

BLIND DATE
by Samara Siskind

Cast of Characters

MARCIA, pretty young woman in her twenties. A little mousey and shy. Hasn't had much experience with men.

TED, twenties. Not particularly attractive, yet not unattractive. Seemingly sweet and honorable. A real gentleman.

Place

Marcia's apartment.

Time

Evening.

Production Notes

Props include:

Hair curlers
Wax strip
Clothes/debris
Sunglasses
Walking stick
Panties
Bottle of water
Glass
Bottle of eye drops

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(At rise: MARCIA runs around her apartment in a frenzy with curlers in her hair, wax strip above her lip, and only one shoe on. In an attempt to tidy up she shoves clothes, debris, etc. under the couch.)

(The doorbell rings.)

MARCIA. Great, he's early. *(Calling out.)* Uh...hold on a sec! Just give me a minute!

(She exits and returns, now presentable. She gives her hair a smooth over and checks her breath. It is passable.)

MARCIA. Alright. Come in!

(TED enters. He is rather dressed up, wearing sunglasses. Both of his hands are grasped behind his back. He speaks with a British accent.)

MARCIA. Hello. You must be —

TED. Ted.

MARCIA. Ted.

TED. And you are —

MARCIA. *(Nervous.)* Marcia. Hi. It's so wonderful to meet you. My, you look nice. Very...dapper.

TED. Why thank you. So kind of you to notice.

(MARCIA does a little turn, waiting for him to compliment her ensemble. It doesn't happen. Awkward beat.)

MARCIA. So, ah...Carol didn't tell me much about you. Well, except that you were new in town.

TED. That is correct. I just moved here as a matter of fact.

MARCIA. From London?

TED. Why yes. Is it that obvious?

MARCIA. I couldn't help notice your accent. Oh, and Carol said you gave up your seat on the bus for her...which isn't a very American thing to do.

TED. Yes, well. She was wheezing you see.

MARCIA. Yeah, asthma. It sucks.

(Beat. They stand awkwardly.)

TED. *(Motioning inside:)* So... May I...

MARCIA. Oh yes! Yes! Please. I'm so sorry. Do, do come in.

(She reaches out and grabs his arm to pull him inside. TED trips and falls with his face flat on the floor. We can now see that he was holding a walking stick behind his back.)

TED. Whoops a daisies!

MARCIA. Oh god! Oh dear, Ted I'm terribly sorry. Are you alright? Here, let me help you.

(MARCIA helps TED to his feet.)

TED. I'm quite alright. Just a little spill. Really, it happens all the time you see.

MARCIA. I should have that fixed. Here, you dropped your —

(MARCIA picks up and examines the stick trying to make sense out of it.)

MARCIA. Your —

TED. Walking stick?

MARCIA. Huh?

(Beat.)

TED. I'm afraid Carol didn't tell you.

MARCIA. Tell me what?

TED. That I'm —

MARCIA. Ohhh.

TED. Blind.

(Beat.)

MARCIA. I see. I mean —

TED. You seem rather uncomfortable. I understand. I should go.

MARCIA. No! No, of course not. I'm just...surprised, that's all. *(Beat.)* Why don't you sit down? Here, take my hand and I'll lead you to the couch.

TED. *(With a laugh:)* Most kind of you, but I think I can manage.

(TED makes his way in. On the way, his stick picks up a pair of MARCIA's panties. MARCIA runs and tries to yank them off with some difficulty. TED expertly makes his way to the couch.)

TED. No need to worry about me. I've been doing this for quite some time now you see.

MARCIA. I didn't realize. I mean, you were wearing sunglasses, I just thought...how Tom Cruise of you.

(She takes a seat next to him and stuffs the panties under a sofa cushion.)

TED. I thought you were well aware. I'm quite embarrassed. Now you're stuck with the likes of Helen Keller all night. *(Beat.)* Except that I'm not deaf. Some date, eh?

MARCIA. To be honest, I haven't been out on many dates. So relax, I don't have much to compare you to.

TED. Why, I don't believe that. An attractive lass like — Well... Carol said you were an attractive lass.

MARCIA. It's not that I haven't had the opportunity. It's just difficult for me to trust people, especially men. *(Beat.)* To be perfectly honest, I was going to cancel on you tonight, but Carol said I needed to get out more. "Throw caution to the wind Marcia!" So I said to myself — "The biggest adventure you can take is to live the life of your dreams."

TED. So true. Thoreau?

MARCIA. No, Oprah. Besides, Carol said you were very sweet. So I decided why not? You only live once! Go ahead Marcia, fly blind for once in your life! *(Beat.)* Oh god. I'm sorry.

TED. Don't be. That has always been my motto as well. That and look both ways before crossing. *(Beat.)* Ha! Got you! Who said Brits don't have a sense of humor? So, my dear... What did you have planned for the evening?

MARCIA. Well—since you're new in town I thought that maybe we'd go see the sights!

(Awkward pause. MARCIA buries her face in her hands.)

MARCIA. Oh god. I did it again. That was horrible.

TED. It certainly was not.

MARCIA. It was. I'm an idiot.

TED. Rubbish. I actually think you're rather smashing. I quite fancy you Marcia.

MARCIA. *(Blushing.)* Why thank you. I quite fancy you too, Ted. *(Beat.)* Well, since that plan's out the window... What would you like to do?

TED. Actually, I don't mind staying here in the flat. Have a nice chat, get to know one another better. How does that sound?

MARCIA. Awesome! I mean...I'd like that.

TED. Brilliant!

MARCIA. Splendid! *(Beat.)* So...what do you do for a living Ted?

TED. I teach little children how to read braille.

(Beat. MARCIA melts.)

MARCIA. Oh. You kind soul.

TED. You see, I myself was a child when I lost my sight.

MARCIA. That's horrible. How did it happen?

(TED bows his head. MARCIA takes his hand.)

MARCIA. It's alright Ted, you can tell me.

TED. *(Taking a deep breath.)* I was all of nine, playing rugby with some mates when I noticed old Mrs. Whitman trying to make it across the street with an armload of groceries. So I left the game and ran over to help her. I was in the BBS, British Boy Scouts you see.

MARCIA. Then what happened?

TED. *(Reenacting.)* A black Mini came speeding down the pavement, right in Mrs. Whitman's direction! So I pushed her aside, groceries flying everywhere, and then—

MARCIA. *(Edge of her seat.)* And then?

TED. The car hit me.

MARCIA. So that's how you lost your sight?

TED. Yes.

(Beat.)

MARCIA. *(Confused.)* How?

TED. You know. Little shards of glass from the windshield got lodged in my eyes.

MARCIA. How dreadful. You poor, poor thing.

(MARCIA draws TED's face down to her chest to console him.)

MARCIA. And you were just performing a random act of kindness, helping a defenseless old woman! Life can be so cruel!

(As she pets and soothes him, TED removes his sunglasses wiping away phony tears. His eyes widen and a smile forms as he relishes the close up view of MARCIA's chest.)

TED. It's been over a decade now, but it's still ever so painful.

MARCIA. It must be.

TED. What makes it so difficult is knowing that I will never again be able to enjoy the vision of a beautiful woman. A woman like you Marcia.

(*She releases his head as he raises it, their eyes meet. TED looks away.*)

TED. I apologize if I seem forward. I know we just met and all —

MARCIA. You are the most charming man I've ever met.

TED. And you the most lovely I've met. Woman, not man.

(*She embraces him passionately.*)

MARCIA. Oh Ted.

TED. Oh Marcia.

MARCIA. I've never felt this way before.

TED. Nor have I.

MARCIA. This is so unlike me, but the way you opened up to me —

TED. And you to me.

MARCIA. You're the man I've been waiting for. (*Beat. Flirtatious.*) I'll be right back.

TED. (*Hopeful.*) Slipping into something more comfortable?

MARCIA. No. I uh, have to go to the loo. Don't you go anywhere.

(*MARCIA exits. TED jumps up, performing an elaborate victory dance on the couch. He flails around throwing pillows into the air and catching them. MARCIA reenters, witnessing his celebration. She exits silently.*)

MARCIA. I'll be right out Ted!

(*TED freezes, jumps off and repositions himself on the couch. MARCIA reenters.*)

MARCIA. I'm back.

TED. So I see, er, hear.

MARCIA. You know, this may sound horrible, but I was secretly thrilled when I found out that you were blind. I mean, considering my job and all.

TED. Oh? What is it that you do?

MARCIA. Carol didn't tell you? I'm a graduate student, in Med school.

TED. Brilliant! What are you studying?

(*TED takes a bottle of water out from his jacket and takes a swig.*)

MARCIA. Ophthalmology.

(*TED does a spit take.*)

MARCIA. Isn't that a crazy coincidence? My specializing in the treatment of the eyes?

(*TED nods, turning pale.*)

MARCIA. In fact, I was hoping to show you some of the new products we're researching here in the U.S. We've been experimenting with certain formulas that may in fact, help blind people regain their sight!

TED. You don't say.

MARCIA. We've only been able to experiment on lab rats, but we need to test the formula on a human specimen before it can be FDA approved, and here you are!

TED. Darling, I ah...hmm. I don't think this is such a great idea. You should ah, test someone else, not me. An American. I don't even have a Visa. I'm completely illegal actually —

MARCIA. Ted, you are so noble...unselfish. Wanting to give someone else a chance to undergo this breakthrough treatment, but you deserve this. Listening to my problems, helping old Mrs. Whitman across the street that fateful day.

(*MARCIA pulls TED's legs so he falls backwards collapsing on the couch. She sits on his chest so he cannot move.*)

TED. Oh heavens would you look at the time? I mean, blimey! It must be late. You see, I completely forgot I have a reading, and you wouldn't want me to keep those blind orphans waiting would you?

MARCIA. (*Removing his sunglasses.*) Now just relax, and open your eyes wide...

(*She takes a bottle out of her pocket and holds it over him.*)

TED. (*Terrified.*) What is that?!? I mean, well...I have this strange sense you're holding something over me!

MARCIA. Just a mixture of potassium hydroxide and hydrochloric acid.

TED. Oh no! Please Marcia, enough of this fooling about—

MARCIA. It's perfectly safe, trust me. It's only caused impotency and penile dysfunction in 70% of the specimens tested.

TED. (*Covering his privates.*) Penile dysfunction?! Are you off your trolley?! Get that away from me!

MARCIA. Hush. I'm a professional Ted, I'm only trying to help you.

(*She squeezes the drops into his eyes and TED lets out a terrifying howl. He grabs a glass of water on the table and throws it on his face, rubbing his burning eyes.*)

MARCIA. You saw the glass. On the table.

(*TED stops, caught. He looks at MARCIA. Beat.*)

MARCIA. You can see! It's a miracle!

(*MARCIA begins to jump and dance around. TED's eyes are red, blotchy, watering, and twitching. Despite his discomfort, he dances and jumps around with MARCIA.*)

TED. Jolly good! Why look at that! I am blessed! I see colors! I see such beauty in the world! You look like an angel and those, my dear, those are little drops from heaven!

MARCIA. How many fingers am I holding up?

TED. Two!

(*MARCIA pokes him in the eyes with her two fingers, Three Stooges style.*)

TED. Owwww! Whatever did you do that for my love?

MARCIA. It was shampoo you fool, *No More Tears* no less. You can cut the act. I've called your blindman's bluff.

TED. Oh. Well, I ah... Ha! Awkward. (*Beat.*) I guess you'd prefer I leave.

MARCIA. Spot on.

TED. Yes, well ah...cheerio.

(*TED stumbles blindly to the door. Beat. He turns around.*)

TED. It's just...hard for me to get people to like me for who I am. In a way we're alike you and I. Maybe we can start over from the beginning? Give me another chance?

MARCIA. Let's see...you came into my home, lied, tried to take advantage of me, played with my emotions. Need I go on?

(*TED nods. He slowly exits with his head bowed in shame. Beat. We hear a doorbell.*)

TED. (*Softly.*) Marcia?

MARCIA. What?!!

TED. Could I have my walking stick?

(*MARCIA lets out a strangled grunt. She grabs TED's walking stick, storms over and throws it offstage.*)

TED. Thanks. No matter what happens, you're still a pretty cool chick. I like, totally mean that.

(*Beat.*)

MARCIA. What happened to your accent?

TED. Oh, that. (*Beat.*) I'm really from Milwaukee. But I've always wanted to visit jolly old England.

MARCIA. Out.

TED. And I've seen every *Harry Potter* movie ever made... Twice!

MARCIA. GET OUT!

TED. But I only have eyes for you—

MARCIA. OUT NOW!!

TED. You're so beautiful when you're angry—

MARCIA. (*Pushing him offstage:*) GET OUT BEFORE I REALLY BLIND YOU!!

(MARCIA crosses back and collapses on the couch face down. A few beats. TED serenades her by the door.)

TED. (*Singing:*) I can see clearly now the rain is gone —

MARCIA. (*Closing her eyes:*) I'm so going to kill you Carol.

TED. I can see all obstacles in my way —

(*Blackout.*)

End of Play