

Turn the other cheek

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a short play

by

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Cast

ALBERT

SAMSON

ALBERT: (FURIOUS) Because it's not what I want !

SAMSON: (LACONIC) What you want doesn't matter.

ALBERT: Yes it does.

SAMSON: No it doesn't.

ALBERT: How do you know what I want doesn't matter ?

SAMSON: Because it doesn't.

ALBERT: I tell you what I'm going to do. The next one – I'm going to say to her. Straight out. When I ask her out – or at the start of the night when I pick her up - I'm going to say, very nicely: "Look, is there any chance you are even the teeniest bit attracted to me because if you're not let's just say goodnight right now."

SAMSON: Won't work.

ALBERT: How do you know ?

SAMSON: Because I tried it. Had the reverse effect.

ALBERT: What did she say ?

SAMSON: "I could never be attracted to anyone who said something like that."

ALBERT: Crap. She was never attracted to you in the first place.

SAMSON: Might've been. Some attractions take time to develop.

ALBERT: Bullshit. Not true attraction. It's instantaneous. You know in a second. "I want her," "She wants me." (CLICKS FINGERS) Snap.

SAMSON: That's a very male viewpoint.

ALBERT: Because I'm a fucking male.

SAMSON: A woman sees things differently. She doesn't know whether she's attracted to you or not yet. It takes her a while. That's why she has to go out with you. To see if she is attracted to you.

ALBERT: Well let me tell you – she ain't.

SAMSON: That's because you're not giving them time.

ALBERT: How much time do they need ? If somebody gives me one more cheek to kiss I'm going to scream. And the way they do it. They don't even give you the slightest hint, the tiniest option that there might be

ALBERT: (CONT) something more. Before you've got time to even start leaning they plonk a big cheek in your face and say a quick "Night." And you oblige. Give them a dutiful peck and they skedaddle. Through their front door in a mini-second.

SAMSON: What are you doing to these women ?

ALBERT: I'm not doing anything. I'm being nice and charming, polite even. I pick them up. I take them to the appointed restaurant or function or opening at the appointed time – as promised – then return them again to said residence again at the appointed time.

SAMSON: Well what do you expect ?

ALBERT: I expect more than getting a bloody big cheek rammed in my face the millisecond I think of anything to do with lips. Well I tell you, next time I'm not going to be nice. The next cheek that comes my way I'm not going to give it a nice little peck. I'm going to give it a juicy big lick. A nice sloppy one. Right from the tip of the chin to the top of the cheekbone. I'm gonna slobber all over that bitch.

SAMSON: So why exactly don't they go out with you on a second date ?

ALBERT: Because they're all bitches – every single one of them.

SAMSON: How many girls exactly has this particular occurrence occurred with ?

ALBERT: I hate it when you do that.

SAMSON: Do what ?

ALBERT: Try to sound intelligent.

SAMSON: I wasn't – was I ?

ALBERT: Yes you were.

SAMSON: And did I ?

ALBERT: Did you what ?

SAMSON: Sound intelligent.

ALBERT: No you bloody well didn't. Thirty eight.

SAMSON: What's thirty eight ?

ALBERT: That's the number of delightful young ladies who have shoved their big fat, red cheek in my gob at the end of an evening.

SAMSON: You really hate women don't you ?

ALBERT: No I don't.

SAMSON: Doesn't sound like it.

ALBERT: I don't hate women. Just those thirty eight particular women.

SAMSON: It can't be that many.

ALBERT: It is.

SAMSON: Can't be.

ALBERT: Alright here they are. The thirty eight women since I broke up with –

SAMSON: She who won't be named.

ALBERT: Her – the thirty eight women who I have expressed interest in who have expressed absolutely no interest in me.

SAMSON COUNTS ALONG ON HIS FINGERS.

ALBERT: Alison, Annabelle, Anne, Belinda, Christine, Deborah, Deborah's friend -

SAMSON: I don't think they count if you can't name them.

ALBERT: Yes they do. Eli, Eve, Evelyn, Fabien,

SAMSON: Who ?

ALBERT: Fabien.

SAMSON: That's a nice name.

ALBERT: And she's a very nice girl – with an even nicer cheek ! Georgia, Jaime, Jennifer, Jesse, Jessica,

SAMSON: Lot of J's there.

ALBERT: Yes there are. And a lot of L's too. Laura, Liz, Louise, Louise

SAMSON: You already said Louise.

ALBERT: There's three of them.

SAMSON: Three ?

ALBERT: Louise 1, Louise 2 and Louise 3. And number two wasn't content just with turn the other cheek. She made sure I got the message very loud and clear.

SAMSON: What happened ?

ALBERT: Don't sound so titillated.

SAMSON: Oh, but I am.

ALBERT: Well I took her to the Opera. Very romantic – La Boheme.

SAMSON: Nice date.

ALBERT: Very nice date. Then we went for coffee.

SAMSON: Not champagne ?

ALBERT: No, coffee.

SAMSON: Nice little glass of rose.

ALBERT: I said coffee.

SAMSON: Why ?

ALBERT: Because she didn't drink.

SAMSON: Well that's probably a bad sign – right there.

ALBERT: Samson old buddy.

SAMSON: Yes Albert.

ALBERT: Have you ever noticed that I don't drink either ?

SAMSON: Come to think of it ...

ALBERT: AAAAHHH ! Anyway, so we go for a coffee, have a really nice chat, deep and meaningful conversation, baring our souls, cutting to the bone.

SAMSON: There's your problem right there. Cutting to the bone.

ALBERT: What ?

SAMSON: Getting too close too quickly.

ALBERT: Evidently not. Because the next day she sends me a text message:

SAMSON: What did it say ?

ALBERT: I'm getting to it ! It says: "Thanks for last night but I never want to see you again."

SAMSON: Ouch.

ALBERT: And she really wanted me to get the message loud and clear ?

SAMSON: How do you know ?

ALBERT: She sent it twice.

SAMSON: Ouch, ouch.

ALBERT: Exactly. Where was I ?

SAMSON: M.

ALBERT: Thank you. Marney – e – y and Marnie – i - e, Mary, Megan,

SAMSON: How many's that ?

ALBERT: Why ?

SAMSON: I've lost count.

ALBERT: Naomi, Octavia, Patricia, Rachel, Rebecca, Sepideh –

SAMSON: Sepideh ? That's an unusual name.

ALBERT: She's Muslim.

SAMSON: Well, that's why she would only let you kiss her on the cheek. Because of her religion.

ALBERT: She's also a bikini model, without the bikini.

SAMSON: Sounds like a very interesting girl.

ALBERT: Very. Tahnee, Tracey, Trilby, Ursula, Wilga, Yvana,

SAMSON: There certainly are some unusual names on this list.

ALBERT: Yes there are but they all end up with the letters c-h-e-e-k. And finally Virginia.

SAMSON: No Z's.

ALBERT: No, no Z's.

SAMSON: That's a relief. I lost count again.

ALBERT: Trust me. It's thirty eight.

SAMSON: Who've all given you -

ALBERT: The big cheekerooni. And that's not to mention the other nine who don't even make that list.

SAMSON: Because they kissed you on the lips.

ALBERT: No. They shook my hands.

SAMSON: You took a woman on a date and she shook your hand. What is wrong with you ?

ALBERT: You're meant to be making me feel better.

SAMSON: It's not working.

ALBERT: No !

PAUSE.

SAMSON: What about that girl that lives downstairs ?

ALBERT: Who ?

SAMSON: Prudence.

ALBERT: Prue.

SAMSON: She was interested in you. She asked you around for dinner. I was there. I heard it.

ALBERT: She doesn't count.

SAMSON: Why not ?

ALBERT: Because I'm not attracted to her.

SAMSON: Maybe you just need some time.

ALBERT: Four hundred thousand years wouldn't be enough time for me to be attracted to her.

SAMSON: That's a pretty long time.

ALBERT: Well, it still wouldn't be long enough.

PAUSE.

SAMSON: Alright – I've got an idea.

ALBERT: For what ?

SAMSON: How to make you feel better.

ALBERT: You can not possibly make me feel better.

SAMSON: Come on. Try it.

SAMSON STANDS. HE TURNS HIS CHEEK TO ALBERT.

SAMSON: Okay, kiss me.

ALBERT: What ?

SAMSON: On the cheek.

ALBERT: You want me to kiss you on the cheek ?

SAMSON: (POINTS TO CHEEK) Right here.

ALBERT: How will that help ?

SAMSON: Trust me. Just do it.

ALBERT: Kiss you on the cheek ?

SAMSON: Yep.

PAUSE. **ALBERT STARTS TO LEAN IN. HE STOPS.**

ALBERT: You're not going to do anything weird.

SAMSON: Trust me.

ALBERT: (BEAT) Alright.

ALBERT LEANS FORWARD TO KISS SAMSON ON THE CHEEK. AS HE DOES SAMSON TURNS HIS FACE TOWARDS HIM SO THEY KISS ON THE LIPS.

ALBERT: (WIPING MOUTH) Yuck. What the fuck are you doing ?

SAMSON: I didn't do it.

ALBERT: Do what ?

SAMSON: Give you my cheek to kiss.

ALBERT: So what ?

SAMSON: I let you kiss me on the lips.

ALBERT: I don't want to kiss you on the lips.

SAMSON: I thought it would help.

ALBERT: You idiot.

ALBERT EXITS.

SAMSON: (CALLING AFTER HIM) Just trying to build up your confidence.
(BEAT. SITTING) I think Prue is quite nice. Reckon he'd give me her number.

LIGHTS FADE.