



FROM THE HEART

By J.B. Miller

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A Short Play

by J.B. Miller

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(A married couple. BEN and ALICE, stand staring at each other. He's tense, angry, incredulous. She's calm. Pause.)

BEN

You're not serious.

ALICE

I am serious.

BEN

But it's insane. Why?

ALICE

It's just something I want to do. I've been thinking about it for a long time.

BEN

You're mentally ill.

ALICE

I'm not mentally ill. I'm not physically ill. I've been through a lot of tests. They make sure you're of sound mind and body.

BEN

I'd understand — perhaps — if it was for someone you knew. For a sick relative or something.

ALICE

No, I want it for anyone. That's the point. It shouldn't matter who it's for.

BEN

You'd just give a kidney to whomever — first come, first served.

ALICE

A second kidney is completely superfluous. You don't need it. Somebody else does. It's like if you had two, I don't know — lawnmowers. Why not give the second one to someone else? Like Craig's list.

BEN

You don't put a kidney on Craig's List.

ALICE

But why not? I mean, effectively — why not? This society is sick. We're sick, the things we think we need. People with two houses, three cars, five computers. There's too much stuff. We don't need all this stuff. And we don't need two kidneys. I'm giving one of mine away. Why not? It's my kidney.

BEN

Not for long.

ALICE

Yes, good.

(beat)

BEN

Why not your second lung? Why not, uh, hand over your left arm while you're at it?

ALICE

I'm keeping my arms.

BEN

What about lungs?

ALICE

It's good to have two lungs.

BEN

It's good to have two kidneys.

ALICE

No, it isn't. It's wasteful. It's only because of bilateral symmetry, but it's mostly unnecessary.

(beat)

Look, I'm not asking you to give up your second kidney.

BEN

Yes, thanks for that.

(beat)

Is this like when you went vegan?

ALICE

This has nothing to do with going vegan.

BEN

I think it does. You said eating meat was killing the planet.

ALICE

It is killing the planet.

BEN

That's why you went vegetarian.

ALICE

No, I went pescatarian first.

BEN

That's right, you still ate fish.

ALICE

But the oceans are getting overfished. There are people who live on coastlines who can't make a living or feed their family because of depleted fish stocks. So I stopped eating fish.

BEN

You used to love calamari.

ALICE

I know. But I don't need it.

BEN

Don't you miss it?

ALICE

Not really.

(beat)

A bit. I mean, yes, sure, but it's not worth it.

BEN

The succulent grilled octopus at the River Café.

ALICE

Octopi turn out to be highly intelligent. If they were given IQ tests, most would score on the genius level.