

Dialogues with Lars

by

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Dialogues with Lars

a play

CHARACTERS

PHILLIP CROSS, late 20's

DREW AGERS, late 20's

LARS, early 20's

SUSAN KELLY, late 20's

STAN DOBSON, 40's

SETTING

New York City
2007

PRODUCTION NOTES

There's no need to be realistic in terms of setting. Simplicity, sound, and light is enough.

1.1

In darkness, we hear a small, electronic keyboard begin to play chords. A tenor voice, rich and soothing, begins to sing "Ave Maria" by Schubert.

The lights reveal a young woman, early twenties, dressed mildly in a large trench coat, which is obviously too big for her and which she never takes off. This is Lars.

Her eyes are closed, a smile across her face.

As the singing continues, the sound of an arriving subway train comes screeching in over it-- LOUD-- drowning out the music.

The lights flicker with the rumbling of the train.

The lights go out.

1.2

Phillip Cross, late-twenties, sits at a small table in a Manhattan diner. There is half of a burger and some fries left on a plate in front of him, a cup of coffee next to his plate of food.

Drew Agers, also late-twenties, his hair shaggy and long, sits across from Phillip.

DREW

Tornado.

PHILLIP

Tornado.

(Beat)

Did you take a detour through Kansas?

DREW

It hit Brooklyn.

PHILLIP

You're so full of crap.

DREW

Check the news. Seriously. Tornado. Shut down the subway. I got here as fast as I could.

PHILLIP

At least you made it here in one piece.

DREW

Thanks.

Phillip refreshes his cup of coffee.

PHILLIP

You want some?

DREW

No thanks. Makes me twitchy.

PHILLIP

Anything to eat?

DREW

Dinner plans with David.

PHILLIP

How is David?

DREW

Busy. Everyone needs an organist. But he's good. How's digs?

PHILLIP

How's digs? Digs are good.

DREW

That's good.

PHILLIP

And you?

DREW

Stressed as hell. I have 17 student papers on Moltmann's *The Trinity and the Kingdom* to read.

PHILLIP

Molt-Man. Sounds like a reject superhero.

DREW

He's a cornerstone of modern theology. You should read him.

PHILLIP

Nah. My reading list's full. I have to know-- Will Voldemort win? Will Harry die at the end. Would J.K. kill him off? Who will survive?

DREW

I still can't believe she killed off Mad-Eye Moody.

PHILLIP

Ah, come on! I haven't gotten there yet!

DREW

It's like chapter 3!

PHILLIP

Screw you, chapter 3! I just started it!

DREW

Sorry!

PHILLIP

You just ruined the whole thing for me. Susan ruined the sixth and now you've ruined the seventh. You damn fast-readers. Some of us don't sit at home and read five hundred pages in one sitting. Some of us actually get out of the house and do things.

DREW

When was the last time you got out of the house?

PHILLIP

Besides today?

DREW

Besides today.

PHILLIP

Last week.

DREW

Last week?

PHILLIP

Does getting groceries count?

DREW

No. I mean out out.

PHILLIP

Two weeks.

DREW

Two.

PHILLIP

When did Susan...

DREW

Two months.

PHILLIP

Then two months.

DREW

Jesus, Phillip.

PHILLIP

Who needs to leave the house when McDonald's delivers and Netflix arrives at my door?

(Beat)

Where would I go anyway?

DREW

I don't know. Out. Somewhere. Get your mind off things.

PHILLIP

My mind isn't on things.

DREW

She says you call four or five times a day.

PHILLIP

That's not true.

(Beat)

Three. Tops.

DREW

Phil. Give her time.

(Beat)

She wants to see you. She says she wants to talk to you--

PHILLIP

So she can arrange a time to get the rest of her stuff?

DREW

She just wants some time. Things are busy with all the turkeys and crap, so, just back off a smidge. Lingering on Susan's not going to do you any good. It'd be good for you to have time to embrace solitude.

PHILLIP

Embrace solitude? You were just telling me to get out of the house!

DREW

It's a metaphorical solitude. When you're alone, you have two choices. You can be lonely and wallow in it, or you can transform your loneliness into "solitude."

PHILLIP

Embrace loneliness.

DREW

No. Embrace solitude.

PHILLIP

What's the difference?

DREW

There's a big difference. Loneliness is isolation and desperation. Solitude is comfort and solace. Peace with yourself. Open yourself up and realize you're not really alone.

PHILLIP

Yeah, with millions of people in this city, how can anyone be alone. Bound to bump into one sooner or later.

DREW

I'm trying to help. I hate seeing you like this.

PHILLIP

Believe me, I hate seeing me like this.

DREW

I may have something that'll cheer you up.

PHILLIP

You got me a hooker?

DREW

Better.

PHILLIP

Two hookers?

DREW

There's a guy I met at Grey Dog.

PHILLIP

You met a guy? What's David going to say?

DREW

Listen. It was lunch. There were no empty tables, so this guy comes up to me and asks if he could sit at my table.

(MORE)

DREW (CONT'D)

I say, "Please do." We talk a little, this and that, and I'm like, "I teach theology," and he's like, "I'm a director." So, I say, "You need to talk to my best friend. He's a playwright."

PHILLIP

You didn't.

DREW

And he was like, "Tell him to call me."

PHILLIP

And?

Drew holds up a business card. Phillip grabs it.

PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Stan Dobson.

DREW

Yup.

PHILLIP

You had lunch with Stan Dobson.

DREW

Yup.

PHILLIP

Artistic Director of Dramatists Dimension.

DREW

And he wants you to call him.

PHILLIP

I can't call him.

DREW

He wants to read your stuff.

PHILLIP

I don't have anything worthy of Stan Dobson.

DREW

I'm sure you do.

PHILLIP

It's Stan-freaking-Dobson. I'd have to give him something epic, something important... I could send him "The Ethereal Cave!"

DREW

Never heard of that one.

Phillip digs in his bag, pulls out a script. He tosses it to Drew.

PHILLIP

It's new.

DREW

What's it about?

PHILLIP

It's a love story about this guy and girl who fall in and out of love in an insane asylum. It's like a romantic comedy, but with suicide.

DREW

Sounds heartwarming.

(Beat)

Give me a pen.

Phillip hands Drew a pen. Drew writes on the script's cover.

DREW (CONT'D)

(As he writes)

Here's what you're going to do. One. Call Stan Dobson. Two. Become a famous playwright.

Phillip grabs the pen.

PHILLIP

I'm not going to call him.

DREW

This guy could be your golden ticket.

PHILLIP

I--

DREW

(Sings)

You've got a Golden Tiiii-cket.

PHILLIP

Drew.

DREW

(Sings)

You've got a golden chance to light your way.

PHILLIP

Seriously, stop it.

DREW

Call him.

(Beat)

I gotta get going, but I mean it, call him.

(Beat)

Do you want me to pay you?

PHILLIP

For what?

DREW

For dinner.

Drew rummages through his wallet.

PHILLIP

You didn't eat anything.

DREW

Here.

Drew tries to give Phillip some money.

PHILLIP

No, it's fine. Just get going.

DREW

I want to--

You don't have to--
PHILLIP

Take the money.
DREW

I don't need it.
PHILLIP

Just take it.
DREW

I don't--
PHILLIP

I'll see you later!
DREW

Drew throws the money down on the table and rushes out the door.

I told you--
PHILLIP

Beat.

Phillip puts the money in his pocket.

Lars enters.

She carries a load of multi-colored T-shirts in her arms. Each T-shirt has a large sticker on it.

Lars walks over to the table where Phillip is sitting and drops her T-shirts onto his writing and food.

Excuse me.
PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Lars starts to organize the shirts.

Excuse me!
PHILLIP (CONT'D)

Hey! How are you?
LARS