

WAITING

a short one act comedy for two actors

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<http://offthewallplays.com>

Waiting – a one act comedy

CHARACTERS:

Roddy: *A very ordinary looking, slightly nerdy guy of any age*

Sue: *A typical middle class suburban single woman aged late twenties to forties.*

Scene: A queue outside a toilet in a shopping mall. It is a unisex toilet so both men and women are in the same queue. The sound of the airdryers can be heard as well as the occasional sound of a toilet flushing. There should be two toilet doors centre upstage from which people periodically emerge and others take their place. The play can be done simply with just two people or with a few actors playing the other people who go to the toilet as well.

Roddy: *(Con conversationally to Sue who is behind him in the queue)* Don't you hate these new toilets?

Sue: I suppose so. *(She doesn't really want to chat and is just behind polite)*

Roddy: I liked the old ones.

Sue: Meh.

Roddy: They were fantastic. *(As if describing a meal)*

Sue: Uh huh.

Roddy: Don't you hate progress? I hate progress. Progress sucks.

Sue: What do you -?

Roddy: I mean, it was fine before.

Sue: Before?

Roddy: Before they built these bloody unisex toilets I mean.

Sue: Oh? Oh. *(Realises she has been sucked into the conversation)*

Roddy: Yes, they wanted to extend the parking, so something had to go. And the obvious choice would be the men's loos. Typical.

Sue: But I heard they expanded these ones to make up for that.

Roddy: Not the same, love.

Sue: Not the same? And don't call me 'love.'

Rodney: I mean you're not the same. (*points at her*) Men and ... "WOMEN."

Sue: Here we go.

Roddy: I mean, anatomically speaking.

Sue: Oh, my God.

Roddy: Well if you want me to be specific....

Sue: I do not!

Roddy: Oh. Okay. Well how about I sum it up for you?

Sue: Oh, please no.

Roddy: (*Ignoring her*) What I mean is, that in the old men's loos we had the choice of both urinals and cubicles. Now they took all the urinals away replaced them with cubicles.

Sue: You have to admit urinals are a bit gross.

Roddy: But functional.

Sue: Well, yes, but you can't have urinals in a unisex toilet.

Roddy: My point exactly. Now in the good old days, if a guy had the urge, he would just pull down his fly, whip it out and then, hey presto, he's done.

Sue: That sounds about typical, actually. (*grimly and ironically*)

Roddy: Typical?

Sue: You men have it so bloody easy. It's about time you went through what the rest of us have to.

Roddy: Excuse me, but it's not my fault you lot are hormonally supercharged.

Sue: What! That's got nothing to do with it. I'm talking about peeing.

Roddy: You're talking about peeing?

Sue: Peeing. And nothing else.

Roddy: Then what was that little comment earlier?

Sue: I have no idea what you mean. I was talking about having to go to the loo in a cubicle. And it's only fair that you have to do it as well now.

Roddy: Okay. Ignoring what you 'didn't say' earlier, I feel that there's something fundamentally wrong with what goes in in the woman's loos, love

Sue: Fundamentally wrong? With what? And don't call me love.

Roddy: With what goes on in there (indicates toilet doors), you know.

Sue: I do not know.

Roddy: You women take so bloody long in there that there's actually a shift in the space time continuum in the queue outside. See that old guy there? Bet he doesn't make it.

Sue: Make what?

Roddy: The front of the queue.

Sue: *(Ignores this comment)* Well, at least we don't pee on the floor.

Roddy: Well at least we don't take two hours to do the necessary.

Sue: We do not! And I like how you don't deny that you pee on the floor.

Roddy: Okay. I'll prove it to you. Please note the two stalls directly ahead of us. *(The door opens and a lady exits, and pushes her way past all the people in the queue with an irritated 'excuse me!' Another lady takes her place)*

Sue: Did you see that? She didn't wash her hands!

Roddy: You'd be surprised how many people don't. At least twenty percent of people either do not wash and at least thirty percent do not wash adequately. I am a student of human nature, you see. I am an observer.

Sue: Of people in toilets?

Roddy: People in toilets and er, generally.

Sue: I see. What kind of person counts people in public toilets anyway?

Rodney: An observer. I told you I was one.

Sue: You probably Googled those stats.

Rodney: I may have logged into Google, yes, but -

Sue: You googled them.

Rodney: Anyway... to get back to our little experiment.

Sue: It's not an experiment. It's you trying to prove to me that you're right.

Rodney: That's what an experiment is, love.

Sue: Don't call me love.

Rodney: You're losing focus here.

Sue: I'm not losing focus here!! You're insane. Or you have too much time on your hands, more likely. Counting people in the loo. Seriously!

Rodney: Shh (*she bridles*) Observe the two doors directly ahead of us. Now, you agree that the non hand washing woman came out of the right hand side door and she was replaced by the small woman in black who was wearing the pearl necklace, and the size six and a half shoes, and who was at the front of the queue. Right?

Sue: I didn't really see-

Roddy: Well, I saw. Okay. That woman entered the bathroom stall at exactly 10.32 am standard time.

Sue: I can't believe-

Roddy: Now in the adjacent cubicle is a couple.

Sue: A couple?

Roddy: So we'll have to wait for them to finish doing what they're doing (pause) and wait for that man (*indicates the guy in the front of the queue*) to take their place.

Sue: You can't mean they're...surely not. In a crowded shopping mall! I don't believe it.

Roddy: There are many things that people do in the loo that are not fundamentally plumbing related.

Sue: Well, that's one way to put it.

Roddy: See that very twitchy guy who is third in the queue? Wonder why he's so twitchy?

Sue: Desperation?

Roddy: Coke.

Sue: No!

Roddy: Notice how he continually blows his nose. And doesn't stand still. And he's a bit sweaty.

Sue: Maybe he's got the flu and he needs the loo.

Roddy: Either way, we can't use him for our stats.

Sue: We?

Rodney: WE are focussing on toileting habits here. Anyone who doesn't fit the profile should be excluded entirely.

Sue: I see.

Roddy: What time is it now?

Sue: *(checks her watch)* Ten thirty seven.

Roddy: You sure?

Sue: Of course I'm sure. *(checks her watch again)*

Roddy: Perhaps we should synchronize watches just to be certain.

Sue: I am not going to synchronize watches with you!

Roddy: Why not? *(confused)*

Sue: Because, because.....

Roddy: Well?

Sue: Because you just don't synchronise watches with someone you've just met in the queue to go to the loo!

Roddy: See, the woman in black has already been in the cubicle for five minutes.

Sue: So?

Roddy: Doesn't that strike you as unusually long?

Sue: No.

Roddy: And therein lies the heart of the issue. How long do you think the average man takes to go to the loo?

Sue: I have absolutely no idea, but I am confident that you'll fill me in. (the left door opens and a couple comes out. They hold hands and look at each other

with love filled eyes. They walk slowly past Roddy and Sue) Oh, my God.

Roddy: I am sure she felt the same. *(The man in the front of the queue enters the left cubicle)*

Sue: You're disgusting.

Roddy: No, I am an observer.

Sue: I think that's classified as the same thing in some countries. *(She checks her watch)*

Roddy: Anyway, to get back to what we were doing.

Sue: It's ten thirty nine. *(Roddy looks at her enquiringly)* I knew you'd ask.

Roddy: So the guy enters the cubicle at ten thirty nine exactly. And the woman in black is still busy in the loo. That makes seven minutes and counting for her and zero minutes for him.

Sue: Well, he's obviously winning because he started later.

Roddy: No. We'll treat each case individually. But he will win.

Sue: Okay, I'll bite. How long will he take?

Roddy: Depends on what exactly he's doing in there.

Sue: Yuck.

Roddy: Since the time taken to do a number one is not equal to the time taken to do a number two.

Sue: Too much information.

Roddy: But relevant.

Sue: Okay. So are your statistics worked out on a number one or two?

Roddy: An average of both, since I clearly am not going to ask them what they just did.

Sue: Really? I wouldn't have put that past you.

Roddy: I'm not that bad. I do have limits.

Sue: Surprising.

(The door opens of the lady's cubicle. The lady in black exits, clearing her throat slightly. She is replaced by a another woman)

Roddy: And that makes eight minutes.

Sue: Okay, eight minutes. But I bet that he takes just as long.

(The door of the man's side opens and he leaves promptly.)

Roddy: One minute and forty eight seconds. Ha!

Sue: Must have been a number one. *(defensively)*

(The door of the woman's cubicle opens again and the girl inside signals to another girl in the queue and the second girl enters. The door closes)

Roddy: Why do they do that?

Sue: What?

Roddy: Pee in pairs. And I hope to God it's peeing.

Sue: I don't know. Lots of girls do. Companionable, I suppose.

Roddy: Well, I can tell you that there isn't a single bloke in this room who EVER considers taking a mate in with him to watch him go.

(A man enters the guy's cubicle)

Sue: No, you guys like to do it all the time right in front of each other.

Rodney: That's for practical reasons, love. And the point is men don't look at each other when they do it. That's an unwritten rule. Whereas you lot purposefully go into the cubicle with each other and watch each other's most private er, stuff.

Sue: We do not go in and watch each other's privates stuff. And don't call me love. *(slightly irritated)*

Roddy: Then why do you go in?

Sue: Like I said before. For company.

Roddy: Well, I don't get it.

Sue: You lot never do.

Rodney: Aha. And she slips a general 'derogatory man comment' in there.

Sue: I don't know what you're talking about.

Roddy: You lot never do -

Sue: Okay, I've had it with you and this conversation. Please do not talk to me anymore.

Roddy: But we haven't finished yet.

Sue: I'm not talking to you

Roddy: Yes, you are. You did, just now.

Sue: No I didn't.

Roddy: Yes, you bloody did.

Sue: Not. Talking

Roddy: What do you call that?

Sue: Not talking.

Roddy: You call saying the words ' not talking' to me not talking to me.

Sue: Yes

Roddy: I'm confused.

Sue: Halellujah.