

# Excerpt terms and conditions

This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

---

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

---

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest you read the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.



**Dramatic  
Publishing**

# Alone, Together

Edited by

WILLIAM DAVIES KING

Foreword by

RISA BRAININ

Written by

LINDA ALPER, KATIE BENDER, JAMI BRANDLI,  
DAN CASTELLANETA, DEB LACUSTA,  
LEO CABRANES-GRANT, MIA CHUNG, YUSSEF EL GUINDI,  
ANNE GARCÍA-ROMERO, IDRIS GOODWIN,  
ENID GRAHAM, ARLENE HUTTON, LILA ROSE KAPLAN,  
WILLIAM DAVIES KING, JENNY MERCEIN, BRIAN OTAÑO,  
LYNN ROSEN, CHERI STEINKELLNER, JAMES STILL,  
ALISON TATLOCK, ANNIE TORSIGLIERI, JOHN WALCH,  
CHERYL L. WEST and SHERI WILNER.

**Dramatic Publishing Company**

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

\*\*\* NOTICE \*\*\*

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website: [www.dramaticpublishing.com](http://www.dramaticpublishing.com), or we may be contacted by mail at: THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

©MMXX by  
DRAMATIC PUBLISHING

Printed in the United States of America  
*All Rights Reserved*  
(ALONE, TOGETHER)

For inquiries concerning all other rights, use the  
contact information listed on the title page of each play.

ISBN: 978-1-61959-253-7

## IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play *must* give credit to the author of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent (50%) the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with  
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., of Woodstock, Illinois.”

In addition, all producers of any play in this anthology must include the following acknowledgment on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and on all advertising and promotional materials:

“Commissioned and originally presented in June 2020 as part of the  
University of California, Santa Barbara, Department of Theater and Dance LAUNCH PAD Zoom  
Festival *Alone, Together*; Risa Brainin, Artistic Director.”

Thank you to all the playwrights; directors; actors; designers; dramaturgs; artistic, production and administrative folks; donors; and audiences who have contributed to making LAUNCH PAD a vibrant home for new plays.

# Alone, Together

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword.....	7
By Risa Brainin	
<b>The Plays (by author):</b>	
Linda Alper	
Pick Me Up .....	11
Katie Bender	
King Zoom.....	19
The Most Human Human.....	31
Jami Brandli	
Pandemic Therapy.....	37
Zoom Audition .....	47
Leo Cabranes-Grant	
Zoom Baby.....	53
Dan Castellaneta and Deb Lacusta	
Dynamite Sales .....	61
Rosebud.....	71
Mia Chung	
Quietus .....	77
Which Actually Isn't So New .....	81
Yussef El Guindi	
Cha-Cha .....	89
Anne García-Romero	
Late Night Prayer.....	99
Idris Goodwin	
The Art of Coping .....	105
Talk Tomorrow.....	111
Enid Graham	
Do Not Go, My Love.....	119
Arlene Hutton	
All the Cranes in the World.....	127
Neither Here Nor There .....	133

Lila Rose Kaplan	
A Pandemic Romance Monologue.....	141
William Davies King	
Les Mots Justes, or Hold Your Tongue .....	145
Jenny Mercein	
Auld Lang Syne .....	153
Brian Otaño	
I'm Not Coming Home .....	161
South Lake Tahoe, California .....	167
Lynn Rosen	
But Here I Am.....	177
That Flower, That Flower.....	185
The Shakespeare Section .....	189
Cheri Steinkellner	
The Great Greats .....	193
James Still	
Abundance (a requiem on Zoom) .....	203
Mom's Kids (a reunion on the Zoom).....	211
Waiting for Now (a duet on security cameras).....	219
Whitman v. the United States: Case 36 (on Zoom).....	227
Alison Tatlock	
Flight.....	235
Here Comes the Sun.....	241
Annie Torsiglieri	
First Date.....	249
The Safest Space .....	255
John Walch	
2084.....	263
Cheryl L. West	
Corona Chicken (Part One).....	273
Corona Chicken (Part Two) .....	279
Safety Net.....	287
Sheri Wilner	
LOL OL.....	293
<i>Alone, Together</i> Festival Chapters .....	304
<i>Alone, Together</i> Company.....	306
Author Biographies.....	608

## Foreword

On March 10, 2020, one week before the end of winter quarter, everyone in the University of California, Santa Barbara community received an email from Chancellor Henry Yang instructing us to move to online teaching as soon as possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The theatre/dance faculty immediately came together to figure out what to do to best serve the needs of our students. Final projects and upcoming productions had to be canceled, and students were heading home for the foreseeable future to take classes on Zoom from their childhood bedrooms! We were all thrown into a bit of chaos: how could we create a remote curriculum for all of our aspiring young artists?

It was at that point that my dear friend, festival co-director and head of the B.F.A. acting program, Annie Torsiglieri, had the vision to say: “Let’s commission playwrights to write monologues and plays that are meant to be performed on Zoom.” Well, I went a little crazy and invited every writer who has ever worked with our new play development program, LAUNCH PAD, over the past 15 years to participate. That was around 30 writers, and 24 answered the call! We gave the writers this prompt: *Alone, Together*. A total of 39 plays were written, 23 directors engaged, 61 actors cast, 5 stage managers, 3 designers, 3 dramaturgs and 10 staff assembled virtually, and, together, we created an all-day, live Zoom festival in four chapters on Saturday, June 6, 2020.

What we couldn’t anticipate is that not only would we be rehearsing during a global health pandemic but also in the midst of a revolution. George Floyd was murdered on Monday, May 25, and it reignited the cry against racism in our country. Our company was composed of students, faculty, staff and professional guest artists from across the country. Many were protesting by day and rehearsing by night. Even today, as I write this, the protests continue. It was important to both Annie and me that all of the artists involved in *Alone, Together* knew (and still know) that UCSB Department of Theater and Dance and LAUNCH PAD stand with our Black communities across the country on this day and every day. BLACK LIVES MATTER. We are with you.

As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote in a famous letter from the Birmingham jail in 1963: “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.” We, as artists, are committed to speaking out against injustice.

Xochitl Clare, one of our actors, announced *Alone, Together* on her Facebook page by quoting performance and installation artist Ester Hernandez who said, “We must continue to use our creative skills to give strength to our political, cultural and spiritual struggle.”

Xochitl then continued with her own thoughts: “‘Is making theatre really important now?’ my heart asks. As a young Black artist, struggling to grapple with our world, channeling my energy towards my craft has provided me some solace. Support me as I move forward in virtual solidarity with fellow theatre artists across the nation to do a very simple, yet important thing—to *come together*.” And that’s exactly what we did on 6/6/20. With an audience of 800 people over the course of the day, we all came together.

As theatre-makers, we communicate through the art we create. The 39 plays in this collection reflect many perspectives on life during the early days of the quarantine. They brilliantly offer moments of joy, pathos, insight, hope and comfort knowing we are never really alone.

—Risa Brainin  
Artistic Director, LAUNCH PAD

# I'm Not Coming Home

By  
BRIAN OTAÑO

©MMXX by BRIAN OTAÑO  
Printed in the United States of America  
*All Rights Reserved*  
(I'M NOT COMING HOME)

For inquiries concerning all other rights, contact  
William Morris Endeavor Entertainment, LLC  
11 Madison Ave., 18th Floor, New York, NY • Phone: (212) 586-5100

*I'm Not Coming Home* was commissioned and originally presented in June 2020 as part of the University of California, Santa Barbara, Department of Theater and Dance LAUNCH PAD Zoom Festival *Alone, Together*; Risa Brainin, Artistic Director. It was directed by Shianne Dingeman.

CAST:

TERRY ..... Dillon Redd

### AUTHOR'S NOTE

When this nightmare began, I was living with a roommate who wasn't inclined to practice social distancing or any other precautions. Did he think he was immune? I couldn't tell you. When it became abundantly clear that he wasn't going to change, I moved. That's where I started, thinking of all the people who are saddled with cohabitants, partners or other extenuating-circumstance people who continually put them at risk. I started there. I took my first step into this piece with a song lyric:

“Member when I was so sick and you didn't believe me?”

That's a line from “Regret,” my favorite track on Fiona Apple's *The Idler Wheel*. The whole song could melt your fucking face off, but *that particular line* paints such a distinct picture of both a shitty partner and a shitty relationship dynamic. I love it so much, I stole it for this monologue—which ultimately wound up being about a young person learning the steep price that comes from handing over your agency. It's also an acknowledgment of all the people who have been forced to shelter in place while in necrotic relationships with dysfunctional, potentially abusive partners. And that's that on that.

—Brian Otaño

# I'm Not Coming Home

## CHARACTERS

TERRY: early 20s.

\*\*\*

*(TERRY can be played by a performer of any gender or ethnicity. The character is in a gay relationship with Stevie, whose gender should match TERRY's.*

*TERRY is in their early 20s, with many of their biggest mistakes and successes [all lessons] still ahead of them. They're from one of those small towns in Pennsylvania that's close to Atlantic City and Philadelphia, but far enough for its young citizens to be somewhat sheltered. TERRY has been living in New York City.*

*TERRY doesn't walk away from anything without feeling an immense sense of guilt, as if every move they make might be construed as a failure to meet an obligation. That's TERRY's big problem at the moment, and they are reckoning with the fact that their nature as a Type-B person is part of what got them into this mess in the first place.*

*TERRY is a COVID-19 patient who has been in a relationship with Stevie for a little over a year. Stevie is older, powerful, moneyed, charismatic. In a relationship, they don't really allow a partner to have much breathing room or much of a say. TERRY has been living in "The Stevie Show" for a little over a year. TERRY's been lost in this relationship pretty much the entire time it's been happening.*

*At lights up, TERRY is sitting in a hospital bed. They've had about four or five days on their own to take stock—and the situation is pretty dire. They're going to survive—in fact, they're being discharged in a day or so. However, the undeniable truth is that they can't stay in New York. Their job is vaporized and their landlord has let them out of their lease—a shitty move, but also a mercy, given how badly legislation in Albany has fallen short. TERRY has two choices—stay and get lost in "The Stevie Show" again or go back home to their family, hole up in the garage for a week until it's safe to be around people and quietly slip back to the life they had before college, while the world rages.*

*At lights up, TERRY has made a decision.)*

TERRY *(in darkness)*. Hi ... umm, is this ...

*(TERRY adjusts the camera until they're in full view. They're in bed, wearing latex gloves and a hospital gown. They take a moment to self-consciously primp. They give up, they look like shit, no amount of fussing is going to fix it. An unseen nurse stands at the foot of the bed for moral support.)*

That's as good as it's going to get, I suppose. Umm. Hi, Stevie. One of the nurses here let me borrow his iPad for a couple of minutes. I would have called, but the wire on my phone charger is frayed—it's broken, I think ... Not that I've needed my phone in here.

*(TERRY thinks. Before they can finish processing the thought, they cough into their elbow. They take a deep breath and exhale slowly. At the end of the exhale, another tiny sputtering cough.)*

They tell me I'm out of the woods, believe it or not. I'm one of the lucky ones. Every person who has been in the bed to my left and the bed to my right has died. Three people since I was admitted. The nurses told me that either my bed is lucky or I'm an Angel of Death. Both could be true, I guess it depends on your outlook. I ...

*(TERRY gets lost in the thought of all those dead people. They cringe and shake that thought away.)*

I've had some time to think. I've tried my best to ... keep my head screwed on straight, which is nearly impossible when you've got a fever. For a couple of days there, my head was just a steady stream of nonstop fever nightmares, but ...

*(TERRY looks to their left, at the patient in the bed next to them. They look at the nurse.)*

The person who died in the bed to my left was my age.

*(TERRY takes a deep breath, finding the courage to say the following—speaking their mind is like moving a boulder.)*

Stevie, I told you that I had a bad feeling about all this. I know your boss gives you grief if you're not out partying as hard as everyone else in the firm, but ... I *told* you that we should have taken the social distancing seriously. We didn't *need* to go to the Gold Rush for that happy hour, we didn't *need* to go to that dinner party ... I thought it over and I told myself, "Be fair, Terry, be reasonable. You're an adult. You could've stayed home. You didn't have to go along. You had a say." But ... that's not really the dynamic we're working with, is it? I don't really get much of a say in *anything*. Ever. You make all the money, so you make all the decisions, because you're pushier.