



ANIMAL

BY CLARE
LIZZIMORE



DRAMATISTS
PLAY SERVICE
INC.



ANIMAL
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ANIMAL was first produced at the Studio Theatre (David Muse, Artistic Director; Meredith Burkus, Managing Director), Washington, D.C., on September 30, 2015. It was directed by Gaye Taylor Upchurch, the scenic design was by Rachel Hauck, the costume design was by Kathleen Geldard, the lighting design was by Jesse Belsky, the sound design was by Daniel Kluger, the dramaturg was Adrien-Alice Hansel, and the stage manager was Allie Roy. The cast was as follows:

RACHEL Kate Eastwood Norris
STEPHEN Joel David Santner
TOM Cody Nickell
DAN Michael Kevin Darnall
LITTLE GIRL Anaïs Killian
OLDER WOMAN Rosemary Regan

The New York premiere of ANIMAL was produced by Atlantic Theater Company (Neil Pepe, Artistic Director; Jeffory Lawson, Managing Director) on May 24, 2017. It was directed by Gaye Taylor Upchurch, the scenic design was by Rachel Hauck, the costume design was by Sarah J. Holden, the lighting design was by Bradley King, the sound design was by Stowe Nelson, the original music was by Daniel Kluger, and the production stage manager was Mary Kathryn Flynt. The cast was as follows:

RACHEL Rebecca Hall
STEPHEN Greg Keller
TOM Morgan Spector
DAN David Pegram
LITTLE GIRL Fina Strazza
OLDER WOMAN Kristin Griffith

CHARACTERS

RACHEL.

STEPHEN. Rachel's psychiatrist.

TOM. Rachel's husband. Similar age to Rachel.

DAN. A stranger. Younger than the other men.

A LITTLE GIRL. Looks between seven and ten years old.

AN OLDER WOMAN. Between seventy and eighty.

NOTES ON THE TEXT

A beat lasts as long as it takes to read the word beat.

A pause is slightly longer than a beat.

A dash — represents an interruption.

A backslash / represents the interruption point for two people interrupting each other.

An ellipsis ... represents a deliberate stopping of one word or thought, to better phrase the next part of the sentence.

Words in parentheses () are words that are intended but the character never gets to say them.

Words in all caps and italics, e.g. *TAKE HER*, are words that are shouted.

Rachel's thoughts are mostly about the past, like memories. But they are sometimes day dreams. Importantly, they should be fleeting, transitory moments, glimpsed just before the next scene begins.

ONE

The lights snap up.

Rachel and Stephen are mid-session.

Two pens are in Stephen's pocket, a Parker and a plastic ballpoint.

RACHEL. I take that on. I take that on board. I do. But. I find that... It's worse, actually if you say that, it's worse.

STEPHEN. There are many other people who—

RACHEL. I'm not expected to meet them am I? / Don't do that.

STEPHEN. No.

RACHEL. I don't want to do that.

STEPHEN. You don't have to

RACHEL. That's like putting someone with claustrophobia in a lift and saying it's okay because there's this whole other group of people who feel exactly the same; and don't worry they'll *all* be here in a minute.

Beat.

So, you know what? Instead of meeting them—

STEPHEN. You don't have to meet / them

RACHEL. I'm going to go / 'cause I said—

STEPHEN. You

RACHEL. —to Tom I'd come

STEPHEN.

And that's good that you did

RACHEL.

And now I've come. And I think you've seen me.

Beat.

RACHEL. And maybe you're magic 'cause I feel better. So all I need is the paper.

STEPHEN. What paper?

RACHEL. The certificate / the thing.

STEPHEN. I can't—

RACHEL. I'll take that now please to give to Tom, and to

work, and we can just all go back normal. Yes you can. You can sign a thing, and you can tick a box.

Beat.

STEPHEN. I can.

RACHEL. Yeah right so—

STEPHEN. But I need to ask you some questions first.

RACHEL. You've done that.

STEPHEN. Not all of them.

Beat.

I need to know if, over the past two weeks, you've felt little pleasure or interest in doing things that you usually enjoy? On a scale of not at all, some days, many days, or every day Rachel, what would you say?

RACHEL. A questionnaire?

STEPHEN. It's not a questionnaire.

RACHEL. It sounds like a questionnaire.

STEPHEN. It's not as simple / as that

RACHEL. You think you can put a number on it?

STEPHEN. You can. We do. It helps.

RACHEL. What am I scoring so far?

STEPHEN. Six.

RACHEL. What's crazy?

STEPHEN. Twenty-seven.

RACHEL. How many questions?

STEPHEN. Nine in total.

RACHEL. What if I lie?

STEPHEN. Try not to.

RACHEL. Will you know?

STEPHEN. Whom will you help if you do?

Beat.

RACHEL. You know what's really surprising to me.

STEPHEN. What's surprising?
RACHEL. That there's a business here. In what you do.
 Beat.
STEPHEN. That's what you feel.
RACHEL. Yeah. That's what I feel.
 Beat.
 'Cause, everyone's on Xanax, on Prozac, aren't they, the drug companies must be loaded / and I'm not saying that 'cause I'm jealous.
STEPHEN. The drug companies—
RACHEL. I'm saying it 'cause it's not natural is it? All of us on this stuff, this stuff, this scaffolding?
STEPHEN. If you think of yourself like a house / and that house is damaged.
RACHEL. I don't.
STEPHEN. You can't start with the roof. You've got to lay the foundations. And that's what the medication is for.
RACHEL. *(Smiles.)* They gave you a pen.
STEPHEN. I'm—(a doctor)
RACHEL. I know how it works. The reps, they come in. They say "have a free pen." Then they say okay, "I'm here to talk to you about this drug, the latest drug, the drug it's all about." And what is it called? Turn your pen over. There it is. Branding. Bribing. You're all doing it.
STEPHEN. You feel upset that your symptoms, they're not unique.
RACHEL. Do you have a pen?
STEPHEN. I'm a doctor Rachel. I need to write prescriptions.
 Pause.
RACHEL. Will you write one for me?
 Beat.
 'Cause, I know I said what I said, but actually I

think I qualify. Actually I think I want the king. I think I want the one you wheel out from the vault marked “supremely fucking excellent.” ’Cause if basically everyone’s on it. Then why aren’t I?

STEPHEN. We need to do some assessments first. We need to talk about what it is you feel is happening to you.

Beat.

RACHEL. I haven’t been sleeping. I’ve been waking up in the middle of the night, not just waking up, but waking myself up. There’ve been weeks. Whole weeks.

STEPHEN. Are you having thoughts of hurting yourself, or harming anyone else around you?

RACHEL. That’s quite a question?

STEPHEN. It is.

RACHEL. That’s question two?

STEPHEN. No. That’s question nine.

RACHEL. What happened to two through eight?

Beat.

STEPHEN. I need your answer Rachel.

RACHEL. I don’t want to sit, or lie down, or think. I want to do, and buy, and eat, and shop, and gather.

STEPHEN. Is there any reason you feel / you have to?

RACHEL. To get ready for the fucking storm up ahead.

Beat.

I went out. I went to a shop and it sold everything.

STEPHEN. Which one? Tesco’s? ’Cause everyone goes a bit mad in there. *(A small laugh.)*

Beat.

RACHEL. Oh my God. Was that a joke?

STEPHEN. It was / a

RACHEL. My God, you’re trying to lighten the mood?

STEPHEN. No / I

RACHEL. When did you graduate?

ANIMAL

by Clare Lizzimore

3M, 2W, 1 child

Rachel has it all: marriage, house, career. So why does she suddenly have this creeping feeling? Did she leave something behind? Or is there something in the walls...? Her husband thinks she needs time; her psychiatrist suggests positive thinking. But then the visions start. Apparitions of doubts, past decisions, future mistakes. Is it time for Xanax? Prozac? Or perhaps she just needs to forget it all, follow her instinct, and kiss a stranger. A darkly comic play about the underside of domesticity, the complexity of the brain in chaos, and the thin line between sinking and survival.

"[ANIMAL] teas[es] out its fractured storyline with elements of menace and surrealism reminiscent of Harold Pinter..." —**The Hollywood Reporter**

"...Lizzimore's drama turns one woman's mental descent into a theatrical tour de force... [The playwright] shows herself to be a master of theatrical legerdemain... As its main character descends further and further into madness, Lizzimore puts us right in that vortex of her downward spiral. ...ANIMAL delivers the extraordinary." —**TheWrap.com**

"...[an] unrelenting pressure cooker of a play...[with] brilliantly funny dialogue by Lizzimore..." —**TheaterMania.com**

"Toying with the line between perception and reality, ANIMAL takes us on a viciously playful tour through one woman's mental crisis. ...[The play's] action is thrilling. ...It's also funny. ...Lizzimore has a sense for the ironies underlying mental health rehabilitation... The play seems to waltz through a minefield of overwrought material...which is a testament to the specificity and originality that Lizzimore brings to her writing... awe-inspiring..." —**Theasy.com**

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