

# THE FIRST DATE

## By Kristyn Leigh Robinson

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ISBN: 1-60003-218-4

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## CHARACTERS

- BRAD                    an accountant, quiet, unassuming, on a blind date set up by a close friend
- DELIA                    his date, an artist, vivacious, charming, with only one apparent flaw – she is a kleptomaniac
- JACK                    their waiter, completely inept

## PRODUCTION NOTES

This play requires an assortment of restaurant-type props, including dishes, silverware, salt-and-pepper shakers, a ketchup bottle, etc. It isn't necessary to stick to exactly what's written in the script. The one requirement is a battery-operated power screwdriver or screw gun.

## SET

A table, two chairs, and some way of mounting a light fixture that will have to be unscrewed

*The First Date* was first produced at the Chapel Street Players in Newark, Delaware in 2002; then, at the Shelterbelt Theatre in Omaha, Nebraska in 2004; at the Maysville Players (Kentucky & Ohio) in 2004; and at Prince William Sound Community College in Valdez, Alaska in 2005.

The First Production of the play was directed by Kristyn Leigh Robinson with the following cast:

Christopher M. Turner	Brad
Georgiana Staley	Delia
Matt Casarino	Jack

## THE FIRST DATE

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**AT RISE: A booth in a theme restaurant like Bennigan's or TGI Friday's. BRAD sits, drumming his fingers nervously on the table. JACK enters.**

JACK: Hi, how are you this evening?

BRAD: (**obviously nervous**) Fine. How are you?

JACK: I'm great. My name's Jack, and I'll be your server tonight. Our soup is the hearty potato cheddar chowder, and our specials are listed in our menu. Can I get you something to start, sir?

BRAD: No, thank you – I'm waiting for someone.

JACK: You're sure?

BRAD: (**suddenly uncertain**) I hope so – I mean, she said she'd be here – unless she changed her mind –

JACK: Er, no – I mean, are you sure you don't want anything?

BRAD: Oh. Yeah – I'd better wait until she gets here.

JACK: Your wife?

BRAD: No, we're not married.

JACK: (**nodding knowingly**) Your girlfriend.

BRAD: (**obviously uncomfortable with the conversation**) No. I've never met her before.

JACK: Ah – a blind date! Those are the worst, aren't they? I mean, will she like you, will you like her, what if you black out and wake up in the middle of nowhere with a tattoo of a smiling pickle on your chest? Or, worse – what if she cracks her knuckles? You know, if she's just sitting there during dinner, cracking and cracking away (**unconsciously demonstrates as HE says this; BRAD has a visible reaction to the sound of the knuckles cracking; JACK continues, oblivious**) There's nothing more nerve-wracking than a blind date. (**finally noticing BRAD, who has become more and more agitated during this speech**) Oh, but I'm sure you'll be just fine. Are you nervous?

BRAD: A little – look, uh, Jack... Don't you have another table or something?

JACK: Yeah... (**HE seems reluctant to leave**)

BRAD: Is something wrong?

JACK: No... Are you sure you don't want something... a drink, appetizers... (**inspiration strikes**) the hearty potato cheddar chowder? The manager doesn't really like it when people sit at a table and don't order anything.

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BRAD: (*considering this*) Oh. Well, yeah, but it isn't like I'm not going to order anything. I just want to wait until she gets here.

JACK: (*with a sigh*) Okay.

*(JACK sits in the empty chair to wait for DELIA. HE begins to drum his fingers on the table. BRAD, obviously uncomfortable with his presence, glares at him. JACK is oblivious to this.)*

BRAD: (*with exaggerated cheer*) Know what? I changed my mind. I do want something.

JACK: Certainly, sir. (*HE stands*) What can I get for you? (*pen is poised over notepad*)

BRAD: I'll just have a glass of water.

JACK: (*tightly*) Right. (*writing it down slowly*) One... glass... of... water, coming right up. (*exits, humming "Hey Big Spender"*)

*(DELIA enters and looks around. SHE spots BRAD and crosses to him. SHE is carrying a large bag.)*

DELIA: Brad?

BRAD: (*standing nervously*) Dina?

DELIA: Delia.

BRAD: Right – Delia. (*looks embarrassed*)

DELIA: That's me. (*SHE sits, laying the bag on the seat next to her*)

Sorry I'm so late – I had a terrible time getting through that traffic on 95. It was one of those situations where everyone slows down for no apparent reason, then all of a sudden, everything speeds back up and there's no accident or anything, you know? I mean, it's not like someone's head is lying in the street or something!

BRAD: Oh, I hate that!

DELIA: When there's no head? Yeah – what a waste.

BRAD: I, uh, meant the traffic.

DELIA: Oh. Yeah, me, too. Anyway... (*brightly*) Have you ordered yet?

BRAD: No, I was waiting for you.

DELIA: Oh. That was nice of you. (*looks at table*) Aren't there any menus?

BRAD: Um – no, I guess the waiter didn't leave any. You just missed him.

DELIA: Oh. Well, I'm sure he'll be back soon. So – Anna tells me you're an accountant.

BRAD: And you showed up anyway – brave woman.

DELIA: Yeah, I'm stopping here on my way to lion-taming class.

*(BRAD chuckles)*

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DELIA: Actually, accountants don't scare me. (*leans in conspiratorially*) My father was an IRS agent.

BRAD: Okay, now I'm scared.

DELIA: (*with a laugh*) Don't worry, it doesn't run in the family. I'm an artist.

BRAD: That's what Anna said – multi-media stuff, right?

DELIA: Oh, yeah – I dabble in a bit of everything. Photography, painting, sculpture, you name it.

BRAD: Wow. I'm impressed.

DELIA: Don't be. I may be okay with a paintbrush, but I'm hopeless when it comes to anything practical. You should see me try to program my VCR.

BRAD: Oh, come on, that's not a good example. Those instruction manuals are written in some ancient foreign language or something.

DELIA: (*with a laugh*) Even so, I'm pretty scatterbrained.

BRAD: Well, I'm still impressed. I don't have a creative bone in my body.

DELIA: Sure you do. Everyone says that, but it's not true. A lot of people just don't take the time to tap their inner creativity, that's all.

BRAD: I don't know. I drew a picture once in art class and my mother hung it up on the fridge. She thought it was a great picture of a snake.

DELIA: See, that's nice!

BRAD: It was a motorcycle. I was trying to get her to buy one for my birthday.

DELIA: (*stifling a laugh*) Well, that's not that uncommon. Most little kids' drawings don't even remotely resemble what they're supposed to be.

BRAD: I was a senior in high school.

DELIA: Oh. Okay, well, maybe you're right, then.

**(THEY laugh.)**

BRAD: I wonder where the waiter got to? It took me forever to get rid of him, and now he won't come back. We're going to miss the movie.

**(looks around for JACK)**

DELIA: Well, maybe he's on a break. **(SHE takes all the packets of sugar from the container on the table and puts them in her bag)**

BRAD: Or maybe Scotty finally beamed him up to the mother ship. With that guy – **(turning and seeing her steal the sugar)** – anything's possible. **(stops, startled)**

DELIA: **(seeing him catch her stealing the sugar)** You never know when you might need some.

BRAD: True. **(grins at her)**

DELIA: So, have you ever eaten here before?

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BRAD: No.

DELIA: Me either. But I've been wanting to try it for a while.

BRAD: I'd never heard of it. Anna recommended it. It seems like a nice place.

**(JACK enters.)**

BRAD: Hey, there you are! We thought you got lost!

JACK: What do you mean?

BRAD: ...Never mind. We could use some menus.

JACK: Certainly, I'll be right back with those. **(exits)**

BRAD: Great. **(turns to DELIA, who is examining her silverware)**

How long do you think it'll be before we see him again?

DELIA: **(distracted)** What?

BRAD: He's going to get us some menus. The last time he left, I thought he was never going to come back.

DELIA: This could be a long dinner, couldn't it?

BRAD: I'm starting to think so.

DELIA: Oh, well, it'll give us some time to get to know each other. At least it'll make for a good story, right? Think of all the horror stories people have about blind dates.

BRAD: What was your worst experience?

DELIA: **(beginning to laugh at the memory)** He took me to a museum.

BRAD: Well, that doesn't sound too bad – at least it was something you're interested in.

DELIA: A paper clip museum.

BRAD: Oh.

DELIA: Yes.

BRAD: Paper clips, huh?

DELIA: You'd really be surprised at how many different varieties of paper clips there are.

BRAD: Well, maybe we can go there on our second date.

DELIA: As long as we don't follow it up with a bean-tasting.

BRAD: I'm sorry, did you say bean-tasting?

DELIA: Yep.

BRAD: At the risk of sounding unduly ignorant here, what exactly is a bean-tasting?

DELIA: That would be the same thing as a wine-tasting, except with beans instead of wine.

BRAD: Oh, my. And here I was, thinking dinner and a movie.

**(DELIA laughs and slips her silverware into her bag.)**

BRAD: What are you doing?

DELIA: What?

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BRAD: **(a little stunned)** I – you – ? **(gestures toward her bag)**

DELIA: What, that? Oh, don't worry about that.

BRAD: But –

DELIA: They'll never miss it.

**(BRAD is speechless as JACK enters.)**

JACK: So, have you decided yet?

BRAD: Decided?

JACK: Are you ready to order?

BRAD: Order? Order what?

JACK: **(with a confused look at DELIA)** Your food, sir.

BRAD: How can we order?

JACK: **(cheerfully, relieved)** Oh, it's easy! **(as though eager to explain)** You tell me what you want, and then I write it down, and –

BRAD: **(cutting in)** We can't order anything.

JACK: **(encouraging)** Oh, sure you can! You just lack self-confidence. You know, I used to have that problem, too. **(to DELIA, who seems very interested)** Then I took this really great public speaking class, and before you knew it, I was talking to everyone –

BRAD: **(interrupting again)** No, I mean we can't order because we don't have any menus.

JACK: You don't?

BRAD: No.

JACK: What happened to them?

BRAD: Nothing happened to them! You never brought them. We asked you to get some for us.

JACK: Oh – right. Okay, well, I'll be right back.

BRAD: Sure you will.

DELIA: Could I have some silverware, too, please?

JACK: Oh – sure. Sorry about that. **(HE exits)**

DELIA: We should be nice to him. I think maybe he's new. **(SHE is examining a candle holder on the table)**

BRAD: **(moving the candle holder away)** So... you were, uh, talking about the great bean-tasting date.

DELIA: Right. Well, apparently this guy really liked beans. I mean, really liked them. So on the ride home – well, let's just say it was a very long ride, and he'd eaten a lot of beans.

BRAD: Oh, my. So I guess it wasn't love in the air, then.

DELIA: You could say that.

**(THEY both laugh.)**

DELIA: So what was your worst blind date experience?

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BRAD: That's a little hard to say. I've had tons of bad blind dates. But the worst? I guess that would be about three months ago.

DELIA: What happened?

BRAD: It was my first – and last – attempt at meeting someone on the internet.

DELIA: Oh...

BRAD: **(nodding)** We met in a chat room, and sort of hit it off. I have some friends who had successful internet dates, so I decided to take a shot at it. We met at this little café, agreeing that we'd each carry a red rose – you know, the whole bit.

DELIA: Okay. So what happened?

BRAD: Well, as you can imagine, I was a little nervous – you hear all kinds of news stories about scary things that happen on internet dates. So I got there and scanned the room for the rose.

DELIA: And? What happened?

BRAD: And, I finally saw it – on the table in front of what was either a man in a dress or a woman with a serious estrogen deficiency.

DELIA: Oh, no!

BRAD: **(nodding)** Oh, yes.

DELIA: What did you do?

BRAD: **(as though this is the only logical answer)** I sat down and had dinner with him and pretended I didn't notice the hair sticking out of his plunging neckline.

DELIA: You didn't!

BRAD: I did. Then, when dinner was over, I very nicely explained to him/her that I'd decided to become a priest.

DELIA: I didn't know guys did that in real life! I thought that was just on really bad sitcoms!

BRAD: Sometimes I think my life is a really bad sitcom.

**(As THEY laugh, JACK enters and starts to laugh along with them. BRAD stops laughing and glares at JACK, who notices this, clears his throat and stops laughing.)**

JACK: Here are your menus. **(gives them menus and, noticing candle holder has moved, resets it near DELIA)**

BRAD: Thank you.

JACK: Can I start you off with something to drink?

DELIA: I'll take a Diet Coke.

BRAD: Yuengling, please.

JACK: Okay, I'll be right back with those. **(exits)**

**(DELIA is now holding BRAD'S silverware.)**

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BRAD: Uh –

DELIA: **(dropping the silverware into her bag)** This is a really great place. You know, now that I think of it, Anna told me this is where she and Frank had their first date.

BRAD: Did you just –

DELIA: **(with genuine innocence)** What?

**(JACK enters with drinks.)**

JACK: Here you go. **(to BRAD)** Iced tea. **(sets it down)** And milk for the lady.

BRAD: **(after a beat)** Oh, I see. So when you asked what we wanted, it was just kind of out of curiosity, then?

JACK: I'm sorry?

BRAD: The lady ordered a Diet Coke I ordered a Yuengling.

JACK: Yeah...?

BRAD: You brought her a milk, and you brought me an iced tea.

JACK: **(beat)** Is there something wrong with the drinks, sir? **(HE sticks his finger into the milk and tastes it)**

BRAD: You mean, apart from the fact that they're not what we ordered? **(reacts to JACK's finger in DELIA's milk and moves his iced tea away just as JACK is about to stick his finger into it)**

DELIA: It's fine. **(to BRAD)** Really. It's okay.

BRAD: **(hesitant)** Are you sure?

DELIA: I'm sure. I like milk! **(to JACK)** But we could use some silverware.

JACK: **(frowning, as HE speaks, HE looks under the table, under the napkins, etc.)** Oh, I thought I set it. I'll bring it right over. **(exits)**

BRAD: You know, Delia, you seem like a really nice person...

DELIA: **(smiling)** So do you.

BRAD: **(pleasantly surprised, as though this was not the response HE was expecting)** Oh. Thank you. **(back to business)** Well, it's just that – I mean, it's the silverware thing.

DELIA: The silverware thing?

BRAD: Well, you... took the silverware. Twice.

DELIA: Right...?

BRAD: Aren't you afraid you'll get caught?

DELIA: Oh, they won't miss it. They expect people to take things. That's why they leave them here.

BRAD: No, I don't think so. I'm pretty sure they leave them here so people will use them and then give them back.

**(JACK enters, carrying two more glasses.)**

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JACK: Here are your refills!

BRAD: Our what?

JACK: Refills. On your drinks.

***(BRAD looks at glasses – now four full ones on table.)***

DELIA: Thank you.

BRAD: You didn't, by any chance, bring the silverware, did you?

JACK: What silverware?

BRAD: I didn't think so.

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