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A Tale of Two Spectators

By

PETER MANOS

Dramatic Publishing Company

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

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(A TALE OF TWO SPECTATORS)

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A Tale of Two Spectators premiered on April 12, 2020, via
livestream by The B Street Theatre in Sacramento, Calif.

CAST:

MANJohn P. Lamb

WOMAN.....Amy Kelly

PRODUCTION:

Artistic DirectorBuck Busfield

Director Lyndsay Burch

Stage Manager Sean Patrick Nill

A Tale of Two Spectators

CHARACTERS

MAN: 20s to 70s.

WOMAN: 20s to 70s.

SETTING: A park.

A Tale of Two Spectators

(A park. WOMAN sits on a bench looking out at something intently. She is eating a bag of popcorn. Her expression is grim but fascinated. MAN enters, his collar up on his coat. He looks around furtively. He sees WOMAN, walks up behind her.)

MAN. Do you see them?

(WOMAN nearly jumps out of her skin, popcorn flying.)

WOMAN. Don't do that.

MAN. Are they there?

WOMAN. You're late.

MAN. I know I'm late. You don't have to tell me I'm late. I don't see them. Are they there? They're not on their usual bench.

(He sits next to her on the bench.)

WOMAN. Did you bring your binoculars?

MAN. Yes I brought my binoculars. Where the hell are they?
Tell me where they are.

WOMAN. Please don't use that tone.

MAN. They're not on that bench. They're not on that bench.
They're not over there. Where are they? Do you see them?
Why don't you answer my question? Where are you looking?

WOMAN. Give me your binoculars. I forgot mine.

MAN. I want to use them.

WOMAN. Let me use them first. Right now. And please don't talk to me so much. It's been a bad day.

MAN. Do you think it's been a good day for me? Do you think I don't have bad days too?

WOMAN. I try not to think about you at all. Now, may I please see your binoculars?

MAN. Where are you looking? On the ground over there? They're on the ground? Oh my God, they're on the ground!

(He whips out his binoculars and looks.)

WOMAN. Don't yell! For God's sake! Do you want them to see us?

MAN. It's a weekday! They can't be on the ground on a weekday! She's got to get back to work!

WOMAN. So does he. They probably took the day off. Did she tell you anything about taking the day off? He didn't tell me about taking the day off. Of course he wouldn't, would he.

MAN. She said not to call her at work today. She'd be too busy. *(Peering through the binoculars.)* My God. They've got a bottle of wine.

WOMAN. Where? Let me see!

(She yanks the binoculars out of his hands.)

MAN. Hey!

WOMAN. What kind of binoculars are these?

MAN. Opera glasses. Will you please give them back?

WOMAN. Opera glasses? What happened to your binoculars?

MAN. I stepped on them.

WOMAN. You STEPPED on them?! How do you step on binoculars? How does anybody step on binoculars?

MAN. I stomped on them, I mean.

WOMAN. On purpose?

MAN. They were a birthday present from her. I got mad.

WOMAN. Jesus. Why couldn't you stomp on something else? These are about as useless as my new contact lenses.

MAN. Then give them back. Please.

WOMAN (*squinting through the binoculars*). Blue Nun? He hates Blue Nun. She must have bought it.

MAN. She doesn't drink.

WOMAN. Come on. She drank last time.

MAN. I know she drank last time, but she always told me she didn't drink.

WOMAN (*handing binoculars back to him*). Useless. These are completely useless. Couldn't you stomp on something else? Surely there are a lot of other things she's given you that would have done better for your stomping.

MAN. I stomped on lots of things. I didn't just relegate myself to the binoculars. I stomped on lots of things. So get off my back, please.

WOMAN. I can't believe they're drinking Blue Nun. He's always going on about the "great" wines. How you have to have a "great" Chablis for lunch and a "great" Bordeaux for dinner. And now he's drinking a wine you open with a bottle opener.

MAN. You do not. It's an OK wine. It's Liebfraumilch [LEEB-frow-milk]. It's German. The bouquet is fruity but—

WOMAN. Oh, shut up.

MAN (*looks at her bag of popcorn*). What's that? Popcorn? You were watching them and eating popcorn?!

WOMAN. I was hungry.

MAN. What are they to you? A matinee? Popcorn! Jesus! (*He*

peers through the binoculars.) They've got the blanket from the couch in the den. That's the blanket from my couch. They're getting it all dirty. She's going to have to dry clean that. Does she think I'm not gonna notice that the blanket from the couch in the den is gone?

WOMAN. Maybe she doesn't care. God knows *he* doesn't care what I notice.

MAN. What have you noticed?

WOMAN. What do you mean what have I noticed? I'm here, aren't I?

MAN. Please don't snap at me.

WOMAN. Let me see those binoculars.

MAN (*giving them to her*). I really like that blanket. She's ruining one of my favorite blankets. Do you think ... do you think they *want* us to know about this? Do you think they're just giving us clues so that we find out about this? Maybe they just want us to be jealous. Maybe they're doing this to make us closer to them.

WOMAN. You want closer? Look at 'em now.

(She hands him the binoculars.)

MAN (*peering through the binoculars*). Hm.

WOMAN. That's turning into quite a picnic.

MAN. Hm.

(He takes out a stick of gum and starts chewing it. Then he does so with another. Then another, until the entire pack of gum is in his mouth.)

WOMAN. You're not gonna start with the gum again, are you?

MAN (*chomping violently. Incoherent*). Relaxes me.