

LOIS

You father, Professor Theodore Flynn was a graduate of the University of Sydney, with a science degree in Biology and a reputation as an eminent member of his profession.

ERROL

Can't argue with that.

LOIS

And your mother ....

ERROL

Look darling, do we have to go into all these depressing details? After all the lads don't want to hear this. They want to get stuck into the meaty bits like fighting off Kanaka headhunters and swimming crocodile infested waters to rescue damsels in distress.

LOIS

It's just for the record Mr Flynn.

ERROL

My mother ... God bless her ... the lady wants to know about my mother ....

SCENE 2 - YOUNG ERROL'S MIDDLE CLASS HOME - HOBART 1916

MRS FLYNN (LILY MARY) HAS BEEN SITTING ON STAGE FROM THE START - AN UNOBTRUSIVE PART OF THE BAR ROOM SCENE.

SHE POURS TEA.

LILY

Tea Miss Tudor?

LOIS

Thank you.

LILY

Of course, like any seven year old, he can be most charming when he wants to be, then again he can also be quite difficult.

LOIS

Hmmmm ...

LILY

Sometimes I admit, I don't know what to do with him. He is naughty and impudent and when I try to punish him, he laughs in my face. He has also inherited his father's enquiring mind. Last week I caught him and the little girl next door standing out the back with their pants down.

LOIS

Oh, what did you do?

LILY

I confronted the scoundrel of course. 'What on earth is going on here?' I said. 'Oh I was just interested to see what was underneath' he replied casually. So I told him he was a dirty little brute and gave him three or four good hard smacks on his bare backside.

LOIS

Mrs Flynn, would it be fair to say that you are a society person?

LILY

Oh most definitely.

LOIS

Well how do you cope living in Hobart?

LILY

Not very well I'm afraid. Look I don't want this to go beyond these four walls, but I detest the place.

LOIS

You regret having come here?

LILY

Most definitely.

LOIS

And do you also regret marrying and having a son like Errol?

LILY

Oh but Errol is a charming little chap - most of the time.

LOIS

But he does hamper you doesn't he? He does .... cramp your style?

PAUSE

LILY

Oh my, look at the time!

THEODORE ENTERS

THEODORE

Good evening Lily .... Oh excuse me, I didn't know we had company.

LILY

We haven't! This is Miss Tudor darling, I was telling her about Errol.

THEODORE

Oh yes, he's a lively little chap Miss Tudor.

LOIS

Yes, so I've heard.

THEODORE

He should be in soon .... I say, did you tell her the story about the ducks?

LILY

I hardly think ....

THEODORE

Oh look I must tell you, it's quite amazing, it really is.

LOIS

Oh good, this might be the sort of thing I'm looking for.

THEODORE

Yes, you see the duck has a digestive system that firstly does not digest pork, and secondly is very fast acting - in other words the pork remains pork and is eaten and then defecated in a very short time.

LILY

Theodore is this necessary?

THEODORE

Quiet please Lily. Well Errol discovered these facts about the duck, and so he tied a piece of pork to a string and fed it to the biggest drake in the flock. Well the pork passed in and out of the drake and was then picked up by another duck which did the same, and so on. By the time I arrived there were six ducks strung together and Errol was selling tickets to his friends to see the 'living bracelet'!

LOIS

Yes, that is amusing. What was your reaction?

THEODORE

I broke my umbrella across the little bugger's backside.

LILY

He's a sadistic little boy.

SCENE 3 - HEADMASTER'S OFFICE SHORE GRAMMAR SCHOOL - 1924

SCENES 2 AND 3 ARE LINKED BY A SCHOOL CHOIR SINGING IN ANGELIC VOICES WHILE ERROL PREPARES TO RECEIVE THE CANE FROM THE HEADMASTER, MR ROBSON.

MR ROBSON IS ENGLISH, VERY OLD-SCHOOL. HE WEARS A MORTAR-BOARD AND ACADEMIC GOWN.

CHOIR

(sings)

You are my guiding light  
In all I think and do  
Your love is pure and perfect  
And all forgiving too.

ROBSON

This Flynn is for your impudence ....  
(whack)  
This is for being a liar ....  
(whack)  
This should teach you to play around during class ...  
(whack)  
And this is for poor Elsie Cullen's lost virginity ...  
(whack)  
Now get out, stay out, and don't ever cross my path  
again. You are expelled!

CHOIR

Hurrah ... beauty Flynny boy! Did you cop it Flynn ...!

ERROL

He's as weak as piss! I didn't feel a thing.

CHOIR

(sings)

They dragged her up the rickety stairs  
Pulling on her light brown hairs  
Inky pinky parlez vous.

ROBSON ADDRESSES LOIS.

ROBSON

Naturally I'm very proud of our boys, although one must always realise that they are at an advantage because they are from the upper-echelons of society and as such have superior minds and bodies to the umm ... common public school person. We select only boys who have, shall we say, notable pedigrees. We do not accept riff-raff here at Shore, after all we have a tradition to maintain as the leading Boy's Grammar School here in Sydney. But Miss Tudor, as any breeder of dogs or horses could tell you, there are always one or two in each generation that do not come up to standard. Perhaps they are genetic freaks or throwbacks. Whatever the reason, they are culled from the flock. Such is the case with Flynn. He has been culled. My only regret is

If you'd like to continue reading this script,  
you'll find it available for purchase at

australian *plays*.org

The definitive online destination for quality Australian playwriting.