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MARTYN FORD

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# Five Short Plays



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## INTRODUCTION

This play is about a young person who wants to change his life. Chris would like to see new places and learn new things, but the older people in his life don't like his plan. They can only see problems. Chris finds that he, too, is a little afraid of change.

## CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

Chris, a young person who wants to travel

Cox

Mills

Harris

Dean

Wright

} five of Chris's friends, all older than him

## PERFORMANCE NOTES

At the beginning of the play Chris's friends are in a room. Cox is reading a book, Mills and Harris are talking quietly to each other, and Wright and Dean are looking out of a window. You will need six chairs, a book, a bag and a map.

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## Canada Can Wait

*Cox, Mills and Harris are sitting in a room. Dean and Wright are standing by a window. Chris comes in.*

CHRIS *(Smiling)* Well, goodbye, everyone.

COX *(Putting down his book)* Are you going?

CHRIS Yes, I must.

MILLS When are you going?

CHRIS Now.



*'Well, goodbye, everyone.'*

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*Five Short Plays*

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COX     Now? So soon?

MILLS     Don't go!

CHRIS     But I must. I need a change.

HARRIS     What are you going to do?

CHRIS     I'd like to travel for a time.

HARRIS     Travel? How wonderful!

DEAN     Yeah, think of us when you're travelling.

COX     Yes, think of us – we have to stay here.

MILLS     It's the same old thing, day after day—

HARRIS     The same old faces.

WRIGHT     The same old problems.

MILLS     Nothing different for us!

DEAN     But someone has to do it.

COX     Yes, that's right. We can't *all* go!

CHRIS     Why not? You can travel too.

COX     Us? (*He laughs.*)

MILLS     How can we travel?

HARRIS     We have things to do here.

CHRIS     What things?

WRIGHT     He says, 'What things?'

DEAN     What a question!

COX     (*To the others*) He's tired of us.

CHRIS     No, I'm not. I'm not tired of you. I'm happy here.

MILLS     Are you?

CHRIS     Well, I *was* happy here. It's a good place, and I—

HARRIS     Yes?

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*'Spain, perhaps, or Greece . . .'*

CHRIS Well, I like you. I'm one of you – one of the group.

WRIGHT That's nice.

DEAN So where would you like to go?

CHRIS I don't know. Spain, perhaps, or Greece . . . maybe even Canada—

COX Canada?

CHRIS Yes. I'm very interested in Canada.

MILLS Canada, well!

HARRIS That's interesting.

WRIGHT You're very adventurous, Chris.

COX We're not adventurous at all, I'm afraid.

DEAN But then you're young—

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*'The lakes and the forests . . .'*

COX You have your life in front of you.

MILLS You want to see exciting places—

HARRIS Like Canada!

WRIGHT The lakes and the forests . . .

COX The great St. Lawrence River . . .

DEAN How wonderful!

COX Lucky Chris!

MILLS It's different for us. We have to stay here. We can't go to Canada.

HARRIS 'I'm one of you,' you said, 'one of the group.' But you're not!

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*Canada Can Wait*

DEAN No, Chris, you're different from us—

CHRIS No, I'm not! Stop talking like this. I'm not different from you. Sometimes I'm happy, sometimes I'm not. I work and eat and sleep, like you.

MILLS Ah, but *you* are going away—

HARRIS And *we* are staying here.

WRIGHT And that makes you different.

CHRIS I'm *not* different!

COX But what about Canada?

CHRIS Stop talking about Canada! I'm not going to Canada – I'd *like* to go there, that's all!

COX So you *aren't* going there now?

CHRIS I don't know. Perhaps. I need some time to think about my life.

WRIGHT Oh, yes.

DEAN Everyone does.

MILLS It's usual for people to do that.

HARRIS And there's lots of time. You're young.

CHRIS That's right. I have my life in front of me.

HARRIS So, take your time.

CHRIS Right.

WRIGHT You can stay here as long as you like—

DEAN And think about it.

CHRIS Yeah. (*He sits down.*)

ALL Mmm . . .

*Everyone is quiet for a moment.*

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*Five Short Plays*

COX So what are you going to do?

CHRIS Sorry?

MILLS Are you leaving today?

CHRIS Leaving? Er, not today. I want to think about it first.

MILLS Of course.

HARRIS When are you going, then?

CHRIS Well, not now. Later, perhaps. I can stay here a bit longer. There's lots of time. *(Laughing)* Canada can wait, can't it?

WRIGHT Yes, it can. It certainly can!

DEAN You're one of us really, aren't you, one of the group?

CHRIS Yes, I am, I think.

COX *(Laughing)* But, you know, you say—

CHRIS Yes? Say what?

COX Well, you say some funny things sometimes!

CHRIS Like what?

COX Well, *Canada!*

*Cox, Mills, Harris, Dean and Wright all laugh.*

CHRIS *(Looking at them)* What's so funny about that?

MILLS *(Laughing quietly)* It doesn't matter.

HARRIS Forget it.

COX Look at the time – I must go!

MILLS Me too. I have a lot to do.

HARRIS And me.

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*Canada Can Wait*

WRIGHT Let's all go.

DEAN Yes, let's leave Chris with his dreams—

COX About *Canada*!

*They all laugh at Chris.*

COX See you later, Chris.

ALL Bye-bye.

COX (To Chris) Bye-bye, traveller!

*Chris's friends laugh, and then go out. Chris stands and watches them go. He doesn't look happy. He opens his bag and takes out a large map. He opens the map on the floor and looks at it carefully.*

CHRIS Thailand . . . Malaysia . . . Indonesia . . . Australia . . . (He looks up, smiling.) Mmm, Australia!



*'Mmm, Australia!'*

**YOU HAVE REACHED THE END OF THE SAMPLE.**

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