

ACT I

SCENE ONE

(The scene is the interior of O’Malley’s Tavern, a trendy bar and grill in a large metropolitan city. As the lights come up, we see JIMMY, a handsome young man in his mid- to late-20s, seated at a table for two. He is dressed casually, wearing a nice shirt, blazer, and slacks with dark-colored loafers. On his chest is a white adhesive name tag with his name written on it. In the background is a banner that reads “O’Malley’s Zippy Quick Date Nite”. The chair across from JIMMY is empty, although a beverage glass and an appetizer plate adorn the table. BRIANNE, the hostess, is an attractive young woman in a waitress uniform standing and talking to JIMMY as the scene begins.)

BRIANNE

Have you ever done a Zippy Quick Dating event before?

JIMMY

Well, no. I don’t really get out much, you see. To tell you the truth, it’s all kind of new to me. Actually—and this is kind of embarrassing—my grandmother put me up to coming here. She said I should shake the cobwebs off and meet some new people, so I came. It isn’t something I’d normally do.

BRIANNE

Me either, actually. I’m much more of a take-your-time and get to know someone over a cup of hot tea kind of girl. Anyway, the dating-go-round goes like this: you’ll have two minutes to learn as much as you can about each prospective date before the bell rings. Then, another lady will come and sit at your table for the next two minutes and so on. Just ask questions that you would like to know about them: Do you like sports? What’s your favorite color? Where are you from? Would you consider getting to know a lowly restaurant hostess? Like that.

JIMMY

I see. That sounds simple enough. But that’s not very much time, is it?

BRIANNE

(Smiling, being a little more overt, yet reserved)

Oh, you’d be surprised how long two minutes can last sometimes. But look at the bright side: if you find someone you like, you’re already looking forward to spending more time with them.

JIMMY

(Oblivious, focusing on the event)

What if I *don’t* like them? I guess they’ll be out of my life before they can mess it up, huh?

Excerpt from “Jimmy’s Adventures in Zippy Quick Dating Land” 10-minute play.
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BRIANNE

(Laughs)

Definitely! Oh! We’re about to start. Let me get out of your way and enjoy your evening. I’d like to come by and check on you later if that’s OK.

JIMMY

Sure. That might be good, actually. I’m a bit nervous.

BRIANNE

You’re going to be just fine. My name’s Brianne if you need anything. (Pause) And it’s Kimberley if you don’t (giggles).

(JIMMY looks up at BRIANNE and laughs at her joke. He starts to say something to her but can’t as the bell rings and BRIANNE exits. A dour-looking woman, all dressed in black with horn-rimmed glasses enters quickly and sits down at the table with JIMMY. She looks to be in her mid- to late forties, although she could be younger. Her hair is tied in a bun and her name tag reads AGATHA. She carries a small notebook.)

AGATHA

OK. Let’s get this over with... “Jimmy”. Do you have protection?

JIMMY

(Startled, JIMMY turns from watching BRIANNE leave)

Sorry! Pardon?

AGATHA

Did I stutter or did you ride the short bus here? Protection. Did you bring it?

JIMMY

I’m confused. Are we going yet? What kind of protection?

AGATHA

(Rolls her eyes)

Prophylactics, Einstein! We’re here to hook up, I presume, and do so quickly. You are kind of hunky—in a nerdy sort of way—and my pleasure clock’s ticking. Are you ready to ring my alarm or what? (Abruptly) Chunky or smooth?

JIMMY

(Completely confused)

What? What the...? What are you *talking* about? Are you into rubbing peanut butter on alarm clocks for fun or something?

AGATHA

(Produces her notebook and pen and makes a notation, talking to herself and shaking her head)

That’s good. I’m going to have to remember that.

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(Addressing JIMMY again, back to business)

OK. What’s the best salad dressing ever?

JIMMY

I don’t know. French?

AGATHA

(Shakes her head in disbelief)

Wrong! Wrong, wrong, WRONG!!

(Jots down another note, then back to JIMMY)

When did the driver of the short bus say he would come back to pick you up?

JIMMY

Why? Did you need a ride back to the asylum?

(Bell rings)

JIMMY

(Relieved, in an explosive breath)

Oh! Thank heavens!

AGATHA

Here’s the deal, Jimmy: if you don’t find a female companion by the end of the night—and with your apparent lack of wit, how could you?—I would most certainly entertain the prospect of an evening of wanton copulation with you... but *bring protection*. Oh! And the safe word is “Saskatoon”. Jot it down, because I *won’t* say it again!

(AGATHA exits. An attractive female in her mid-20s, dressed in a tee shirt and jeans enters and sits down at the table. Her hair is short and messy. She seems agitated slightly. Her name tag reads “MANDY”)

JIMMY

(Still recovering from his experience with AGATHA)

Hi! Uh... Mandy. So, where are you from?

MANDY

Your opening question is totally boring, man. Surely you’ve got better stuff than *that*? You could be meeting the love of your life and you ask where I’m from? Soooo sad. Why, when I met my ex-boyfriend, Connor, he always had a unique and creative question for every occasion. I remember the question he asked me when we first met. “You gonna eat that?” That’s what he asked and I just melted into a puddle of goo. Right there, I knew we had something special. Something transcendent. Something that would last forever and ever. That and he was real easy on the eyes, you know? (Bitterly) But that’s all over now. What a jerk!

JIMMY

(Laughs)

“You gonna eat that?” *That* was unique and creative? Wow!

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MANDY

Why is that funny? It was an intelligent and thoughtful thing to ask. Now *you’re* just being disrespectful. Of course, Connor got to where he was disrespectful, too, but at least he had the decency to come up with creative and fun questions first.

(Sighs, speaking dreamily)

Ah! Those were the days. I remember one time he asked me—and I’ll never forget this—“So, you want to go parking later or what?” What a romantic!

JIMMY

It sounds like you were really into this guy. How long ago did you and Connor break up anyway?

MANDY

(Thinking)

About... forty-five seconds ago. He’s over at table nineteen.

(She glances off stage, longingly half-waves. Lights come up on CONNOR and AGATHA gazing deeply into each other’s eyes before they leap over the table at each other, kissing each other in a wild embrace. MANDY turns back to JIMMY as the lights go out on CONNOR and AGATHA)

Oooh! That *creep*! I haven’t been gone from his life for *two minutes* and he’s already making out with another girl. A pretty one, too! I hope he dies of strepetitus E or something, the bastard!

JIMMY

Whoa! That’s pretty harsh, don’t you think? And what is “strepetitus E”, anyway? Maybe you meant to say something else?

MANDY

Look, buddy. I’m a registered nurse, okay? I think I should know what strepetitus E is! It’s real. Real bad. And *deadly*. Aww, forget it! I just don’t think we’re right for each other anymore.

JIMMY

You and Connor?

MANDY

No! You and me. You started out with such an interesting and thoughtful question about where I’m from and now you’ve turned into such a jerk! You’re just like Connor! Damn you!

(Bell rings and MANDY stands clumsily, sobbing, knocking her chair over backwards as she gets up to leave. She then storms off in a huff. Exit MANDY. Another young woman rushes in and sits down. She is dressed nicely, does not have a name tag, and looks very rough.)

THIRD GIRL

(Setting the chair upright and flopping down)

Hiya, handsome! I just threw up.

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JIMMY

Chunky or smooth?

THIRD GIRL
(Out of it)

Huh?

JIMMY

Oh! Did you really just throw up?

THIRD GIRL
(Grabs a bunch of sugar packets and crams them into her mouth, chewing them in a belabored fashion, nodding vigorously)

Mmm hmmm. OH! This sugar tastes *so good!*

JIMMY
(Reacts, befuddled and mildly shocked)

I'm so sorry. Was it something you ate or... How many sugar packets *is* that?

THIRD GIRL
(Still chewing noisily)

How many sugar packets a girl chews is none of your business. Besides, I heard refined sugar is good for an upset stomach. Has something to do with peptides or what have you.

JIMMY
(Interested)

Really? Where did you hear that?

THIRD GIRL

From your grandma, who else?

JIMMY

There's no need to be snide. Besides, my Nanna always recommended ginger or that lemon-lime soda stuff. Sometimes that sports drink with the electrolytes.

THIRD GIRL

I need another screwdriver! They help settle the stomach, you know! (Looking pale) Cancel that! Gotta go! Nice meetin' ya, Lenny!

(Exit THIRD GIRL in a rush. Enter CONNOR, his preppy clothes have been thoroughly manhandled. His hair is disheveled. He sits down at JIMMY's table, tucking part of his shirt back in. He looks desperate and perhaps a touch frightened, but excited.)

JIMMY

Um, I was told the bisexual swingers event was next week. Are you sure you're at the right table?