

SOCIALLY DISTANCED

A one-act play for two women

By

LYNDON HOUSE

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SET :

CHAIR / DESK OR SMALL TABLE

CHARACTERS :

MEGAN (ANY AGE)

ROGERS (ANY AGE THOUGH SIMILAR TO MEGAN)

DURING THIS PLAY MEGAN NEVER PHYSICALLY
ACKNOWLEDGES EXISTENCE OF ROGERS, JUST REACTS.
(MEGAN SITTING AT TABLE STARING AT PIECE OF PAPER)

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MEGAN : I am writing this as a testament to my life, to be removed from my fellow human beings and forced to endure social distancing, or in my case social isolation.. Although the whole population is now forced to endure the same loneliness that I have suffered, it only serves to make me feel mine more acutely. And so the future stretches out before me like a long dark tunnel.(Stops and ponders)

(ROGERS ENTERS)

ROGERS : Well, here we are again, just the two of us. So what are we writing, something interesting? Well, we must keep our minds active in lockdown, mustn't we, keep our creative juices flowing... Oh and don't worry, I'll keep two metres apart. We must observe social distancing. Adapt to the new normal. Trouble is this isn't the new normal for us. It's the normal normal. We've been social distancing for our whole life. We have to be struck by the irony of it. Coronavirus has locked society in a cage, the same cage that society locked us into

MEGAN STARTS WRITING

ROGERS : (INTERRUPTING) Are you going to write our life story. That would be an interesting read. You could tell them about the happy times. That should keep them riveted for all of thirty seconds. Tell them about the time dad left, and who could blame him? After we were born, mum only had time for us. As far as she was concerned, he ceased to exist from that day. We became her entire life, and she expected us to become hers. It was just mum and us. Exactly how she wanted it

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MEGAN : She built a wall around us.

ROGERS : A wall, a bloody castle more like. Not only did she keep everyone out, she kept us in.(As MUM) *Megan don't you go bothering with those other children. They'll hurt you, Don't go out play love, I'm not well today. We don't need anybody else, do we?*

MEGAN : She never liked me playing with the other children, so I learnt to play by myself.

ROGERS : So then they started to bully us. Just like hyenas really. Pick out the weak and vulnerable one in the herd and smell blood

ROGERS : (As children) *Here comes Megan.*

MEGAN : Please let me go past, I want to go home.

ROGERS (*Mocking*) *Dirty ugly Megan. Can't get a boyfriend. Dirty ugly Megan nobody likes her. Dirty ugly Megan, she's got the nits. Dirty ugly Megan. Dirty ugly Megan...*Then they'd push us between one and another passing us round like some grotesque game of pass the parcel.

MEGAN : And they'd only stop when I started to cry.

ROGERS : So we learnt to start crying straight away and they'd stop and move off, laughing. Our humiliation was their spoils of victory. But who were worse, those cruel little shits or the ones who stood by and did nothing.

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MEGAN : (STARTS WRITING. AS IF DICTATING) I don't blame anyone for any for this. I blame myself...

ROGERS : That's right, it's all our fault isn't it? Perhaps there's something about us that people just don't like, I mean we were always a bit shy, a bit withdrawn, a bit different. People don't trust different... We tried to blame it all on mum, for that wall. But we were all she had. And she was all we had. We didn't need anyone else. (As mum) *Megan come on, our telly programmes about to start. Come on love give your mum a cuddle. I know where you're ticklish... No wonder no one wants to take you to the prom. ..You're useless, you're a waste of space... It's alright love, I'm here for you. I'll always be here. (Pause Angry) Megan come here at once.*

(MEGAN STOPS AS THOUGH STRUCK BY SUDDEN MEMORY)

MEGAN : What's the matter mum?

ROGERS : *I have been in your bedroom. What is this?*