

Diamond Dogs

a short play by

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Synopsis

The country is in ruin. Sick of corrupt politicians the population has revolted but it turned to anarchy and now everything is breaking down. Dog is a manipulative dealer with a plan to turn things round but his motives are unclear and he cannot do it without the respectable looking Candidate on his side. Meanwhile Sweet Thing is an awful reminder of what people have become.

David Bowie originally planned an album based around the George Orwell book 1984 but was unable to get permission. The Diamond Dogs LP was his own version of the Orwellian concept. This play is inspired by Bowie's imagery, the songs on the LP and the lyrics to the songs Candidate and Sweet Thing.

Characters

DOG: A grubby little man

SWEET THING: A filthy, sexually provocative junkie woman

CANDIDATE: A sharp suited, arrogant man

Diamond Dogs

A squalid pub. DOG is nursing a pint. On the next table sits SWEET THING who doesn't have a drink. She appears to be stoned.

SWEET THING: Hey, Dirty.

DOG: Not now.

SWEET THING: I'm thirsty.

DOG: Get a drink.

SWEET THING: I've no money. Dirty?

DOG: I gave you money.

SWEET THING: It's gone.

DOG: Well, that's your problem.

SWEET THING: Aw, come on, Dirty.

SWEET THING does something sexually provocative.

CANDIDATE enters and is disgusted. He sees DOG and approaches him.

CANDIDATE: Did we have to meet here?

DOG: It's safe.

CANDIDATE: Are you sure about that?

DOG: Just get yourself a pint and come to sit down. No one will take any notice.

CANDIDATE: A pint?

DOG: A pint. It's all there is.

CANDIDATE goes to the bar which could be off stage. SWEET THING continues to act in a sexually provocative way.

SWEET THING: Who's your friend?

DOG: Mind your own business.

SWEET THING: Hey, Dirty.

DOG: Leave us.

SWEET THING: You want me?

DOG: Did you hear me?

SWEET THING: Do you want it?

DOG: Leave us alone.

SWEET THING: Who's your friend?

DOG: Never mind.

SWEET THING: Don't you want me any more?

DOG: Not now.

SWEET THING: Aw, you want Sweet Thing?

CANDIDATE returns with a pint and sits with DOG.

CANDIDATE: You should have come to me.

DOG: I'd feel out of place in your country pile.

CANDIDATE: I don't have a country pile, not any more.

DOG: That's why you need me.

CANDIDATE: If you are as good as you say you are.

DOG: You know I am.

CANDIDATE: Do I?

DOG: I won't fail. The campaign has already in full flow. It is only your involvement with it that starts now.

CANDIDATE: Here?

DOG: This is the only place you will be seen in public. People will see you as one of them, living amongst squalor and filth. They will know they can trust you.

CANDIDATE: What about her?

DOG: She's out of it, don't worry about her. They will see that you

haven't allowed yourself to become like everyone else. You still have dignity and self respect despite living amongst all this shit. That is your unique selling point. But that means you must only be seen here. Never let anyone see how you really live your life.

CANDIDATE: It isn't so different.

DOG: It is. Believe me.

SWEET THING: You want it boys? Get it here.

DOG: Outside of here, everything is scripted, rehearsed and performed for the camera. There won't be a word out of place. You won't see or speak to anyone who isn't an actor performing to make you look good.

CANDIDATE: I want to film in Chelsea.

DOG: Not a chance.

CANDIDATE: It would be good to show what it has become. People are fucking in doorways.

DOG: You're not listening. Here is the only place you will be seen in public. Everything else will be on my set.

CANDIDATE: A film set?

DOG: It's an amazing set. It even smells like a street. I have the best actors and they will ask you all the right questions and you will give them all the right answers.

SWEET THING: Sweet thing.

DOG: The theme is no compromise. When you are elected you will invoke emergency powers to bring back the death penalty. Then watch them fall. Politicians, judges, senior police officers. The hangman can have them all. Each one celebrated, a milestone in putting this country back on the right track. No more big wheels. No more passive anarchy. I have "I smell the blood of Les Tricoteuses" spray painted on a wall. The intellectuals will love that.

CANDIDATE: Do I have any say in this?

DOG: You hired me because you want to win. We do things my way.

CANDIDATE: Don't forget who is paying you.

DOG: That's the deal. You are not the only candidate. If you don't like it I have plenty of others I can choose.

CANDIDATE: And you are not the only Dog.

DOG: I'm the only one who is any good. If you don't like it then leave now. Six months from now you will be fucking in doorways yourself.

*SWEET THING comes over and drapes herself around
CANDIDATE.*

SWEET THING: Hey, do you want to play? Let's take some drugs and go watch a band.

CANDIDATE: Get her off me.

DOG: That's enough now.

SWEET THING returns to her table.

CANDIDATE: Slut.

DOG: Watch your mouth.

CANDIDATE: You what?

DOG: I said watch your mouth. Who do you think you are?

CANDIDATE: What is she to you?

SWEET THING: Later.

DOG: This is why you can't be seen in public. You don't know how to behave.

SWEET THING: (*Disorientated*) When it's good it's really good.

CANDIDATE: Why does she matter?

DOG: You just concentrate on your image. You can leave everything else to me but if you can't project a good image we're fucked before we start.

CANDIDATE: What am I supposed to do when some whore junkie

drapes herself around me.

DOG: You treat her with respect.

CANDIDATE: Oh, really?

DOG: Yes.

SWEET THING: (*Disorientated*) When it's bad I go to pieces.

DOG: Just remember you need me more than I need you. I have spent my time with poisonous people spreading rumours and lies to get you into office and you are going to win, there is no doubt. I've already done enough to ensure that people will vote for you but, at the end of the day, you are just a figurehead.

CANDIDATE: And if I don't play ball?

DOG: There are plenty of others.

CANDIDATE: You just said that you have all ready done everything. I'm guaranteed a win.

DOG: You are. Everything is in place. You will win, We'll do a couple of little promotional films to get your face seen but everything else is done.

CANDIDATE: So, you do need me.

DOG: Oh no. I can put a stop to it at any time. Just a word from me and you'll be in the gutter and some other smart suited tosser will be in your place. You are replaceable.

CANDIDATE: Now, hold on.

DOG: You have a problem with that? There's the door.

CANDIDATE: Just what exactly are you planning?

DOG: I'm planning to get you elected. On my agenda.

CANDIDATE: Why not just put yourself forward if you are so sure of yourself?

DOG: You know the answer to that. No one is going to vote for me. People are sick of politicians as much as they are sick of anarchy. The

next leader will be someone who looks respectable and wears a nice suit. The stupid bastards have lost any common sense they had. They are like turkeys voting for Christmas. Left to their own devices they will elect someone who will grab what little is left for himself and leave the country to ruin. I've got to put a stop to that.

CANDIDATE: Quite the hero aren't you.

DOG: Don't pretend that you're not in it for what you can get for yourself. You don't want to turn this country round. You just want to grab what you can before it is too late. You don't give a shit about anyone else.

CANDIDATE: And what are you in it for?

DOG: I'm saving this country from arseholes like you.

CANDIDATE: What makes you any different to anyone else?

DOG: I don't get fooled so easily. I can see what's happening.

CANDIDATE: You make it sound like there is some conspiracy.

DOG: And you're saying there isn't?

CANDIDATE: How can there be? I've lost everything. Everyone has lost everything.

DOG: That's because your great plan failed.

CANDIDATE: You're crazy.

DOG: The anarchy was carefully orchestrated. The ring leaders were all moles. The problem is they fucked it up.

CANDIDATE: You really believe that?

DOG: The establishment could see what was happening. Anarchy was in the air. Something had to be done.

CANDIDATE: They should have brought the army in, the same as last time. I told them.

DOG: That just made them stronger. People saw the army gunning down demonstrators live on TV and that's when the storm started. That's when you lost it.

CANDIDATE: I wasn't any part of that.

DOG: You could see that force wasn't working. The only way was infiltration. Let the people revolt, but make sure the ring leaders are all on your side.

CANDIDATE: Have you heard yourself?

DOG: But it failed. You are all corrupt. Only in it for yourself. So your ring leaders let you down. They tried to grab what they could and everyone ended up with nothing.

CANDIDATE: You certainly have a novel view of it all. There were no moles! The ring leaders were your own. A dangerous collection of psychos leading a bunch of peasants.

DOG: If they had been our own it would have been different. It still will be. Once you are elected, I will be pulling the strings.

CANDIDATE: What do I do?

DOG: You do what I tell you to do. Don't worry, you will have an easy life. You will have everything you want.

CANDIDATE: It will never work.

DOG: It will work. People are tired of this. They want someone to lead them.

CANDIDATE: It's too late. There is no coming back from this. Everyone knows that. Everyone is just out to look after number one.

DOG: I'm not.

CANDIDATE: Don't try to shit a shitter.

DOG grabs CANDIDATE and pushes him against a wall.

DOG: Don't you dare compare me to the likes of you. We are worlds apart. You just can't handle the fact that there are still some decent people about. People who care about others. People who know that the only way out of this mess is to create a new kind of society built on sharing and trust.

CANDIDATE: You're deluded.

SWEET THING: Hey Dirty. What you doing?

CANDIDATE: You talk like some spaced out hippy.

DOG: Face it. Corruption is dead.

CANDIDATE: You're as corrupt as anyone. Rumours and lies, you said. You are no different to me.

DOG puts a hand round CANDIDATE's throat. SWEET THING has come over to them.

DOG: It's the only way. No one will listen. People don't know what's good for them any more. They need me but they are too fucking stupid to see it.

SWEET THING: Hey Dirty?

DOG: Fuck off, whore.

SWEET THING: Dirty?

DOG: Fuck off.

SWEET THING: Dirty?

DOG: Get away from me you fowl slut.

SWEET THING: What did you call me?

CANDIDATE: Let me go.

SWEET THING: Oh, Dirty. Dirty.

SWEET THING pushes a knife into DOG. He collapses.

SWEET THING: You shouldn't have said that, Dirty. You shouldn't have said that. Oh, Dirty.

SWEET THING returns to her table. It is as if she has already forgotten what she has just done. CANDIDATE stares at her. After a beat he straightens his clothes and goes over to SWEET THING. He produces a business card and gives it to her.

CANDIDATE: I'm representing the Diamond party in the forthcoming election. You will remember to vote for me won't you? I'm your only

hope.

CANDIDATE exits.

SWEET THING: Hope is a cheap thing.

END