

Zoe and Nora and Everything in Between. – Michael Kras

Zoe and Nora and Everything in Between.

A Play by Michael Kras

Zoe and Nora and Everything in Between. – Michael Kras

CHARACTERS

Zoe

Nora

SETTING

The outside of Zoe's house in Hamilton. May 2020. People aren't seeing each other much.

SYNOPSIS

Zoe and Nora try to hold onto what they have while the world around them tries to hold on to itself.

HISTORY

Zoe and Nora and Everything in Between was written in April 2020 through commission from Convergence Theatre in Toronto, Ontario as part of The COVID Confessions; a multidisciplinary project fostering the creation of new works of theatre and art responding to the new reality of the COVID-19 crisis.

NOTES ON DIALOGUE

The dialogue, in general, moves at a pretty rapid, conversational clip. I'm leaving it up to the intuition and impulse of the performers to find organic moments of stillness. A forward slash (/) in the middle of a line of dialogue indicates when the line following it begins, creating an overlap.

May 2020. Sometime around like 11am in the morning. Hamilton. The outside of a two-storey house. Sun, green grass, white siding, quiet. NORA is standing on the grass, clutching a paper bag in one hand and a takeaway coffee cup in the other. She's in a jean jacket and her hair looks like it hasn't been cut for weeks (because it totally hasn't). ZOE is upstairs in her bedroom wearing pyjamas, looking like she just rolled out of bed (because she totally did). She's leaning out of her freshly cracked bedroom window and holding a small stone.

ZOE
Serio/usly?

NORA
Oh my god I'm so
Freaking
Sorry

ZOE
Babe what the / fuck

NORA
I'm sorry I'm sorry I
I guess I'm like stronger than / I

ZOE
My dad literally just like
Got these replaced like a month ago

NORA
I'll pay for it I'll pay / for it

ZOE
He's gonna like
Freak

NORA
He can freak on me
Tell him to like
Call me and freak on me and I'll just take it because I deserve it

ZOE
He obviously won't do that
He loves you.
You could like
Stab him in the peen and he'd still be like
'Oh Nora you're such a delight to have around the house.'

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NORA

I wanted to get your attention

ZOE

You could've texted

NORA

I thought it would be like

Cute or

ZOE

I don't even know if we can get like

A guy to come in for this right now

NORA

Sorry

I was trying to be

Like

Romantic

Sorry.

Please don't be like

Pissed.

I'm dumb.

ZOE

So dumb

NORA

So dumb

ZOE

Like the dumbest

Fucking

A moment. They both smile. They both laugh.

NORA

I fucking miss you

ZOE

Me too

NORA

You look hot

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ZOE

You're a dick

NORA

I'm being serious

ZOE

You woke me up just now
Plus you shouldn't even be here

NORA

But with good reason
I brought you something

ZOE

I haven't even like
Put my face on

NORA

Why do you still even do that?
None of us are going anywhere

ZOE

Yeah well I mean like
It's like
Something normal I can do.
Doing normal things is like
Keeping me sane

NORA

Dude I haven't even showered in like
17 days

ZOE

So like
The usual

NORA

Suck my dick

ZOE

What'd you bring me?

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NORA
Huh?
Oh uh

NORA holds up the paper bag, takes a sip from her coffee cup.

ZOE
Is that

NORA
Uh huh

ZOE
From Oko?

NORA
Uh huh

ZOE
Fuck off

NORA
Everything or sesame seed?

ZOE
Everything obviously
Does it have the / garlic cream cheese

NORA
Garlic cream cheese of course it does I'm not a monster

ZOE
You're gonna make me cry
Toss it up

NORA
You gonna be able to catch it?

ZOE
Uh
Yeah?

NORA
You suck at catching

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ZOE

Oh my god I'm like the best catcher that ever caught
I'm like the catcher in the rye

NORA

You're also high though

ZOE

Wow I literally just woke up

NORA

No I mean like / you're

ZOE

Oh you mean I'm

NORA/ZOE

High up

ZOE

Right right obviously yeah

NORA?

Ready?

ZOE (*rolling the 'r' in ready*)

Ready set go

ZOE sticks her arms out the window. NORA gets ready to heave the bagel skyward.

NORA

Alley-ooop

NORA tosses the bagel with all her dang might. She ends up lobbing it back over her shoulder and way off into the trees or bushes or whatever. They're never gonna see that bagel again. A raccoon is probably pouncing it already, in fact.

NORA

Uhhhhhhhhhhh

ZOE

You're kidding.

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NORA

I am aghast

ZOE

Tell me again / how I

NORA

Don't

ZOE

How I suck so much / at

NORA

Okay okay

ZOE

Meanwhile Ms. Star of the Basketball Team can't / even

NORA

Wow this is different shut up.

If I give you half of mine can we move past this?

ZOE

Deal

Even though sesame is the worst like

Bagel flavour

NORA

Uh excuse me sesame is a classic

It's simple.

I like simple.

ZOE

Well here

You get to redeem yourself champ

ZOE sticks her hands out the window

NORA

Wouldn't it be easier if I / just

ZOE

No way

You know you can't

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NORA

Come on this is dumb

ZOE

If my mom sees you at the front door she'll lose it

NORA

I can just put it down and walk away

ZOE

But then she'll see me come down and she'll be like

'Where are you going?'

And I'll be like

To the front door who cares

And she'll be like

'For what?'

And I'll be like

Nothing

And she'll be like

'For what Zoe?'

And I'll be like whatever it's a bagel from Nora whatever

And she'll have a meltdown because like

'Why is Nora out getting bagels?'

'The last thing Nora needs to do is be out getting bagels'

Then she'll make me put it in the garbage

Which is actually like really fitting for a sesame bagel

And then she'll spray everything with Lysol again

For the fifth time this morning probably

And I just like

Don't need that energy right now.

NORA

She needs to chill

ZOE

I mean like I get it

She has really bad asthma so.

NORA

She also runs marathons all the time

ZOE

Still.

Her friend's cousin's friend who also runs had to like

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Be admitted to the ICU and stuff
So she's like
Extra freaked out.

NORA
Shitty.

ZOE
Anyway just throw it up
I'm ready

NORA
Now I'm like
Self-conscious though

ZOE
Just like
Imagine this is championships and you're like
About to score the winning basket

NORA
That's actually worse

NORA starts to unwrap the bagel

ZOE
Wait wait wait
Before you

NORA
What?

ZOE
Can you

NORA
Oh my god they're clean
I washed before I left the house

ZOE
Yeah but you've been
Can you just like
Humour me then?

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NORA

You're such a

ZOE

Babe just

Please?

NORA sighs, pulls a bottle of hand sanitizer out of her pocket, pours a dollop dramatically onto her hand, and then rubs it into her hands with even more dramatic flair. Then she holds up her hands to ZOE.

NORA

Boom

There

See?

Happy?

No scary germs from this germ-infested like

Contagion

ZOE

Nora

I don't think you're a

It's just

We have to be like

Super careful

NORA

I just feel like some things are like

A little over the top

ZOE

Isn't it better to be over the top instead of like

Not doing enough?

NORA

I at least wish I didn't have like

Crypt Keeper hands from all the

ZOE

Oh my god mine are like

Bleeding constantly

ZOE holds up her own dry, cracked hands. They both kinda laugh a little.

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NORA

Take two

NORA rips the bagel in half

NORA

I'm even giving you the bigger half

ZOE

That's the hottest thing you've ever said

NORA

Ready?

ZOE

Yup

NORA

Hiiiiiiiiiii-YA

NORA puts all of herself into lobbing the half-bagel upwards. This time, it flies straight up and ZOE catches it. NORA runs around the yard enthusiastically, shouting a guttural cheer.

NORA

YESSSS!

YESSSSSSSS!

SLAM DUNK BITCHESSSS

HOO HOO HOO HOO!

ZOE

Nora shhhhhhh!

Nora you're being so loud oh my god

Nora seriously!

If my mom hears you

NORA

Sorry sorry I just

Got really excited wow

ZOE

Dude if my mom sees you're here she's gonna

NORA

That was highlight reel worthy

I'm like weirdly pumped right now

ZOE

I can tell

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NORA

I guess it's like
Not being on the court for like two months it's like
I'll take what I can get.

ZOE

You'll be back before you know it

NORA

Yeah I'm
I mean we'll see
I hope so
It sucks because
This was like
A really important season

ZOE

I / know

NORA

For like scholarships / and

ZOE

I know

NORA

And we were crushing it and
It just
It sucks.
Shit
Sorry

ZOE

That's okay

NORA

I feel like talking about shitty things is like
Super unproductive right now
And like this is supposed to be happy
Seeing you is supposed to be happy

ZOE

It is
I'm like

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So freaking stupidly happy to see you.
See your actual face in real life

NORA
I wanna kiss you.
Like really badly.

A moment.

NORA
How's that bagel?
Is it changing your life?

ZOE looks at the half-bagel in her hands.

ZOE
Oh uh
I guess I should

NORA
I mean the guy at Oko was like
Open-mouth sneezing and coughing all over them
But I was like "these are worth the risk"

ZOE lowers the bagel from her face

NORA
Zoe.
I'm obviously kidding.

ZOE
Yeah I uh
I know
That's just

NORA
Zoe it's fine just eat it

ZOE
Yeah no I will I will I just
I'm actually realizing I'm kinda not super hungry right now?

NORA
You're always hungry

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ZOE

Yeah I mean I dunno I'm
I might have it in a bit my stomach's just

NORA

Zoe oh my god it's seriously fine

ZOE

It's cool it's cool I'll eat it later.
But thank you
Seriously this was all really thoughtful

A moment.

NORA

No problem.

NORA takes a considerable sip from her coffee cup.

ZOE

Are you uh
Mad at me now?

NORA

Nope.

ZOE

You sure?

NORA

I mean I was trying to like
Surprise you and do a nice thing / and

ZOE

Nora

NORA

And like actually see you like
Not on FaceTime for the first time in forever
And have it be really nice and I feel like / this is

ZOE

Hey can we
I don't wanna fight

NORA

I
Neither do I just
Sorry.
My head's weird
I'm like
Not myself.

ZOE

None of us are ourselves right now.
It's like impossible.
Like even me it's like
I actually kinda miss school and it's freaking me out.

NORA

I miss being up there

ZOE

I do too

NORA

Like I don't wanna be down here right now.
I wanna be up there and
Wake up with you and and
Make fucking burnt waffles
And smoke a bowl in the backyard
And try to do cartwheels again and maybe finally get it and
Eat popcorn in the basement and
Sit and do nothing and say nothing and that's fine and
Like fuck it's like
Okay sorry I'm about to rant but like
This is the first good like actual good thing
That has happened to me in forever
That I'm actually like
Really stoked about and now it's like
Why can't I have this?
Why can't I have this?
And I know there's way way way more important stuff right now
And this is like a blip in comparison but
I actually hate all of this so so so much
And I feel like I'm not even allowed to be mad.

A moment.

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NORA

That all sounds really stupid.

ZOE

No it doesn't

I really really hate this too.

But we just have to / like

NORA

Do me a favour?

ZOE

What?

NORA

Come down here.

ZOE

What?

Nora

NORA

Just for a second

ZOE

I can't

NORA

Please

It's fine I'm fine you're fine

ZOE

It's still a risk

NORA

I'll risk it

Why won't you?

ZOE

Because I care about you idiot

And you shouldn't even like

Be down there at all let / alone

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NORA

It's been two months since we've
I wanna see you like
Actually see you

ZOE

I do too but

NORA

Then come here

ZOE

Nora
Stop.

NORA

Just come / on

ZOE

No.
Seriously

NORA

Oh my god why not?

ZOE

Because we're not more important than everyone else.

A longer moment.

ZOE

Sorry
But

NORA

Yeah.
I know.
I'm just.
I'm being.

Another moment.

NORA

We're more important than fuckboi Chad though

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ZOE

Oh of course I thought that was implied

NORA

Yo I bet he's like

Still outside the school and like

Banging and pulling on the doors like

"Uhhhhh hello?"

"is anyone there?"

ZOE

He's so dumb

NORA

So dumb

ZOE

We're so mean

NORA

So mean

They laugh. Another silence.

ZOE

Do you feel like we're running out of things to talk about?

NORA

I mean

Kinda

Yeah.

ZOE

But we can just

Not talk.

NORA

Did you write another poem yesterday?

ZOE

Oh uh

Kinda yeah

It's really bad though

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NORA

Doubtful

Will you read it to me?

ZOE

Really?

It's kinda sad

NORA

That's fine

Your poems are like

The best part of my day

Even the sad ones.

ZOE

I mean

Sure if you

Let me get my

ZOE disappears from the window, and returns pretty quickly holding a notebook

ZOE

It's really rough so like

Don't judge me

NORA

That's cool

ZOE

Okay um.

ZOE opens her notebook, takes a quick breath.

ZOE

And so we're in this like

Dotted line

Essentially

And when it's my turn

I look at the carts like demons

Spray

Wipe

My ribs hum

My intercostals tremble

I snatch at apples like a snake is trying to bite me

And I try to smile
And find eyes that want to find mine
And nod to be like
Hey
It's you and me and us
But everyone's eyes have fallen on the ground
And we're all sets of gaping sockets
With nervous hearts
And shuttered mouths with swallowed tongues
And breath that stops at the base of our necks
And carts that can't get full fast enough.

ZOE closes her notebook.

ZOE
Told you it was kinda sad

NORA
Yeah but
Also like
Really weirdly pretty.
Thanks.

A moment. They kinda just stand in silence.

ZOE
Um
Okay
Not to be horrible but like
My mom is probably gonna come and check on me soon / so

NORA
Oh yeah no totally
I should uh
Get back home anyway
And get caught up on
Stuff.
I'll uh
I'll text you?

ZOE
You better.
And uh
If you wanna come back and do this again

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You like
Totally should.

NORA
I totally will

ZOE
Just uh
No rocks next time please.

NORA
No promises.
Ha.
Anyway uh
See you later.

ZOE
See you
Later.

NORA turns and walks off the lawn. ZOE watches her go until she rounds the corner and disappears. Then, ZOE shuts her cracked window. When it closes, the crack on it grows just a tiny little bit bigger. Then...

End of play.

