

Hold Out Your Hand

By Chris Thorpe
Copyright August 2020
For Wonder Fools as part of Positive Stories For Negative Times



WRITER'S NOTE:

A text for as many people as there are. Say it in your own voices. Join the lines end to end when they need it. When it says 'silence', don't be afraid to take your time, but remember all silences aren't as long as each other. When the text asks you to share something personal – only go as far as you feel comfortable going – the safer and more confident you feel, the better this works.

Hey

Hey there

Hey

My name's (*name*)

Say that again

We're talking over each other

Let's take turns, just this once

(Silence. Then in perfect unison.)

Hey

My name's-

(Everyone's names in perfect unison)

My name's

(Everyone's name, one after the other)

(Silence)

This is a play

Kind of

Also not a play

Let's not worry about what this kind of thing's called

What we might have started to call it

This thing we've always done

When we get together

Whatever we've started to call 'together'

And some of us watch and listen

And some of us speak and listen

Whatever we're calling this right now

This is one of those

It's meant to take place

Wherever it takes place

It's meant to take place

(Gesture to the other screens/the room)

Here

Which could mean you're wherever you are

And everyone else is wherever they are

Joining together our 'here's to make a single 'here'

Bolting them edge to edge on a screen

Like self-assembly plastic storage boxes

For human heads

[The bit between these square brackets is an optional section you can use if everyone's performing remotely-

And if that's true

Then let's tell you about

Our own worlds outside these boxes

I'm in *(what town or room are you in?)* and it's *(one words to describe it)*

The optional section ends here]

Or, maybe even, just maybe

That we're all in the same big box

All in the same air

That I can look you in your actual eye

Your actual human glistening, sticky-to-the-touch, see-it-blink *human eye*

Imagine that, if that's not what we're doing

If we're still at the heads-in-boxes stage

Imagine us all in that space, how it's going to feel

When it finally happens

Cos it *will* happen

And if it has happened
If we *are* all together in a room
With air and eyes, and all the sounds
The small sounds of bodies that microphones don't notice
And speakers don't transmit
Take a moment to think back to the time
That lost age, of months or weeks or even just days ago
When we couldn't do this
When our bodies were quiet
Or at least made noises only we could hear
When maybe the only clue to our actual existence
Our real world existence
Was when we froze, or glitched
Or had to leave and return while we stayed in the exact same place
(Long silence)