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THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME

A Play by Simon Stephens

Based on the Novel by
Mark Haddon

SAMUEL FRENCH

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concordtheatricals.co.uk
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THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME was first presented by the National Theatre, London at the Cottesloe Theatre on 2nd August 2012 and transferred to the Apollo Theatre, West End, London on 12th March 2013. The play opened in the USA at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre on 5th October 2014.

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CHARACTERS

CHRISTOPHER BOONE

SIOBHAN

ED

JUDY

MRS ALEXANDER / POSH WOMAN / VOICE SIX

MRS SHEARS / MRS GASCOYNE / VOICE ONE / WOMAN ON TRAIN / WOMAN ON HEATH / SHOPKEEPER

ROGER (MR SHEARS) / DUTY SERGEANT / VOICE TWO / MR WISE / MAN BEHIND COUNTER / DRUNK ONE

POLICEMAN 1 / MR THOMPSON / VOICE THREE / DRUNK TWO / MAN WITH SOCKS / LONDON POLICEMAN

NO. 40 / VOICE FIVE / LADY IN STREET / INFORMATION / PUNK GIRL

REVEREND PETERS / UNCLE TERRY / VOICE FOUR / STATION POLICEMAN / STATION GUARD

AUTHOR'S NOTES

All actors remain on stage unless prescribed otherwise.

There is also a dead dog. With a fork sticking out of it.

Scenes run into one another without interruption regardless of alterations in space or time or chronology.

PART ONE

1. Garden

(A dead dog lies in the middle of the stage. A large garden fork is sticking out of its side.)

*(***CHRISTOPHER BOONE***, fifteen years old, stands on one side of it. His forty-two-year-old neighbour* **MRS SHEARS** *stands on the other.)*

(They stand for a while without saying anything. The rest of the watch, waiting to see who is going to dare to speak first.)

MRS SHEARS. Holy fuck.

*(***CHRISTOPHER** *is frozen to the spot.)*

Oh no. Oh my fucking Christ.

(Christopher's teacher, twenty-seven-year-old **SIOBHAN** *opens Christopher's book. She reads from it.)*

SIOBHAN. It was seven minutes after midnight. The dog was lying on the grass in the middle of the lawn in front of Mrs Shears' house. Its eyes were closed. It looked as if it was running on its side, the way dogs run when they think they are chasing a cat in a dream. But the dog was not running or asleep. The dog was dead.

MRS SHEARS. What the fuck have you done to my dog?

SIOBHAN. There was a garden fork sticking out of the dog. The dog was called Wellington. It belonged to Mrs Shears who was our friend. She lived on the opposite side of the road, two houses to the left.

MRS SHEARS. Get away from my dog.

*(***CHRISTOPHER** *takes two steps away from the dog.)*

SIOBHAN. My name is Christopher John Francis Boone. I live at Thirty-six Randolph Street, Swindon, Wiltshire. I know all the countries of the world and the capital cities. And every prime number up to seven thousand five hundred and seven.

MRS SHEARS. Get away from my dog for Christ's sake.

*(***CHRISTOPHER** *puts his hands over his ears. He closes his eyes. He rolls forward. He presses his forehead onto the grass. He starts groaning.)*

SIOBHAN. After twelve and a half minutes a policeman arrived. He had a big orange leaf stuck to the bottom of his shoe which was poking out from one side. This is good Christopher. It's quite exciting. I like the details. They make it more realistic.

(A **POLICEMAN** *enters. He has a big orange leaf stuck to the bottom of his shoe, which is poking out to one side. He squats next to* **CHRISTOPHER**.*)*

He squatted down next to me. He said to me:

*(***CHRISTOPHER** *stops groaning.)*

POLICEMAN 1. Would you like to tell me what's going on here, young man?

*(***CHRISTOPHER** *lifts his head from the ground.)*

(There is some time.)

*(***CHRISTOPHER** *looks at the* **POLICEMAN**.*)*

(There is some time.)

SIOBHAN. I do not tell lies. Mother used to say that this was because I was a good person. But it is not because I am a good person. It is because I can't tell lies.

CHRISTOPHER. The dog is dead.

POLICEMAN 1. I'd got that far.

CHRISTOPHER. I think someone killed the dog.

POLICEMAN 1. How old are you?

CHRISTOPHER. I'm fifteen years and three months and two days.

POLICEMAN 1. And what precisely are you doing in the garden?

CHRISTOPHER. I'm talking to you.

POLICEMAN 1. Okay, why were you in the garden in the first place?

CHRISTOPHER. I was holding the dog.

POLICEMAN 1. Why were you holding the dog?

CHRISTOPHER. I like dogs.

POLICEMAN 1. Did you kill the dog?

CHRISTOPHER. I did not kill the dog.

POLICEMAN 1. You seem very upset about this.

I'm going to ask you once again.

*(***CHRISTOPHER** *starts groaning.)*

POLICEMAN 1. Terrific.

*(***CHRISTOPHER** *carries on groaning.)*

Young man I'm going to ask you to stop making that noise and to stand up please calmly and quietly.

*(***CHRISTOPHER** *carries on groaning.)*

Marvellous. Great. Just flipping –

(The **POLICEMAN** *tries to lift him up by his arm.)*

*(***CHRISTOPHER** *screams. He hits the* **POLICEMAN***.)*

(The **POLICEMAN** *stares at* **CHRISTOPHER***. For a while the two look at one another, neither entirely sure what to say or quite believing what has just happened.)*

I'm arresting you for assaulting a police officer.

I strongly advise you to get into the back of the police car because if you try any of that monkey business again you little shit I am going to seriously lose my rag. Is that understood?

2. School

SIOBHAN. I find people confusing. This is for two main reasons. The first main reason is that people do a lot of talking without using any words. Siobhan says that if you raise one eyebrow it can mean lots of different things. It can mean, "I want to do sex with you." I never said that.

CHRISTOPHER. Yes you did.

SIOBHAN. I didn't use those words Christopher.

CHRISTOPHER. You did on September twelfth last year. At first break.

SIOBHAN. And it can also mean, "I think that what you just said was very stupid."

3. Police Station

DUTY SERGEANT. Could you take your laces out of your shoes please Christopher?

(He does.)

Thank you. Could you empty your pocket onto the desk please?

CHRISTOPHER. Is that in case I have anything in them that I could use to kill myself or escape or attack a policeman with.

(The **DUTY SERGEANT** *looks at him for a beat.)*

DUTY SERGEANT. That's right.

CHRISTOPHER. I've got a Swiss Army Knife but I only use that for doing 'odd jobs' not for stabbing things or hurting people.

DUTY SERGEANT. Jolly good.

*(***CHRISTOPHER** *empties his pockets.)*

VOICE FOUR. A piece of string.

VOICE FIVE. A piece of a wooden puzzle.

VOICE SIX. Three pellets of rat food for Toby, my pet rat.

VOICE FOUR. One pound and forty-seven pence (made up of a one-pound coin, a twenty-pence coin, two ten-pence coins, a five-pence coin and a two-pence coin).

VOICE SIX. A red paperclip.

VOICE FOUR. A key for the front door.

VOICE FIVE. A Swiss Army knife with thirteen attachments including a wire stripper and a saw and a toothpick and tweezers.

DUTY SERGEANT. Could you take your watch off please Christopher?

CHRISTOPHER. No.

DUTY SERGEANT. I'm sorry Christopher?

CHRISTOPHER. I need my watch to know exactly what time it is.

DUTY SERGEANT. Do you have any family Christopher?

CHRISTOPHER. Yes I do.

DUTY SERGEANT. And who is your family.

CHRISTOPHER. Father and Mother but Mother is dead. And also Uncle Terry who is in Sunderland. He is my father's brother. And my grandparents too but three of them are dead and Grandma Burton lives in a home because she has senile dementia and thinks I'm someone on television.

DUTY SERGEANT. Right. Lovely. Do you know your father's phone number Christopher?

4. Police Station

*(**CHRISTOPHER** turns to **ED**. **ED** looks at him. He holds his hand out in front of him with his fingers stretched. **CHRISTOPHER** does the same. They touch fingers. Then let go.)*

CHRISTOPHER. I could see the Milky Way as they drove me towards the town centre.

ED. Could you?

CHRISTOPHER. Some people think the Milky Way is a long line of stars, but it isn't. Our galaxy is a huge disc of stars of millions of light years across.

ED. Is that right?

DUTY SERGEANT. Christopher. Mr Boone. Could you come this way please?

CHRISTOPHER. Are you going to interview me and record the interview?

DUTY SERGEANT. I don't think there will be any need for that. I've spoken to your father and he says you didn't mean to hit the policeman. Did you mean to hit the policeman.

CHRISTOPHER. Yes.

DUTY SERGEANT. But you didn't mean to hurt the policeman?

CHRISTOPHER. No. I didn't mean to hurt the policeman I just wanted him to stop touching me.

DUTY SERGEANT. You do know that it's wrong to hit a policeman don't you?

CHRISTOPHER. I do.

DUTY SERGEANT. Did you kill the dog Christopher?

CHRISTOPHER. I did not kill the dog.

DUTY SERGEANT. Do you know that it is wrong to lie to a policeman and that you can get into a very great deal of trouble if you do?

CHRISTOPHER. Yes.

DUTY SERGEANT. Do you know who killed the dog?

CHRISTOPHER. No.

DUTY SERGEANT. Are you telling the truth?

CHRISTOPHER. Yes. I always tell the truth.

DUTY SERGEANT. Right. I'm going to give you a Caution.

CHRISTOPHER. Is that going to be on a piece of paper like a certificate I can keep?

DUTY SERGEANT. No. A Caution means that we are going to keep a record of what you did, that you hit a policeman but that it was an accident and that you didn't mean to hurt the policeman.

CHRISTOPHER. But it wasn't an accident.

ED. Christopher, please.

DUTY SERGEANT. If you get into any more trouble we will take out this record and see that you have been given a Caution and we will take things much more seriously. Do you understand what I'm saying?

CHRISTOPHER. Yes.

5. School

SIOBHAN. The second main reason I find people confusing is that people often talk using metaphors. These are examples of metaphors.

VOICE THREE. I am going to seriously lose my rag.

VOICE FOUR. He was the apple of her eye.

VOICE THREE. They had a skeleton in the cupboard.

VOICE ONE. We had a real pig of a day.

VOICE TWO. The dog was stone dead.

SIOBHAN. The word metaphor means carrying something from one place to another and it is when you describe something by using a word for something that it isn't. This means that the word metaphor is a metaphor. Wow. That's clever.

CHRISTOPHER. It's true.

SIOBHAN. Yes. I think it should be called a lie because a pig is not like a day and people do not have skeletons in their cupboards. And when I try and make a picture of the phrase in my head it just confuses me because imagining an apple in someone's eye doesn't have anything to do with liking someone a lot and it makes you forget what the person was talking about.

6. Home

*(***CHRISTOPHER** *turns to* **ED.***)*

CHRISTOPHER. I'm sorry.

ED. It's OK.

CHRISTOPHER. I didn't kill Wellington.

ED. I know.

Christopher you have to stay out of trouble, OK?

CHRISTOPHER. I didn't know I was going to get into trouble. I like Wellington and I went to say hello to him, but I didn't know that someone had killed him.

ED. Just try and keep your nose out of other people's business.

CHRISTOPHER. I am going to find out who killed Wellington.

ED. Were you listening to what I was saying, Christopher?

CHRISTOPHER. Yes I was listening to what you were saying but when someone gets murdered you have to find out who did it so that they can be punished.

ED. It's a bloody dog Christopher, a bloody dog.

CHRISTOPHER. I think dogs are important too. I think some dogs are cleverer than some people. Steve, for example, who comes to school on Thursdays needs help eating his food and he probably couldn't even fetch a stick.

ED. Leave it.

CHRISTOPHER. I wonder if the police will find out who killed him and punish the person.

ED. I said leave it for God's sake.

CHRISTOPHER. Are you sad about Wellington?

ED. Yes Christopher you could say that. You could very well say that.

*(***SIOBHAN** *reads more from the book.)*

7. Home

SIOBHAN. Mother died two years ago.

I came home from school one day and no one answered the door, so I went and found the secret key that we keep under a flowerpot outside the kitchen window. I let myself into the house and wiped my feet on the mat. I put the key in the bowl on the table. I took my coat off and hung by the side of the fridge so it would be ready for school the next day and gave three pellets of rat food to Toby who is my pet rat. I made myself a raspberry milkshake and heated it up in the microwave. Then I went up to my bedroom and turned on my bedroom light and played six games of Tetris and got to level thirty-eight which is my fourth best ever score.

An hour later Father came home from work.

ED. Christopher have you seen your Mum?

CHRISTOPHER. No.

SIOBHAN. He went downstairs and started making some phone calls. I did not hear what he said. Then he came up to my room and said he had to go out for a while and he wasn't sure how long he would be. He said that if I needed anything I should call him on his mobile phone.

He was away for two and a half hours. When he came back I went downstairs.

ED. I'm afraid you won't be seeing your mother for a while.

CHRISTOPHER. Why not?

ED. Your mother has had to go into hospital.

CHRISTOPHER. Can we visit her?

ED. No.

CHRISTOPHER. Why can't we?

ED. She needs rest. She needs to be on her own.

CHRISTOPHER. Is it a psychiatric hospital?

ED. No. It's an ordinary hospital. She has a problem…a problem with her heart.

CHRISTOPHER. I'll make her a get-well card.

If I make her a get-well card will you take it in for her tomorrow?