

EXTRACT

Jammed

a short play

By

Alex Broun

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Characters

CRESSIDA

DANNY

Time

Day.

Setting

A photocopying store.

(NOTE TO DIRECTORS: Please feel free to localise place names and settings.)

Jammed

Photocopying store. Two machines. (PLEASE NOTE: These can be mimed or represented by tables.)

*At one we find **CRESSIDA**, she is slowly, painstakingly placing a number of objects on the glass – trying to fit all the objects into one photocopy.*

DANNY enters. He smiles at **CRESSIDA**. He pulls out a large ream of paper from his satchel. He places it on the feeder, programmes the copier and presses the copy button.

The machine jams.

DANNY: Bugger.

DANNY OPENS THE MACHINE AND TRIES TO FIX THE JAMMED PAPER.

CRESSIDA: You're doing a lot of copying.

DANNY: It's a play.

CRESSIDA: Who by?

DANNY: Me.

CRESSIDA: It looks long.

DANNY: It's an epic. Seven acts. Runs over four hours.

CRESSIDA: (EXAMINING PLAY) And one-sided too.

DANNY: The actors prefer it like that, when they're doing a moved-reading. It's on next week. You should come.

CRESSIDA: How many actors?

DANNY: Nineteen. There's a bit of doubling.

CRESSIDA: Does every actor get their own copy?

DANNY: Absolutely. Got my copying card all juiced up. Over a hundred bucks.

CRESSIDA: (DEFEATED) Is that all?

DANNY: I hope.

CRESSIDA: (LOOKING AT PLAY) So you're going to photocopy this whole play nineteen times.

DANNY: Twenty one. One for the director and one for *moi*. I'll hold on to the original – for future productions. Lavinia Nicholas is directing. Have you heard of her? Young but very talented. Quite a coup. You should come along. I'll give you a flyer.

CRESSIDA: That photocopied too.

DANNY: (HOLDING OUT COLOUR FLYER) Printed. It costs a bit more but if you don't value your work, who will?

CRESSIDA: How many people come to this reading?

DANNY: Venue holds eighty six but I'm hoping for around fifty. Fifty one with you.

CRESSIDA: How many nights?

DANNY: Just one – for now. But who knows, first stop the play reading, next stop Broadway.

CRESSIDA: So you're photocopying all this just so fifty people –

DANNY: (HOLDING OUT FLYER) Fifty-one.

CRESSIDA: Can hear your play read?

DANNY: And watch. It's a moved reading. (DEMONSTRATING) The actors move around acting out the stage directions, script in hand. It's the only way to really see the play come to life. (HOLDING OUT HAND) I'm Danny by the way.

CRESSIDA: (SHAKING HANDS) Cressida.

DANNY: Cressida. That's a beautiful name. Mind if I use it as a character in my next play.

CRESSIDA: As long as it's not as long as this one. How many pages is it?

DANNY: One hundred and forty six.

CRESSIDA: And you're copying it twenty-one times.

DANNY: You got it.

CRESSIDA: Well, good luck with that.

CRESSIDA GOES BACK TO HER MACHINE. SHE TAKES A PENCIL AND SMALL BROWN NOTEPAD FROM HER BAG. SHE BEGINS TO MAKE A FEW CALCULATIONS.

DANNY: Would you like to hear what it's about?

CRESSIDA CONTINUES TO CALCULATE.

DANNY: The lead character is called Daniel. People may think it's autobiographical but I assure you it's not. He's Daniel while my name is Danny. He's a poet – I'm a playwright. He lives in Stanmore, I live in Enmore. Totally different. Anyway it's about his search for love – and how he asks out twenty-four women over a period of six months who all turn him down. As if that would happen to me. Ha! That's why we have such a large cast. They have to play all the women. But then Daniel meets a beautiful girl called Cressida – *(correcting himself)* Caroline – in a photocopy store – *(correcting himself)* hardware store and it's definitely –

CRESSIDA: Three thousand and sixty six.

DANNY: Sorry.

CRESSIDA: You are going to use three thousand and sixty six sheets of paper. That's over eight reams of paper.

DANNY: Like I said – it's a long play.

CRESSIDA: Do you know that it takes seventeen trees to make one tonne of paper?

DANNY: Eight reams is hardly a tonne.

CRESSIDA: It's still a lot.

DANNY: I thought they used re-cycled paper here.

CRESSIDA: Not completely re-cycled. Re-cycled Pure White. Everybody's got to have nice white paper.