**BRO’S**

A Short Play by James McDermott

**Characters**

**Nemo** *eighteen*

**Daz** *seventeen*

**Setting**

Present day. Sheringham Steam Railway Station, North Norfolk.

*Dusk.*

*Sheringham Steam Railway Station*, *North Norfolk.*

*The chug, chug, chug of the steam train as it arrives in the station.*

**NEMO** *alone on the platform.*

*He looks at the suitcase at his feet.*

*He looks off at the waiting train.*

*He looks back at his suitcase.*

*The train screams as it lets out steam.*

**NEMO** *picks up his suitcase and is about to make his way to board the train when…*

**DAZ** *runs on.*

*Eye contact.*

**NEMO** I’ve gotta go.

**DAZ** Nemo.

**NEMO** I’ve got a train to catch.

**DAZ** Don’t leave for ten minutes.

**NEMO** I don’t wanna talk to you Darren.

**DAZ** I don’t want ya to go.

Without saying bye. Yeah… Don’t want ya to go without saying bye.

**NEMO** Supposed to say bye last night Darren.

**DAZ** Stop calling me Darren. Only call me Darren when ya pissed at me.

**NEMO** I am pissed at you!

‘Chippy Mr Whippy and a box of bevs. Just like old times lad, perfect way to say ta-ra. Seven o’clock, Sunday night, meet on Sheringham beach. Sound’.

I sat there til nine o’clock with two portions of chips peas and jumbo sausage. And you didn’t text til this morning to say you weren’t coming.

**DAZ** Text ya last night mate. If you only got it this morning that’s Norfolk’s fault not mine.

**NEMO** I’ve got a train to catch.

**DAZ** We can’t leave things like this.

**NEMO** I didn’t wanna leave things like this. I wanted to see you last night.

**DAZ** I’m sorry alright? I just couldn’t come out mate.

**NEMO** Cos you’d rather see a girl you’ve known ten minutes than see-off a mate you’ve known ten years?

**DAZ** Cos I couldn’t say bye to ya could I?

**DAZ** *stares at his trainers.*

Me best mate. And I don’t want ya to go.

And I don’t think you wanna go either.

*Eye contact.*

*A whistle from the train.*

**NEMO** I’ve got a train to catch.

**DAZ** Not if ya don’t wanna go.

**NEMO** Not this again.

**DAZ** Said yourself ya weren’t sure. Said yourself you’ll miss me and the boys. Miss spending days in arcades, nights pissed in pubs, weekends on the beach.

**NEMO** Lads on tour.

**DAZ** Lads on tour. Said yourself ya could stay at home and go uni in Norwich.

**NEMO** I know I did but… Why go uni in Norwich when I can go uni in London?

**DAZ** What’s London got Norfolk ain’t?

**NEMO** You what?

**DAZ** You heard. Sun.

**NEMO** Where?

**DAZ** Sea.

**NEMO** Colour of tea.

**DAZ** Sand.

**NEMO** Shingle.

**DAZ** Fresh air, fairground, fish and chips. What more d’ya want?

**NEMO** Boys. Bars. Regular buses. Look at this: steam train to Norwich every three hours. Bus to Hunstanton every three days. I wanna get out Daz. Get on. Be someone.

**DAZ** You’re someone round here mate. You’re the actor. You’re the gay. You’re Nemo.

In London, you’ll be just another actor. Just another gay. Neil Morrissey.

Cos people at uni might not call you Nemo mate. They won’t know you love the sea. They won’t know you abbreviated your name cos you got sick of people asking if you still see Martin Clunes. Better off staying in Sheringham with mates who do know.

**NEMO** I don’t wanna stay in Sheringham Daz. Nothing to do, nothing to see, nowhere to go.

**DAZ** Miles of coast: how’s there nowhere to go? Can see the world from here if you look out to sea.

**NEMO** Don’t wanna just see the world from here. I actually wanna see the world. I want love and life and sex to not just be things I read about. I want art museums not boat museums. Shopping arcades not amusement arcades. Gay clubs not rummy clubs. I wanna meet someone.

**DAZ** Could meet someone round here.

**NEMO** Where? Who?

**DAZ** *stares at his trainers.*

**DAZ** Get on Grindr. Whole world’s a gay bar now.

**NEMO** But I can’t get in. Cos there’s no 4G in Norfolk. How am I gonna meet anyone when round here the closest thing to a gay scene is a paedophile ring?

**DAZ** There is a gay scene. You just haven’t explored it cos you think London’s where it’s at. But in London right, you’ll be one of shit loads of shirt lifters all chasing the same fellas. In Norfolk, you’re the only gay in the village mate. Less competition. First dibs on the D. Your milkshake could bring all the boys to the yard but you won’t put yourself out there and give em a taste. So if you’re running away for fellas and phone signal

**NEMO** I’m not running away from anything. I’m running to something. Career. Culture. No theatre round here.

**DAZ** Sheringham Little Theatre.

**NEMO** No jobs in theatre round here.

**DAZ** They need a cleaner.

**NEMO** Can’t make it as an actor round here can I?

**DAZ** Gotta be crème de menthe to make it as actor in London mate.

**NEMO** I am.

**DAZ** You’re gonna look like a right bell-end if you get to uni and you’re shit.

**NEMO** What?

**DAZ** They’ve all had like proper good training, all be from proper good places. They’ll have done Crucible, Macbeth, Pride and Prejudice at National Youth Theatre. You’ve done three farces, two pantos and The Lion King at Sheringham Little Theatre. They’ve played Shakespeare. You’ve played Pumba.

**NEMO** Why you being a dick? And what do you know about drama? When I asked for advice about audition speeches, you told me to do *Breaking Bad* for my contemporary, *Game Of Thrones* for my classical.

**DAZ** Don’t know owt bout drama mate. But I know you’ll have better time staying here with me than ya will going there.

**NEMO** Wasting days in arcades trying to win enough shrapnel for the chippy a Mr Whippy and a box of bevs? Spending weekends pissed in pubs shouting shit at plasma screens?

**DAZ** Yes mate.

**NEMO** I want more from life than that Daz.

**DAZ** Titting about with mates, sharing tinnies, ciggies, stories. That is life lad.

**NEMO** That’s your life Daz. I wanna go to the theatre, drink Bollinger, eat Brie.

**DAZ** Why? That’s not you.

**NEMO** Then you don’t know me.

**DAZ** Known you ten years mate.

**NEMO** That’s not the same is it? You know what I drink not what I think, what I feel. Cos you never ask. You only talk to me when you want advice about girls. Only want to see me when girls are busy. Only friends cos we live on same street as each other not cos we’re same as each other. I’m not like you Daz. Living for the weekend, for Fosters and fanny and football. I’m cultured. I’m bohemian. I’m brilliant. And at uni, I’ll be living the dream.

**DAZ** Your dream or your Mum’s?

**NEMO** What?

**DAZ** She wanted to go uni to be a performer didn’t she? Then she got preggers, had you, bang goes dream. Then you had to be in every school play. You had to go every drama club.

**NEMO** I never had to go. I went cos I wanted to go. Cos I loved it.

**DAZ** Cos ya loved kissing boys loved dressing up not cos ya loved drama.

**NEMO** Why you doing this?

**DAZ** Why *you* doing this? Why ya reallygoing?

**NEMO** Cos I wanna make something of myself. And cos I’m good. Everyone tells me how good I am.

**DAZ** So ya doing this for everyone else?

**NEMO** I’m doing this for Mum. For me. For me and for Mum. Cos she’s always, I’ve always wanted to do this. So I don’t wanna let her down. Don’t wanna let myself down. I don’t wanna do a Dad and bottle it instead of manning up and making something of myself.

**DAZ** Ya Dad only bottled it cos he hadn’t done what he wanted with his life.

**NEMO** You didn’t know him Daz so shut the fuck up.

**DAZ** But I know you mate. And I know ya don’t really want this.

*Beat.*

**NEMO** I see why you’re doing this. You’re just jealous I’m doing something with my life.

**DAZ** Doing something with my life.

**NEMO** You sell kebabs.

**DAZ** How much you earn?

**NEMO** You drive a moped.

**DAZ** What transport you got?

**NEMO** You don’t have any hobbies.

**DAZ** I get tattoos.

**NEMO** And you’re moving in above a chip shop with a girl you’ve known ten minutes.

**DAZ** Not anymore. Ending it aren’t I?

**NEMO** Since when?

**DAZ** Since last night. Nother reason I couldn’t make ya leaving do.

**NEMO** I thought you wanted to move in with her?

**DAZ** She wants me to. Dad wants me to. But I don’t want to. So I’m ending it cos I don’t wanna end up like you: living life I don’t wanna live just to please other people.

**NEMO** But you love her.

**DAZ** Don’t love her. Don’t be a bell-end. I was horny, she was there. And besides…

Think I love someone else don’t I?

**NEMO** Who?

 *A whistle from the steam train.*

**DAZ** *stares at his trainers.*

**NEMO** *stares at Daz…*

**DAZ** You’ll miss ya train.

Go. Go on.

*Beat.*

**NEMO** See ya then.

**DAZ** See ya.

**NEMO** Love ya.

**DAZ** Love you an’ all.

**NEMO** As a mate?

**DAZ** What?

**NEMO** Not like… I love you?

**DAZ** Nah.

**NEMO** Right.

**DAZ** No…

**NEMO** Right then.

**DAZ** I dunno. I dunno alright? Fucking hell I dunno what I feel…

Look, go on, piss off.

**NEMO** You don’t know what you feel?

**DAZ** Why d’ya think I couldn’t say bye? Why d’ya think I tried everything stop ya leaving?

**NEMO** Cos I’m your best mate not cos

**DAZ** Why d’ya think I broke up with Stace?

*Beat.*

**NEMO** No but Daz, what the, you’re not

**DAZ** I know I’m not. Don’t love blokes do I? But I think I love you mate.

**NEMO** As a best mate. What you feel it’s, it’s bromance not romance.

**DAZ** Don’t tell me what I feel. Know what I’ve tried to stop feeling. Isn’t bromance alright?

*Silence.*

*They just stand staring at each other.*

**DAZ** Say something then.

**NEMO** What do you want me to say?

**DAZ** I dunno do I? That you’ll, I dunno lad, that you’ll defer? Defer and let’s try something.

**NEMO** Mum deferred when Dad said he loved her. Then Dad got her pregnant, ran away.

**DAZ** I’m not gonna get ya pregnant mate.

**NEMO** But you’ll run away. Once you’ve explored, got bored. You’ll find another Stacey.

*Another whistle from the steam train.*

**NEMO** I’ve gotta go.

**DAZ** You haven’t.

**NEMO** This isn’t funny Daz. This is cruel. You know how I feel about you.

**DAZ** I feel same mate.

**NEMO** Then why didn’t you tell me sooner?

**DAZ** Only just told myself.

**NEMO** You’re just saying all this cos you’re jealous I’m getting out and getting on.

**DAZ** Nemo, mate, I’m not.

**NEMO** I don’t believe you.

**DAZ** Swear on my life. Swear on our friendship.

*Eye contact.*

*A whistle from the steam train.*

**NEMO** I’ve gotta get my train. I can’t deal with this right now Daz.

**DAZ** Mate…

**NEMO** Why did you have to tell me this?

**DAZ** Right piss off then. Go on then piss off get your train. Go on. Go.

**DAZ** *and* **NEMO** *lock eyes.*

**NEMO** *picks up his suitcase.*

*Hold the stare, the silence…*

*The steam train screams.*

*Lights.*