

Screenwriting Extract ~ Television Drama

"Something in The Air"

Television drama production

ABC TV Drama

Beyond Simpson le Mesurier

Episode 299 Submission

Extract Synopsis

JULIA is running for local government against her ex-husband Doug. She receives a visit from party publicist MICHAEL.

Scene extract:

INT. MERINDA STUDY -

DAY 2

JULIA enters the study, followed by MICHAEL FOX, a middle-aged and well-dressed man.

JULIA
Please, take a seat.

They sit.

JULIA (CONT'D)
Now what can I do for you?

MICHAEL
It's more about what I can do for you, Julia.

He places a folder on the table and slides it over to her.

JULIA
What's this?

JULIA opens it and flicks through the contents.

MICHAEL
'Protocol'.

MICHAEL gives her another folder, this one heavier.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
'Policies'. You don't have to believe them, just read them.

He slides over yet another folder.

MICHEAL (CONT'D)
'Agenda 2010'. Objectives. Public affairs. Internal affairs.
Management strategies.

And another.

MICHEAL (CONT'D)
Charities, functions, outside interests that we suggest you entertain.
There's a significant list for you to choose from.

And another.

MICHEAL (CONT'D)
'Perks'.

And another.

MICHEAL (CONT'D)
'Obligations'.

JULIA thumbs through the pages, lips pursed.

JULIA
I'm sorry, but I wasn't aware that I needed so much help.

MICHEAL
I'm sure you don't. I understand from all accounts that you're an
extraordinarily capable woman whose achieved her position
entirely on her own merit... However...

A pregnant pause.

MICHEAL (CONT'D)
May I be frank?

JULIA
Of course.

MICHEAL
You're inexperienced.

JULIA
I've worked with Doug for thirty years.

MICHEAL

Behind the scenes. You need to do some homework, and we need to establish a profile.

JULIA

People already know who I am.

MICHEAL

You're a woman whose voice is known but whose face is not. Your appearance is going to be your ally in this election.

JULIA

I thought it was my opinions that counted.

MICHEAL

Everyone has opinions. It is the manner in which you address your opinions that counts.

JULIA

Image.

MICHEAL

Perception. The Party is perceived to have lost touch with its constituents. Perceived. There's a word I want you to remember. It may or may not be true, but it is the perception that counts.

JULIA

Hard-working, honest, local...

MICHEAL

Attractive...

JULIA doesn't miss the undertones: is MICHEAL flirting?

MICHEAL (CONT'D)

Maternal...

JULIA

Maternal?

JULIA doesn't like the sound of that.

MICHEAL

We want our constituents to feel protected by you.

JULIA

She can influence Canberra and bake scones.

MICHEAL laughs gently. He is enjoying being in the company of this woman.

MICHEAL shuffles around in his briefcase.

MICHEAL

Now, I've drawn up a schedule...

MICHEAL hands it over to JULIA. JULIA begins to read.

MICHEAL (CONT'D)

It's time you stepped into the limelight, Julia Rutherford.

JULIA glances at MICHEAL. She is feeling a bit uneasy about this new direction.

END OF EXTRACT