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It's not you, it's me

By Don Zolidis

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Cast of Characters:

Those who are about to be dumped:

JACK
JIM
TODD
MARK
JAMES

CATHERINE
MAZIE
ANGELA
TERRI

Those who are doing the dumping:

JACOB
JOHN
THOMAS
SAM
LUKE

ELLIE
SARAH
ASHLEY
GABRIELLA
TORI
JENNY

SERVER

(There are numerous ways to cast this show. One way would be to have all the male characters being dumped be the character of JACK and all the female characters being dumped be the character of CATHERINE, which would lead to an ideal cast of 6 M, 7 F and one either. A variation of this was used in the original production, with JACK and CATHERINE being dumped in most, but not all of the scenes.

(It would even be possible to have the people doing the dumping be played by the same actor doing extremely quick costume changes. That would lead to a cast of 2 M 2 F and one either.)

(Any number between 5 and 21 actors would work.)

Locations:

One set of locations is in a restaurant. It should be very simple. One table and two chairs will suffice. A second location is a living room area – again, simplicity is best here. A couch and maybe a comfy chair will work. The third location is an outdoor café. Again, a table and chairs is all that is necessary.

It's not You, it's Me was first produced at North Oaks Middle School on April 17th, 2010.) The original cast was as follows:

JACK: Derek Branch
JIM: Bryce Conklin
TODD: Derek Branch
MARK: Matthew Rodriguez
JAMES: Derek Branch

CATHERINE: Christie Blay
MAZIE: Meghan White
ANGELA: Christie Blay
TERRI: Christie Blay

JACOB: William Swanson
JOHN: Aaron Sifuentes
THOMAS: Aaron Sifuentes
SAM: Matthew Rodriguez
LUKE: John Shipka

ELLIE: Ally Rainey
SARAH: Cheyenne Eddins
ASHLEY: Jamie Brisson
GABRIELLA: Rebekkah Sandoval
TORI: Kianna Kelly
JENNY: Ahlaizha Brown

SERVER: Valerie Wilson

(the stage is divided into three areas. One, a restaurant, two, a living room, and three, an outdoor café. The scenes cycle between the three.

Scene 1

(Lights up on the restaurant. Cheesy music plays (something like "My heart will go on" by Celine Dion.) JACK is grooving out to it. He mouths the words. Then sings quietly at first. Then he sings a little louder. With slow hand movements like he's conducting it. ELLIE stares at him.)

ELLIE

Can I talk to you for a second?

JACK

Hold on.

(driven by the music, JACK stands up, still conducting and singing louder now.)

ELLIE

This is really a great song.

(JACK launches into his big finish. Exhausted and spent, he sits.)

JACK

Wow. Wow.

ELLIE

I know.

JACK

Wow. That's a special song. Our song.

ELLIE

Yeah, it's something all right.

JACK

You know this has really been the best relationship I've ever had.

ELLIE

Really?

JACK

Yeah.

ELLIE

You don't date much, do you?

JACK

I actually date quite a bit.

ELLIE

That's surprising.

JACK

I know, right! But I guess I have a kind of magnetism about me. That's what they say, anyway.

ELLIE

Who says?

JACK

My ex-girlfriend. Girlfriends. I really shouldn't be mentioning them. That's bad form.

ELLIE

Yeah. I don't talk about my ex-boyfriends. I'm very careful not to mention my ex-boyfriends because that would be rude.

JACK

Right.

ELLIE

Even the one that plays in the NFL. I don't ever mention him. I don't want you to feel bad.

JACK

Yeah. Knowing that you dated a pro football player would probably make me feel pretty bad.

ELLIE *(taking out a picture)*

You want to see a picture of him?

JACK

No. I'm cool with not knowing what he looks like.

ELLIE

Good.

(ELLIE looks at the picture, sighs dreamily, and puts it away.)

JACK

But you know what's funny? Every single relationship I've ever been in I've gotten dumped. I mean just once I'd like to be the person doing the dumping, you know? I'm actually kind of an expert in getting dumped.

ELLIE

Really? How does it happen?

JACK

Okay, so first thing is they take you out some place in public. Like a restaurant. That's so you won't make a scene.

(the SERVER enters with a pitcher of water.)

SERVER

More water?

ELLIE

No thanks.

JACK

You can't dump someone before dinner and then eat it, so they wait until after the dinner.

SERVER

Anyone have room for dessert?

ELLIE

I'm stuffed.

(the SERVER leaves.)

JACK

Then there's usually a moment where they sneakily try to get back everything you borrowed from them.

ELLIE

That reminds me. Can I have my Ipod back?

JACK

Oh sure.

(JACK hands over an Ipod.)

And sometimes, if they're really being tricky, they might try to borrow something –

ELLIE

Actually, you know what? Did you want your leather jacket back?

JACK

No you look great in it.

ELLIE

I know. All my guy friends say so.

JACK

And then you have "the talk".

ELLIE
What happens in the talk?

JACK
Basically they come up with some excuse where they try to spare my feelings.

ELLIE
Huh.

JACK
Always happens.

ELLIE
You know… there is something I wanted to talk to you about.

JACK
Right here in the restaurant?

ELLIE
This seems like a nice place.

JACK
What is it um… you want… to talk… about?

ELLIE
Who are you going to vote for in the next election?

JACK
No idea. That's what you were thinking about?

ELLIE
Yeah. And…

JACK
…yeah?

ELLIE
I think we need to stop seeing each other.

JACK
What?

ELLIE
It's not you. It's me.

(short pause)
It's so hard to find someone as understanding as you.
(lights shift.)

Scene 2.

(Lights up on the living room area.)

(CATHERINE and JACOB are sitting on the couch, next to each other.)

CATHERINE
I feel so safe when I'm with you. Don't you?

JACOB
I guess yeah sure.

CATHERINE
There's something about you that's just so calming. I'm usually a pretty nervous person, but you're like… you're just so solid, you know?

JACOB
Uh huh.

CATHERINE
Maybe I'm insecure. I'm always thinking that any guy is going to break up with me at any time. I mean, that's just crazy talk right? Right?

JACOB
Huh?

CATHERINE
That's me being crazy.

JACOB
About what?

CATHERINE
Worrying about getting dumped. It's crazy for me to worry about getting dumped. Especially since I'm with you now and you're so calm and considerate… and just – you're like a giant teddy bear. In a manly way. You're a manly teddy bear.

JACOB
Huh.

CATHERINE
And I can talk to you. That's another great thing about you. You're such a great listener.

JACOB

You wanna watch Sportscenter?

CATHERINE

Sure. I love watching you watch Sportscenter.

(JACOB has the remote control. Sportscenter plays quietly in the background. CATHERINE snuggles in.)

What do you like the most about me?

JACOB

Huh?

CATHERINE

I said what I liked about you. What do you like about me?

(JACOB stares at the television.)

You're so thoughtful. That's another thing I like about you. You really take your time and think about it before you answer a question. Most other guys would say my eyes. I think that's the pretty standard response, don't you? But you wouldn't say that because you're really giving this some thought.

(JACOB stares at the television.)

So… what do you like about me?

JACOB

Your eyes I guess.

CATHERINE

I like your eyes too.

JACOB

What?

CATHERINE

I said I like your eyes. Um… Can I ask you something really really important?

JACOB

Uh huh sure.

CATHERINE

I need your undivided attention.

JACOB

I'm waiting for the highlights.

CATHERINE

Can you turn off the T.V. for a second?

JACOB

Hold on.

CATHERINE

This is important, Jacob.

JACOB

I know. I have to find out if my team won.

CATHERINE

No I mean it's about us.

JACOB

I can listen and watch at the same time.

CATHERINE

No you can't. Just listen for a second.

JACOB

I am listening.

CATHERINE

No you're watching Sportscenter.

JACOB

I'm watching Sportscenter and listening to you at the same time.
(CATHERINE swipes the remote control and turns off the T.V.)
Hey!

CATHERINE

Just listen to me and you can have the remote control back. Some things are more important than Sportscenter, okay? And one of those things –

JACOB

We're breaking up.

CATHERINE

WHAT?!

JACOB

Look, I can't be that guy.

CATHERINE

What guy?

Skipping Forward

SARAH

Kaylee and Preston.

JIM

So?

SARAH

Kaylee and Preston are the cutest couple?

JIM

They are pretty cute. I mean, you know, very cute. She's cute. I don't – I don't look at guys.

SARAH

I can assure you that he is also cute.

JIM

So?

SARAH

Why aren't we on this page?

JIM

Um…

SARAH

Because we're the second-best couple, that's why. They're better than us. You understand that? They're beating us.

JIM

They're beating us at what?

SARAH

At being a couple.

JIM

How do you beat someone at being a couple?

SARAH

It's easy. Not only are they very cute, remember that time Preston gave her a three-foot tall teddy bear on Valentine's Day?

JIM

Yeah.

(SARAH takes out a two-foot tall teddy bear.)

SARAH

How big is this one?

JIM

I don't know.

SARAH

How tall is this bear?!

JIM

It's, I don't know, two feet.

SARAH

22 inches tall. 22 measly tiny pathetic little inches. Okay? here's what I think of this midget bear.

(she tosses it away violently.)

JIM

Hey! I bought that with my own money!

SARAH

And what about the time Preston got that karaoke machine and sang I will always love you? How romantic was that?!

JIM

It was –

SARAH

It was a lot romantic, that's what! It was a lot romantic! When was the last time you sang me a song?

JIM

I sang you that one song.

SARAH

Fat Bottom Girls does not count!

JIM

Well I sang it!

SARAH

And do you know what else?! Kaylee really loves Preston, you know that? For his birthday she got him a limited edition, signed jersey from Lebron James! And what did I get you for your birthday?

JIM

You didn't get me anything.

SARAH

I know that! See?

JIM

I would have liked a jersey.

SARAH

I would have liked to have been the best couple. But clearly we're not. So I'm moving on. I'm going to find a guy that loves me for me and still has the money to buy me expensive things and sing songs in public.

JIM

But you know that Kaylee and Preston broke up right?

SARAH

They did?

JIM

Yeah. It was really ugly.

SARAH

Wow.

JIM

So they're not the cutest couple any more.

SARAH

Huh.

JIM

We've probably moved up in the rankings.

SARAH

Do you think we're number one?

JIM

I hear Tasha and Will are pretty highly regarded.

SARAH

I gotta go.

JIM

But wait –

SARAH

Look um – Preston's not gonna be single for long.

(lights down.)

(lights up on the outdoor café.)

Scene 4.

MAZIE

Noooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo!!

(MAZIE hyperventilates, cries, sobs, throws things, has a fit.)

JOHN

Calm down, calm down, calm down –

MAZIE

Noooooooooooooo!!!!!!! WHY?!?!!? WHY?!!!

(she drinks some water.)

JOHN

Can I tell you? Can I explain it to you?

MAZIE

You've murdered my heart! You've assassinated my love, you murderous thug! I was the best thing that ever happened to you! The BEST! In the entire world!!! For the rest of your life you will RUE this day and you will CRY and say why did I do that?! WHY?! What was wrong with me?!!! Why?!!

JOHN

Do you know want to know why?

MAZIE

Yes!

JOHN

Are you sure?

MAZIE

Yes.

JOHN

I don't want to get too involved emotionally.

(lights down.)

(lights up on the living room.)

Scene 5.

TODD

I don't believe it.

ASHLEY

I've had a hard time with it myself.

TODD

I thought things were going well.

ASHLEY

They were.

TODD

Were they?

ASHLEY

No.

TODD

Oh.

ASHLEY

Don't feel bad. It's not your fault. You see – I realized that I have a problem and I'm going to get the treatment I need. And maybe, in six to ten weeks, with the right guidance and a little luck, we can try dating again.

TODD

Really?

ASHLEY

No.

TODD

Oh.

ASHLEY

I lied. That's my problem. I'm a liar. I lie all the time.

TODD

You don't lie all the time.

ASHLEY

You're right. I lied just then.

TODD

About being a liar?

ASHLEY

That's right.

TODD

You're not a liar?

ASHLEY

Nope.

TODD

Wow, I –

ASHLEY

I did it again! I just lied to you! I am a liar!

TODD

How do I know that?

ASHLEY

Remember when I said I couldn't go out to dinner last night because my Dog started to talk and I didn't want to miss it?

TODD

Yeah?

ASHLEY

That was a lie.

TODD

No way!

ASHLEY

I don't have a dog.

TODD

Yes you do.

ASHLEY

See! I just lied again!

TODD

Does he talk?

ASHLEY

Absolutely.

TODD

Was that a lie just then?

ASHLEY

See? Now you're catching on! Do you see why I need help?

TODD

Yeah.

ASHLEY

No you don't you're a complete moron!

TODD

You're lying again!
(she chuckles.)

ASHLEY

No that was the truth.

TODD

Wait a minute – What about all that stuff about how your Mom was being hunted by the mob and that's why you couldn't go to the dance?

ASHLEY

That was the truth.

TODD

It was?

ASHLEY

No! My Mom sells Tupperware for a living! Why would the mob try to bump her off?

TODD

You're right.

ASHLEY

I'm lying again! Of course the mob is trying to kill her. She works as a hit man part-time.

TODD

I always thought your Mom was a little strange.

Skipping Forward

ANGELA

I don't understand.

THOMAS

That's okay too.

ANGELA

No it's not!

THOMAS

I have to be going.

ANGELA

Wait!

THOMAS

Listen to me, and listen carefully: you need to forget you ever knew me, you understand? I never existed. We, as a couple, never existed. Tear up your photos, delete my number from your cell phone, eat those little candy hearts I gave you –

ANGELA

I already did.

THOMAS

Good. Throw away the wrappers.

ANGELA

I was saving them.

THOMAS

Destroy them. As soon as I leave this restaurant. No one must know we dated.

ANGELA

Why?

THOMAS

I could tell you. But then I'd have to kill you. Goodbye.

(he gets up to leave.)

By the way, you're going to need to pay for the dinner. Make sure you tip the waiter well. He did a good job and filled up my water twice without me having to ask. I like that.

ANGELA

Where are you going?

THOMAS

I can't tell you.

ANGELA

Is it dangerous there?

THOMAS

Very.

ANGELA

Are you some kind of spy??

THOMAS

Shhhhhhh! Say nothing.
(he pulls her close.)
If you must know, I'm an agent of the Canadian government. A black mounty.

ANGELA

A black mounty?

THOMAS

Shhhhh! You're going to get us all killed. I don't exist. This program does not exist. Now forget me.
*(he jumps out the window.)**
*(*if you don't have a window, he can leap off-stage.)*

ANGELA

Wow.
(Pause.)

(She turns away. THOMAS pops up again in the window.)

THOMAS

Psst!

ANGELA

You're back! I thought we were never going to –

THOMAS

Shhhh! Listen to me very carefully. Don't speak. Nod if you understand me.
(ANGELA nods.)
I seem to have left my wallet on my chair. Do you see it?
(ANGELA shakes her head.)
Get up slowly and walk to the other side of the table. Don't look suspicious.
(ANGELA looks suspicious.)
I said don't look suspicious!
(ANGELA looks very fakily unsuspicious.)
Do you see the wallet?

ANGELA

What does it look like?

THOMAS

It looks like a wallet! Don't speak!
(short pause)
It has Hello Kitty on it.

ANGELA

Oh here it is.
(she picks up a wallet.)

THOMAS

Shhh! Now, without opening it, I want you to toss it out the window.
(ANGELA looks at it.)
Stop. Don't –

ANGELA

Why do you have a Nebraska driver's license?

THOMAS

My cover. Now if you -

ANGELA

Your name is Barry?

THOMAS

Well it's um – I've been shot!
(he falls over.)
They've got me – agents from Lichtenstein are closing in – they're… they're very small you can't see them and um… can I have my wallet back please?
(lights change.)

(lights up on the outdoor café.)

Scene 7.

MARK

Can I just tell you something?

GABRIELLA

Go ahead.

MARK

You are absolutely perfect.

GABRIELLA

I'm really not.

MARK

No I mean it – you are… like… you're amazing, you're funny, you're smart, you're incredibly gorgeous. I am the luckiest guy in the world.

GABRIELLA

Huh.

MARK

What's on your mind?

GABRIELLA

Well… let's talk.

MARK

Okay.

GABRIELLA

This is hard for me to say.

MARK

Go ahead. I love our ability to communicate.

GABRIELLA

Me too.

MARK

That's my favorite part of our amazing relationship: the communication. And your sheer awesomeness.

GABRIELLA

Huh.

MARK

Check it out: I just got your name tattooed on my back.
(he turns around and lifts up his shirt.)

GABRIELLA

Wow. That's my whole name.

MARK

Gabriella Maria Conchita Consuela Rodriguez. It took them seven hours to do that.

GABRIELLA

Over your entire back.

MARK

Don't touch it. It's still pretty raw. Ungodly painful. I cried for three days. But it was worth it. Because I know – our love – is undying. It will last as long as the sun, longer even, because -

GABRIELLA

That's a really long time.

MARK

I know. And you know what else?

GABRIELLA

You know I really do need to talk to you.

MARK

You know how you're allergic to dogs? I got rid of mine. Sold him. For ten bucks.

GABRIELLA

You sold Buddy?

MARK

My best friend since the age of ten? The animal that means more to me than anything else in the whole entire world? Except for you, of course. So I found a stranger who looked like he needed a dog and just unloaded `em. You know, they say dogs can't cry, but there were definitely tears in his eyes. That's okay though. Because –

GABRIELLA

I've been doing some thinking.

MARK

I love it.

GABRIELLA

I've been thinking about us.

MARK

Double love it.

GABRIELLA

And I think – can I be honest with you?

MARK

Please. I adore your honesty.

GABRIELLA

You know how we've only been dating for two weeks?

MARK

The most amazing two weeks of my entire life. Except for the three days of crying after that massive tattoo, but other than that, the most perfect two weeks ever.

GABRIELLA

I think we should break up.

(MARK just stares.)

It's not… um… it's not you.

(MARK just stares.)

It's um… it's me? I can't accept love. I'm weird that way.

(MARK just stares.)

I'm sure you'll find another girl named Gabriella Maria Conchita Consuela Rodriguez.

(lights down.)

(lights up on the restaurant.)

Scene 8.

(SAM and TERRI have salad. They eat calmly.)

(long pause.)

SAM

I'm thinking of becoming a mermaid.

(lights down.)

(lights up on the living room.)

Scene 9.

JAMES

I see.

TORI

You're bothered.

JAMES

A little bit. I thought we were doing well.

TORI

I know that you thought that. I'm psychic.

JAMES

I didn't know you were psychic.

TORI

My astrologer told me. She was very clear about it. I have the ability to see the future.

JAMES

And that's why you're dumping me?

TORI

Yes. I mean, look, you're okay right now –

JAMES

Okay?

TORI

You're an average guy. You're a little smart – you're kinda good-looking, you're sorta funny.

JAMES

I thought I was above average.

TORI

No you're pretty average. But that's okay. I'm pretty average too.

JAMES

No no you're very much above average.

TORI

Let's not lie, okay? We're a good match right now.

JAMES

Right now?

TORI

The future – not so much.

JAMES

What's going to happen?

TORI

I'm going to become a lot more attractive.

JAMES

Really?

TORI

Oh yes. It's going to be an amazing transformation. In fact, I'm going to become a model. No one will see it coming.

JAMES

What about me?

TORI

Well, a few unpleasant genes are going to kick in. First there's the male pattern baldness. You'll hold on for a few years, you'll fool yourself a bit, but really, your hairline is doomed. You'll develop a bald spot, and then all that will be left of your hair is a small line just above the ears. And then there's the middle-age weight gain. You'll get flabby at first, and then you'll really go to seed, you're going to be shopping at the Big and Tall store – not to mention the ear hair –

JAMES

Ear hair?!

TORI

Oh yeah. Totally disgusting. And Back acne.

End of Excerpt.
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