

EXTRACT

The Salsa Plays

Seven short plays by Alex Broun and the Short+Sweet Script Development Group (Bobbi-lea Dionysius, Ingrid Gang, Justyna Kiczor, Kate Prestt, Daphne Quah, Janeen Sonsie and Lara Woolf.)

PLEASE NOTE:

THIS PLAY SCRIPT HAS BEEN DOWNLOADED FROM www.alexbroun.com

BY AGREEING TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF www.alexbroun.com AND PAYING THE DOWNLOAD FEE YOU ARE PERMITTED TO PERFORM THIS PLAY **ROYALTY FREE** ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD FOR A PERIOD OF **12 MONTHS FROM THE DATE OF DOWNLOAD.**

IF YOU DO PERFORM THIS PLAY PLEASE VISIT OUR **RECORD A PRODUCTION** PAGE AND RECORD THE DETAILS OF YOUR PRODUCTION SO YOUR PRODUCTION CAN BE LISTED AMONGST THE THOUSANDS OF PRODUCTIONS OF ALEX'S WORK WORLDWIDE EVERY YEAR.

FOR ANY QUERIES PLEASE CONTACT THE AUTHOR ON
abroun@bigpond.net.au

The plays

Page no.

Waiting for Jacqueline

4

The Salsa Slur

14

Death in the Salsa Class

24

Lemon Tart

36

Salsa Party

47

The Competition Rehearsal

57

Dressing Room

67

Epilogue

76

Characters

ROBBIE	Female Owner of a small Salsa School
JAMES	Her son
JACQUELINE	A teacher at the School
RICARDO	The star dancer
SASHA	Quiet
JENNIFER	A successful business-woman
SUE	A good dancer
MARY	A new student
PAULA	Enjoys dancing
NATALIE	Asian
BERNIE	A regular student

Settings

The studio of a rundown Salsa School; a dressing room; a café;
Mary's apartment

Time

The present

Waiting for Jacqueline

The Salsa School. Dance Studio. Night.

Lights up. RICARDO is dancing alone in front of a mirror. He stops and goes to a bag nearby. He takes out a brush and brushes his hair. He goes back to the mirror and dances again. Still not right. He stops and goes back to the bag. He takes out a bandana and ties it on his head. He goes back to the mirror. Ta da! He dances again.

MARY enters.

MARY: Hi.

RICARDO: *Buonas Noches.*

MARY: Oh that's nice, that's Spanish ... and it's a

RICARDO: *Clase de salsa.*

MARY COMES OVER TO RICARDO. THEY STAND WAITING.

MARY: So, it's just us?

RICARDO: No the teacher's late. She's always late.

MARY: Oh, I'm Mary.

RICARDO: *Ricardo.*

MARY: Ricardo, that's Spanish too and Salsa comes from -

RICARDO: Cuba. Actually it's Bart. But I like to tell people it's Ricardo.

MARY: Why?

RICARDO: Bart the Salsa shark. Doesn't really have the same ring?

MARY: Great costume. I didn't know what to wear.

RICARDO: It's okay. You look ... kind of ...

MARY: What?

JENNIFER ENTERS, TALKING ON THE PHONE. SHE WAVES TO MARY AND RICARDO.

JENNIFER: Get her to fax it to the office and I'll look at in the morning./No I can't come back there now I've got something on./ Something. Just get her to fax it.

JENNIFER HANGS UP. SHE PUTS HER PHONE AWAY.

RICARDO: (TO MARY) That bit about my real name -

HE HOLDS A FINGER OVER HIS MOUTH. MARY NODS. RICARDO DANCES AWAY AND CONTINUES TO GO THROUGH SOME STEPS.

JENNIFER: I see there was no need to hurry.

MARY: Guess not.

JENNIFER: I don't believe we've ...

MARY: Mary. New.

JENNIFER: (EXTENDING HAND) Jennifer. Wishart.

MARY: No, I mean I'm new. Not I'm Mary New.

JENNIFER: I see. Well new or not - you haven't missed much.

MARY: No?

MARY OPENS HER BAG. SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING.

JENNIFER: Our teacher's punctuality is spasmodic to say the least.

MARY: Busy?

JENNIFER: Just work.

MARY: Oh. What do you do?

SUE ENTERS.

SUE: Have we started?

RICARDO: *Por supuesto.*

SUE: What does that mean?

RICARDO: Of course not.

SUE: (NODS TO JENNIFER, THEN) Hi, I'm Sue.

MARY: I'm Mary.

SUE: Guess you've heard.

MARY: About what?

SUE: *Jac-que*-line - our teacher - always late.

MARY: Oh, yes.

SUE: You know, we should take bets.

MARY: Bets?

SUE: On when she'll turn up. Run a sweep. Five bucks in. I say fifteen minutes. Ricardo?

RICARDO: *Veinte minutos.*

SUE: How long is that?

RICARDO: Twenty.

SUE: (TO MARY) What about you?

MARY: I'm not sure.

SUE: Put you down for eighteen.

SUE LOOKS TO JENNIFER.

JENNIFER: Jennifer.

SUE: Sorry. How long?

JENNIFER: I don't bet.

JENNIFER SORTS SOME PAPERS IN HER BAG.

SUE: Suit yourself.

BERNIE: (ENTERING) Sorry I'm late.

SUE: You're not.

BERNIE: You mean ...?

SUE: Again. We're taking a pool on how long she'll be. Five bucks in.

BERNIE: Fifteen minutes.

SUE: Taken.

BERNIE: Twenty.

RICARDO: Taken.

BERNIE: Twenty one. I'm Bernie.

MARY: Mary. This is my first time.

BERNIE: For what? Don't worry – it only hurts a little bit.

SUE: If she ever arrives.

BERNIE: You live around here?

MARY: Ballarat.

BERNIE: Long way to come.

MARY: Sorry. I used to live in Ballarat. Now I live upstairs.

BERNIE: I didn't know they had –

MARY: They do.

BERNIE: How are they?

MARY: Small.

BERNIE: Hope the dance classes don't keep you awake?

SUE: Not much chance of that.

PAULA: (ENTERING) She's late again? I deliberately waited.

SUE: We're running a pool on how late she'll be. You in?

PAULA: Sure.

SUE: How long do you think?

PAULA: I'm going to go for a no show.

SUE: Big call.

PAULA: Third week. Later and later each week – so this time she won't come at all.

SUE: This is Mary. She's from Ballarat. And she's got the hots for Ricardo.

BERNIE: Join the queue.

PAULA: I'm Paula. And don't mind them.

SUE: Five minutes and counting.

NATALIE: (ENTERING) Sorry. I got held up at work again. Had to ...

SHE SEES JENNIFER AND TRAILS OFF.

PAULA: Don't worry. She isn't here. Of course.

SUE: You can take a bet though.

BERNIE: On when she'll get here.

NATALIE: Seventeen minutes.

PAULA: Nice number.

NATALIE: Lucky.

BERNIE: This is the new victim. Mary from Ballarat.

MARY: Well actually I'm from –

BERNIE: This is Natalie from –

NATALIE: Fitzroy. Hi.

BERNIE: So what are we going to do? Just sit around and wait.

SUE: Why doesn't Ricardo take the class?

RICARDO: Oh no. I couldn't.

PAULA: No that's a good idea. Come on Ricardo.

BERNIE: Yeah spunky.

RICARDO: If you insist. (HE GOES TO THE FRONT) Okay, let's get in a line and start warming up.

THE LADIES LINE UP WITH RICARDO IN FRONT.

RICARDO: Welcome to Studio Ricardo.

BERNIE & SUE: Nice arse.

THE LADIES LAUGH.

RICARDO: And 4, 5, 6 –

HE STARTS TO EXECUTE SOME STEPS. THE GIRLS START TO FOLLOW. JENNIFER'S PHONE RINGS.

SUE: Can't dance with the phone.

JENNIFER: It's mine. I'll just –

JENNIFER ANSWERS THE PHONE AND TAKES IT OFFSTAGE.

BERNIE: Well turn it off. It's a salsa lesson. Not the stock exchange.

NATALIE: A legal firm actually.

PAULA: They're colleagues.

NATALIE: She's my boss.

BERNIE: You mean you have to work with that stuck up –

NATALIE: She's okay. She's under a lot of pressure.

BERNIE: Then she should turn off her phone and relax.

NATALIE: I'm sure she will.

JENNIFER RE-ENTERS.

RICARDO: Okay, now we should pair up. Any volunteers?

SUE AND BERNIE PUT UP THEIR HANDS TOGETHER.

SUE AND BERNIE: Me!

BERNIE GRABS RICARDO. PAULA GOES TO PAIR UP WITH
NATALIE BUT NATALIE SMILES AND INDICATES MARY. SUE AND
PAULA PAIR UP.

SUE: I'll be the man.

BERNIE: That's not hard.

RICARDO STARTS TO LEAD SOME STEPS. THE LADIES FOLLOW.

RICARDO: And ...

JENNIFER PUTS HER PHONE BACK IN THE BAG AND TURNS TO SEE
SHE IS WITHOUT A PARTNER.

MARY NOTICES THIS.

MARY: Oh sorry. Jenny, you go with Natalie. It's my first time and I don't
know –

JENNIFER: It's Jennifer. (PICKING UP BAG) No it's okay Mary. I'm actually going to go.

NATALIE: What?

SUE: It's okay. Ricardo's taking the class.

BERNIE: And doing much better than Jacqueline.

JENNIFER: I'm sorry Ricardo. Nothing against you. It's just that I rushed here from work and the whole thing is very disorganised. The teacher's always late, and the environment.

BERNIE: What's wrong with the environment?

JENNIFER: The walls are filthy and the floor looks like it's about to cave in – and I can't stand the smell in here tonight.

A CHORUS OF SURPRISE AND DISAPPROVAL.

BERNIE: Then open a window.

JENNIFER: I tried and you get suffocated by all the fumes of Asian cookers wafting in.

SUE: What do you expect? You're in Richmond.

JENNIFER: (EXITING) No, I'm just going to ... (SHE EXITS)

SUE: What a bitch.

RICARDO: Perhaps it was my after shave.

PAULA: (TO NATALIE) How can you work with her?

NATALIE: I'm just going to go after her.

BERNIE: Why? Leave her. Didn't you hear what she just said?

NATALIE: If I don't she'll think I'm being rude.

BERNIE: She's the one being rude.

PAULA: I'll come with you.

PAULA AND NATALIE EXIT. PAUSE.

MARY: Is this class always so ... eventful?

BERNIE: Don't know why she bothers. Racist bitch.

SUE: Racist?

BERNIE: You heard her. Suffocated by all the Asians.

SUE: She was talking about cooking.

BERNIE: “Cookers”?

SUE: Cook-*ing*.

BERNIE: You know what she meant?

SUE: Yeah, “the Pad Thai is a bit off tonight.”

BERNIE: It was racist. She can’t get the dance steps so she puts down Asians, which Natalie happens to be. Isn’t that right Mary?

MARY: I didn’t really ...

BERNIE: You all lily white up there in Ballarat?

MARY: Maybe she has respiratory problems.

SUE: That’s right. An allergy.

BERNIE: To people with yellow skin.

MARY: Well I guess it could be seen as a bit harsh.

SUE: Don’t side with her.

MARY: The way she said Asian.

SUE: Not too bright up there in the little smoke, are they?

NATALIE AND PAULA RETURN.

NATALIE: Couldn’t find her.

BERNIE: Good riddance.

PAULA: Do you want us to be witnesses?

SUE: To what?

PAULA: Natalie being verbally abused.

SUE: She was talking about fried rice.

BERNIE: She knew exactly what she was talking about, anal bitch.

SUE: You're just jealous because she makes more money than you.

NATALIE: I'm sure Jennifer didn't mean it.

PAULA: Natalie, it's okay.

NATALIE: That's what I'm saying.

PAULA: You can tell them.

NATALIE: It's not about that.

BERNIE: Tell us what?

PAULA: Natalie is up for review next week.

NATALIE: I've only been there three months. My job isn't confirmed.

SUE: And who's doing the review?

PAULA: Jennifer.

BERNIE: Good luck.

PAULA: And she's going to sack Natalie because she's Asian.

NATALIE: No, not at all.

PAULA: You said there had been issues.

BERNIE: What issues?

NATALIE: But not about that ... and there've been resolved.

MARY: So you'll keep your job?

NATALIE: I don't think so. Not after tonight.

RICARDO: But it's not your fault. You weren't cooking the food.

NATALIE: She was upset. She left. In Jennifer's mind – she failed. And now I'm connected with that failure.

SUE: Sayonara.

PAULA: We'll we stop her.

NATALIE: How?