

Excerpts from,,,
"OPPOSITES ATTRACT"
A One Act Comedy
by Bruce Kane

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"OPPOSITES ATTRACT"
by Bruce Kane

This play consists of a sequence of short plays about relationships gone awry for various reasons. We've included segments from each of the pieces that make up the play to give you some idea of the content, style and humor.

SETTING: Sometimes a bar, sometimes not a bar.

TIME: Now.

(The lights come up on three empty stools)

(BETTY, a Valley housewife enters and addresses the audience.)

BETTY: Hi. My name is Betty Corbin. I'm thirty eight years old. I'm trying to lose eight pounds.

(She sits on a end stool. A conservatively dressed man enters. He introduces himself to the audience)

DAVE: I'm Dave Corbin. I'm thirty nine. Today my top spin forehand was devastating... I won six-three... Six-four.

(He sits on the center stool. (A sexy young woman enters and greets the audience)

SHELLEY: My name is Michelle. But everyone calls me Shelley. I'll be twenty eight next month. I still wear a size six.

(She sits on the third stool.)

BETTY: I have a lovely home in the Valley. Five bedrooms, three and a half baths.

DAVE: My office is in Century City.

SHELLEY: I own a condo in what the real estate ladies like to refer to as Beverly Hills adjacent.

BETTY: I'm a housewife.

DAVE: I'm an attorney.

SHELLEY: I run my own interior design firm.

BETTY: I have two kids and a dog named Millie.

SHELLEY: I've never been married.

DAVE: I drive a classic 89 BMW. It's my pride and joy.

BETTY: I've been married to the same man for fifteen years.

SHELLEY: I've been sleeping with the same man for eight months.

DAVE: I play tennis twice a month with Barbra Streisand's lawyer.

BETTY: My husband is a wonderful man. He takes very good care of me and the kids.

DAVE: They deserve it.

SHELLEY: My lover and I see each other whenever we can.

DAVE: Neither of us likes to be crowded.

BETTY: It's not the same as it was when Dave and I first got married. Then, he'd call me up in the middle of the day... right out of the blue... and tell me to wait for him in bed. I loved sex in the afternoon.

DAVE: I was in law school then. There was time.

BETTY: He doesn't come home in the afternoon anymore.

DAVE: Hell, it's forty five minutes from the office to the house alone. And that's if there's no traffic on the freeway.

SHELLEY: I sometimes think the only attraction I hold for Dave: is the proximity of my apartment to his office. He can be in and out before anyone at the firm misses him.

DAVE: It goes much deeper than that. I love being with Shelley. She's bright... beautiful... independent... Never demanding... Last week I took her to Las Vegas with me for a lawyer's convention. Just the two of us for the whole week. It was great. We had a wonderful time.

SHELLEY: He did take me to Las Vegas for a week. He said we'd have all kinds of time to be alone. We were alone alright. He didn't want any of his pals to see us together.

BETTY: Dave works very hard. And we try to get away when we can. He really wanted me to go with him to Las Vegas last week. He had this lawyer's convention. He said we could turn the whole thing into a second honeymoon and it would all be tax deductible. I was looking forward to it... Then the kids got the flu and Dave had to go by himself.

DAVE: It would have been a second honeymoon. But just because Betty couldn't make it, I saw no reason why I should go alone.

SHELLEY: I hope it doesn't sound like I'm complaining. Dave and I have a very good relationship. We like each other. The sex is good and I'm not limited: to just one man.

DAVE: I didn't know that... About not being limited.

BETTY: Don't think I'm not grateful for my life. It's hectic and we don't get as much time away from the kids as we'd like, but it's a good life.

SHELLEY: I have my independence.

BETTY: I have security.

SHELLEY: I have a great job.

BETTY: I have a wonderful home.

SHELLEY: I drive a red convertible.

BETTY: We paid off the station wagon last month.

SHELLEY: My apartment has a built in sauna.

BETTY: We've got our own pool.

SHELLEY: Dave says I'm the fulfillment of every erotic fantasy he's ever had and he dresses me in garters, black seamed stockings and stiletto heels to prove it.

DAVE: A guy's gotta have some fantasy fulfillment.

SHELLEY: I don't mind.... Really.

BETTY: Dave never fails to compliment me on my cooking. He says eating my lasagna is the closest thing to sex he's ever encountered.

DAVE: I'm not ashamed to admit it... I've got it all... A successful law practice... A beautiful home... Two terrific kids... A wife who never complains... And a girlfriend with legs like a Rockette... And an 89 BMW.

SHELLEY: Who would have ever believed it? Here I am at age twenty eight with everything I ever wanted. And I don't know where the hell I'm going.

BETTY: I'm right where I belong... Why do I feel like I haven't been anywhere?

DAVE: I couldn't be happier.

(Segment continues...)

(Next segment...)

(A sexy, distant woman sitting alone, perhaps nursing a drink. She is wearing a short, black cocktail dress. A man, also dressed in black, enters. He sees the woman... Slowly he begins to circle her, eyeing her from head to toe and everywhere in between. He is an emotional sadist. She is an emotional masochist. Each of his lines is the equivalent of a whip crack. She reacts to each line as though physically stung. It hurts but it feels so good. From his opening line she is drawn to him but determined to elongate the pain. While their deliveries are not meant to be monotonal, there is a deliberate suppression of emotion.)

TED: I love you.

BARBARA: What?

TED: I love you.

BARBARA: Are you talking to me?

TED: Yes... I love you.

BARBARA: You don't even know me.

TED: That's why I love you.

BARBARA: If you'll excuse me.

TED: I've been looking for you all my life.

BARBARA: I've heard that line before.

TED: I mean it. You're perfect. Your nose is perfect. Your hair is perfect. Your lips are perfect. Your legs are perfect. And... Your breasts are perfect.

BARBARA: I'm going to order another drink.

TED: I need you.

BARBARA: I have no need to be needed.

TED: Perfect. I need a woman who has no need to be needed.

BARBARA: Well I don't need a man who needs a woman who has no need to be needed.

TED: I want you.

BARBARA: I'm unobtainable.

TED: That's why I want you.

BARBARA: I beg your pardon.

TED: I only want women I can't have. They never disappoint me.

BARBARA: That must make for long lasting relationships.

TED: Sarcasm in a woman turns me on.

BARBARA: We'd never get along.

TED: Is there someone else?

BARBARA: No.

TED: Are you emotionally involved?

BARBARA: I never get emotionally involved.

TED: Marry me.

BARBARA: I could never marry a man who actually wanted me.

TED: Of course.

BARBARA: A man who wanted me would also need me.

TED: I need you.

BARBARA: I know. That's why you can't have me.

TED: Have you ever been in love?

BARBARA: Hundreds of times.

TED: What happened?

BARBARA: They didn't know I was alive.

TED: Thrilling, isn't it?

BARBARA: Have you ever been married?

TED: Scarlett Johanson wouldn't return my calls. If I told you I didn't need you, didn't want you and didn't love you, what would you do?

BARBARA: Throw myself at your knees.

TED: I don't need you, I don't want you and I don't love you.

BARBARA: If only I could believe that.

TED: You hold no appeal for me at all.

BARBARA: (close to the breaking point) Please stop.

TED: There are thousands of other women I'd rather be with. Millions...

BARBARA: I won't listen to your honeyed words.

TED: Kiss off, baby.

(She throws herself at his knees)

BARBARA: I'm yours.

(The segment continues....)

(Next segment)

(Greg and Tanya enter carrying drinks and laughing gaily. This piece is about two people fresh out of therapy, who believe they've gone through a life changing metamorphosis. In truth nothing has changed except for their own self regard which is now out of proportion to reality. While telling the other how wonderful she/he is, they are actually just congratulating themselves. The early part of the piece should be played brightly, with high energy, building in momentum until the moment it all comes crashing down)

GREG: How long have we known each other?

TANYA: I don't know... Three, four hours.

GREG: I feel I've known you all my life.

TANYA: Isn't that funny? I was just thinking the same thing.

GREG: There are some people you know all your life and...

TANYA: You never really know them.

GREG: Exactly.

TANYA: My first husband was like that.

GREG: I knew it.

TANYA: Knew what?

GREG: That you'd been married before.

TANYA: You did? How?

GREG: I just knew.

TANYA: You're divorced, aren't you?

GREG: Two years.

TANYA: I knew it the first time I saw you.

GREG: Talk about simpatico.

TANYA: Was your first wife communicative?

GREG: Silent as a tomb.

TANYA: My ex was the same way.

GREG: That's why the marriage failed.

TANYA: To be honest, I wasn't a very open person myself.

GREG: I never would have guessed.

TANYA: It was only through therapy..

GREG: That you learned to say what you felt.

TANYA: You too?

GREG: Me too.

TANYA: Somehow I knew that.

GREG: I went into therapy a tightly closed bud and emerged an open flower reaching for the light.

TANYA: That's beautiful.

GREG: I've come to learn that only through complete and open communication can two people have any hope for a deep and lasting relationship.

TANYA: As long as that communication isn't one sided.

GREG: Both people must be able to freely express their thoughts, their needs, their desires...

TANYA: But it must be an honest expression of those needs and desires. No game playing.

GREG: You're a find, if you don't mind my saying so.

TANYA: Not at all.

GREG: Since my divorce, I've dated many women. They seem so protective.

TANYA: Defensive...

GREG: Afraid to say what they want.

TANYA: What they need. It's the same with men.

GREG: I don't mean to sound presumptuous, but I think you and have...

TANYA: A real future together?

GREG: You took the words right out of my mouth.

TANYA: You're an open book.

GREG: Coming from someone as forthright as yourself, that's a real compliment. The truth is I'm not as open as I'd like to be.

TANYA: I feel complimented that you can reveal that to me.

GREG: You see... I want to...

TANYA: The answer is yes.

GREG: But I haven't even asked the question.

TANYA: You want to have sex with me.

GREG: When it comes to open lines of communication, you could write the book.

TANYA: Don't be silly, I was thinking the same thing.

GREG: Actually, I've been thinking it...

TANYA: Since you bought me that second martini.

GREG: My God, are we on the same wave length or what?

TANYA: It's nothing magical really. We're just two open people who refuse to beat around the bush.

GREG: I could kiss you.

TANYA: Why don't you?

GREG: Exactly... Why don't I?

(They kiss)

GREG: *(thrilled with himself beyond belief)* I don't know why I was so afraid to even broach the subject of sex. I knew you were going to say "yes."

(This is where it falls apart. Tanya's emotional high takes a slow elevator ride to the basement as her demeanor turns testy and defensive)

TANYA: *(after a long pause)* You did?

GREG: *(still riding the wave)* There was no question about it? This is amazing.

TANYA: *(pause... dry, cool)* Yes... Isn't it?

GREG: Oh, I'm never going to let you go.

TANYA: *(pause)* You knew I was going to say "yes"?

GREG: *(still thrilled with himself)* Absolutely.

TANYA: *(pause)* I could've said "no."

(The segment continues...)

(Next segment...)

(Martha and Larry enter)

MARTHA: Who is it, tonight?

LARRY: Susan. A salesgirl I met while picking out your birthday present.

MARTHA: And a lovely gift it was, too.

LARRY: Susan said you'd like it. She was the one who really selected it. You know how I am with those things.

MARTHA: Thank her for me. She has excellent taste in jewelry... and men.

LARRY: I'll tell her what you said... She'll be pleased to hear it.

MARTHA: Is Susan pretty?

LARRY: Lovely... Almost as lovely as you.

MARTHA: You think Peter will like the way I look?

LARRY: He'll love you.

MARTHA: I hope so. He is such a sexy man.

(She picks up her purse and starts to exit)

LARRY: Before you go.

MARTHA: Can it wait, Larry. I am running a little late.

LARRY: This will only take a second.

MARTHA: My dearest always comes first. Besides, it's good to keep a man waiting. Gets his juices perking.

LARRY: I have a terrible confession to make, Martha.

MARTHA: What is it, dear? What's wrong?

LARRY: Remember our conversation last year?

MARTHA: Which one?

LARRY: The one we had after Tony and Judy broke up when she found out about his affair.

MARTHA: Yes... That was where we agreed that statistically, we'd be faced with the same problem, sooner or later.

LARRY: And we decided that our marriage was much too important for it to flounder on the rocks of infidelity.

MARTHA: (*impatiently*) Poetically said dear. But can you get to the point?

LARRY: It's about the agreement we reached to set aside every Tuesday night for each of us to see whoever we wanted openly and above board.

MARTHA: So long as it didn't interfere with the marriage.

LARRY: It's about those Tuesday nights.

MARTHA: They are working out wonderfully, too. Aren't they?

LARRY: Yes... Well... That's what I want to talk to you about.

MARTHA: It sounds serious.

LARRY: It is. Quite serious.

MARTHA: Oh dear.

LARRY: It's not what you're thinking.

MARTHA: Then you haven't gotten involved.

LARRY: No.

MARTHA: Good.

LARRY: It's something else.

MARTHA: Perhaps we can talk about this when I...

LARRY: It's about last Tuesday night.

MARTHA: Last Tuesday... You were with someone named Joan, or Joanne, or something like that.

LARRY: That's not quite true.

MARTHA: (*almost at the door*) Whatever her name. As long as you enjoyed yourself.

LARRY: I wasn't with a woman.

MARTHA: Ohmygod!!!!

LARRY: It's not that Martha.

MARTHA: Then what the hell is it?

LARRY: I was at the movies.

MARTHA: The movies???

LARRY: A double bill. "Dirty Harry" and "Magnum Force"... Clint Eastwood.

MARTHA: Clint Eastwood?

LARRY: It was the same the week before. "Ghostbusters" and "Groundhog Day." They both had Bill Murray in them. He's the fellow who used to be on "Saturday Night..."

MARTHA: I know who Bill Murray is.. If you couldn't find a date, why didn't you say so? It's no big deal. One or two Tuesday nights.

LARRY: It's not that I couldn't find a date. I haven't been looking for one. I've never looked for one. I've been going to the movies every Tuesday night.

MARTHA: Every Tuesday night for the last six months?

LARRY: It's been awful. You don't realize how much junk Hollywood turns out until...

MARTHA: You louse.

LARRY: I didn't know how to tell you.

MARTHA: What about your secretary?

LARRY: I never touched her.

MARTHA: Ohmygod. And here I've been making all those little innuendos to her over the phone. What must she think of me?

LARRY: She just thinks you're a little brassy.

MARTHA: And I suppose while Kenny and I were at the Marriott you and whatshername were never...

LARRY: Never.

MARTHA: What is wrong with you?

(The segment continues...)

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