

*Mini Play Number Thirty Two*

## VIRUS

Prejudice, in all its shades and colours, is found pretty much everywhere. It can range from a little irritating to utterly destructive. Many people don't even know they have a particular prejudice. Prejudice can be likened to a virus. A lot of people may get the virus but not show any symptoms. – until it raises its ugly head. On the other hand, a virulent virus can quickly and systematically wreak havoc in society. See what kind and how many prejudices you can spot in this mini play.

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PREJUDICE

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# FOREWORD

## **Zik-Zak Corolla's *mini plays for pleasure and purpose.***

The accounts in the plays are drawn from real-life experiences but the characters are fictitious.

The plays will help raise awareness and promote useful discussion of social issues that now effect most families. The aim is to help safeguard our kids from the increasing dangers they face in this ever-changing world.

Interactive and fun, the plays and the following *Questions for Discussion*, help raise awareness of challenges that affect the younger generation. They have been designed to promote discussion and dialogue especially between kids and their parents or guardians, teachers and others who are genuinely concerned about the welfare of our society.

Because the plays address real issues the language used is at times direct but is unlikely to be offensive. Feel comfortable about playing.

### **Tips for playing**

Drop the directional notes and change the genders of the characters if it is more appropriate to your setting and cast; but be sure to follow the general thrust of the play. Short, the plays may be, but they are carefully researched, thoughtfully penned – and they pack a punch!

It is important to have fun acting out the plays and to get fully involved in the *Questions for Discussion*. Remember not to be judgemental but to listen, consider and learn.

### **Get Involved. Get Motivated. Play Safe.**

Invite your family and friends around for the evening. Make a night of playing and learning. Have some fun!

Speak to the teachers at your kids' school. Get competitions going – Best Production, Best Actor, Best Answer, Best Lesson Learned. \*

Contact local groups and clubs to put on a production of a selection of the plays. \*

Be expansive. Get on social media (if it is safe and sensible) and spread the word. \*

Go Big! Invite the local radio and TV station to come and see your very own special premiere. \*

*\* Performances are authorized for educational purposes only; not for commercial gain.*

**Enjoy! Hugs! – Zik-Zak Corolla**

## COMPLETE COLLECTION

1. **BUMPY RIDE** PLAY SUBJECT : ALCOHOL/DRIVING
2. **ONE MORE SHOT** PLAY SUBJECT : ALCOHOL/SOCIAL MEDIA
3. **MOVIE MADNESS** PLAY SUBJECT : PEER PRESSURE
4. **THE BREEZE AND THE WIND** PLAY SUBJECT : PEER PRESSURE
5. **I'M A BULLY ARE YOU?** PLAY SUBJECT : BULLYING/MENTAL HEALTH/SOCIAL MEDIA
6. **MOMMY** PLAY SUBJECT : GUN CRIME BULLYING/MENTAL HEALTH
7. **HE DESERVES RESPECT** PLAY SUBJECT : BULLYING/MENTAL HEALTH
8. **GOTTA CHANGE WANNA CHANGE** PLAY SUBJECT : BULLYING/MENTAL HEALTH
9. **HOW IS SALLY GETTING ON?** PLAY SUBJECT : DRUGS
10. **A FISH ON THE LINE** PLAY SUBJECT : DRUGS
11. **WILL YOU BE MY GIRL** PLAY SUBJECT : DRUGS/ABUSE/MENTAL HEALTH
12. **YOU GOTTA SHOW LOVE** PLAY SUBJECT : DRUGS
13. **THE PHONE CALL** PLAY SUBJECT : DEPRESSION/MENTAL HEALTH
14. **BLACK DOG** PLAY SUBJECT : DEPRESSION/MENTAL HEALTH
15. **NO. 26** PLAY SUBJECT : CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE
16. **THE RESTAURANT** PLAY SUBJECT : CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE
17. **1:30AM** PLAY SUBJECT : KNIFE CRIME
18. **TROUBLE BREWING** PLAY SUBJECT : KNIFE CRIME/GANGS
19. **23** PLAY SUBJECT : KNIFE CRIME/GANGS
20. **CARROTS, ONIONS & CELERY** PLAY SUBJECT : BODY IMAGE
21. **THAT NIGHT** PLAY SUBJECT : SINGLE MOM/SEX EDUCATION
22. **FAST CAR** PLAY SUBJECT : SEX/ALCOHOL/DRIVING
23. **DO YOU THINK THEY'LL BELIEVE YOU** PLAY SUBJECT : SELF HARM/SEXUAL ABUSE
24. **ME AND MY MOM** PLAY SUBJECT : CUTTING/SELF HARM/MENTAL HEALTH
25. **BRAIN BOX** PLAY SUBJECT : SELF HARM/MENTAL HEALTH
26. **THE MONSTER** PLAY SUBJECT : GAMBLING
27. **A TARGET TO KILL** PLAY SUBJECT : BINGE DRINKING
28. **WHAT A PARTY!** PLAY SUBJECT : BINGE DRINKING
29. **RAP ATA TAT TAT TAT** PLAY SUBJECT : GUN CRIME
30. **MISS ISABELLA LINDEMAN** PLAY SUBJECT : GUN CRIME
31. **DRASTIC ACTION** PLAY SUBJECT : CYBER BULLYING
32. **VIRUS** PLAY SUBJECT : PREJUDICE
33. **JOJO** PLAY SUBJECT : RACISM

## Characters

**Dora**

**Betty Torrino**

**Franko Torrino**

**Sasha**

**Doctor**

## **SUMMARY**

Prejudice, in all its shades and colours, is found pretty much everywhere. It can range from a little irritating to utterly destructive. Many people don't even know they have a particular prejudice. Prejudice can be likened to a virus. A lot of people may get the virus but not show any symptoms. – until it raises its ugly head. On the other hand, a virulent virus can quickly and systematically wreak havoc in society. See what kind and how many prejudices you can spot in this mini play. Don't forget to check out the **Questions for Discussion**.

## **SCENE ONE**

**Dora** (to the audience) You know, prejudice can be difficult to define. Some say it's a negative attitude or feeling toward an individual based solely on that individual's membership in a certain group. (slight pause) Phew! That was a bit wordy. Others say it is an attitude based on insufficient information which leads to prejudice (sigh). But one thing is for certain, prejudices can be formed against another person because of their race, gender, language, religion – you name it! If there's a perceived difference, there can be prejudice. Do you have a prejudice? Think about it. (slight pause) Meet my mom and dad, Betty and Franko Torrino. Look at them. Do you think they are prejudiced? Well, we're going to find out. I'm inviting someone special to dinner. Take a look in . . .

(Franko, Betty and Dora are seated in the living room. At one side at a slight distance sits the doctor and at the others side sits Sasha)

**Franko** You look really nice today Dora.

**Dora** (laughing) Don't I always Dad? Just kidding Dad. Thanks. I thought I'd make a special effort today, and so too did you Mom.

**Betty** I know. Well, it's not every day you bring a boyfriend home. Is it? And I must say you do look lovely Dora, although you know I'm not overly keen on bright red lipstick. You know what type of girls wear that colour.

**Frank** Betty!

**Dora** Oh! Come on Mom. It's not as bright as Dad's lime-green socks and you know what type of men wear that colour, don't we? (everyone laughs)

**Franko** Well, I don't know. We've got a *Sasha* at work. Started on the shop floor this week. He dresses well-enough, but you can see he's a little bit different.

**Betty** What do you mean Dear, different?

**Franko** Nothing really. I think he's an immigrant. I don't know where from though. Not that I've got anything against immigrants. They deserve a chance to better themselves. I hope he's got the aptitude for the job, you know, that it's not too much for him, not being from this country.

**Dora** Well, *my* Sasha is very clever and he's so dreamy. We haven't seen each other for two weeks so we've got a lot to catch up on.

**Betty** So, go on then Dora, Was it love at first sight?

**Franko** (raises his eyes) Women!

**Dora** You know when I went on that technicians' course a few months' ago? Well, he was at the course and yes Mom, we did click straight away.

**Franko** Technicians course. I don't know Dora, I wish you'd have gone in for hairdressing or beauty therapy. Something a little more suited to girls. You'd have been good at that.

**Dora** Come on Dad we've been through this, ages ago. Anyway . . .

**Betty** Go on tell him Dora.

**Dora** We finally got the results in today. I came top of the . . .

**Betty** Of the top thirty in the country. Our daughter is number one!

(door-bell rings)

**Dora** That'll be Sasha. You'll be nice to him you two?

**Franko** We'll try.

**Dora** Mom, Dad this is Sasha (she pecks him on the cheek)

(All stand, shake hands and return to their seats. Franko and Betty look a little startled, surprised but remain polite. Sasha joins the conversation)

**Franko** (aside to Betty) That's the kid from work. I told you he looks different. What has Dora gotten herself into?

**Betty** Ssshhh! or he'll hear you.

**Franko** I recognise you. You've started work at Robbins International.

**Sasha** Yes, I did. I enjoy it. Dora said you work there and now thinking about it I recognise you too. You work with the production team, don't you? I haven't managed to meet everyone yet. It's only been a few days.

## SCENE TWO

**Doctor** Well, Mr Tarrino. Your initial tests have come back fine. But you do seem a little on edge, anxious. Perhaps there is something deeper, not so obvious.

**Franko** If I'm truthful there is something bothering me Doctor.

**Doctor** Would you like to tell me about it?

**Franko** I think the start of it happened a few nights ago (he turns back and joins Sasha and the family)

## SCENE THREE

**Betty** Dora said you met at a technicians' course.

**Sasha** Yes, that's right. It was a really enjoyable time. I'd had a rough couple of days and then I met Dora who made me a lovely cup of coffee, but it was her lovely smile that warmed me up.

**Dora** Yes, he'd (turning and speaking to Sasha), you don't mind do you?

**Sasha** No. Warts and all (laughing and Dora laughs too)

**Dora** He'd, Sasha, had just been to see his psychiatrist and he had a really rough time.

**Betty** Oh! That sounds interesting. (to Franko) Not everyone has their own psychiatrist do they Dear?

**Franko** (aside to the doctor) He goes to see a shrink. The guy is a psycho. It doesn't surprise me, where he's from and all that. (turning to Betty) No they don't. Yes, that is interesting Dear.

**Betty** Mmmmm.

(brief awkward silence)

**Franko** I suppose going on the course helped you get into Robbins International?

**Sasha** Not exactly, but in a way yes.

**Franko** (aside to the doctor) He's shady Doctor. That type normally are.

**Dora** Actually Daddy, Sasha was one of the course's instructors, weren't you Sasha?

**Sasha** Yes, I'm sort of in your field Mr Torrino – project development and I thought to have the technicians on board would be good for industry.

**Franko** You've got to be qualified in those things Sasha so I'm guessing you're into admin – getting it all organised, that type of thing.

**Sasha** Yes, I did get involved in a bit of that too.

**Dora** Dad, Sasha devised the course. It was his idea.

**Betty** Have you been to university then?

**Sasha** Yes, I did a degree at the Sorbonne.

**Franko** Where?

**Dora** It's in France Dad, Paris. It's a top Uni.

**Franko** I see. So, it's a *French* qualification.

**Sasha** And then I did a Ph.D. at Oxford, England.

**Franko** Oxford *University* England?

**Sasha** And here I am.

**Franko** (aside to the doctor) He's a doctor just like you.

**Doctor** No Mr Tarrino, he's not like me (little snort and laugh) I am a medical doctor and there is a big difference.

**Betty** Would anyone like a drink?

**Franko** So how is it Sasha? That you're sort of (embarrassed cough) working a menial job at Robbins if you are so highly qualified?

**Dora** Dad! Really!



**Franko** Sasha?

**Sasha** No it's okay really. Hopefully we're going to be family soon (Dora snuggles up to Sasha)

**Franko** I'll have a whisky Betty.

**Sasha** You see it was Jed's idea.

**Franko** Jed?

**Dora** Jed Robbins Dad – you know the owner of Robbins International.

**Franko** You know Jed Robbins personally?

**Sasha** Well, I suppose so. He had heard about the work I had been doing and he invited me over to his place for the weekend to share ideas – talk things out.

**Betty** You've stayed at Jed Robbin's mansion?

**Sasha** I have to admit it is a smart place. Anyway, that's when he offered me the job.

**Franko** On the shop floor? A low-grade worker?

**Sasha** I've never looked at workers like that Mr Tarrino. The way I see it is that we're all part of a team. But Jed wanted me to get the feel of the firm but no, it was to come in as Director of Operations specifically to project manage.

**Franko** But, you're only in your late twenties.

**Dora** Isn't it exciting Daddy. You are going to be working together!

**Betty** What a surprise. Sasha is going to be your boss Dear.

**Franko** Make that a large whisky Betty. (aside to the doctor) I need some anti-depressants Doc. Something to go with the whisky. (slight pause) So I went on the love tack . . .

#### **SCENE FOUR**

**Franko** Would you like a whisky Sasha?

**Dora** Sasha doesn't really drink Dad, Do you honey? He thinks it's a crutch, because of a weakness in a person's character (laughing)

**Sasha** Oh! Come on Dora, I wouldn't go that far. Everyone is entitled to one vice.

**Betty** Is the psychiatrist a crutch for you Sasha?

**Sasha** (thinks) The truth is yes, in fact at the moment I think it's a bit of a necessity.

**Betty** (looking disapprovingly) Oh! Really.

**Sasha** It's to do with – well when I was a kid in my home country (slight pause) I . . .

**Dora** Sasha experienced a trauma . . .

**Sasha** I . . . One night, armed militia broke into our home. They shot my uncle dead and smashed my father's head with a rifle butt. He fell down dead right in front of me. My family were goldsmiths you see. I guess they were after gold and jewels. But they were never kept at home. While they were ransacking the place, somehow my mom, my brother and sister, we got out., we escaped. We ran and ran. The whole country was in turmoil. Eventually we made it to France.

**Betty** Oh! You poor boy.

**Sasha** That was nearly twenty years ago. But in my head, well it feels like it was yesterday. And yes, talking it out with the psychiatrist has helped a lot. It is my crutch. Believe it or not getting to know Dora has eased the pain too.

**Betty** You're a fine wonderful young man Sasha – to come through all that and get where you are. I'm so glad you came over.

**Franko** (turning to the doctor) So I've got a virus then Doctor?

**Doctor** Yes Mr Tarrino. You've been infected for years but it's just been made visible.

**Franko** You mean my prejudice. I didn't know it was there. Really.

**Doctor** Most of us don't until the symptoms become evident but all of us have some prejudice to some degree. The important thing is to do something about before it takes hold and ruins our lives and of course the lives of others.

**Sasha** You know Mr Torrino. I will have a whisky please, just a small one.

**Dora** (to the audience) My family is probably a bit like yours – somewhere. Well then, Do you have a virus? Are you infected? Do you have a prejudice?

**THE END**

### ***Questions for Discussion***

- 1) What is your definition of prejudice?
- 2) Would you describe the Torrino family as a bad family?
- 3) Did you spot any signs of prejudice? (Here's a few: age, gender, sexuality, social status, nationality, education, personal habits, personality type, mental health, job status and more . . .) What is your opinion of each example portrayed? Do you think any of them are acceptable? Why?
- 4) How do you think prejudice develops?
- 5) Do you think any prejudice is acceptable? What? Why?
- 6) Do you have a prejudice of any kind? Why?
- 7) How can prejudice be addressed?
- 8) What do you think of the characters?
- 9) What do you think of the play?
- 10) What can we learn from the play?
- 11) What other comments or observations would you like to make?

**THE END**