

THIS SEAT'S TAKEN

a one act romantic play about OCD

by Lindsey Paulette

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This Seat's Taken

By. Lindsey Paulette

SCENE ONE: INT. COFFEE SHOP- MORNING

LEO sits at a table by the window. He taps his fingers to a very specific beat. He only flips to the next page of his book after he's taken a sip of his coffee.

MAYA enters and walks straight up to the counter to order.

MAYA

Mocha frappe...with...extra whip and...
let's do a double shot of espresso today
(beat) actually how's your green tea?

BARISTA

Same as anywhere else.

MAYA

Oh (beat) okay then I'll stick with the
original order...but (beat) no my
original order.

BARISTA

Name?

MAYA

Maya.

She pays for her drink, walks over to a table across from Leo, sits, and scrolls through her phone.

Leo looks up from his book and stops tapping his fingers. He cracks his knuckles and tries to return to his book.

He can't.

The tapping of his fingers gets faster as he continues to glance up at Maya.

LEO

Excuse me.

Maya looks up and points to herself.

MAYA

Me?

LEO

Yeah. Um... I'm sorry but would you mind maybe sitting somewhere else?

MAYA

Am I bothering you?

LEO

Yes...I mean no. It's not you specifically it's that seat..the whole table really.

MAYA

What's wrong with the table?

LEO

Nothing (*beat*) it's just in about ten minutes a group of college students are going to come in and they sit there... everyday.

MAYA

Oh, your friends?

LEO

No but they sit *there* everyday and I sit *here*. It's a routine...ya know?

MAYA

I see.

BARISTA

Mocha Frappe with extra whip and a double shot of espresso for Maya.

Maya puts her phone in her pocket and goes to pick up her coffee. She walks past the table she sat at previously and sits down at Leo's table.

LEO

What are you doing?

Maya sips her coffee and shrugs her shoulders. She looks out the window at the people walking by.

MAYA

Sitting. I can see why you like this seat so much. Great view.

LEO

Yeah...

He tries to read his book but can't help looking up at Maya.

LEO

I don't think this is going to work for me either. I'm sorry but it feels... wrong.

MAYA

Why? Are you meeting someone?

LEO

No?

MAYA

Then what's the problem? I promise I don't bite. I'm just looking for a seat.

LEO

Can you pick a different one?

MAYA

So I can't sit over there...or here? Where do you suggest I sit?

LEO

I don't know.

He looks around and points to the table behind him.

LEO

There's an open seat over there.

She smiles at him and shakes her head as she gets up and moves to the new seat.

Leo starts reading his book again and strums his fingers to the beat from before.

Maya tears up her napkin, balls them into little wads and tosses them at the back of Leo's head.

He tries to ignore it.

He can't.
He turns around to face her
She looks down at her phone.

LEO

What do you want from me?

Maya looks up and innocently points to herself.

MAYA

Me?

LEO

Don't be coy. Are you trying to drive me insane?

MAYA

Not at all.

LEO

Then why won't you leave me alone?

MAYA

You're interesting. You know that?

LEO

You find crippling phobias interesting?

MAYA

Nobody said *that's* what makes you interesting.

Leo lets out a disgusted sigh and resumes reading his book.
Maya begins exiting and looks back at him as she's halfway out the door.

MAYA

What do you say? Same time tomorrow?

He gives her a hard look.
She smiles then exits.
Leo resumes his routine from the beginning of the scene.

SCENE TWO: EXT. COFFEE SHOP- THE NEXT DAY- MORNING

The next day MAYA is walking outside the coffee shop. She notices LEO through the window and taps on it enthusiastically until he notices her.

SCENE THREE: INT. COFFEE SHOP- MORNING

LEO sighs as MAYA enters the shop. She smiles and waves at him as she walks to the counter. He glances up at her then looks back down at his book. Maya places her order then plops down in front of Leo.

MAYA

Whatcha reading today?

LEO

No.

MAYA

No? What do you mean no?

He begins to say something then thinks better of it and continues to read his book. She slightly pushes the book up towards him so she can read the title.

MAYA

Oh, that's a good one.

Leo looks up surprised.

LEO

You've read it?

MAYA

No, I saw the movie.

LEO

Oh.

He looks back down at his book.

MAYA

What? Does that mean? I'm not good enough
for you now?

LEO

It's just...nevermind.

MAYA

No, say it.

LEO

The book is so much better than the movie.

MAYA

I see...you're one of those.

LEO

One of what?

MAYA

One of those people who judges those of
us who'd rather watch the movie than read
the book. *(beat)* You're a snob.

LEO

I'm no snob.

MAYA

(mockingly)

I'm no snob. *(normally)* maybe snob is the
wrong word...you're very...judgy.

LEO

It's judgemental...and no I am not.

MAYA

There you go being all *judgy* again.

BARISTA

Order for Maya!

Maya goes to grab her drink then quickly comes back to the table
where Leo is still desperately trying to read his book.

LEO

Will you be here long?

MAYA

Until I finish my drink.

LEO

Sure you can't take it to go?

MAYA

I'm positive. *(beat)* where do you usually go after this?

LEO

Why? So you can annoy me there too? Stalking is illegal you know.

MAYA

I'm well aware. I'm just curious.

LEO

Well, if you must know...at 10:30 I go to the library down the street to return the book I read that day. Then I check out a new one for the next day.

MAYA

You read a whole book *cover to cover* before 11 O'clock *everyday*?

LEO

Yes?

MAYA

Huh...you got a couple screws loose don't you?

LEO

I hardly think enjoying a book makes me crazy. In fact, I think out of the two of us, the crazy one here is *you*.

MAYA

I guess it's all just a matter of opinion.

Maya takes a sip of her coffee and lets out a satisfied sigh.

MAYA

You wanna sip?

LEO

No.

MAYA

It's hazelnut.

LEO

I don't like hazelnut.

MAYA
Have you ever tried it?
LEO
No.
MAYA
Neither have I until today. It's pretty
good. Sure you don't wanna try it?
LEO
I'm sure.
MAYA
What are you drinking?
LEO
House brew.
MAYA
You get that everyday?
LEO
Yep.
MAYA
Oh *(beat)* interesting.

Maya smiles and slumps back into her seat slyly sipping her coffee.

Leo lays down his book and puts his elbows on the table.

LEO
What?
MAYA
Nothing, it's just very boring.
LEO
I happen to like boring.
MAYA
We all have our preferences...I can respect that.
LEO
Oh, well I'm so glad to have gotten your stamp of approval.

Maya fights her urge to laugh.

MAYA

You're odd.

LEO

Then leave me alone!

MAYA

I think we could be friends. Do you?

LEO

Not particularly no. In fact, I think that idea's horrendous.

MAYA

You use a lot of big words. Must be because of all those books.

LEO

Must be.

MAYA

Am I annoying you?

LEO

Where on earth did you get *that* impression.

MAYA

I'm not *trying* to annoy you.

LEO

No?

MAYA

No.

LEO

Then what is it you're *trying* to do?

MAYA

I told you, I find you interesting.

LEO

And I told you I find you annoying.

MAYA

Oh...Sorry.

Maya slumps into the booth and stares out the window. Leo reads his book but occasionally looks up at Maya. She sighs dramatically and sneaks peeks at Leo to see if he notices she's upset. He suddenly closes his book.

LEO

I'm sorry.

Maya looks away from the window and back at Leo.

MAYA

Sorry for what?

LEO

You aren't *that* annoying.

MAYA

No?

LEO

No.

MAYA

Well, I guess I forgive you then.

She looks down at her watch.

MAYA

I have to get going. Can I count on you being here again tomorrow? Or do you plan on having a change in routine?

LEO

(sarcastically)

You're very funny.

MAYA

I know.

Maya smiles at Leo as she exits.

SCENE FOUR: INT. COFFEE SHOP- TWO WEEKS LATER- MORNING

LEO walks in, places his book on the table, and walks up to the front counter to order. The BARISTA greets him with a smile.

BARISTA

What can I do for you, Leo?

LEO

I'll have my usual and...an Island Tea.

BARISTA

Are you sure? She already tried that one
a couple weeks ago.

LEO

Oh, well in that case let's try a Rosemary
latte.

BARISTA

I'll have that ready for you in a few.

LEO

Thanks.

Leo goes to his seat and begins flipping through the pages of
his book. He looks out the window and checks his watch every so
often then restlessly returns to the book.
Eventually MAYA walks in and Leo relaxes.

BARISTA

Order for Leo!

MAYA

I got it.

Maya puts her bag in the seat across from Leo and then walks to
the front counter to grab their drinks. She slides into the
booth as she eyeballs her drink and takes a whiff of it.

MAYA

What is it?

LEO

I dunno, try it.

Maya carefully sips her drink. She clicks her tongue and shrugs.

MAYA

It's pretty good.

LEO

Better than yesterday?