

All Packed
A One Act Lockdown Comedy
By C.M. Miller

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CHARACTERS

HODGE: Early 20's. Exacting and cautious.

SIERRA: Early 20's. Spirited, attractive. Playful.

TIME & SETTING

Early March, 2020. A hiking trail overlooking a small, northwestern college town.

SCENE 1

An afternoon, late winter.

SCENE 2

An evening, late spring.

SCENE ONE

A lookout point at the top of a hiking trail. A bench sits upstage center.

(SIERRA strolls onstage, full of energy. She takes in the view.)

SIERRA

Made it!

(She sits center, relaxing.)

SIERRA (Calling O.S.)

I said made it!

(We hear a GROAN.)

SIERRA (Calling O.S.)

You O.K. Hodge?

(We hear a RUSTLING noise as HODGE trudges onstage, exhausted. He wears a full backpacker's rucksack, stuffed to the brim. Odds and ends dangle from it, clanging like janitor's keys: flashlight, utility tool, hand sanitizer, water bottle, you name it, *it's there...*)

HODGE (panting)

Oh wow...

(HODGE stumbles toward the bench.)

(Amused, SIERRA watches.)

(Slowly, carefully, HODGE takes his rucksack off and sets it on the bench. Top heavy, it falls over with a pathetic crash.)

SIERRA

You look like Burt in Mary Poppins. You know, when they first meet him. When he's wearing his whole...

HODGE

One man band?

SIERRA

Yup. You sound like him too. HONK... CRASH!

HODGE

Hey. fail to prepare--

HODGE (with SIERRA joining):

Prepare to fail.

SIERRA

Jinx!

(HODGE shakes his head. He unpacks a Nalgene, drinks.)

SIERRA

Agua?

(HODGE takes out a bottled water and tosses it to SIERRA. She drinks.)

HODGE continues unpacking a litany of items: snacks, a laminated trail map and marker, a bag of folded clothing, portable speakers and so on...)

(SIERRA watches, still amused).

SIERRA

Kitchen sink?

HODGE

Hah. Bottom pocket.

(HODGE tears into an energy bar.)

SIERRA

I'll take one.

(SIERRA holds her hand out, arm extended. HODGE sees it, but ignores it for now.)

HODGE (sotto)

Let's see...

SIERRA

Anytime now...

(HODGE studies the trail map.)

HODGE (sotto)

Three point two miles... temperature's... sixty-five with the breeze...slightly up from when we started.

(SIERRA snaps her fingers.)

SIERRA

Hodgekins...

HODGE

Warm but not bad...anything above sixty-eight slows your pace...

SIERRA (overlapping)

Hodgekins Wilfred Alan Jennings...the THIRD!

HODGE (overlapping)

Trail grade was...seven point five. Moderate to difficult.
Overall time was...

SIERRA

Yoo-hoo! I'm talking to you.

HODGE (sotto)

Two hours, seventeen... All things considered, we hit our target.

(SIERRA sulks, dropping her arm.)

HODGE (sotto)

Good hike; lovely spot. Not bad at all.

(Pause)

Yeah, this'll do.

SIERRA

Hey Fitbit man, c'mon and bar me.

HODGE

Bar you? ... Bar you from what?

SIERRA

You know what I mean.

HODGE

Sure do. Been reading minds since I was ten.

(SIERRA gets up and walks to the bench beside him. She punches HODGE on the shoulder and picks up an energy bar.)

(She turns, but HODGE catches her hand and tugs her back to him.)

SIERRA

What? I'm starving.

(SIERRA turns, but HODGE tugs her back again.)

SIERRA

Please?

(HODGE lets go. He takes the energy bar, unwraps it, and with a touch of flourish, presents it to SIERRA.)

SIERRA

Why *thaaaaaank* you.

(SIERRA takes a huge bite and starts chewing.)

HODGE

My pleasure.

(Still chewing, SIERRA leans over and kisses HODGE on the cheek.)

HODGE

That's... *okay*.

(HODGE leans away, but she advances, going for a quick kiss on the mouth. HODGE gives in.)

SIERRA (through a mouthful):

You're the best!

(SIERRA goes forward and sits. HODGE unpacks.)

HODGE

So you're glad that someone carried up the whole kitchen sink?

SIERRA

Yeah. I'm glad that same someone's carrying it back to the parking lot.

(As they talk, HODGE sneakily sets up two speakers, connected to his phone. He unzips his jacket, revealing a clean white dress shirt beneath.)

HODGE

Well so much for equality.

SIERRA

You pack it in, you pack it out. Hiker's code don't discriminate.

HODGE (casually)

Keep eating then and lighten the load.

SIERRA

What did you say?

(SIERRA pivots and HODGE covers the white shirt in his jacket.)

HODGE

Nothing my love. Hey how's the view over there?

SIERRA

Decent.

HODGE

Decent? What'd we climb three point two miles for?

(SIERRA shrugs.)

(HODGE wiggles into a pair of nice dress slacks, pulling them up over his hiking shorts.)

SIERRA

Hey where's the map?

(SIERRA turns her head and HODGE jumps aside, out of view.)

HODGE

The what?

SIERRA

Trail map. You know, the one you brought two copies of?

HODGE

I don't...

SIERRA

Yeah you do. C'mon, they're both laminated...

HODGE

Hold on, I'm... getting situated.

(HODGE takes out polished dress shoes and slips them on.)

SIERRA

What, are we making camp on Everest or something? Are we going to summit tomorrow if the weather's good?

HODGE

Possibly.

(Pause)

But not tomorrow. That'd be a really fast--

SIERRA

What are you...

(SIERRA turns her head and HODGE lunges to the floor.)

HODGE

I'm good! I just...tripped on a shoelace.

SIERRA

Do you need help?

HODGE

No, just... enjoy the view. Can you see the bell tower from here?

(SIERRA looks ahead. HODGE stands, dusts himself off and takes out a folded blazer coat, along with a small straightening iron from his backpack.)

SIERRA

Yeah. Campus is pretty clear.

HODGE

What else?

SIERRA

Looking down, I see parking lots, Fox Theater, Pioneer boulevard...

(HODGE holds up the iron, agonizing over what to do. He puts the iron away and pulls on the coat.)

SIERRA

Looking up, there's foothills, treeline, Three Sisters... the airport.

(Pause)

No planes though.

(Pause)

I don't think I've seen one since I landed last night. You see any planes today?

(Using a small mirror, HODGE puts on a necktie and adjusts his hair.)

HODGE

...Have I what now?

SIERRA

We should have heard four or five them going over us by now. They're like the soundtrack to this trail.

(Using a small mirror, HODGE puts on a necktie and adjusts his hair.)

HODGE

Airport's closed.

SIERRA

What? Since when.

HODGE

This morning.

SIERRA

Really? Why would they... Oh... wait: that stupid virus in the news?

HODGE

Think so. Someone tested positive at SeaTac. So all the flights, all the surrounding airports...

SIERRA

You're kidding me. That's drastic.

HODGE

Better to be safe, right? Plus I'm not exactly missing the sound of 747's shrieking overhead.

SIERRA

Every airport? You don't think that's overkill?

HODGE

I dunno... this thing's new, contagious... *Let's see here...*

SIERRA

C'mon: EVERY airport? For a single infection?

(HODGE takes a moment; *this is it*. He adjusts the speakers and a song starts playing. Something smooth and soulful: perhaps Al Green's 'Still in Love With You'.)

SIERRA

What's going on?

(HODGE approaches SIERRA gallantly, hand offered; he's been practicing this.)

HODGE

Care to dance?

(HODGE bows.)

SIERRA

You sure? I'm all... sweaty.

HODGE

I'd go from rags to riches.

(SIERRA smiles, thinks about it, then places her hand on HODGE's back. Awkward at first, they dance a little. HODGE twirls SIERRA smoothly.)

*END OF SAMPLE

For full script and permission, please contact C.M. Miller

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