

TRUE LOVE TRAVELS ON A GRAVEL ROAD

**By
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TRUE LOVE TRAVELS ON A GRAVEL ROAD

CHARACTERS:

Richard:	Male, 30's
Sam:	Male, 30's
Angie:	Female, 30's
Glenda:	Female, 40's
Maggie:	Female, 20's
Jake:	Male, 20's

SETTING

The action of the play revolves around an incident at “The Copy Centre”, a photocopy and printing service and the scenes within it are either after, during or before this central incident.

The central incident occurs within one day – a Friday.

The play is set largely within a police station/s and the Copy Centre although at various times, the space represents other locations as the action transitions through time.

SCENE ONE

AFTER

A POLICE STATION

MAGGIE AND SAM ARE SITTING ON CHAIRS. THEY ARE PHYSICALLY IN THE SAME SPACE BUT SEPARATE LOCATIONS.

MAGGIE: None of this is my fault. It can't be. I wasn't even there. Where it happened. At home.

Shouldn't this wait until I can talk to Rodney?
Rodney's always been the policeman. At home. He deals with everything. So maybe we should just wait. Because the thing is....I wasn't even there. So in a way. In some ways...it isn't even my business. It is, but it isn't.

It's just that I know everyone. There's probably no-one I don't know. That's why it's all been secret. Had to be. Everyone knows us.

Up until 2 years ago I lived in the same house all my life. With Mum. And Gran. Went straight from Mum's to married life. My wedding was huge. You could ask anyone.

I didn't know my father. I mean, I knew him. He's the local chemist. Rodney knows this. I just didn't know he was my father. The Chemist not Rodney. Not until my deb ball.

At my deb ball. Out of nowhere. Mum calls me over. . .

MAGGIE'S MOTHER ENTERS. FIVE YEARS EARLIER

GLENDIA: Maggie. You know Mr Henderson? The Chemist? Well. . . He's your father.

MAGGIE: And I thought. . . . "Really? Wish I'd known. I've bought so much makeup and hair stuff in his shop over the years". I'd spent heaps. No discount. Nothing. He didn't even come to my wedding. Mum walked me down the aisle. She was so excited. She always

wanted me to get married.

GLEND A: Listen to me Maggie. You're mad if you don't marry young. Crazy. Need your head read. Do you think I enjoy mowing my own lawns?

MAGGIE: I knew she didn't. So when I had the chance I did.

GLEND A: I'm proud of you, missy. You've been practical. Life isn't like Viva Las Vegas. We can't all be Ann-Margret waiting for Elvis.

MAGGIE: I looked better than Ann-Margret. At my wedding. I was a princess. Everyone said so. I bought all my makeup from Mr Henderson. Still no discount. Nothing.

GLEND A: I am really proud of you today, Maggie.

MAGGIE: She really hated mowing the lawn.

SAM: It's hot in here isn't it? I'm hot. And its cool outside. I can't find my jacket. Why no jacket? I'd have worn a jacket. But where is it? I would've worn a jacket. Where is it?

ANGIE ENTERS.

BEFORE – EARLIER IN THE DAY

SAM IS SEARCHING FOR HIS JACKET. ANGIE ENTERS.

SAM: Have you seen my jacket? The blue one?

ANGIE: Something just bit me on the bum. This place drives me mental.

SAM: Was it a spider?

ANGIE: Well, if it was....Tonight, you could be eating alone.

SAM: Did you see my jacket?

ANGIE: Drycleaner, maybe?

SAM: I'll sweep out the toilet when I get home.

ANGIE: Spray it too. Really strong insecticide. So strong we have to pee in the shower for a week.

SAM: So you're staying? For another week at least?

ANGIE: I have to get to work.
Don't wait up. I'm not sure what time I'll be home.

SAM MOVES TO KISS HER. IT IS AWKWARD AND SHE KISSES HIM ON THE CHEEK.

SAM: Aren't we past this? Yet?

ANGIE: What? We're fine. I really have to get to work.

ANGIE KISSES HIM ON THE CHEEK

See..... Bye

ANGIE EXITS

AFTER – THE POLICE STATION

SAM: I'm sweating now. I'm sweating and it's not hot. Do you think I'm sick?

(FEELS UNDER HIS ARMS)

See. What does that mean? Why would I be sweating now? We're just talking. We're just talking. It's pouring off me.
Shit. We're just talking.
Can I go home?
Is my wife here?
Do you know if she's here yet?
Actually, can we stop for a bit?
Just a minute.
I think I'm going to be sick.

END SCENE

SCENE TWO

BEFORE – TWO WEEKS AGO

**JAKE SITS ON A BENCH PLAYING WITH THE RUBIKS CUBE
MAGGIE ENTERS. SHE APPROACHES AS IF TO
SURPRISE HIM/**

MAGGIE: Hi Sweetie.

**JAKE PUTS THE CUBE DOWN. MAGGIE SITS DOWN BESIDE
HIM AND KISSES HIM PASSIONATELY. JAKE STOPS HER**

JAKE: Do you think....?
Someone might see us. Trevor might see us.

MAGGIE: He's on a trip. Two days.

JAKE: I could come over.

MAGGIE: We can't do that anymore. He could find out and I'm
scared of what he'll do.

JAKE: He's on a trip. You just said he's away.

MAGGIE: My mother's not away.
She drops in all the time. Says I can't look after
myself. I think that's an exaggeration.

JAKE: What did you mean you're "scared of what he'll do?"

MAGGIE: He might kill you. He's crazy jealous.
Can't we just go away? Somewhere? Now? Today.

JAKE: Your hair smells nice. Clean. What did you mean
"kill" me?

MAGGIE: It's the product I use. The product that cost me
twenty-five dollars in my own father's chemist.
Do you love me?

JAKE: Yes.

MAGGIE: Then take me away. Please. Somewhere romantic

JAKE: Like where?

MAGGIE: Anywhere. Somewhere you can smell my hair without
anyone seeing us.

- JAKE:** We could go to my Aunty Jean's. She's got a bungalow in the side yard. I've got the key. No one would see us in there.
- MAGGIE:** Not here. Somewhere away from here. Away from everyone who knows us. My mother, your mother, Aunty Jean.
- I'd love to go to Hawaii. It's a tropical paradise. Elvis had a special connection with Hawaii. He made so many movies there. Paradise Hawaiian Style, Aloha from Hawaii, Blue Hawaii and Fun in Acapulco.
- JAKE:** Mags, that was Acapulco.
- MAGGIE:** Acapulco Hawaii. You're so sweet. And I love that you've never been with anyone before me. You meant that, didn't you? That I was your first? Because that makes me feel so special. Like you saved yourself. For me.
- JAKE:** Not Hawaii...
- MAGGIE:** What?
- JAKE:** Acapulco is in Mexico. Not Hawaii.
- MAGGIE:** Did you really save yourself for me?
- JAKE:** I did. Except I didn't know you. But if I'd have known you, I'd have saved myself. For you. That's just between us.
- MAGGIE:** I wish you'd been my first.
- JAKE:** I do too.
- MAGGIE:** But I'm married.
- JAKE:** So Trevor was your first-
- MAGGIE:** No. But let's just pretend. That there's never been anyone else.
- JAKE:** For me there hasn't.
- MAGGIE:** Let's pretend we're each other's first.

JAKE: But you are actually my first.

MAGGIE: No, I know.

JAKE: So I don't need to pretend.

MAGGIE: I just wish we could go away. Be together. Do whatever we want. Swim naked. Feel the sea and sand on our bare skin.

JAKE: I think I'd have to wear shorts. Sand gives me a rash. But you can be naked if you like.

MAGGIE: I just want to get away. I'd love to go on a real romantic getaway. If we had some money, we could go somewhere really glamorous. Sophisticated. The Gold Coast. Noosa.

JAKE: Noosa's the Sunshine Coast

MAGGIE: We could go to Graceland. It's in Memphis. I'd love to see Graceland. Mum says it's a more important spiritual icon than the Vatican. She says it's a real shrine. It has a room that is exactly like an African jungle but it's indoors. A jungle room. Inside a house.

JAKE: I'd love to take you there.

MAGGIE AND JAKE KISS. SUDDENLY JAKE PULLS AWAY

JAKE: It can't be exactly like a jungle.

MAGGIE: No. It is. An inside jungle.

JAKE: But there's not animals or jungle plants.

MAGGIE: I think there are plants and maybe a monkey.

JAKE: I don't think there's a monkey. Or plants. Not real ones. Not living.

MAGGIE: I think there is.

JAKE: No. See I don't think there could be. Because it's inside. It's a house so it's –

MAGGIE KISSES HIM

Are you sure I couldn't come over tonight?

MAGGIE: I'd love to go to Graceland.
I'd love it if we could go there together.
Me and my man. The man I love. The man who
rescued me.

JAKE: We'll go.
I'll think of something.

MAGGIE: Really? That would be so amazing. No one has ever
done anything like that for me. And I'd love to fly
somewhere. I've never been on a plane. Not a big one
anyway. I'd love someone to take me to Graceland on
a plane.

JAKE: I will. I'll do it.

MAGGIE: Really? That would be amazing. A dream come true.
I'm just so lucky to have found you.

JAKE: I'll get some money. From somewhere. I just need to
think.

MAGGIE: It's so romantic. Don't you think?

JAKE: How much would we need? Ten thousand?
Would it make you really happy?

MAGGIE: Happier than I've ever been in my entire life.

JAKE: I just need to think. I'll do it. We'll go. I promise.

MAGGIE: I love it that you saved yourself for me.
The thing is Jake...I saved my heart for you.
That's more important.

LIGHTS DOWN

END SCENE

SCENE THREE

**AFTER
THE POLICE STATION
MAGGIE AND SAM SIT ON CHAIRS**

SAM SITS IN A CHAIR

SAM: I reckon I could be getting the flu. Feel my head. It's clammy.
Do you know if my wife's outside?
I'm sure she'll come. Things haven't been brilliant but you don't think of that stuff if something life threatening happens, do you? You think about what someone means to you. Not what they've said....Or not said.

**BEFORE.
FOUR YEARS EARLIER. SAM SITTING.**

ANGIE ENTERS.

SHE APPROACHES SAM FROM BEHIND AND COVERS HIS EYES WITH HER HANDS.

ANGIE: Hey you.

SAM: Hi.

ANGIE: I've got 5 minutes.
Lift your shirt up.

SAM: Not here.

ANGIE: I've been waiting all morning.

SAM: Tonight. People are watching.

ANGIE: No-one's watching. You don't have to get undressed.
Just a quick look. I think it's very sexy.

SAM: You haven't seen it.

ANGIE: I keep thinking about it. It's been very distracting.
Come on. Lift your shirt up.

SAM AWKWARDLY LIFTS THE BACK OF HIS SHIRT UP.

SAM: See.

ANGIE: Where?

SAM: There. On my shoulder.

ANGIE: Do you have a torch?

SAM: Very funny. It's not that small.

ANGIE: Oh I see it. It's an 's'. Is it? An 's'? For Sam?

SAM: No. It's Superman. The 'S'. The big 'S'.

ANGIE: Wow.

SAM: What do you think ? It hurt like hell.

ANGIE: It's-

SAM: Too small? It's just that it really hurt. If I'd got a bigger one I'd be in intensive care. Tears actually came out of my eyes. It was humiliating.

ANGIE: No. It's not too small It's actually.... I like it. It's very subtle.

SAM: Really?

ANGIE: Absolutely.
Superman?

SAM: I reckon.

ANGIE: You're so funny.

SAM: Really?

ANGIE: Oh no...in a really great way. Truthfully...I never thought you'd go through with it.

SAM: Impressed?

ANGIE: I really am.

SAM: It really hurts. Do you think it could be infected?

ANGIE: I have to get back to work.

ANGIE STARTS TO LEAVE

SAM: Will I see you tonight?

ANGIE: It was touch and go...but Superman. That's tough to pass up.
God, Sam, you didn't get it for me, did you? That's a lifetime commitment-

SAM: Shit no. No. Of course not. No. What makes you say that? No.
I did it because I wanted to...And I lost a bet with Jacko in Sales. But I wanted to...It makes a statement about who I am.

ANGIE: Superman?

SAM: Yes. No. Not exactly. You know what I mean...Fearless.
At work.
In business.
An absolute gun.
Ruthless. "Anything it takes" kind of thing.

ANGIE: Maybe you should've made it more obvious...If it's a statement. About your fearless ruthlessness.

SAM: I know it's there and that's the main thing.
(PAUSE)
You don't hate it though, do you?
Not that it matters because I told you I did it for me.

ANGIE: I like it.

SAM: Good because it really hurts.

ANGIE: *(SHOWS HIM HER ANKLE)*
That stopped hurting after a day.

SAM: When did you get that? .
I've never noticed that. How come I didn't know you had that?

ANGIE: You obviously never look at my ankles.

SAM: How long have you had it? What is it? A butterfly?

ANGIE: A bee. I got it in high school. My mother cracked it completely.

SAM: I can't believe I haven't seen it.

ANGIE: You must have seen it. It just hasn't registered.

SAM: How come I didn't notice it? I mean now I look at it... It's all I can see. It practically covers your whole ankle.

ANGIE: It does not. Anyway, it was so long ago. I don't see it half the time.

SAM: That's freaking me out. That I didn't notice it, I mean. Do you think I might need glasses? What if I'm gradually losing my sight?

ANGIE: You're not losing your sight. But I really have to go.

ANGIE KISSES HIM. SHE STARTS TO LEAVE

SAM: Angie, I love you.

ANGIE: Really? Okay. Really?

SAM: I shouldn't have said that. . Sorry.

ANGIE: Did you mean it?

SAM: No. I mean...Not "no". I mean I meant it In a way. I just didn't mean to say it then or ever....No, not "ever". Just not right now. Sorry.

ANGIE: I'm just surprised. Really surprised.

SAM: Good surprised or "Jesus, someone just farted in this really crowded lift" surprised?

ANGIE: Good surprised, I think. Surprised.

SAM: Sorry.

ANGIE: No.... It's fine....Really. Good. Fine. I'm late. See you tonight.

ANGIE STARTS TO GO.

SAM: Bye.

***AFTER
THE POLICE STATION***

SAM: Do you think Lois Lane knew Superman was just Clark Kent in a cape and contact lenses and never said anything?

It's just that I'm pretty sure she'll be out there waiting...

Angie, I mean, not Lois Lane...Could you just check again?

AFTER

MAGGIE SITTING IN A CHAIR.

MAGGIE: The thing is... Elvis was a good actor. Like genuinely talented. Look at 'Kissing Cousins. He played both cousins and, okay, so his hair was dyed blonde...it was his acting that made that film.

Blue Hawaii. And Love Me Tender. He was very versatile. People don't appreciate that.

Do you know he bought strangers cars? I read that. That's a special soul right there.

Have you ever heard him sing that song "Memories"? I had it at my wedding.

I didn't want any other song. Mum wanted me to have "Love Me Tender" but I said "no".

I want one song and one song only. And that was the one. Memories.

Did you know he made his last movie in 1969. That's like a million years before I was even born.... He was a doctor. In love with a Nun. Star crossed.

I can relate to that. I know how that is. It's devastating. Heartbreaking. And you just can't think of anything else.

When I love someone, I give them everything.

And I don't mean like just my body. I give them my mind. And that's bigger isn't it? Your body's just your body.... But your mind is...

That's everything.

A YEAR EARLIER. GLENDA, MAGGIE'S MOTHER ENTERS

GLEND A: Life can't always be like "Fun in Acapulco".
You're not Ursula bloody Andress, you know.

There's no part Cherokee prince charming ready to
whisk you away, let me tell you.

There's just married bloody pharmacists who never
leave their wives no matter how many promises they
make behind the prescription counter. And they make
plenty, I promise you.

When your body's still in passable nick.
Star-crossed is overrated for my money. It's a pain in
the rear end. Hang on to what you've got there,
Maggie. Don't let lust rule your life. If you do
you'll be changing your own light globes and putting
out your own bins in no time.

Then one day you're 45 and his wife's been to a fat
farm, a detox centre and had a bloody eye lift. You
can't compete with that. Your body's no longer the
wonderland it used to be. It's a saggy tired child
bearing shadow of it's former self.

AFTER

MAGGIE: But it's not about your body. It's about your heart
and everything you think and feel.

(PAUSE)

Mrs Henderson had all that work done on her face and
her body and I still don't even get a discount on my
Maybelline.

END SCENE

SCENE FOUR

**THE STREET
TWO DAYS AGO
BEFORE**

JAKE IS SITTING PLAYING WITH A RUBIK'S CUBE. RICHARD ENTERS. HE WALKS PAST JAKE AND GRABS THE CUBE

RICHARD: What are you up to, Genius?

(SITTING DOWN NEXT TO JAKE STILL HOLDING THE CUBE)

Got the money?

JAKE: You're late. We said twelve-

RICHARD: Thirty. We said twelve thirty. I haven't got all day and I've already got the shits so don't push m

JAKE: Why?

RICHARD: Why? I don't know why, Jake.
Maybe, because some stupid bastard honked his horn at me at an intersection this morning. I hate smartarses who think they can honk their horn like they're better or smarter. God botherer. One of those fishes on the back window. But I'll find him.

JAKE: How?

RICHARD: Don't worry about that Jake. It's not a big town is it? I don't reckon God approves of monsterring people with a car horn. ***(PAUSE)*** What do you think?

JAKE: I don't know.

RICHARD: Don't you Jake? I think you do.
There are two types of people living in this town. Those with a burned out car in the front yard. Those without That's your social strata around here. That's the beginning, middle and end.

JAKE: You live here.

RICHARD: Do I Jake?
That's where you're wrong. I just come here when I need to. Lie low. like I'm in witness protection. My own kind of witness protection. I'm here, there

and frigging everywhere.

RICHARD TOSSES THE CUBE BACK TO JAKE
A DOG BARKS

RICHARD: Shut up Cyclone. Fucking dimwit.

JAKE: What's that?

RICHARD: My dog. He's tied up down the corner. Now hurry up and I'll get going.

A DOG HOWLS AGAIN.

JAKE: Is he all right? Tied up?

RICHARD: I don't know. Give me the money and I'll find out.

JAKE: He could be choking. How tight did you tie the lead? Did you tie him to a pole or something?

RICHARD: The bin. I tied him to the bin. Now get out your wallet.

JAKE: It's just that my cousin had this dog once and he tied him to a pole while he went into the video shop. He was with his mate and they were planning to be real quick. Like 5 minutes tops but then they can't agree what video to get and they're more like an hour so when they came out the dog's been winding itself round and round the pole.

RICHARD: What video did they get?

JAKE: The Matrix. But the thing is the dog's been winding itself round and round this pole and it's lying there. Dead.

RICHARD: It wasn't lying there.

JAKE: It was. No joke.

RICHARD: No. If it wound itself round and round the pole, it couldn't lie down. Because the lead would be holding it tight to the pole.

JAKE: No. It was dead. Lying down dead. That's what he said. They came out and it was lying down dead.

RICHARD: That can't be right.

JAKE: No. It is. No joke.

RICHARD: No. See. Now say I grab your tie.

(GRABS JAKE'S TIE AND PULLS IT)

And wind it round and round a street pole while
you're still wearing it round your neck. It gets tighter
and tighter see and you got no air in your lungs and
you can't swallow. And you could definitely die.

**(AS HE SAYS THIS HE PULLS THE TIE TIGHTER AND
JAKE STARTS TO CHOKE. SUDDENLY RICHARD LETS IT GO)**

But you couldn't lie down dead. You couldn't fall
down. Because the tie's holding you to the pole.
You're tied to the pole by the neck.

JAKE: **(COUGHING AND COMPOSING HIMSELF)**
No. It was dead. It was lying down.

RICHARD: Well I just don't believe that. I reckon that's bullshit.

JAKE: It happened. No joke.

RICHARD: And you say they got 'The Matrix'?

JAKE: Yeah.

RICHARD: Top film. Saw it on Imax. Ever been to Imax?

JAKE: No.

RICHARD: Shits on everything. Imax. Huge.

THE DOG HOWLS AGAIN.

RICHARD: Shut up Cyclone.

JAKE: You'd better check your dog. He could be dead.
Like my cousin's dog.

RICHARD: He's not dead is he?

JAKE: How do you know?

RICHARD: Because he lets out a bark every couple of minutes.
Anyway Just hand over the money and I'll get going.

JAKE: Where are you going to get it from?

RICHARD: You don't need to know that.

JAKE: Is it a secret?

RICHARD: Well, I'm not telling the whole world, am I? You asked me to get it, you give me the money, I'll get it. Straight forward business. Usually.

JAKE: I brought a hundred.

RICHARD: You must be fucking kidding? What do you reckon I'll get for a hundred? I'll get you a slingshot for that.

JAKE: I can go to one fifty.

RICHARD: Don't try and bargain with me asshole.
I am doing you a big favour. That's just the kind of person I am. You need help. I'm helping you. I don't need to do it.

JAKE: All right

RICHARD: It's not all right. Not fucking all right at all.

JAKE: I'm sorry.

RICHARD: Do you think that's enough? I don't.

A DOG HOWLS

RICHARD: If my dog's dying after winding itself round that pole I'll kill you. I came to get the money and do you a favour.

JAKE: I didn't think it would cost so much.

RICHARD: You're buying it. Not renting it. You can't pay a few bucks and hand it back when you don't need it anymore. Dimwit. I actually think you might be retarded. Am I right? Are you retarded?

JAKE: No.

RICHARD: Don't lie about it.

JAKE: I had some problems. At school. Years go.

RICHARD: And what kind of school was it? Special school? Was it a special school, Jake? Have I got a retard on my hands?

JAKE: No.

RICHARD: No? See, I don't know if I believe that. That's not what I've heard.

JAKE: From who?

RICHARD: A source.
Somebody I know who knows you. He says you're slow. In the head. Says it's pretty much accepted as factual. That you're a nuffy.

JAKE: I'm not.

RICHARD: I can only take your word for it. But the thing is... I don't know if I feel right putting a weapon in the hands of a retard.
I don't know if it's responsible.

JAKE: I'm not retarded.

RICHARD: Listen, I don't care if you are or you aren't but I'm not going to be responsible for any problems.
Problems that come up because you're slow or retarded or whatever.

JAKE: I've got three hundred. That's it. No more.

RICHARD: Don't shit me. Don't come over like you're holding me to ransom. Just give me the money and I'll see what I can do.

JAKE GIVES HIM THE MONEY

JAKE: When will I get it?

RICHARD: I don't know Jake. When will you get it? I should just piss off with this money. My time, the time you've wasted pissing me around today, is worth three hundred bucks. I should just stick this in my pocket

and be on my way. What are you going to do if I do that? Call the police?

JAKE: No.

RICHARD: No. That's right. Now I will get it. I'm not a prick. I'll phone you and arrange a drop-off. At a time convenient to me.

JAKE: Today?

RICHARD: Might be today. Might be tomorrow.

JAKE: Okay.

RICHARD: It's more than okay. Now say 'thank you' and I'll go and untie my dog. . . . My dog that's probably choked itself on a pole while you've wasted half my day. . . . and go on with my life.

JAKE: Thank you

RICHARD: Was that so hard? People make things harder than they need to.

THE DOG HOWLS AND BARKS

I'm coming, you stupid fucking flea bag.

END SCENE

SCENE FIVE

BEFORE

THREE YEARS AGO.

A RESTAURANT.

SAM SITS OUTSIDE. ANGIE COMES OUT FROM INSIDE

ANGIE: Hey you.
What are you doing?

SAM: Waiting for you.

ANGIE: Spying on me.

SAM: No.
You won't answer my calls or texts.
Who are you having lunch with?

ANGIE: It's a meeting. For work. It's just Don.

SAM: Just Don? I've never heard of "Don", just or otherwise.

ANGIE: Don from Human Resources. I know I've mentioned him.

SAM: So what do we know about Don from Human Resources?

ANGIE: Are those binoculars?

SAM: No. Yes. I wanted to make sure I didn't miss you. I've been waiting over half an hour. Anyway, I haven't used them.
Today.

ANGIE: You're stalking me.

SAM: I am not.

ANGIE: You're nuts.

SAM: I remember when you thought I was funny.

ANGIE: There's a fine line between funny and fruitcake.

SAM: Did Don from Human Resources pay for lunch?