

Parasites

a play in one act
by Margaret Kynaston

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Parasites by Margaret Kynaston

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First performed by Llanymynech Amateur Drama Society at
Theatr Hafren, Newtown, Powys
8th April 2006

Bernie	:	Margaret Kynaston
Polly	:	Suzannah Smith
Greta	:	Gwerfyl Davies
Dr Simpkin	:	Richard Brazier
DC Tim Poole	:	Peter Coxhead
DS Mick Shawcross	:	Jeremy Smith

Directed by Theresa Dillone

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Performance Fee Code: Ch

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CHARACTERS

Bernie 40s, calm and capable, has run the café for years
Polly 40s, Bernie's sister, a bit dizzy, helps with the café
Greta late 40s, regular customer, flashy and loud
Dr Simpkin bumbling, garrulous, hypochondriac GP
DC Tim Poole plain clothes policeman, "good cop"
Mick Shawcross plain clothes policeman, corrupt "bad cop"

Setting: A small, rather drab café
Time: The Present

THE SETTING IS A CAFÉ, NOTHING VERY GRAND JUST A FEW TABLES AND A COUNTER. THERE ARE TWO ENTRANCES/DOORS: ONE THAT LEADS TO THE CAFÉ KITCHEN AND THE PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION UPSTAIRS AND THE OTHER WHICH LEADS ON TO THE STREET AND IS THE CUSTOMER'S ENTRANCE TO THE CAFÉ. THERE ARE BUNS, PLATES, A PILE OF SERVIETTES, CUPS, SAUCERS ETC. ON THE COUNTER.

SCENE 1

BERNIE: Dead?

POLLY: Yes!

BERNIE: Are you sure?

POLLY: Well of course I'm sure! It's not the sort of thing you can make a mistake about is it? I went in to give her her 12 o'clock pill and there she was large as life... dead.

BERNIE: She couldn't just be in a deep sleep?

POLLY: You don't usually go blue and stop breathing in a deep sleep do you?

BERNIE: Did you make sure?

POLLY: Sort of...

BERNIE: What do you mean sort of?

POLLY: I sort of prodded her...

BERNIE: Did she feel cold?

POLLY: I don't know, I didn't touch her.

BERNIE: How can you prod her without touching her?

POLLY: I used her walking stick...

BERNIE: You poked her with a walking stick? Oh, brilliant! That's going to take some explaining isn't it? "Why is the deceased covered in little round depressions?" "Well I poked her with a walking stick to see if she was faking or not".

POLLY: I'm sorry! I just couldn't bear to touch her.

BERNIE: Right, I'll have to go and have a look. Have you got a mirror?

POLLY: (PUZZLED) Your hair's fine.

BERNIE: I mean to hold against her mouth and see if she's breathing.

POLLY: Oh, right. No I haven't but there's one on her dressing table.

BERNIE: Wait here. Don't do anything, don't touch anything, don't tell anyone.

(BERNIE GOES OUT. POLLY LOOKS LONGINGLY AT THE PHONE, LOOKS ALL ROUND, MARCHES TO THE PHONE AND PICKS IT UP. SHE STARTS DIALLING THEN GRETA COMES IN. GRETA IS FLASHILY DRESSED AND MADE UP)

GRETA: Cup of tea and a slice of Madeira, Poll please...

POLLY: What...? Now?

GRETA: If it's not too much trouble.

POLLY: Right... (SHE DOESN'T MOVE) Right...

GRETA: Everything all right our Poll?

POLLY: Yes, of course. Of course! Why wouldn't it be?

GRETA: No reason, you just looked a bit... harassed, I suppose

POLLY: No, not me. I'm fine. Fine.

GRETA: Good. Bernie all right is she?

POLLY: Yes. She's fine too. Fine. Absolutely fine.

GRETA: And what about the Wicked Witch of the West?

POLLY: Who?

GRETA: Lady Face Ache.

(POLLY LOOKS BLANK)

She Who Must Be Obeyed...

(GRETA POINTS AT THE CEILING)

POLLY: What?

GRETA: How is she?

POLLY: Why? Why do you want to know?

GRETA: I'm just asking. Just making conversation...

(ENTER BERNIE LOOKING SHOCKED)

POLLY: (VERY AGITATED) She's dead!

GRETA: What?

BERNIE: Dead to the world. Fast on it. Just taken her medicine in and she's fast asleep. Hello Greta. All right?

GRETA: Hiya Bernie. I'm grand thanks. Just come for a cup of tea and a bit of Madeira.

BERNIE: Oh right. Good. Polly seeing to you is she?

GRETA: Not so's you'd notice, no.

BERNIE: Alright Polly I'll get it.

(TAKES THE PHONE OUT OF POLLY'S HAND AND REPLACES IT, GOES BEHIND COUNTER AND STARTS POURING TEA ETC)

POLLY: (MOUTHING SOUNDLESSLY TO BERNIE) "Well?!"

(BERNIE DRAWS HER HAND ACROSS HER THROAT, ROLLS HER EYES AND STICKS HER TONGUE OUT, POLLY GROANS. GRETA LOOKS UP TO SEE BERNIE'S MIME)

BERNIE: Ooh, that's better, just doing some face stretching exercises. Here you are Greta

(PUTS TEA AND CAKE ON THE TABLE)

GRETA: Ta Bernie. Just need to spend a penny...

BERNIE: You know where it is, ha ha.

Margaret Kynaston

has been actively involved in amateur theatre for fifteen years. She wrote her first play, an all-female comedy set in a maternity ward, entitled: *All Labour in Vain* which was commended in the Geoffrey Whitworth Competition, in 1999. In 2000 her second play *Loony Tunes* was runner-up for the DAW Crawshay Cup awarded for the Best Original Script premiered in the National Festival of Community Theatre in Wales. *A Slight Inconvenience* won the Crawshay Cup in 2002 and is also published by the Drama Association of Wales. *Cold* won the Crawshay Cup in 2004. Margaret has been commissioned to write a full length play for Newtown ADS to commemorate their 75th Anniversary in 2009. *Parasites* won the Crawshay Cup in 2006.

Parasites

Set in a small café, it's nearly Christmas and the Café owner, Bernie's mother-in-law has just died. It seems fairly straightforward but why is the Coroners Office involved? Why is their regular customer Greta calling herself by another name and what has the sinister policeman Mick got on Bernie?

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