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Product Code: A1007-SP

Sound Effect

A 10-Minute Contemporary Comedy

by Chantal Marie

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

SARA: *Best friend of Charles*

CHARLES: *Best friend of Sara*

ENRIQUE: *Friend of Charles*

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SETTING: *Sara's apartment; a table and two chairs stage right and a vase with flowers and a sofa stage left.*

AT RISE: *SARA fluffs the pillows on the sofa anxiously anticipating the arrival of her best friend, CHARLES. SARA is accepting a visit for the first time since coming out of quarantine.*

SFX: DOORBELL RINGS.

SARA

Coming! (*Sashays to the front door; flings it open*) Charles! Charley Bear, Char Man.

CHARLES

Sara Wara Fara Tara!

Leaving the door ajar, they perform a pretend hug to avoid touching.

SARA

Oh, those pesky germs.

CHARLES

They're just evil.

SARA

Enough with germs and sickness! It's so good to see you in person!

CHARLES

How are you feeling today?

SARA

Pretty good. I just realized that you're the first human being I've been with in real life except my doctor in, like, three months.

CHARLES

Kee-razy, woman!

ENRIQUE comes bounding in, a little out of breath.

ENRIQUE

I got a parking space right in front of the building!

SARA stares at ENRIQUE.

SARA

(To CHARLES)

Uh, sound effect.

CHARLES

Uh, no sound effect.

SARA

SOUND EFFECT.

SARA grabs CHARLES' shirt and drags him aside.

SARA. Cont'd

You didn't tell me you were bringing someone. This was supposed to be you and me getting together.

CHARLES

This is my friend Enrique and if you would just give me two seconds I will introduce you guys.

SARA

You know I have been living like a hermit. You can't just go and throw some random person into my life.

CHARLES

I'm hardly 'throwing him into your life.' I told you my car's in the shop. He gave me a ride. Plus, he's a good guy. You'll like him.

ENRIQUE

Guys? Do you want me to go?

CHARLES

Absolutely not.

SARA

(Composing herself)

No, it's very nice to meet you.

ENRIQUE crosses to SARA and holds out his hand.

SARA

I don't shake hands with people anymore. It's very unsanitary. In fact, I should probably be wearing gloves.

CHARLES

(To ENRIQUE)

Remember, she was really sick.

ENRIQUE

Right, right. By the way, if you don't mind me asking, what does "Sound Effect" mean?

SARA

It's just a silly inside joke.

CHARLES

(To ENRIQUE, starting to explain)

You know in the movies—

SARA

Don't explain it. He'll think there's something wrong with us.

CHARLES

I'm sure it's too late for that. *(To ENRIQUE)* You know how in the movies when something unexpected or sudden happens and they use that sound effect of someone grabbing a phonograph needle off a record?

SARA

We love that sound effect.

CHARLES

We love that sound effect.

SARA and CHARLES look at each other.

ENRIQUE

(To CHARLES)

You know, if you want to spend some time together I can just go grab a coffee somewhere and you can text me when you're ready to leave.

SARA

No, please stay. Sit down.

ENRIQUE and CHARLES sit at the sofa. There is an awkward pause.

SARA

(Finally)

Would you like to something to drink?

ENRIQUE

I'll have a beer, if you have any.

CHARLES

Same.

SARA

(To CHARLES)

You never drink beer in the middle of the day.

CHARLES

Well, I started, okay?

SARA stares at the two of them and they stare back. SARA makes no move to get the beer.

SARA

I can't do this.

CHARLES

Um, what?

SARA

I have been alone so long that this real-life encounter is just too intense. I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to ask you to leave.

ENRIQUE stands. CHARLES remains sitting.

CHARLES

But you're the one who invited us over. Well, me, anyway.

SARA

I made a mistake. This was too soon for me to be with actual human beings. The pressure is stifling me. I need my space back.

CHARLES

You sound like an insane person.

SARA

Thank you for the compliment. Now please leave. I'm putting up this boundary to protect myself.

ENRIQUE crosses to the door.

ENRIQUE

(To CHARLES)

Come on, she wants us to leave.

CHARLES

I'm not leaving on principle.

SARA

Sound effect! Yes, you are. God, even the noise of live human voices is an assault on my senses.

ENRIQUE

You guys really like that "sound effect" thing.

CHARLES

We probably overuse it a little.

SARA

I think I'm having a panic attack. *(Crosses and leans against the table)* Ew, I'm sweating.

CHARLES

But I wanted to speak to you about moving in.

SARA

What?

CHARLES

On the phone, you said you were thinking about getting a roommate. My lease is up at the end of the month. I think it's a great idea. It'll be fun.

SARA

I can't even envision such a thing right now.

CHARLES

Can I have that beer, anyway?

SARA

Get out.

CHARLES

Guess I'll have to get it myself. *(Jumps up; starts toward kitchen)*

ENRIQUE

(To CHARLES)

You're kind of torturing her.

CHARLES

She can take it. This is nothing.

ENRIQUE

I don't know if I want to know what that means.

CHARLES heads toward the kitchen.

SARA

I don't have any beer!

CHARLES

No beer? So you were leading us on, alcoholically?

SARA

You're on to me, Charles. I spent weeks hatching a plan to reel you in with the promise of beer, only to pull the rug out from under you when you discover that indeed I have no beer. I would stand there laughing while all your hopes and dreams crashed down around you simply because of temporary beer deprivation. That was my big plan and you figured it out with that big brain of yours. Now please leave.

CHARLES

Okay, we're going. But only because you're not being fun, not because you asked us to. And the next time you call 'Charley Bear' and ask him over, expect him to be too busy hanging out with his 'real' friends.

SARA

You're talking about yourself in the third person.

CHARLES

(Turn his back on her)

Come on, Enrique. Let's head by that party at—Who was it again?

ENRIQUE

You mean my second cousin's quinceañera? I said I don't want to go to that.

CHARLES

(Taunting SARA)

I heard you say it was going to be amazing.

SARA

(To herself, quietly)

That does sound kind of fun.

CHARLES drags ENRIQUE out the door.

SARA

Thank God.

SARA closes the door, sits down on the sofa, pulls out her phone and looks at it. No texts or calls. She lies back and stares at the ceiling.

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes