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Edinburgh Fringe 2016

Missed Connections

Between The Bars



Genre: Comedy, Short Plays, Theatre

Venue: C Nova

Festival: Edinburgh Fringe

Low Down

A very amusing, poignant and well-scripted trilogy from the talented writer Rachel Jarmy that shows good things can come from occasionally flying in the face of convention.

Review

Missed connections. We've all missed connections. In fact I missed Missed Connections first time round due to an unscheduled tyre deflation on my preferred mode of transport. And, such was the demand for tickets for this fifty minute ride on the London Underground (or the tube as most people know it) that it was only by employing that well-known technique for boarding a crowded train (use of pointy elbows) that I managed to get a seat on the last performance of this new piece from the talented pen of Rachel Jarmy.

Everyone who uses it knows that unwritten tube etiquette strictly forbids the exchange of glances between commuters. Heaven forfend that anyone should actually strike up a conversation. In my experience, the scene that greets us here of a well-suited gentleman perusing *The Times* and a frosty looking lady reading a literary review in stony silence, each in their own bubble, is a familiar sight on the Northern line. So when a woman dressed as a cow enters the carriage, does either bat an eyelid?

But this cow is nothing if not precocious, inquisitive, intrusive even as she burrows her way slowly into background of the urbane be-suited, demur gentleman. Step-by-step, her interrogation reveals just who this gent is, who he's going to meet and a whole host of other intriguing facts. It's rather like watching an onion being peeled, only the tears are from laughter given the exquisite manner in which the script has been crafted. You really want to laugh out loud at some bits but, this being the tube, you're forced to cover your mouth with your hand and just smirk instead. One doesn't want to draw attention to oneself, after all. Hats off to the Roll-Royce tones of Rory Lowings and the persistent Susan Sadek (under the cow suit) for two inspired character portrayals.

The next duologue takes place on the good old Bakerloo and features two ladies who've been shopping for what turns out to be quite different reasons. Jenny is marvellously frank, honest and extremely good at plonking her foot firmly in it. Carol is quieter, withdrawn, perhaps hiding a secret she doesn't really know how to deal with. It's a lovely, tender conversation of hopes, dreams, the frustrations and surprises of familial life and the courage it takes to face up to those difficult issues that, inevitably, we all have to deal with. Again, two top class performances from Sarah Ingram and Suzanne Emerson.

The third and final duologue rattled its way along the Jubilee and featured Mark and Penny, both on their way to a first date with someone they'd met over the internet. Two strangers who ultimately find they have a lot more in common than they first realised. I'll leave you to fill in the blanks as the excellent Samantha Billing (Penny) and Ian Bruno (Mark) find they're both getting off at Green Park.

Three very different but completely engaging pieces each with an extremely clever, funny or poignant end line, each consummately performed and beautifully staged with a simple tube seat, grab handles for the passengers that came and went as the conversations took place and the constant sound of a train moving, doors opening and closing, guard announcements and even a good old signal failure.

Meticulously researched (to the point that all the tube stops were in the right order!), this was an excellent piece of observational writing from a very talented young writer. What a pity the last train has now departed but I'm glad I made the dash to catch it. I might even strike up a conversation the next time I ride the tube.

Published August 20, 2016 by [Tim Wilcock](#)

Show Website

www.btbtheatre.com

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