

# EXTRACT

# THE PROBLEM WITH LANGUAGE

a short play

by

Alex Broun

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**Cast**

LISHA

MARK

**Setting**

Theatre Foyer.

**Time**

Interval.

**The Problem With Language by Alex Broun**

Foyer. Interval. **MARK** approaches **LISHA**.

MARK: Hi.

LISHA: Hello again.

PAUSE.

MARK: Enjoy the first act?

LISHA: Absolutely. And you?

MARK: Not really.

LISHA: Oh well. Maybe Act Two.

MARK: Yes. (PAUSE) Listen ... about before, I didn't mean to upset you.

LISHA: You didn't.

MARK: I wasn't thinking.

LISHA: I've forgotten already.

MARK: It's just that you walked away quite quickly – I thought I'd upset you.

LISHA: You didn't.

MARK: Then why did you walk away quickly?

LISHA: My sushi wrapper. Had to put it in the bin.

MARK: Before you went in?

**LISHA** NODS.

MARK: Well I'm glad. (PAUSE) That's why I didn't enjoy the first act. I kept thinking that I'd upset you. I felt ... bad.

LISA: But you didn't upset me.

MARK: Still it was thoughtless.

LISHA: No big deal.

MARK: I just didn't like it.

LISHA: As you said.

MARK: But that's just my opinion. Other people ...

LISHA: Did.

MARK: I mean there was a lot of applause. And you were great – as usual.

LISHA: Thanks.

MARK: But as for the whole piece – it just didn't grab me.

LISHA: As you said.

MARK: I was actually quite surprised it won.

LISHA: But it did.

PAUSE.

MARK: Is Max your boyfriend?

LISHA: (LAUGHING) No.

MARK: I thought that might explain why you got so ... upset.

LISHA: I didn't get upset.

MARK: I mean if he was your boyfriend and I told you I didn't like his short film then naturally you would get pretty upset. I didn't think about that ... possibility and I should have.

PAUSE.

LISHA: Max is not my boyfriend.

MARK: No?

LISHA: But he is my friend. And if – if – I did get a bit upset when you said his film was bad – which I didn't – then I would be perfectly within my rights to do so.

MARK: Completely.

LISHA: But like I said. I didn't.

PAUSE.

MARK: Like.

LISHA: Yes. Like I said.

MARK: No. I mean me.

LISHA: You?

MARK: Not bad.

LISHA: What?

MARK: I said like. Me.

LISHA: Are you asking me if I ...?

MARK: I said I didn't *like* Max's film. Not that it was a *bad* film.

LISHA: Well, that's not what I heard.