Acting Edition

Dig

by Theresa Rebeck

SAMUEL FRENCH

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This work is published by Samuel French, an imprint of Concord Theatricals Corp.

DIG was originally produced by the Dorset Theatre Festival (Dina Janis, Artistic Director) in Dorset, Vermont, in July 2019. The performance was directed by Theresa Rebeck, with sets by Christopher and Justin Swader, lights by Mary Ellen Stebbins, costumes by Fabian Aguilar, and sound by Fitz Patton. The production stage manager was Avery Trunko. The cast was as follows:

ROGER.....Jeffrey Bean
LOU.....Triney Sandoval
MEGAN.....Andrea Syglowski
MOLLY.....Sarah Stephens
EVERETT.....Greg Keller
ADAM.....David Mason

DIG received its New York premiere at Primary Stages (Shane D. Hudson, Executive Director; Erin Daley, Interim Artistic Director; Casey Childs, Founder) at 59e59 Theatres in New York City, in September 2023, with the same cast.

DIG was originally commissioned by South Coast Repertory (David Ivers, Artistic Director; Paula Tomei, Managing Director).

CHARACTERS

ROGER – 54, the owner of the shop, a bit of a crank.

LOU – 60, Hispanic. He is broken, wounded, defensive. Roger's best friend and Megan's father.

MEGAN – 34, a ferocious wound, striving to survive.

MOLLY – 20s–30s, a lovely, talkative outsider.

EVERETT – late 20s–mid-30s, a persistent slacker.

ADAM – 35, impatient alpha male.

Casting Note

All parts aside from Lou can be cast as any race.

SETTING

A dying street in a decent-sized city.
Atlanta, or Albany, or Pittsburgh, someplace like that.

TIME

Present, or thereabouts.

ACT ONE

(A cluttered shop. There are a lot of plants but a little too much space. Quite green quite lonely. A skylight and a cash register. In the back, a door to another space.)

(The front door, which exits to the street, has the name of the store on it: Dig. Because we are looking at it from inside, it is backwards.)

(On the table, center, is a large nearly-dead elephant ear. It is in terrible shape. **ROGER***, fifty-four, the owner of the shop, considers it. He is shrewd, focused, but reactive, annoyed. He is a little like a cactus. Beside him,* **LOU***, sixty, less like a cactus and more like someone who's just flat-out reactive.* **ROGER** *turns the plant.* **MEGAN***, thirty-four, pissed, leans against the front window, looking out the door. She has visible tattoos.)*

ROGER. It's not good.

LOU. I'm aware.

ROGER. The soil is…

LOU. I watered it.

ROGER. You didn't.

LOU. Okay, there was a period where watering was not my central focus.

ROGER. "Focus."

LOU. Focus is the wrong word.

ROGER. Focus is no word, it doesn't apply at all, there is no indication that focus had anything to do with the care of this plant.

LOU. I didn't water it for a little while, I know that was damaging.

ROGER. Damaging?

(He shakes his head at the shockingly self-serving inaccuracy of this word. **MEGAN** *watches these guys go at each other.)*

LOU. I brought it to you for help. I understand this is not ideal. I did not neglect this plant.

ROGER. This plant that I gave you

LOU. Come on, I feel bad. I feel really bad. I did water it, mostly, and then I forgot and it was not looking great

ROGER. No when you don't water a plant they tend to feel it.

LOU. – but then I DID water it, I tried to help it. I was aware

ROGER. You doused it.

LOU. It needed water, so I fed it.

ROGER. With the plant food I gave you?

LOU. I did, yes.

(Pause. **ROGER** *looks at him.)*

Okay. I don't understand the concept of plant food.

ROGER. It's food for the plant.

LOU. Okay. I know that makes sense to you.

ROGER. So when so when

LOU. Okay

ROGER. So when you say "I fed this plant" what you mean

LOU. I watered it.

ROGER. You didn't water it!

LOU. I did water it.

ROGER. After you didn't. You didn't water it for let's say a month

LOU. It wasn't that

ROGER. Are you going to tell me

LOU. It was a while.

ROGER. So you didn't water the plant for a month, and then it was clearly, it made its presence known to you with the fact that it was – not dying, but failing. Failing miserably.

LOU. Okay

ROGER. At which point you poured water on it and drowned it. To help it along.

(There is a terrible moment. **LOU** *cannot answer this.* **ROGER** *turns away, utterly frustrated.)*

LOU. I apologize.

ROGER. *(Renewed frustration.)* You APOLOGIZE?

LOU. What do you want?

ROGER. I don't want, I don't – never mind. It's fine. I will save this plant.

LOU. You can save it?

ROGER. Just don't talk to me for a minute, okay?

(He takes the plant to a plant stand. He places it there and turns it. **LOU** *watches him, embarrassed.* **ROGER** *ignores him.)*

LOU. Where is that kid with the coffee?

ROGER. The lines over there are long sometimes.

LOU. I don't know why you hired that kid.

ROGER. I needed someone to help with the truck.

LOU. You're letting him drive that truck, that seems insane to me.

ROGER. You don't get a vote.

LOU. I'm your accountant.

ROGER. You're not my accountant. Not by any stretch of the imagination are you my accountant.

LOU. I help with the books.

ROGER. Occasionally, you help with the books.

LOU. More than occasionally. And I'm telling you, you can't afford that kid.

ROGER. Someone has to drive the truck.

LOU. He drives that truck stoned.

ROGER. You know that?

LOU. I know he's stoned all the time, and I know you let him drive the truck.

ROGER. That doesn't mean he's driving the truck stoned.

LOU. It doesn't mean he's not. I don't like that kid. Maybe I should check on him. I mean, you just handed him a lot of money and sent him out the door with it. You just handed that kid, what, forty dollars.

MEGAN. It was just twenty.

(There is a pause at that.)

I don't think he's going to run off with Roger's twenty dollars.

LOU. You don't know him, you don't know.

MEGAN. No, I don't. It just, seems like a lot of work. Stealing a twenty. It's not exactly worth the bother.

ROGER. *(Polite.)* So, how long are you here for, Megan?

MEGAN. How long am I here for?

ROGER. Yes. How long are you planning to visit?

MEGAN. He didn't tell you?

LOU. It's nobody's business.

MEGAN. It's everybody's business.

LOU. I don't see it that way.

MEGAN. It doesn't matter how you see it.

(To **ROGER**.*)* I'm not visiting, Roger. I so fucked up, I tried to kill myself? And I had nowhere to go and they couldn't let me out of the hospital unless someone said okay she can come here? So, I'm like, I don't know how long I'm here for, but it's not actually a visit. It would be great, if it were just a visit, but that's not likely.

(A pause. **ROGER** *doesn't quite know what to say.)*

LOU. It's sort of a visit.

MEGAN. Dad, I discourage you from talking about it that way. I know it's like hard and definitely too much information but you know they did tell me that I had to be very plain about my situation. So I did try to kill myself. Not that's what, I will say in my defense that I actually didn't think that's what I was doing. I did though, just keep taking pills and drinking vodka well past the point where a person should have stopped, if they didn't want to die. So I have to be able to talk about that. Even though it sucks. This is basically, sorry, Roger. But this is totally my mandate. I have to tell people things.

LOU. But not all the time.

MEGAN. Yes, all the time Dad. I have to tell everyone everything, all the time. I explained this to you.

LOU. It was an accident. She didn't really try to kill herself.

MEGAN. Is this the plant he killed?

(She looks at the plant.)

ROGER. Yes.

MEGAN. I have sympathy.

LOU. I didn't kill it. Because it's not dead.

MEGAN. They say the same thing about me.

LOU. You did that to yourself!

(A beat.)

MEGAN. I did. I surely did.

ROGER. I'm sorry you're having a hard time.

MEGAN. You and me both.

(She looks at the plant, reaches over to touch its broken leaves.)

ROGER. Don't. Don't – please.

(He takes it from her.)

LOU. I'm going to go see where that kid is with the coffee.

(He leaves. **MEGAN** *watches him.* **ROGER** *goes to the orchids, starts to turn them.)*

MEGAN. I embarrass him. Don't bother denying it. It wouldn't matter even if you did. The truth is the truth and if you try to get around it, it will come after you and take you down.

ROGER. Really?

MEGAN. I'm telling you, stay out of Alcoholics Anonymous. They're ruthless. This thing about the truth, it's fucking killing me. But this is the deal: You bottom out, there's always a trap door, anything can be a trap door. So you have to stick with the facts, otherwise they come back and turn into trap doors and the next thing you know. I think the theory is that if you make the truth your friend it can't just suddenly come at you and eat you alive.

ROGER. I've just never known the truth to do that.

MEGAN. Well, you're lucky then.

*(**ROGER** has opened a canister of plant food. **MEGAN** picks it up and looks at it. He takes it from her.)*

ROGER. Please.

MEGAN. Sorry.

ROGER. I just have things where I want them.

MEGAN. And they stay there?

ROGER. Yes.

(He goes back to feeding the plant.)

MEGAN. What is that stuff?

ROGER. It's nutrients, you know, for the soil, it keeps the plants thriving.

MEGAN. You have any for people?

ROGER. I think that's called "food." I don't know if you've heard of that.

MEGAN. I eat.

ROGER. You don't look like it.

MEGAN. Hey.

ROGER. You said I had to tell you the truth.

MEGAN. Well you're a fast learner.

(The door opens and **MOLLY** *sticks her head in.)*

MOLLY. Hello? Are you open?

ROGER. We're not actually. We open in ten minutes.

MOLLY. I'll be fast. I just need some tulip bulbs or daffodils, whatever you have, do you have bulbs? For planting now, but they come up in the spring. Do you have any of them?

ROGER. It's a little late in the season. And we're not quite set up yet, so.

MOLLY. You think you have something, though? I wouldn't want to wait out there on the sidewalk for ten minutes just to find out that you don't have what I need.

ROGER. If you come back in ten minutes

MEGAN. You're going to make her wait on the sidewalk for ten minutes just to find out if you have some bulbs around here? She's a customer, she wants to buy something.

MOLLY. Not if it's any trouble.

MEGAN. How can it be trouble? It's a store, it's a plant store. He can sell you some bulbs.

MOLLY. Thank you.

ROGER. Let me check.

(He does.)

MOLLY. This is lovely! Cozy.

MEGAN. Cozy's a good word.

MOLLY. But it is! There used to be so many little shops like this, all over. And now they're gone. I wouldn't

even know to come looking in here. It's such a funny name. Dig. You don't actually know what kind of store that might be.

MEGAN. *(Uninterested.)* Sure, it could be a store that teaches you about digging.

MOLLY. That's what I mean.

MEGAN. You could buy dirt here and then go sprinkle it around outside.

MOLLY. *(Confused.)* Oh.

MEGAN. Or maybe he could sell you a shovel.

MOLLY. I don't need a shovel.

MEGAN. You might. Someday.

MOLLY. Today I just want plants.

MEGAN. This is the place for that.

ROGER. *(Reentering.)* Well, I have the purple flag triumph, the yokohama single, that's a yellow tulip and the orca double, which is a nice orange.

MOLLY. Orange?

ROGER. Yeah people don't seem to respond to the whole idea of an orange tulip. I don't know why, they're pretty. I got that, Megan.

(For she is trying to write up the order for him.)

MEGAN. Okay.

MOLLY. Well could you order some? Some red ones or those striped ones, my husband likes those.

ROGER. I can't just order them by the dozen, I'd have to order a whole crate, and people actually don't come looking for bulbs this late in the season, so you would have to take the whole crate.

MOLLY. Oh well. Maybe I could get them online.

ROGER. You could do that.

MEGAN. *(Annoyed.)* Don't tell her to do that. She'll go off and do it and then you lost a sale.

ROGER. She should do whatever she likes.

MEGAN. *(Still annoyed.)* Wow. Put your heart into it. Get behind it. Sell those flowers.

MOLLY. But you think these are good?

ROGER. They're reliable. They'll come up. You get them in the ground this week, I don't think you'll have a problem.

MOLLY. I'm really not the gardener at my house. My husband is ready to kill me! He asked me to pick these up at least two weeks ago. Then he said he was going to pick them up. He of course forgot that part! Orange, yellow and purple. That might be pretty.

(She smiles at **MEGAN**.*)*

MEGAN. It sounds awesome.

MOLLY. Well, I guess I'll take this then.

*(***MEGAN** *takes the bulbs from her and takes them to the register.)*

ROGER. I will do this. Thank you.

(He starts to ring them up.)

MOLLY. Do you do a lot of gardening?

MEGAN. No.

MOLLY. So you're not here picking up bulbs then.

MEGAN. No.

MOLLY. That's a good thing! Because they're off season, so I'm told.

*(**MEGAN** attempts to smile at her, but only sort of.)*

You know, I'm sorry but you look so familiar. Have we met?

MEGAN. No.

MOLLY. Do you go to church over at Saint Cecilia's in Rockwell Township?

MEGAN. What? No.

ROGER. It's sixty-three forty-eight. You want to put it on a card?

(He holds out the receipt.)

MOLLY. Oh yes yes. It's not a debit card, my husband says those are just a waste of time.

ROGER. Either one is fine.

(She finds her card and hands it to **ROGER***, who rings it up.)*

MOLLY. *(To* **MEGAN***.)* Are you Catholic?

MEGAN. Excuse me?

ROGER. You need a bag?

MOLLY. You just look so familiar. For a while my husband and I were going to All Saints, but he didn't like the pastor over there, so we started going to St. Joseph's, but that was far, and now we drive over to St. Cecilia's so I thought if you're Catholic maybe I've seen you at any number of churches!

MEGAN. I don't go to church.

MOLLY. Wait! It was All Saints. I know it was. I remember I used to see you there with your mother and father and your brothers! You have two brothers, I remember. Your father is Hispanic. Or Latino! I never know what to call people anymore.

WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

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