La Comédiathèque

QUARANTINE

Jean-Pierre Martinez



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Quarantine

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Four strangers find themselves quarantined against their will in what turns out to be a disused theatre. On the other side of an imaginary pane of glass, people (the audience) are watching them. The supposed patients are puzzled. What virus could they have caught? What exactly is at stake? When and how will their ordeal end? Little by little, it becomes clear that this story takes place in the near future, in a world ruled by Big Brother, and that the reason for their quarantine may not be strictly medical.

Cast

Dom
Pat
Max
Sam/Kim

The characters can be of any gender. They should all have a gender-neutral, almost uniform appearance. The actors may even exchange roles during the performance, each role being identified by a costume (blue, pink or green patient gowns, a white nurse's coat, a black Mao-style suit). In this version, Dom and Max are men, Pat and Sam/Kim are women.

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Act 1

The stage can be bare apart from three chairs. Dom enters hesitantly. He is wearing a hospital patient's gown (blue, pink or green). He looks around, puzzled, then notices the audience with astonishment and steps forward to study them anxiously. Pat, dressed in the same way, enters behind him.

Pat – Hello.

Dom jumps, turns round and sees Pat.

Dom – You gave me a fright...

Pat – Sorry... So you're here too...?

Dom – Yes...

An awkward silence.

Pat – Haven't we seen each other somewhere?

Dom – On the train, I think. In the same coach.

Pat – Coach thirteen, that's right! I wonder if that has anything to do with it...

Dom – With what? The number thirteen?

Pat – With us both being here! We were in the same coach...

Dom – I don't know. Actually, I haven't the faintest idea what we're doing here.

Pat – Neither have I. I can't make sense of it. Two officers stopped me as I got off the train and asked me to come with them...

Dom – Are you sure they were police officers?

Pat – I think so... They had masks on. Not that sort of mask... Medical masks. They put me in an ambulance and...

Dom – Are you sure it was an ambulance? If they were police officers, I mean...

Pat – Well... a van, then.

Dom – A police van doubling as an ambulance.

Pat – That's it... They brought me here and... told me to wait. What about you?

Dom – Same thing... So you weren't told anything either.

Pat – I was told to wait.

Dom – And... you didn't hear anything else?

Pat – No... *(A pause)* I think somebody mentioned quarantine.

Dom – Really...?

Pat – Did you hear that too?

Dom – Not exactly...

Pat – It makes the most sense, doesn't it?

Dom – Quarantine... Yes... What else could it be?

Pat – That would account for the masks.

Dom – Yes... What are we supposed to do now?

Pat – Wait... Those were our instructions, weren't they? Wait.

A pause.

Dom – Quarantine... If they really mean forty days, I hope they'll give us some answers before then.

Pat – It doesn't have to be forty days, just because it's called quarantine. It depends on the illness.

Dom – You think this is about an illness?

Pat – What else could it be? If they're keeping us in quarantine...

Dom – Yes... It must be a virus.

Pat – A highly infectious one, presumably.

Dom – Yes... Probably.

Pat – I haven't got any symptoms. Have you?

Dom – Me neither.

Pat – Mind you... That doesn't mean we aren't ill. There's the incubation period.

Dom – Are you a doctor?

Pat – A computer operator.

Dom – A computer operator?

Pat – They used to call us computer specialists, I think.

Dom – Right... So you know about viruses...

Pat – More importantly, I've got three children... What about you?

Dom – I haven't got any children.

Pat – No, I meant... You're not a doctor either.

Dom – I'm a trainer.

Pat – A trainer...

Dom – I think they used to call us teachers. Tomorrow they'll probably call us animal handlers.

Pat – I see...

Dom – Oh? What do you see?

Pat – I just mean... You know even less about viruses than I do...

A pause.

Dom – So the incubation period varies from one virus to another?

Pat – Exactly... The first symptoms might appear a week after you catch it. Sometimes sooner, sometimes later.

Dom – You seem to know quite a bit about how epidemics spread... for someone who isn't a doctor.

Pat – Like I said, I've got three children. When one falls ill, the other two are usually ill within days.

Dom – But there's nothing wrong with us!

Pat – We could be infectious long before we feel ill ourselves.

Dom – Yes... Assuming we're actually carrying the virus.

Pat – Which is probably why we're in quarantine... I'm sure someone will explain it all to us.

Dom – Yes, I'm sure...

Max comes in wearing the same clothes as the others.

Dom – Ah... The more the merrier...

Pat – The more what?

Dom – It's an old saying... The more the merrier... Forget it.

Pat – Perhaps this gentleman knows something.

Max moves towards the audience, looking distinctly bewildered.

Dom – I wouldn't count on it. He doesn't look quite with it.

Pat – Hello.

Max – Oh, hello... I've... I've only just arrived too...

Dom – How do you know we've only just arrived?

Max – Sorry?

Dom – You said you'd only just arrived TOO. How do you know? We could have been here for weeks.

Max – Have you been here for weeks?

Pat – We've just arrived.

Max – Oh... Same as me, then. That's what I said.

Pat – Yes...

Max – And... do you know what we're here for?

Dom – We were hoping you might tell us.

Max – No idea... They picked me up as I got off the train. Not a word of explanation. I've got things to do, you know.

Pat – You and me both... I've got three children waiting for me at home. Not to mention my husband. And you?

Max – I'm not married. I'd just been away to visit my mother in hospital.

Dom – Is she ill too?

Max – She broke her hip.

Pat – Well, at least you can't catch that...

Max – Yes, but who's going to pay me for the time I'm losing? I've got two jobs to finish by the end of the week.

Pat – Maybe we'll get compensation. Do you work for yourself?

Max – I'm a plumber.

Dom – And when you actually need one, you can never find one...

Max – Sorry?

Dom – Nothing...

Pat – Plumber... I've heard that word somewhere, but I can't remember exactly what it means.

Dom – They're called repairers these days.

Pat – Oh, yes...

Dom – He's a specialist repairer. Pipes, drains, taps... A plumber, as they used to say.

Max – That's right.

Dom – So you don't know why we've been locked up here either?

Pat – What makes you think we're locked up?

Dom – Whether the door's locked or not, we're not allowed out if we're in quarantine, are we?

Max – So you think this is quarantine?

Dom – According to our resident expert here, we're carrying a virus and we're infectious. That's why they've put us into isolation.

Max – A virus? What virus?

Pat – Well... A new one, presumably. Otherwise there'd be vaccines already and no need to put us in quarantine.

Max – Right... But why us? Any idea?

Pat – We must have come into contact with someone who was ill without knowing it... Didn't you say you'd visited your mother in hospital?

Max – She had a fracture!

Pat – Yes... But hospitals are full of viruses, aren't they? Everyone knows that...

Max – Oh, so now it's all my fault...

Dom – Take it easy, my friend. Nobody's blaming you.

Pat – And if we're stuck here for weeks, we'd better stick together.

Max – You think they'll keep us for weeks?

Pat – We don't know. At the moment, we know nothing.

A pause.

Max – And are you all right?

Pat – I'm all right... I'd rather have gone straight home to my husband and children, but there you are...

Max – No, I don't give a damn about that. I mean... Do you feel ill?

Pat *(offended)* – Not so far.

Max – And you?

Dom – I'm fine. But... how kind of you to worry about my health.

Max – Neither do I... I'm in great shape.

Dom – Wonderful, wonderful... We're delighted for you...

Max looks around once more.

Max – Does anyone know where we are, exactly?

Dom – No... You couldn't see a thing from the hearse that brought us here. The blinds were down.

Max – A hearse? Are you sure?

Dom – Did I say hearse? I meant a medical transport van, of course.

Pat – We were barely on the road for fifteen minutes. We can't be far from the station...

Max – Yeah... But this isn't a hospital.

Pat – No... But then we're not ill yet.

Max – This is odd... What sort of place is this? *(He walks around the stage and freezes when he spots the audience.)* And who are they?

Pat – They? Who?

Max *(pointing to the audience)* – Them!

Pat steps forward, narrowing her eyes.

Pat – I can't make anything out... Those lights... They're dazzling.

Max – There! All those people staring at us!

Pat *(seeing the audience)* – Good grief... What is this? *(To Dom)* Have you seen them?

Dom – Yes... That was the first thing I saw when I walked in.

Pat – You might have told us!

Dom – Told you what?

Pat – That we're being watched! That they're listening to us!

Dom – It slipped my mind... What difference would it have made? We haven't done anything wrong, have we? Or said anything wrong...

Pat – I hope not...

Max – I haven't said a thing.

Pat – This is a nightmare...

Max – Do you think they can hear us?

Dom – I rather think that's the idea.

Max – They're listening to us?

Pat – At the very least they're watching us. We are under observation, after all. They want to see how the illness progresses...

Max – Strange. We can't hear them.

Dom – Maybe they're not talking.

Pat – Or they're behind some sort of glass.

Max – Glass?

Pat – Like a two-way mirror in a police interrogation room, you know... *(She squints into the blinding spotlights.)* And they've got these lights shining straight into our eyes...

Dom – I've never been inside a police interrogation room. Not until today, anyway.

Pat – Oh, you know the kind. When you're on the right side, you can see the people and they can't see you.

Max – What people?

Pat – The suspects!

Max – Yes, but we can see them.

Dom – One thing I do know is that if I ever end up in an interrogation room, I certainly won't be on the right side.

Max – Which is the right side, in your opinion?

Dom – The right side of the glass! Where you can see without being seen.

Max – So by your logic, they're the ones who'll be questioned... and we're here to watch.

Pat – You're right, that makes no sense. We're not the police...

Dom – If you say so...

Pat – Excuse me?

Dom – You also seem to know quite a bit about interrogation rooms...

Pat – What are you getting at?

Dom – I don't know... You're an expert on viruses, more or less... You know what interrogation rooms look like. They haven't planted you here, have they?

Pat – They? I don't follow...

Max – You could be an undercover agent. I think that's what this gentleman is getting at. A spy, if you like...

Pat – I think we're all starting to go mad. Those people are probably doctors. They can monitor the course of our illness without catching it themselves.

Max – Let's pretend they're not there.

Dom – Right. Let's do that... Carry on as normal. As if we weren't guinea pigs in a lab, watched day and night by a hundred experts waiting to see how long it takes us to die, and what we die of...

Sam enters behind them, dressed in the same way.

Sam – Hello...

Pat – Perhaps this lady can help us... Hello. Are you a doctor?

Sam – I'm an informer.

Pat – An informer?

Dom – They used to call them journalists, I believe.

Max – Oh... So you're in the same boat as us.

Sam – Are you all informers?

Max – No... I mean you're like us... You haven't been told why you've been brought here.

Sam – Sorry, I've no idea. I'd just stepped off the train...

Dom – Yes, yes, we've heard all that...

Sam – I'm answering your question... If you know the answer, why ask me?

Max – But we don't know anything! We've just told you!

Sam – There's no need to get worked up.

Max – Sorry. You're right.

Sam – Anyway, I was getting off the train and... the police brought me here. That's all I know. I can't tell you why we've been arrested.

Dom – Did they tell you you were under arrest?

Sam – No, not explicitly, but...

Pat – I thought I heard something about quarantine. That's what I understood, anyway.

Sam – Maybe they meant you were in your forties...

Dom – Well, that gets us nowhere...

Sam – If they've taken us into custody, there must be a good reason.

Dom – Oh, now we're in police custody, are we?

Sam – Sorry... I meant under observation...

Pat lowers her voice and gestures discreetly towards the audience.

Pat – So you don't know who all those people watching us are either...

Sam notices the audience but betrays no surprise.

Sam – No...

Max – So you were on that train too?

Sam – Coach thirteen. Seat forty. And you?

Pat – Forty-two.

Max – Forty-one.

Dom – Forty-three.

Sam – So we were all sitting next to each other.

Pat – Or opposite each other.

Sam – That might explain why we'd all caught something from the same person... But who?

Sam looks suspiciously at the other three. They are all bewildered.

Pat – Just look at us in these outfits. I feel as if I've been put in a madhouse...

Max – But madness isn't contagious... Is it?

Sam – Let's avoid touching each other, all the same.

Dom – Oh, you were going to...?

Pat – And try not to cough. Or put your hand over your mouth if you do.

Dom – Why haven't they given us masks, then? If we're infectious.

Pat – They must think there's no point in protecting us from one another if we're all condemned already...

Sam – Condemned?

Pat – Sorry, I meant contaminated.

Max – In that case, there's no point covering our mouths when we cough.

Dom – And we can touch each other too, can't we?

Sam – We could at least introduce ourselves first. *(She offers Dom her hand.)* Sam.

Dom hesitates briefly before shaking Sam's hand.

Dom – Dom.

They repeat the procedure with the other two.

Pat – Pat.

Max – Max.

They all shake hands, rather apprehensively. Suddenly a loudspeaker crackles and a voice is heard offstage.

Voice – Hello, everyone. Can you hear us?

They are momentarily uncertain.

Sam – Affirmative. Receiving you loud and clear.

Dom – Well, more loud than clear.

Voice – First of all, please accept our apologies for the inconvenience, unfortunately made necessary by the crisis we are all facing. We had to act immediately. There was no time to explain the reasons for your detention... I mean, your retention here in isolation, to prevent contact with the outside world...

Pat – Can we now be told precisely what kind of health emergency this is?

Voice – It's rather difficult to explain over a loudspeaker. But don't worry. Someone will be along to see you very shortly. In the meantime, we'll see that you're comfortable. In the entrance hall you'll find a fridge and some well-stocked cupboards, so you can get yourselves something to eat. There's also a door leading to a corridor of bedrooms, each with its own bathroom and minibar. Basic facilities, but you'll find everything you need...

Dom – Everything we need?

Voice – There's even a table football game.

Max – Can you at least tell us how long this is going to last?

Pat – My husband and children are waiting for me at home. Well, my children especially...

Voice – Don't worry. Your families, employers and customers have been informed. We hope you enjoy your stay. See you very shortly.

Another crackle, then silence.

Pat – Enjoy our stay?

Dom – There you are... That's it... All we can do is shut up and wait.

Sam – This is unbelievable...

A moment of general astonishment.

Pat – I'm going to ring my husband. At least let him know. *(She takes out her phone.)* And maybe people outside know more about it than we do... *(She presses a button and her face falls.)* I've got no signal. Have you?

Dom takes out his phone.

Dom – Neither have I.

Sam – They must be jamming the signal...

Max – But why?

They look at one another in bewilderment.

Pat – So we really are cut off from the world...

Dom – What do we do?

Sam – What can we do?

A pause.

Max – Let's get some food.

Dom – What?

Max – They told us where the food was.

Dom – We're being held prisoner here without knowing why, with no means of contacting the outside world, and all he can think about is stuffing his face...

Max – Have you got a better idea?

Dom – No...

Max – Then suit yourselves. I'm starving.

He leaves. The other three look at one another.

Sam – Actually, I am a little hungry myself...

Sam leaves.

Dom – What do you think?

Pat – Well... What would we gain by starving ourselves to death?

She leaves. Dom hesitates, then follows her. Blackout.

Act 2

The lights come up. Dom and Pat are pacing like caged lions. Max watches them with an air of indifference, eating a slice of pizza.

Pat – There were four of us, weren't there?

Dom – Yes...

Pat – The fourth one's vanished.

Dom – What was her name again?

Max – Kim.

Pat – Kim?

Dom – Sam, I think.

Max – Sam, that's it...

Dom – I wonder what they've done with her.

Max – Perhaps they've released her.

Pat – Released her? Why not us, then?

Dom – Or she's dead...

Pat – Dead? You mean... from the illness?

Dom – I don't know. *(To Max)* What do you think?

Max – Yes, she might be dead.

Pat – Well, it doesn't seem to have put you off your food...

A pause.

Dom – How long have we been here?

Pat – About a week, wouldn't you say?

Max – Exactly seven days.

Pat – Yes, that's what I said... A week. I feel I'm going mad.

Dom – So do I.

Pat – We may not be mad enough to lock up yet. But they've locked us up anyway.

Max – In any case, they told us to stay here.

Dom – They? Who are they?

Max – The Authority. The health authorities, I mean. They said so over the loudspeaker. Didn't you hear?

Pat – Just some anonymous voice coming out of a loudspeaker...

Dom – True. What do we actually know? We may have been kidnapped...

Max – By the police?

Pat – They could have been pretending to be police officers. They were wearing masks...

Max – Why would anyone kidnap us?

Dom – To get a ransom out of our families? I haven't got a family. And I take it neither of you is a billionaire.

Pat – All I've got is my apartment, and that belongs to the bank until I've paid off my fifty-year mortgage. I can't see my bank paying a ransom to get me back... just so I can keep paying off the mortgage.

Dom – Besides, nobody's asked for a ransom.

Max – Not as far as I know.

Dom – Our kidnappers must have decided we weren't worth the trouble and cleared off. And forgotten to let us out...

Pat – Or we've been taken hostage. Hostage situations can drag on for ages. Years, sometimes.

Max – Hostages?

Pat – Why not? They've got some demands and they'll kill us if the authorities don't give them what they want.

Max – If that's the case, you're in trouble.

Dom – You?

Max – No, I mean... us. We're in trouble. The authorities stopped negotiating with terrorists years ago. Even when the hostages' lives are at stake.

A pause.

Pat – I think we're starting to lose our minds... No, it's just quarantine. That's all.

Dom – You think so?

Pat – That's what I'd rather believe, anyway. Otherwise I'll go mad...

Max – You're right. There's no point thinking the worst.

Pat – The important thing is that nobody's ill... If this really is quarantine, they'll let us out eventually.

Max – What sort of affliction could we have picked up?

Dom – Interesting. You said affliction, not infection.

Pat – What else could we have picked up, apart from an infection?

Max – I don't know... It was just a turn of phrase. What do you think?

Dom – Nothing. I don't think anything. And if I did, I wouldn't tell you.

Pat turns towards the audience.

Pat – And they're still here too...

Max – Maybe they can't get out either.

Pat – You mean they're being held hostage, like us?

Dom – If they can leave, I really wonder why they haven't already.

Max – Yes... Nothing particularly exciting's happening.

Pat – It's like a reality TV show. Even we're going to get bored...

Doctor Kim enters behind them. She is played by the same actress who previously played Sam. She wears a black Mao-style suit and sports a television presenter's smile.

Kim – Hello, dear friends!

The other three turn in surprise.

Pat – She's dressed differently from us. She must be a doctor.

Dom – Strange, her face rings a bell...

Pat – I think I've seen her somewhere too.

Max – She might tell us why we're here...

Dom – At last!

Pat – Hello, Doctor. Is this it? Are we being released?

Kim – Not quite yet...

Dom – How about telling us who you are first, and why we're here?

Kim – I am... your reformatter.

Pat – Reformatter?

Kim – I'm here to get you back into shape.

Pat – I think they used to call that an inquisitor.

Dom – Tomorrow they'll call it a redeemer.

Pat – But are you a medical doctor?

Kim – I'm certainly a doctor... Doctor Kim. I'm here to cure you.

Dom – Cure us?

Kim – Let's say... guide you back onto the right path. The road to recovery...

Pat – And how do you intend to do that?

Kim – By reformatting you, of course. If it's still possible...

Pat – So there is no vaccine.

Max – Well, that's tremendously reassuring...

Pat – But why on earth are you keeping us here? It's about time you told us.

Kim – You've been in contact with a dangerous individual.

Max – You mean... someone carrying a dangerous virus?

Kim – Yes, in a manner of speaking. We're waiting to see whether you've caught it yourselves...

Dom – But you haven't given us any treatment!

Kim – There is no treatment.

Dom – You mean no medical treatment?

Pat – But none of us has any symptoms!

Kim – It's a condition with a potentially very long incubation period.

Dom – And if we really are infected, what are you going to do to us?

Kim – We're awaiting instructions.

Dom – I feel as if I'm talking to a robot with a damaged hard drive. Are you sure you're not the one with a virus?

Pat – What we do know is that we've been shut in here for a week without any contact with our families...

Dom – Not even by phone!

Pat – The signal's being jammed. You can't catch viruses over the phone, can you?

Kim – Depends on the virus...

Pat gestures towards the audience.

Pat – And who are all these people watching us?

Kim – They're guinea pigs too.

Pat – Too? So we ARE guinea pigs.

Kim – We want to see how they react after prolonged exposure to people who are severely affected, like yourselves.

Dom – But we're not in contact with them!

Kim – No. But they can hear you. And they can see you.

Max – I feel like a hamster in a laboratory.

Pat – They could at least give us a wheel to run on.

Kim – Believe me, this is no game.

Pat – But what exactly is this virus?

Kim – As a matter of fact... it's not exactly a virus.

Max – What is it, then?

Kim – It's more like something that's transmitted by sound. Or sight. Or both. It spreads through imitation, in a sense.

Dom – Oh, well, that clears everything up.

Kim – Someone in coach thirteen displayed inappropriate behaviour in your presence. Deviant behaviour, and therefore dangerous.

Pat – What kind of behaviour?

Kim – You really don't remember?

Pat – No.

Kim – None of you?

Dom – No.

Kim – We'll see. You're here in isolation precisely so we can make sure you aren't infectious.

Pat – Infectious? But you say it's not a virus!

Kim – Or, if you prefer, so we can make sure you're not tempted to imitate that dangerous behaviour. And thereby infect other people.

Pat – How much longer will you keep us here before you're satisfied that we're not... infectious?

Kim – We're awaiting instructions. For now, try to remember.

Max – Remember what?

Kim – What you saw and heard in coach thirteen. I'll leave you to think about it a little longer...

Pat – But...

Kim – That's all for today. Dear friends, we'll meet again soon. In the meantime, if you need anything, do let us know.

Pat – Let you know? How? We're locked in here, and there's no way of contacting the world outside! Or even room service...

Kim – Don't worry... Ask, and it shall be given to you. Seek, and you shall find...

Dom – Knock, and the door will be opened?

Kim leaves.

Pat – Try to remember...

Max – Do either of you remember anything?

Dom – No... Do you?

Pat – Not me...

Dom – Anyway, if we did remember anything, no one would say so, would they?

Max – Why not?

Pat *(pointing to the audience)* – In case you've forgotten, we're being listened to...

Dom – Not much chance of forgetting that.

Max – Knowing someone's listening... That stops people behaving in a deviant way, doesn't it?

Dom – What is deviant behaviour?

Pat – Deviating from what?

Max – Well... We don't know.

Pat – We don't know any more.

Dom – We must have known once... but we've forgotten.

A pause.

Max – All this is making me hungry. How about you?

Max leaves.

Pat – All he ever thinks about is food.

Dom – I wonder if that idiot's here to keep an eye on us.

Pat – Aren't they already keeping an eye on us?

Dom – From the inside, shall we say.

Pat – A spy? It could be any one of us.

Dom – Yes... Why not me?

Pat – I don't think you're one of them.

Dom – Perhaps you're the spy. And you're trying to get me to talk.

Pat – In that case, I'm not doing a very good job. You won't tell me anything.

Dom – I'm just being careful, that's all...

Pat – Then I'll do the talking.

Dom – As you wish.

Pat – I said I couldn't remember anything, but... that's not quite true.

Dom – Really?

Pat – I do remember something.

Dom – I'm all ears... *(Gesturing towards the audience)* We're all ears...

Pat – I remember the couple sitting next to us on the train.

Dom – Oh, yes...?

Pat – The man started telling the woman a story.

Dom – A story?

Pat – A story about two lunatics.

Dom – I'd be interested to hear it.

Pat – A lunatic finds a mirror. He looks into it, sees his face and says, "That idiot looks familiar..." Another lunatic takes the mirror, looks into it and says, "Of course he does. That idiot's me!"

Dom – And you think that's a crazy story?

Pat – Well, only a madman could tell a story that makes so little sense. That's what we've always been taught, isn't it?

Dom – Yes...

Pat – And you knew that story before I told it to you...

Dom – Perhaps.

Pat – You heard it on the train, just as I did.

Dom – Let's say I did. So what?

Pat – The woman's face... twisted into a sort of grimace. Her whole body started convulsing. Her mouth opened and this strange, jerky cry came out.

Dom – A cry? What kind of cry?

Pat – Ha, ha, ha!

Dom – Ha, ha, ha?

Pat – Ha, ha, ha!

She bursts into hysterical laughter.

Dom – Keep your voice down, please... What happened next?

Pat – She didn't look as if she was in pain. He looked at her and started showing the same symptoms.

Dom – So it's definitely contagious. Then what?

Pat – Some police officers turned up and took them both away.

Dom – I see...

Pat – Of course you see. You were there too.

Dom – I don't remember...

Pat – I'm not a spy. You can trust me.

A pause. He draws her towards the back of the stage, away from the audience.

Dom – It's called laughter.

Pat – What?

Dom – The contagious disease you've just described. It's called laughter.

Pat – Laughter? What's that?

Dom – A disease the health authorities managed to wipe out. Not quite, obviously.

Pat – But what kind of disease was it?

Dom – A very ancient condition. As old as humanity itself. The symptoms were fairly mild, but it made people behave in unruly ways. Deviant, as they call it...

Pat – But I've just told you the same story and you didn't laugh.

Dom – It's never as funny the second time. And we've got out of the habit of laughing. We've forgotten what funny means.

Pat – Funny?

Dom – Funny. Or comical. Whatever makes you laugh. We've forgotten how to laugh.

Pat – And you? Do you ever... laugh?

Dom – In secret, you mean? Otherwise... You've seen what happens when they catch people laughing.

Pat – Well, do you?

He moves closer to her and lowers his voice.

Dom – I'm part of a group.

Pat – A terrorist group?

Dom – Yes, if you like. We meet in secret. We tell jokes and we laugh. Or at least we try...

Pat – Stories about lunatics?

Dom – Do you have to be mad to make fun of the authorities? Or even the Supreme Leader?

Pat – But criticising the authorities is forbidden, isn't it? And disrespecting the Supreme Leader is blasphemy.

Dom – Blasphemy used to be legal.

Pat – How do you know all this?

Dom – We've found some books.

Pat – Books?

Dom – And newspapers too.

Pat – What are those?

Dom – They're like tablets, except that the words are printed in black ink on paper.

Pat – Like on packaging?

Dom – And because they aren't transmitted over a network, there's no way of controlling them.

Pat – And naturally, they're forbidden.

Dom – There was a time when they weren't... Things were different then.

Pat – I don't remember.

Dom – Nobody remembers those days. The authorities saw to that. Burning all the books, for instance.

Pat – Laughter...

Dom – Apparently it was what made us human. What set us apart from social creatures like bees, ants and termites...

Pat – We've still got our intelligence.

Dom – But for how much longer? Teachers have become trainers. Politicians have become reformatters. Computer specialists have become computer operators. They're practically computers themselves already...

Max comes back. They drop the subject and pretend to be indifferent.

Pat – Have you had enough to eat?

Dom – Was it good?

Max – Excellent.

Pat – What was on the menu today?

Max – Pizza.

Dom – Again?

Pat – How long are they going to keep us shut up here eating pizza?

Max – I like pizza.

Dom – What if we escaped?

Max – Escape? But that's against the rules, isn't it?

Dom – Of course... I was joking.

Max – Of course it's against the rules. Besides, we might infect people outside.

Dom – The audience, for one. They're not exactly in stitches at the moment, but...

Max – Anyway, they'd soon track you down...

Dom – Well... What do we do, then?

Pat – Is there any pizza left?

Max – There's plenty in the freezer. Just put one in the microwave.

Dom – I'll come with you.

Dom and Pat leave. Kim returns.

Kim – Well? Have you managed to get anything out of them?

Max – Nothing... I'm beginning to wonder whether I'm much good as an informer...

Kim – Yes, so am I... Well... Surely you have an opinion?

Max – A what?

Kim – What do you think of them?

Max – Nothing. You've always told me I think too much, Chief. And that it could be dangerous...

Kim – We've already got a file on them, anyway.

Max – Have you got one on me too?

Kim – Of course! You wrote it yourself, after turning yourself in to the police to claim the reward. Don't you remember?

Max – Yes, yes... I got ten years in detention for that, to put me back on the right path, as you call it.

Kim – Believe me, if everyone were like you, we'd have far fewer problems.

Max – Are you sure these people are dangerous, Chief?

Kim – You still have doubts?

Max – No, of course not...

Kim – Since you're incapable of getting any information out of them, you can write me another report on yourself. List every deviant thought you've had. I want it on my desk tomorrow morning.

Max – Yes, Chief.

Max looks around the room and towards the audience.

Kim – What are you thinking about now?

Max – Nothing, I swear.

Kim – I can see you're thinking about something! Well?

Max – I was wondering... What is this place?

Kim – A disused theatre.

Max – A theatre?

Kim – A place where people used to get together and laugh.

Max – To laugh?

Kim – It was legal in those days. You could make fun of anything. Even the authorities.

Max – Even the Supreme Leader?

Kim – Even yourself.

Max – Thank goodness those days are gone for good.

Kim – Yes... Don't tell me you're thinking about something else...

Max – I'd better go and write my report.

Max leaves. Kim walks towards the audience.

Kim – And how are you all feeling? No worrying symptoms? No sudden fits of laughter? Good. Behave yourselves and we'll let you out later...

Kim leaves. Dom and Pat return.

Dom – Do you think it's her?

Pat – Who?

Dom – Sam! Do you think she's a spy?

Pat – So you don't think it might be me any more.

Dom – No.

A pause.

Pat – You remember that couple perfectly well.

Dom – What couple?

Pat – The man who tells a woman a story and the two of them laugh.

Dom – What makes you think I remember them?

Pat – Because we were that couple.

Dom – Yes, perhaps. *(A pause)* Had you never laughed before?

Pat – No. I didn't know what was happening to me. It was as though... I'd lost all control... I was a little ashamed.

Dom – I understand. It's always like that the first time.

Pat – And you? Have you laughed with other women before?

Dom – Yes. With other women. Other men too. Sometimes in a group.

Pat – In a group...

Dom – And did you enjoy it?

Pat – I... I don't know...

Dom – You enjoyed it.

Pat – Yes...

Dom – You'll see. Once you've done it, you can't live without it.

Pat – That's exactly what frightens me. And that's why we're locked up here, isn't it?

Dom – Yes... The other two, sitting opposite us, must have been police officers.

Pat – They're the ones who brought us here. They had masks on, but I recognised their voices.

Dom – So you knew.

Pat – Yes. But why are they so worried about two people laughing?

Dom – Laughter can be devastating, and they know it.

Pat – Devastating? You mean it's dangerous to our health?

Dom – Not to our health. If anything, it's good for us. It's dangerous to them.

Pat – Why?

Dom – Once you start laughing at everything, you're much less gullible, and much less obedient. Laughter is subversive...

Pat – What are they going to do to us?

Dom – I don't know. They're frightened of us.

Pat – Frightened?

Dom – They're afraid our laughter will spread. And that this epidemic will sweep away the entire system. And take them with it...

Pat – Do you think they might kill us?

Dom – They've probably considered it. But they can't kill everyone...

Pat – What do we do, then?

Dom – Would you like me to tell you another one?

Pat – Another joke?

Dom – If we've got to die, we might as well die laughing...

Pat – Just so you know, I'm married.

Dom – Don't worry. Laughing isn't really cheating.

Pat – Go on, then...

Dom – Well, there's this...

Pat – Not here. I think someone's listening to us...

Dom – You're right... Let's go to my room instead...

They leave. Kim and Max return.

Max – Here's my report, Chief.

Kim – It's rather thin... Are you sure you haven't left anything out?

Max – Quite sure, Chief.

Kim – Where have they gone? They haven't escaped, have they?

Max – They must be in their rooms.

Dom and Pat can be heard laughing loudly.

Kim – Well, now we know.

Max – Yes... They've definitely caught the virus.

They listen to another burst of laughter, a little embarrassed and unsettled.

Kim – Have you ever laughed?

Max – No. Have you?

Kim – It sounds painful, doesn't it?

Max – I wouldn't know. I've told you, I've never laughed. Are you trying to catch me out again?

More laughter offstage.

Kim – This time we have no choice. We must inform the Authority...

Blackout.

Act 3

Kim is standing, still in her Mao-style suit. Dom, Pat and Max are seated. Dom and Pat still wear their blue, pink or green patient gowns, but Max now wears a white nurse's coat.

Kim – Dear friends, first of all, thank you for accepting our invitation.

Pat – We haven't exactly got a choice...

Dom – We're prisoners!

Kim clears her throat and carries on as though nothing has happened.

Kim – So, I've brought you together for a group therapy session.

Pat – You mean an interrogation...

Kim – We know that two of you have suffered a fit of laughter since arriving here. That proves that one of you was already infected before entering quarantine, and that the other caught the virus from that person.

Dom – If you know all that, why go through the motions of an investigation?

Kim – We expect the guilty parties to turn themselves in. It's part of the therapy...

Max – Us? Laugh? We don't even know what the word means. Do we, my friends?

Pat – All right, give it a rest... We know you're a spy.

Max – But I assure you...

Dom – A very bad spy, at that.

Max – All right, an undercover agent, maybe, but not a spy. You're a spy if you're working for the wrong side. We're on the right side, aren't we, Chief?

Kim – This gentleman is not a spy. He's an informer.

Dom – And what exactly are you?

Kim – I'm your reformatter.

Dom – A reformer?

Kim – I'm here to reformat you.

Dom – That's not what a reformer used to be.

Kim – Look it up in the dictionary and you'll see!

Dom – You rewrote that entire dictionary yourselves. But I've found a copy of an old encyclopaedia, and I know what all those words used to mean.

Kim – It is now for the Authority to define the meaning of every word, with just one consideration in mind: the good of the Nation.

Dom – You've rewritten everything, even the Bible! You've replaced God with the Supreme Leader! And you've burnt all the books so there'll be no trace of the past!

Kim – Not quite all of them, apparently. You seem to have read one or two.

Dom – The only things we can read today are on screens, via a network entirely under your control.

Pat – So you want to reformat us... Wipe the hard drive and reinstall the operating system, is that it?

Dom – And install some antivirus software, no doubt...

Kim – Laughter is highly addictive. Once you've laughed, you'll always be tempted to do it again.

Pat – So you consider laughter a drug?

Dom – A soft drug, at least.

Kim – Addiction to laughter is like addiction to alcohol. You're never entirely cured. You can refrain from laughing, but the temptation will always be there.

Max – Once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic.

Kim – You speak from experience. We sent you to a rehabilitation centre for ten years. You were drinking in secret. And you reported yourself to the police.

Max – I don't drink any more.

Dom – But the amount he eats...

Max – So this therapy session is a bit like an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting?

Kim – That's right... Laughers Anonymous.

Pat – The idea being to unmask people who laugh in secret.

Kim – Exactly.

Dom – And how are you going to do that?

Kim – I'm going to tell you a story. It's supposedly funny. We'll see which of you starts laughing.

Pat – I see. A screening test, in other words.

Dom – Strange as it may seem, whatever joke you tell us, I doubt you'll get anyone to laugh.

Kim – Why not?

Dom – Because to laugh, you need good company, and everyone has to be willing.

Pat – You're basically telling us that the first person to laugh is going to a re-education camp.

Dom – Or worse, is going to be executed.

Kim – How did you guess?

Pat – I'm dying laughing already...

Kim – Well, I'll tell you my story anyway.

Max – We're listening, Chief.

Kim – A lunatic finds a mirror. He looks into it, sees his face and says, "That idiot looks familiar." Another lunatic takes the mirror, looks into it and says, "Of course he does. It's me."

Max – That's completely stupid.

Kim – That's what makes it funny, isn't it? I mean, I think it is.

Dom – It depends how you tell it.

Pat – And more importantly, who's telling it.

Kim – You think so?

Pat – Knowing you'll be executed if you laugh doesn't exactly help.

Kim – Does it not?

Pat – No.

Kim – I see what you mean... All right, let's say the first one to laugh gets a slap! Who wants to play with me?

The others say nothing.

Max – I'll play with you, Chief.

Kim – Right... If you laugh, you lose...

They each take a glass of water and drink, holding the water in their mouths. Then they take hold of each other's chins. For a long time they stand motionless and silent, looking each other squarely in the eye with very serious expressions. The others watch in bewilderment. Gradually Max begins to smile, then bursts out laughing, spraying the water in his mouth all over Kim's face. Laughter is infectious, and everyone else bursts out laughing too.

Kim – So everyone's infected now...

Dom – He's one of us! He's laughing with the rest of us!

Kim *(To Max)* – Right, you really are in quarantine now.

Max tries to compose himself.

Max – Yes, Chief.

But Max cannot stop laughing.

Kim – You find that funny?

Max – Not at all! Well, yes, but...

Dom – You see? You can be funny too when you want to be. Or rather, when you don't want to be...

They all continue laughing, rather hysterically. Kim seems deeply disturbed, almost frightened by the laughter.

Kim – I order you to stop laughing!

But the others are overcome by laughter and cannot stop. Kim puts her hands over her ears and rushes out. Dom, Pat and Max gradually stop laughing.

Dom – So, how does it feel?

Max – Laughing? I don't know... I thought it would hurt. Actually, it's quite pleasant.

Pat – Very pleasant...

Max – It's certainly a relief.

Dom – Imagine, there was a time when you were allowed to laugh in public...

Pat – How did things get this bad?

Dom – It started a very long time ago, and it happened gradually. First they banned laughter about certain subjects. Religion, to begin with...

Max – And the authorities, of course.

Dom – Then they made the Supreme Leader into a new God, and all criticism became blasphemy.

Max – Alcohol was banned too, because people are more inclined to laugh when they're drunk.

Dom – The Authority drew up a list of things you could still laugh at. As the years went by, the list got shorter and shorter.

Max – In the end they decided the simplest thing was to ban laughter altogether.

Dom – And that's how, little by little, from not being allowed to laugh at everything, we ended up not being allowed to laugh at anything...

Max – Eventually you weren't even allowed to laugh at yourself...

Dom – Even the poor weren't allowed to laugh at their own misfortunes.

Pat – But how did they enforce the ban?

Dom – The authorities classified laughter as a mental illness. Anyone caught laughing was immediately locked up.

Max – And naturally, they got rid of anything that might make people laugh.

Dom – Newspapers were banned, theatres were closed, and everyone learnt to censor themselves...

Max – Clowns, comedians and actors were regarded as dangerous terrorists.

Dom – Laughter was treated like leprosy in the old days. People were walled up alive in their homes because someone had heard them laughing.

Max – They also made the entire population wear masks.

Dom – Supposedly to protect them from a virus. Actually, it was so you couldn't see so much as a smile on anyone's face. The masks became muzzles.

Max – As in some religions, back in the day.

Dom – Before the Authority became the one and only religion.

Max – Gradually, nobody could be heard laughing any more.

Dom – Of course, in banning laughter they also banned criticism and protest.

Max – No more labour disputes, no more political debates. And therefore no more elections.

Dom – As was already the case in plenty of secular or religious dictatorships.

Max – The Authority thought it had wiped out this scourge for good. But a few isolated cases have emerged again recently. You're among them.

Pat – What are they going to do to us? Kill us?

Max – Before getting rid of you, since they consider you unrepentant laughers and therefore incurable, they wanted to use you in some experiments.

Pat – Experiments?

Max – To study the audience's reaction to you, monitor how the infection spreads and see what havoc laughter can wreak among a healthy population.

Pat looks at the audience.

Pat – So we were supposed to make them laugh?

Dom – All we know is a couple of bad jokes...

Pat – We'll have to learn all over again how to laugh, and how to make people laugh.

A pause.

Max – But what happens if the Supreme Leader abandons us?

Dom – It won't be the end of the world. It'll be a new beginning. Trainers will become teachers again. Reformatters will go back to being politicians...

Max – And informers like me? I can't do anything! What will become of me?

Dom – If you can't do anything, you can always become an actor.

Blackout.

Act 4

Pat paces anxiously. She steps towards the audience.

Pat – Don't worry, you'll be released soon too. At least I hope so...

Dom enters.

Dom – Well? Any news?

Pat – Still nothing. I thought I heard a bit of a commotion outside, but the sound is very muffled.

Dom – Theatres are always very well soundproofed.

Pat – Where's our spy got to?

Dom – He's finishing off the pizzas...

Pat – We're still locked up here, cut off from the world. We haven't had any news from outside for days.

Dom – When the freezer's empty, we'll starve to death. And we thought we'd die laughing...

Pat – Do you think we'll get out of here alive?

Dom – Weren't we dead already, before they put us in quarantine...?

Pat – You're right. The only real disease we've been suffering from for years is terminal doom and gloom.

Dom – And laughter might just be the antidote.

Max returns.

Max – I can hear strange noises outside... Can't you?

Dom – No...

All three listen intently.

Pat – Oh, yes, maybe... It's coming from a long way off...

Dom – It sounds like... explosions, doesn't it?

Max – Explosions? Explosions of laughter, then.

Kim returns, looking distraught and with her clothes in disarray. She carries a NO LAUGHING sign: a laughing emoji printed on paper attached to a circular red-bordered frame, with a red line through it.

Max – You don't look well, Chief. What's happened?

Kim – There's been a new development...

Max – Not a good one, by the looks of it.

Kim – Depends for whom.

Max – Is the epidemic spreading?

Kim – Unfortunately, it's become a global pandemic. An outbreak of laughter that's completely out of control. Mass hysteria. Bursts of laughter are being reported all over the city.

Max – Is it that serious?

Kim – Laughter is breaking out on every street corner. The police are completely overwhelmed. Worse still, many officers have already died laughing... Their jaws are coming unhinged! They're splitting their sides! They're doubled up! They're collapsing in fits! They're laughing like maniacs! They're laughing their heads off! They're rolling on the ground! They're wetting themselves! They're crying with laughter!

Max – Oh, so you can cry with laughter too?

Kim – Have you heard the saying "The more the merrier"?

Max – No.

Kim – Well, I can tell you the whole world has gone mad with laughter!

Dom – Then the revolution has begun...

Kim – Our entire system is collapsing. The authorities have resigned and the Supreme Leader has fled the country.

Max – The Supreme Leader? Where to?

Kim – He's applied for political asylum at the Vatican. At least he won't run the risk of dying laughing there.

Pat – And what are you going to do with us?

Kim – There's no point keeping you in quarantine any longer. You're free.

Dom – At last... I can't wait to see it. People laughing in the streets, on public transport, and perhaps tomorrow in cinemas and theatres too.

Kim – I don't find it funny at all.

Pat – Come on! Have a good laugh with us!

Dom – Have you heard this one? There's this madman who wants to ban laughter all over the world...

Max – And in the end he's the one who chokes with laughter.

The others laugh uproariously. Kim herself begins to laugh nervously. Her laughter soon develops into convulsions and she collapses. Pat bends over her.

Pat – She's dead! So you really can die laughing?

Max – It's something we've observed recently. Officials of the Authority drop dead when exposed to a thunderous roar of laughter.

Dom – That's why they were so desperate to contain the epidemic.

Pat *(To Max)* – But you haven't died.

Max – Probably because I'd stopped believing in it already...

Dom – You were vaccinated, in a way. Just like us!

Pat – So we're free?

Dom – Free to laugh at anything again!

Pat – And we thought we'd been brought here because of bird flu or some new supervirus.

Max – What are we going to do now?

Dom – We'll learn to laugh again. We'll learn to live again.

Pat – It frightens me a little...

Dom – That's normal. When slaves are first set free, they don't know what to do with their freedom.

Max – Could I start drinking again?

Pat – Of course! But perhaps you won't even need to.

Max – Wonderful! But it does make your head spin a bit.

Dom – Yes... We're the doves left behind by a dead magician.

Max – What does that mean?

Dom – We came into being through a magic trick. But the magician who conjured us up out of nothing is gone. We know nothing of the illusion that gave us life, and we're no longer quite sure what to do with our wings...

Pat – That's beautiful.

Dom – It's poetry.

Pat – Poetry?

Dom – Something else they'd banned.

Pat – Are there many other things like that?

Dom – Lots of them! The orgasm, for instance. You don't know what that is either?

Pat – As I told you, I'm married...

Dom – I'll show you later, in private... You'll see. An orgasm is to love what laughter is to intelligence, or a sneeze to a cold. It doesn't cure anything, but it's a great relief at the time.

Kim regains consciousness.

Pat – Oh, she doesn't seem to be quite dead after all.

Max – She probably didn't believe in it much any more either.

Kim – What happened to me?

Pat – You've had a fit of laughter. Don't worry, you'll be all right now.

Max – What about the audience? We'd forgotten them.

Dom – Now that we can make them laugh again without fear of punishment...

Max – We're allowed to, Chief?

Kim – We're in a theatre, after all.

Dom – Then we'll have to come up with some new jokes.

Kim – Yes, because I still don't get that story about the lunatics looking in a mirror...

Dom – Actually, it's a symbolic story.

Kim – Symbolic? What's that supposed to mean?

Dom – Humour is a mirror. The mirror actors hold up to the audience so they can laugh at their own shortcomings.

Pat – And we can all recognise ourselves in that mirror.

Dom – All of us. Except the lunatics, who'd rather smash the mirror than look at the grotesque face it reflects back at them.

Max – Then let's laugh!

Dom – It's our freedom. And to quote a humourist from the last century: Freedom is the one thing that wears out when you don't use it.

Pat – Let's laugh together, but let's laugh at everything...

Max – Because if we can't laugh at everything today, tomorrow we won't be able to laugh at all.

Max grabs the NO LAUGHING sign and pushes it down over Kim's head. They all burst into loud laughter, which may be amplified with prerecorded laughter.

Blackout.

End

About the author

Born in 1955 in Auvers-sur-Oise (France), Jean-Pierre Martinez first took to the stage as a drummer in several rock bands before becoming a semiologist in advertising. He then worked as a television screenwriter before returning to the stage as a playwright. He has written around a hundred scripts for television and 123 plays, some of which have become classics (*Friday the 13th, Strip Poker*). His plays have been performed in more than 100 countries and translated into around 50 languages.

Amateur and professional theatre groups looking for plays to perform can download Jean-Pierre Martinez's plays for free from his websites :

https://jeanpierremartinez.net/

https://comediatheque.net/

However, performance rights, which constitute fair compensation for the author's work, are a legal obligation. Whether you are an amateur or a professional, you must request authorization to perform the play and pay the corresponding royalties for the production.

Jean-Pierre Martinez is represented by the Society of Dramatic Authors and Composers (SACD).

To get in touch with Jean-Pierre Martinez and request authorization to perform one of his works, please use the contact form on his websites.

Jean-Pierre Martinez recently returned to music, writing original songs inspired by his poems and plays.

With **Jean-Pierre Martinez Music**, he extends that creative universe through original songs: short stories in musical form, humorous or melancholy, in which each song sometimes becomes a miniature theatrical scene.

https://jeanpierremartinezmusic.com/

Other plays by the same author translated in English:

Monologues

Happy Dogs
Like a fish in the air
Short Stories

Comedies for 2

A Thwarted Vocation
EuroStar
Heads and Tails
Him and Her
Is there a pilot in the audience?
Last chance encounter
New Year's Eve at the Morgue
Not even dead
Pentimento
Preliminaries
Running on empty
Russian Roulette at the Kremlin
The Costa Mucho Castaways
The Dressing Gown
The Joker
The Rope
The Window across the courtyard

Comedies for 3

A brief moment of eternity
A simple business dinner
An innocent little murder
Cards on the Table
Cheaters
Crash Zone
Fragile, Handle with care
Friday the 13th
Horizons
Ménage à trois
One small step for a woman, one giant leap backward for Mankind
The Ways of Chance

Comedies for 4

A Cuckoo's nest
A hell of a night
A Skeleton in the Closet
Back to stage
Bed and Breakfast
Casket for two
Crisis and Punishment
Déjà vu
Family Portrait
Family Tree
Four stars
Friday the 13th
Gay friendly
Hangover
Happy Hour
How to get rid of your best friends
Is there a critic in the audience?
Is there an author in the audience?
Just a moment before the end of the world
Lovestruck at Swindlemore Hall
One marriage out of two
Perfect In-laws
Quarantine
Requiem for a Stradivarius
Strip Poker
Surviving Mankind
The Deal
The Fishbowl
The Perfect Son-in-Law
The Pyramids
The Smell of Money
The Tourists
The Worst Best Man Ever

Comedies for 5 to 6

All's well that starts badly
Christmas Eve at the Police Station
Crisis and Punishment
Critical but Stable
Dead End Boulevard
In lieu of flowers...
King of Fools
The Castaways of New Year's Eve
The President's Draw
The Rebels
Traffic Jam on Graveyard Lane

Comedies for 7 or more

At the bar counter
Backstage Comedy
Blue Flamingos
Check to the Kings
Christmas Eve at the Police Station
False exit
In flagrante delirium
Just like a Christmas movie
Miracle at Saint Mary Juana Abbey
Music does not always soothe ...
Neighbours' Day
Nicotine
Of Vegetables and Books
Offside
Open Hearts
Reality Show
Save our Savings
Special Dedication
Stories and Prehistories
Such a lovely village
The House of Our Dreams
The Jackpot
The Performance is not cancelled
The Most Beautiful Village in France
The Worst Village in England
Welcome aboard!
White Coats, Dark Humour

Collection of sketches

Apocalypse
Backstage Bits
Blackouts
Don't panic!
Dramedies
Enough is Enough
Ethan and Eve
Every Colour under the Sun
For real and for fun
Funny Stories
Him and Her
Hold on, Butterfly
Killer Sketches
Lockdown Shorts
Lost time Chronicles
Memoirs of a Suitcase
No Sense Off Limits
Now and then
Of Animals and Men
Open Hearts
Open Letters
Park Bench Shorts
Sidewalk Chronicles
Stage Briefs
Stories to die for

All of Jean-Pierre Martinez's plays can be downloaded

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