

Datemia a comedy in too many scenes (or, a scene in too
many comedies)

By

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Cast of Characters

<u>Amanda:</u>	Mid-thirties, a zaftig Professional Woman in search of a Professional Man, whatever that may be.
<u>Zeke:</u>	Early forties, a musical man in search of a reliable man, whatever that may be.
<u>Other Female Characters:</u>	Other Character Female: An assortment of women, or at least characters more female than male.
<u>Other Male Characters:</u>	Other Character Male: An assortment of mostly male men.

Scene

The under and overworlds of dating and desire. A blank stage inhabited a four actors, assorted pieces of furniture, some occasionally cheesy lighting, and a little music, sometimes sentimental, sometimes funny (or both).

Time

Right now. Or perhaps just yesterday.

ACT 1

Prologue

AT RISE, the central playing area is empty. At the perimeter, a few pieces of props and furniture that will be used as many things (for example, in one scene the mop becomes a cat) - they include a couple wooden chairs, mop, jumprope, and a box of kleenex. The characters F-OTHER and H-OTHER stand like life-sized dolls at the back of the stage whose batteries have wound down, drooping towards the ground. AMANDA enters with a toothbrush.

AMANDA

At first it was his idea, Zeke's.
(ZEKE rushes in with some toothpaste)

ZEKE

After I stole it from Amanda, of course.
(ZEKE takes her toothbrush, starts brushing his teeth)

AMANDA

He steals everything. It's the musician in him. Have you noticed? You don't have to be musical anymore to be a musician. But it helps if you're a thief.

ZEKE

I sampled her idea.

AMANDA

Stole it.

ZEKE

Remixed it.

AMANDA

Kypped it.

ZEKE

How do you spell kypped?

AMANDA

Another of his habits. Changing subjects when things get hot.

ZEKE

Oh, I need to spit. Excuse me.
(He exits)

AMANDA

There's no sink backstage. He'll have to swallow.

ZEKE

(Returning, to audience)

Are you following this? I'm asking you a question. Are you following this? Ah, they talk back, too. No wonder you're not at home. You're brighter than your TV.

(To AMANDA)

They're rather clever tonight.

AMANDA

They're divine. Remember, it's not just a screen, they're real. If you pinch them they scream.

ZEKE

Really?

(He starts down into the audience)

AMANDA

Zeke, no. Don't start. AMANDA and ZEKE I never stopped.

AMANDA (cont'd)

He's so predictable. In that adorable unpredictable way of his.

ZEKE

I'm gay. I suck cock and eat butt.

AMANDA

We're so proud of him. He's delightful at a formal dinner party. Really. The thumping Christians love him.

ZEKE

But I use latex. I love the taste of latex.

AMANDA

America the beautiful. Land of opportunity.

ZEKE

But I wouldn't mind finding one guy, you know, a nice and not-so-nice, sort of fucked-up but knows how to talk about it, laugh about it, and not get too stuck in it kind of guy.

AMANDA

And to think it all started with just thirteen revolting colonies.

ZEKE

Maybe with a big dick, maybe not. And pecs, I'd like him to have nice pecs. Hairy. And no car. I believe in mass transit.

AMANDA

And I believe in the Latin Mass. We are founded on the idea of religious freedom. What a beautiful thing. It makes me cry, sometimes.

ZEKE

After four glasses of a good Merlot, stripping varnish off a chair has her crying like Miss Universe. Why does Miss Universe always weep like a baby? Shouldn't the runners up be crying? After all, they lost. They're not pretty or talented enough, their swimsuits and eyes are too pouffy...

AMANDA

"All Men are Created Equal."

ZEKE

A wonderful idea. Unless you're a woman.

AMANDA

Wonderful. Like twenty-six dates.

ZEKE

All my idea.

AMANDA

I just had it first. He appreciated it. Appropriated it.

ZEKE

Remastered it.

(Whispering to AMANDA)

When are they coming?

AMANDA

Look. Behind us.

(HE spots the other actors)

Twenty-six dates.

ZEKE picks up F-OTHER and brings her downstage

ZEKE

Where's the switch on this one?

AMANDA

Equity or non-Equity?

ZEKE

What's the difference?

AMANDA

The non-Equity ones don't mind not getting paid; the Equity ones get very bitter about it.

ZEKE

I forget, which are you?
(She gives him a look)

ZEKE (cont'd)

Oh, right. Silly of me to ask.

*ZEKE picks up H-OTHER and brings him downstage,
near F-OTHER*

AMANDA

Kiss him.

ZEKE

I beg your pardon?

AMANDA

To wake him up. We aren't even to date one and it's almost a quarter past.

ZEKE

But I don't even know him.

AMANDA

Ohmigod, Zeke! You go to the Club and do the Kama Sutra with men whose names you don't even know. Don't even want to know.

ZEKE

I love how you call it "the Club." It's very 1950s Donna Reed. And this is different.

AMANDA

How is it different?

ZEKE

This is very, well, more intimate. And he's kinda maybe cute.

AMANDA

Very more intimate. Kinda maybe cute. Great grammar, Kiddo.

ZEKE

And thanks very to you.

AMANDA

What does it matter what a man looks like, if your tongue is in his mouth?

ZEKE

Or elsewhere. Good point. Too bad most people kiss with their eyes closed.

ZEKE kisses H-Other, who springs to life suddenly, walking around the stage like a wound up doll, bumping into furniture or walls and changing direction until he bumps into something else.

AMANDA
Careful.

ZEKE
Beautiful. Now you do her.

AMANDA
She's not my type.

ZEKE
C'mon. Everyone knows all women are part lesbian.

AMANDA WHAT?! ZEKE
I love saying things to her like that. She's a lot of fun at a formal dinner.

She kisses F-OTHER tenderly on the cheek. She, too, springs to life and starts wandering the stage like a wind-up doll.

AMANDA
We were having coffee and complaining about men. Then it happened. The idea. Thirty-six dates.

ZEKE
Twenty-six.

AMANDA
Oh, You are listening to someone else besides yourself. Just checking.

ZEKE
We were telling them about my brilliant idea.

AMANDA
The one you stole from me.

ZEKE
Remodeled.

AMANDA
Oh, now you're an architect instead of a musician.

ZEKE
I ran out of metaphors.

AMANDA

It's a good thing you're no writer.

ZEKE claps his hands; F-OTHER and H-OTHER stop in their tracks and look at him

ZEKE

We need to get things going in the right direction here.

(to F-OTHER and H-OTHER)

Get the props.

AMANDA

Zeke, be nice. They're people, too.

ZEKE

I thought they were Non-Equity.

ZEKE (cont'd)

(To H-OTHER)

Look, sweetheart, could you start rounding up the props and stuff for the first date? I mean, for my first date?

(H-OTHER looks at AMANDA, who nods)

AMANDA

(A conspirator's whisper)

It's okay.

(H-OTHER trots off-stage)

ZEKE

Why does he always do that?

(AMANDA whispers into F-OTHER's ear and she strolls off-stage also)

AMANDA

What?

ZEKE

Look at you, when I ask him to do something.

AMANDA

He doesn't trust you

ZEKE

Why? What have I ever done? Don't answer that.

ZEKE (cont'd)

Oh, you mean because?

AMANDA

Exactly.

(Pause)

(MORE)

AMANDA (cont'd)

You know, I've never understood that exchange.

ZEKE

Really?

AMANDA

No. I mean, what does it mean, that "because"? Your line "Oh, you mean because?"

ZEKE

Am I not saying it right? I think you play off it beautifully.

AMANDA

Thanks, but I don't know what it means, exactly.

ZEKE

It's got subtext.

AMANDA

It's vague.

ZEKE

Like I said. Subtext. They can handle it. Remember, they're not at home watching five hundred fifty six channels.

AMANDA

No. They're here for our challenge: Twenty six dates in twenty six days, each sealed with a kiss.

ZEKE

That was the hard part.

AMANDA

Who knew.

ZEKE

I knew. I said it at the time.

AMANDA

Actually, I did.

ZEKE

I agreed.

(H-OTHER brings him a toilet plunger)

ZEKE (cont'd)

What is this?

AMANDA

Two words, starts with a 'T.'

ZEKE

What is it for?

(To H-OTHER)

Why did you hand me this, this...?

H-OTHER

The stage manager says it's a steering wheel.

ZEKE

(To AMANDA)

Do you believe that?

H-OTHER

It's not my fault.

AMANDA

Of course not, honey.

H-OTHER

It's a toilet plunger.

AMANDA

Of course it is, honey.

ZEKE

Why do you always talk like that to the non-Equity help? It's patronizing.

AMANDA

You're non-Equity.

ZEKE

Exactly.

(Smiling)

Twenty six dates.

AMANDA

Twenty six days.

ZEKE

And at the end of that twenty-six day month.

AMANDA

A decision.

ZEKE

A plunge ahead...

AMANDA

A decisive moment...

ZEKE

Can we... I mean, is it okay on the dates if we...

*We hear the crack of a baseball bat at a ball,
crowd cheering.*

AMANDA

(Shrugging)
If it comes up, sure.

ZEKE

As it were.

AMANDA

Pick one.

ZEKE

Sounds like Old Maid.

AMANDA

That's what happens if you don't.

ZEKE AND AMANDA:

Pick one.

AMANDA

After twenty-six glorious dates in twenty-six glorious
days, pick one and pursue.

ZEKE

Ask, don't tell.

AMANDA

Woo, don't wollop.

ZEKE

Fall in love.

AMANDA

Dare dependence.

ZEKE

Work to lose the latex.

AMANDA

Thirty-six dates.

ZEKE

Twenty six.

AMANDA
Just checking.

ZEKE
I love you.

AMANDA
You're gay.

OTHER-F brings her a ratty beige overcoat
What's this?

OTHER-F
Your dress for your first date.

AMANDA
But I wore that sexy number with the black stockings
and the knee-high boots.

F-OTHER
The stage manager says nothing is the same the second
time around. Memory changes things.
(AMANDA shoots ZEKE a look)

ZEKE
(Holding up the plunger)
Welcome to the -- er, plunger? We have to work with
what the stage manager gives us.

AMANDA
Does he have a name, this stage manager?

ZEKE
Is that a he? I thought he was in transition.

AMANDA
From what, to what?

ZEKE
We should hit on him and find out.

AMANDA
But he's the stage manager.

ZEKE
Why don't stage managers ever have names? Thornton
Wilder never named his stage manager.

AMANDA
They don't need names. They want ours.

ZEKE
Yes, they live for others.

AMANDA
Twenty-six dates.

ZEKE
This is getting repetitious.

AMANDA
Dating is.

ZEKE
We're losing time.

AMANDA
Let's do thirteen apiece, instead of all fifty two.

ZEKE
Leave out the snake charmer and the guy who wanted to eat his desert off your chest?

AMANDA
Oh, yes, please. I'm worried what the stage manager will substitute for whipped cream. I forget, what did we decide about the proof of a kiss?

ZEKE
The official certification of a legitimate date?

AMANDA
Yes, what did we decide?

ZEKE
One word. Trust.

AMANDA
Trust. I forgot.

ZEKE
I almost did, too. It's my word to yours, yours to mine. Fasten your seatbelts, keep both hands on the plunger.

(BLACKOUT)