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CONCORD
THEATRICALS

G.O.D.
(Good. Orderly. Direction.)

by Lee Coffey

SAMUEL FRENCH

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G.O.D. (GOOD. ORDERLY. DIRECTION.) opened in Axis Ballymun on 4th October 2022 as a part of The Dublin Theatre Festival. Produced by Bitter Like A Lemon in association with Axis, Ballymun. Supported by Irish Theatre Institute, The Arts Council of Ireland, The Rutland Centre and Dublin Port Company. The cast were as follows:

KATE..... Lauren Larkin
STEPHEN.....Luke Griffin
DAVE ..... Loré Adewusi
REBECCA ..... Andrea Irvine
DAMIEN .....Simon O'Gorman
CHRISTINE..... Amilia Stewart Keating

CREATIVES:

Director	Eoghan Carrick
Writer	Lee Coffey
Lighting Designer	Eoin Winning
Set and Costume Designer	Ellen Kirk
Sound Design	Sinead Diskin
Stage Manager	Eoin Harrington
Fight Director	Ciaran O'Grady
Production Manager	Shane Morgan
Promotional Design	Sadhbh McLoughlin

Bitter Like a Lemon

Bitter Like a Lemon is a new writing company giving a platform to working-class voices of Dublin, consisting of Actor/Producer/Director Amilia Stewart, Producer/Stage Manager Evie McGuinness and Playwright Lee Coffey.

Their first production *Leper + Chip*, by Lee Coffey and directed Karl Shiels premiered in Theatre Upstairs in 2014 and toured Ireland and internationally. *A Boy called Nedd* by Emily Gilmor-Murphy, directed by Karl Shiels and *Peruvian Voodoo*, written and directed by Lee Coffey were produced alongside each other in 2015. In 2016 they produced Lee Coffey's third play *Slice, the Thief*, directed by Jeda De Bri. In 2017 they were the company in residence in Axis Ballymun, developing their next show *From All Sides*, which premiered in Dublin Fringe Festival 2017, co-produced with Axis Ballymun. During this residency they also produced a work in progress showing of *Nothin' But A Toerag* by Aisling O'Mara. *Murder of Crows* by Lee Coffey, directed by Karl Shiels premiered in Theatre Upstairs in 2016 and toured Ireland in 2018. In 2018, Bitter Like a Lemon were commissioned by Dublin Port Company to develop a play about the history of Dublin's dock workers as a part of their Port Perspectives initiative. In 2019, *In Our Veins* by Lee Coffey, premiered as a part of The Abbey Theatre's 2019 season. *G.O.D (Good. Orderly. Direction.)* which will premiere in as a part of Dublin Theatre Festival 2022.

CHARACTERS

KATE – late 20s
STEPHEN – early 50s
DAVE – early 20s
REBECCA – mid 50s
DAMIEN – mid 50s
CHRISTINE – mid 30s

SETTING

The Lakelands Centre, Dublin.

TIME

Over the course of a year.

AUTHOR'S NOTES

G.O.D. (Good. Orderly. Direction.) is a play about human beings and their stories. We know very little about recovery as a society but we know a lot about addiction. People think you're sober and then that's it. That's what I thought when I started the journey in writing this play. We've seen and spoken about addiction – active addiction – but what about active recovery? When somebody has come through rehab, they're sober but need the tools to live their lives normally. That's when recovery comes in and these people dedicate two years – minimum – of their lives to getting better. To coming to terms with what they've done, who they've hurt and who they once were.

This play tells those stories and doesn't hide behind the reality of what faces aftercare users on a daily basis. The struggles, the losses and the victories.

This play is for those that fight that fight. Those that show up, one day at a time and keep coming back.

THANK YOU

Carla Kelly, Miriam and Vincent Boyle, Mark Whelan, Ray Smith, Mark O'Brien, Niamh Ní Chonchubhair, Dublin Port Company, Denis Coffey, Catherine Coffey, The team at Irish Theatre Institute, Ger Kellett, Liam Carney, Stephen Jones, Una Kavanagh, Hilda Fay, John Cronin, Derek Magee, Conall Keating, The Rutland Centre and to all those that opened up and trusted me with their stories.

For those that keep coming back.

Scene One

(The play takes place over the course of a year. It is set in an aftercare recovery group in The Lakelands Centre, Dublin, Ireland. Scenes jump time, never place.)

(Lights up. 13th January. A small room in The Lakelands Centre, Dublin. **STEPHEN** *is setting up chairs. He stands in the room for a few moments, looks around. He takes a breath. Pause.)*

(Lights down.)

Scene Two

(Lights up. 13th January. From here on, all scenes drop into moments, not seeing what has gone before or after, just moments of a two hour long session. A meeting room in The Lakelands Centre, Dublin. Aftercare group members – **DAMIEN**, **DAVE**, **REBECCA**, **CHRISTINE**, **KATE** *and their facilitator,* **STEPHEN**.*)*

STEPHEN. Thanks, everyone. So Kate, first day so you just sit and listen. I'll check in with you later.

KATE. Okay.

STEPHEN. So everyone, em, not sure how to say this but I've a bit of housekeeping. Michael's relapsed and he's gone back out.

DAVE. What?

STEPHEN. We've lost contact with him.

(Pause.)

DAVE. No…

REBECCA. What a shame.

CHRISTINE. Poor Michael.

(The group process the news. **DAMIEN** *makes eye contact with* **STEPHEN**. *Pause.)*

STEPHEN. How are you feeling, Damien?

(Pause.)

DAMIEN. I'm okay.

STEPHEN. You're okay?

DAMIEN. It's never nice when someone goes back out but… I don't know, I guess… I wasn't as close to him.

STEPHEN. Do you not relate to Michael?

DAMIEN. Course, I do.

STEPHEN. More than most here, I'd say.

DAMIEN. Yeah. I've been him. I've relapsed. Given in to those voices after two years of aftercare.

STEPHEN. And you say you've been okay?

DAMIEN. I suppose I understand where he's at right now. Something obviously triggered him and he succumbed to it.

STEPHEN. Does that not remind you of your own relapse?

DAMIEN. Yeah, it does.

STEPHEN. And you're okay with that?

DAMIEN. I've started to think about why? Why we're like this. Why we're always looking for that escape.

STEPHEN. There isn't just one reason.

DAMIEN. I know that, we all have our reasons. But by trying to block it out before that might have been the reason I fell last time. So I'm trying to think about it more. And that's okay, because that's how I can move on. Michael's relapse will add to that, it shows how precarious this all is. Which is good/

(Pause.)

DAVE. I don't think it's good that Michael went back out.

DAMIEN. That's not what I was saying.

DAVE. Sounds like you were.

DAMIEN. I was saying it was good because it brings to light my own struggles. Which is good, no?

STEPHEN. It is, Damien.

DAVE. It's not good. Michael is gone. He was one of the strongest in this group.

CHRISTINE. Clearly wasn't.

DAVE. Excuse me? He was stronger than you anyway.

CHRISTINE. Still here, am I not?

STEPHEN. Come on, let's not.

(Pause.)

Go on, Dave.

DAVE. I'm not okay with this. This… this is bad.

STEPHEN. It's okay, let's think of the positive. You had a really great breakthrough last week.

DAVE. I did and now this comes along. When does it stop, you know? I was close to Michael, he was my friend. Rebecca was too and/

REBECCA. It's okay, Dave. He'd want us to let it all out.

DAVE. How are you with all this, Rebecca?

REBECCA. Not good.

STEPHEN. Everything's okay, you're both here and we can work through this.

DAMIEN. That's true, youngfella.

(Pause.)

DAVE. I'm worried. This week wasn't a good week and now, now this!

STEPHEN. It was a bad week, Dave. They're going to happen but you're here and you didn't break.

(Pause.)

CHRISTINE. Did you not?

(Pause.)

DAVE. Eh… Tuesday night. Sarah was asleep and I went for a walk.

(Pause.)

Around the block and at the end of the road, there's this shop. Off-licence. The light flashing on and off. It was like it was calling me, you know?

CHRISTINE. Know too well.

DAVE. I stood there. Must have been an hour, maybe two. Knowing full well, if I went in there, one sup and I'd be gone. Back to where I was.

(Slight pause.)

STEPHEN. What did you do, Dave?

DAVE. The flash of the light. Like it was just banging and banging, piercing the side of my skull.

STEPHEN. What did you do, Dave?

DAVE. I ran. Home, and when I say I ran. I fucking ran, bolted it, like my lungs were going to burst. Till I made it home. Slammed the door, fell to the floor… and I bawled my eyes out.

(Pause. A silence falls on the group. Every one of them has been in **DAVE***'s position.)*

Sarah came running down the stairs. I told her what happened and she… just held me.

(Pause.)

STEPHEN. How did that make you feel, Dave?

DAVE. Hopeless. Is this what our lives are to be?

(Lights down.)

Scene Three

(Lights up. 27th January. The Lakelands Centre, Dublin. The same set up as before, maybe people are in different seats.)

REBECCA. It was an interesting week.

STEPHEN. How so?

REBECCA. I was thinking of Damien.

DAMIEN. Thinking of me will only get you in trouble, Missus.

(He ends with a smile.)

REBECCA. *(Playfully.)* Don't flatter yourself. I was thinking of Dave too.

DAVE. I'm very happy with Sarah but appreciate the gesture.

REBECCA. It's always sex with men, isn't it?

CHRISTINE. With Damien it is anyway.

*(***DAMIEN** *laughs.)*

STEPHEN. Now, now.

CHRISTINE. I was only messing, Damien.

DAMIEN. I know, love.

STEPHEN. Go on, Rebecca.

REBECCA. Well, I was thinking of them both. Dave's comment a few weeks ago, how he ran. Ran from the off-licence, home to Sarah. And I was thinking of Damien's relapse. The difference between them. We all have something to run from, otherwise we wouldn't be here. But maybe, we all don't have something to run to. Something good to run to. A friend, a family member… a Sarah. *(Pause.)* Am I making sense?

DAMIEN. So you're saying I don't have anything in my life?

REBECCA. I didn't mean it like that.

CHRISTINE. Sounded like it.

REBECCA. What I'm saying is we are all running. We all need to find something safe to run to. To help. When the darkest thoughts come for us.

DAVE. If I didn't have Sarah, I know where I would have run to.

REBECCA. Exactly. Damien, you haven't got that Sarah and neither have I.

DAMIEN. I can't be with anyone right now.

REBECCA. I don't mean that we all need somebody. We all need a Sarah, which can be anything, I suppose, that helps us with those dark thoughts. Am I going mad?

STEPHEN. You're not.

DAVE. You're making sense, Rebecca.

KATE. Yeah.

CHRISTINE. She speaks/

STEPHEN. Christine, please.

REBECCA. Well, as a child, I used to swim a lot. My father would bring us. I remember feeling free in the water, that I hadn't a care in the world. So this week, I went down to the forty foot and I jumped in.

DAMIEN. You mad bitch.

CHRISTINE. It's Baltic.

REBECCA. Thought I was going to have a heart attack.

STEPHEN. Did it help you?

REBECCA. It did. It felt the exact same as it did, all those years ago. I felt free, light, completely weightless.

DAMIEN. Not a hope.

REBECCA. It made me happy, made me smile.

(Pause.)

STEPHEN. Maybe that's your Sarah.

DAMIEN. Well, if you're right. I hope my Sarah is something above freezing.

(Pause.)

STEPHEN. Glad you're starting to explore and implement ways to help yourself, Rebecca.

REBECCA. It may not apply to everyone. It could be a load of bollocks or it could be a step in the right direction. Something good to run to. A Sarah.

DAVE. *(Smiling.)* Is that what it's being christened?

DAMIEN. I think it works.

(Pause.)

CHRISTINE. What if you've already lost your Sarah?

(Pause. Lights down.)

Scene Four

(Lights up. 10th February. The Lakelands Centre, Dublin. The same set up as before, maybe people are in different seats.)

DAMIEN. My week was grand enough, yeah. I was up in my sister's and the nephew has been getting into trouble in school. He's fourteen, of course he's getting into trouble. Who didn't?

DAVE. Have to say, I was a little bastard in school.

CHRISTINE. I didn't really have any interest.

DAMIEN. Not many of us do. Those that did, they're doctors now or whatever/

DAVE. And look at us.

DAMIEN. A bunch of basket cases.

CHRISTINE. Speak for yourself.

DAMIEN. I am speaking for you, love.

CHRISTINE. Whatever.

(Pause.)

DAMIEN. So he was expelled. I thought my sister was going to murder him.

DAVE. What he do?

DAMIEN. He threw a book at his teacher.

CHRISTINE. Jaysus.

DAMIEN. Yeah and he sent him to the principal's office.

DAVE. Standard.

DAMIEN. Now, this teacher wears a wig. A bad one. You know those ones? Look like there's a dead animal just lying there.

DAVE. They freak me out. Like, why?

DAMIEN. I know.

DAVE. Just go baldy gracefully, man.

DAMIEN. Well, as he was leaving. He grabbed the wig off his head, popped it on and jumped out the window.

CHRISTINE. Piss off, he didn't.

DAMIEN. He's a mad little bastard. Out the window, onto the shed and stuck it to the window of the class next door.

CHRISTINE. Imaginative.

DAMIEN. Funny.

DAVE. Cruel.

CHRISTINE. Yeah.

DAMIEN. But funny.

DAVE. Gas.

CHRISTINE. Very funny.

STEPHEN. Are we done?

(Pause. **DAMIEN** *notices that* **STEPHEN** *is just staring at him.)*

DAMIEN. Done with what?

STEPHEN. What are we doing here?

DAMIEN. Talking.

STEPHEN. What are you all doing here?

DAMIEN. We're just talking, Stephen. Like we always do.

STEPHEN. You're rambling.

DAVE. Just listening to Damien's story about his week/

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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