

This is the first scene in Camp Darwin, in which the characters introduce themselves to each other. Please read through the Cop lines for context and familiarise yourself with the intro for the character you wish to audition for. If you have time to learn it off by heart that would be great, but it's not essential.

If you are auditioning for a Nurse or a Cop, there's no need to prepare anything. You will be asked to read at that audition.

*Six main characters stand on the upstage pathway facing the audience. Each character is holding a trolley with luggage. A nurse and assistant are recording their temperatures.*

*A Posse of Security/Cops in PPE suits stand downstage. Everyone is wearing a mask.*

Cop 1: Welcome home to Australia and to the Centre for National Resilience in Howard Springs National Territory.

Cop 2: The Centre for National Resilience is a Northern Territory Government multi agency effort with NT Health as the lead agency assisted by NT Police, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics, Department of Corporate and Digital Development, the Australian Federal Police and the Australian Defence Force.

Cop 3: As an arrival ritual we give you the opportunity to introduce yourselves and to offer your gratitude to these agencies that have been working hard to bring you back to Australia, back into the community, back to your homes where your loved ones have been waiting for you.

Cop 4: To reassure you this is not a prison camp while introducing yourself you are free to express yourself. No consequences for anything you say.

*The six, shy, awkward, begin this ritual*

**Jack Gold:** I offer my gratitude to The National Territory Police Force. I acknowledge without all that you have done, I wouldn't be standing here today. I am keenly looking forward to returning to my caravan which waits for me in a small village of Anglewood in the Goldfields region of Victoria. I am a gold prospector. (*Takes a piece out of his pocket*). Here is a nugget of gold, I keep it to show people what I do. I predict prices of gold are going to rocket sky high. My real name is Jack Dwyer but I am better known locally as Jack Gold.

**Raminder Singh:** Thanks mate, thanks to the Australian Federal Police. Raminder Singh here, I am taxi driver, very excellent Chef also, if you like I can cook fine Indian food for the entire camp also. Just give me a big daegh vessel...and see how I do Indian magic...I am returning from India after 4 years. I am looking for work, if there is any work in the camp I am happy to stay in Darwin also, otherwise I go to Sydney.

**Dalip Singh:** No problem, hey Planning and Logistics, thanks buddies. Sat sri aakal Dalip here, I drive a truck, all day all night, sometimes for 2 days and 2 nights without sleep, carrying milk from Shepparton cow to Devondale factory in Laverton for baby in China, no problem. Sorry, I don't like to speak more, much.

**Peter Xu:** G'day, Department of Infrastructure Planning and Logistics. I am very grateful for this opportunity to return to my family in Melbourne. My name is Peter Xu, written as Xu but pronounced as Sheu in Chinese, Sheu not zoo, haha painful joke from my childhood. Many years ago

I worked for Rivers Restoration Australia. I first came to India for a project on the holy Ganga in Benares. That's when I found my spiritual guru. He taught me yoga and the secret art of finding inner happiness. Om Shanti. I am planning to hold yoga classes on the porch, everyone is welcome to join, from their own porches of course.

**Larry:** Thanks Australian Defence Force. Larry's the name. Worked in the force many years ago, I know how you guys think and act. With you there, I know I am in safe hands. Can't trust these politicians though. Like all good veterans I like to live light, live on the run, I live in a car. It's parked somewhere in south Melbourne for the past 18 months while I was stuck in India. That's it, that's what I am returning to, my car.. By the way this whole thing stinks, is illegal making us pay 2,500 dollars for our stay here...I will challenge it in a court of law...where is the legislation, where is the fucking legislation? I refuse to pay a dollar! You're getting nothing out of me.

**Chris:** *(mumbling)* This is not going to be easy, it's a fucking police state, not sure if I can get through this...which department is left....here goes...though I hate filling digital forms, I would like to offer my gratitude to the Department of Corporate and Digital Development. With your help I have been able to get unstuck from India where I have been stuck for the past 18 months. Three cheers for DCDD, hip hip hooray....hip hip hooray...hip hip...*(He loses steam and no one seems to respond to him.)* Oh sorry I forgot to say my name, not sure if I want to say my name, do I have to? What are my rights here?

#### **Additional speeches you may be asked to read:**

**Jack** *(evening on his porch, Raminder is listening to him from another porch)*

Nice cool breeze blowing in from the south, eh. The moon is almost full tonight. That's Jupiter next to it. Nothing like being out in the desert and sleeping under the stars. I love photographing the planets with my handy camera. See here I can zoom and see the craters on the moon. Little pleasures.

I used to be a singer-songwriter, loved the music of the Rolling Stones, Leonard Cohen, what a genius!

*(Starts singing Leonard Cohen)*

Suzanne takes you down

To her place by the river

You can hear go by you can spend the night beside her

And the sun pours down like honey...

It's nice to be here with company. I live alone in my caravan, in a caravan park, no family in Australia, my sister in London died a couple of years ago, didn't get to know until sometime early this year in India, her children didn't inform me. I am getting old, you know. Gold prospecting isn't doing too good either. I called the owner of the park, he seemed suspicious of my returning from India, said a lot of the residents were old and vulnerable, and didn't want anyone getting the virus. He said I might have to self-isolate in a motel for three days followed by a test. That means I've spent four days quarantined in India with 3 tests, 14 days here with 3 tests, and then 3 days in Victoria with a final test.

All this while I've been safe with eating Ivermectin. If everyone popped a pill we'd all be fine.

Do you want an Ivermectin, it will keep you safe from tomorrow's test?

It's a great Prophylactic.

**Raminder** (*excerpt, telling his story to Jack and the night air*)

In college I was known as Krishna, all I had to do was play the flute and many girls were falling in love with me. I had many relationships in Sydney and Melbourne. Indian girls, if they see you have an Australian passport, it's very easy to get them. I had many affairs. But I agreed to get married by my mother's choice. She was right. I have a nice wife. She asks for nothing, a very simple lady. Helped me take care of my father. After one year I had a son. Then the family started pressuring me to go back to Australia, think of your son's future, they said. When I finally decided to go, Coronavirus began. All flights stopped. Then my brother found a travel agent who suggested I come by the Maldives route. In my guts I did not want to leave, but my brother, parents, even my wife said, go. I caught the flight to Maldives, landed at 12 noon, 2 pm we had a Covid test, that night they informed me I had Covid. The Police came in the middle of the night, isolated me in the hotel itself, and the next day they moved me to a hotel dedicated to Covid. I did not have a fever for the first two days, then the fever started in the evening and by night I had a very high fever, with cough and headache. They then moved me to a Covid Hospital 'The Indira Gandhi Covid Centre for Healing.' There my symptoms became worse. I thought I will die here. Never be able to get out. I begged the doctors, I don't know what got into me how I could behave like that, but I was very alone and frightened, I went down on my knees and screamed I would pay any price, 5 lacs 10 lacs, I even held their feet shouting begging just put me on a plane back to India. I just wanted to die in India, not in Maldives.

**Larry** (*in the middle of a conversation with the other characters about the annoying testing*)

(laughing) Haha you're cracking me up too, it's true though, 3 tests in India and 3 tests now. Not sure if the tests in India were worth anything, they would barely touch the tongue before they pulled it out, just twirled the edge of the nostril each time and it was done. Maybe they wanted all of us to come out negative. I mean the whole flight was negative right? Not even one positive result makes me suspicious....who knows....they were so incompetent...got my name wrong...I called them emailed them saying I am not Harry Singh, Larry not Harry, and I can't sing for my life, threatened to sue them. They made sure they changed, and got my name right. The food in the Leela Palace was good though. On the first day I asked for an extra helping. After that each meal they provided me with two trays. I lapped it all up. The rooms were also big. I must have got the emperor's room, at the end of three days I thought I could spend another 14 in there.

**Peter** (*the characters have just been told there are 5 positive cases from their flight, and that means no more visits to the laundry, they are all stressed*)

I have this mantra my spiritual guru gave me. It is like a shield, it protects me from all dangers. I have to repeat it more than a thousand times. It's my practice. If anyone would like, I am happy to teach you. It will protect you. You don't have to worry. The mantra will take care of everything. That is why I have been in India for the past nine months but Covid is far away. Of course if you have no faith then it will not work. It's not like you are a parrot, just repeating.

**Chris** (*the characters have just been told there are 5 positive cases from their flight, and that means no more visits to the laundry*)

(very angry) 5 Covid cases in the enclosed space of a flight. It's not good ole Alfa, it's bloody Delta Delta Delta....it's going to spread like wildfire...something was telling me I was safer in India despite all the cases all around...I mean I stayed covid free for months and months. I was being forced to come to Delhi to quarantine in the hotel. From Hyderabad to Delhi is a two-day train journey. The man sleeping opposite me in the 3 tier train had a terrible cough. I thought I was done for. When I arrived in Delhi, even before I got into the hotel I took a Covid test. Thank god it was negative. Then with the three negative tests in the hotel I thought finally I am now in Australia, I am safe. I will spend these 14 days and get back to see my Maya. Of course Scot Morrison screwed the

vaccination program. Trusting Astrazeneca, not ordering enough, making a mess. So even when we get out it's 14 months before we are vaccinated. Now that the U.K is celebrating freedom day they seem to have got into action...it's too bloody late and we are suffering...I don't recognize this country anymore, I want to get out even now, I want to go back to India, I love it there, it's just my parents and Maya...I am suffering man, suffering great stress.

**Dalip** (*the final scene, Dalip has just been told he is positive and must be removed to the 'red zone'. He has 5 minutes to pack.*)

(*in shock*) How can this be? How can you do this to me? How can I be positive after 5 tests? Please I beg you, please take another test, I am sure there has been a mistake. Please I beg you I cannot do fourteen more days. I will die. I will go mad. (*He falls down on his knees*). Please God what crime have I committed that you are doing this to me. Please put me on a plane back to India. I will pay whatever money you want. I don't want to go to Australia. I will go back. You cannot do this to me. I have no one here. I am totally alone. I promise I will do whatever you say.

Please show some mercy.

*He collapses onto the floor.*