

# THE ABC'S OF DATING

by Matthew Salazar-Thompson

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**THE ABC'S OF DATING****by Matthew Salazar-Thompson**

**SYNOPSIS:** A spirited group of women gather at a local coffee shop to sip lattes and decode the modern dating scene—one letter at a time. From awkward first impressions to laugh-out-loud missteps, this comedic ten-minute play explores the highs, lows, and hilarity of love, friendship, and figuring it all out—alphabetically.

**TIME:** Present.

**SETTING:** Outdoor coffee stand.

**CAST OF CHARACTERS***(5 females)*

BARISTA (f).....Our comedic narrator. She brews the coffee at the coffee shop. *(5 lines)*

ILSA (f).....A member of the ABC's of dating therapy group. *(22 lines)*

DENISE (f).....A member of the ABC's of dating therapy group. *(27 lines)*

OLIVIA (f).....A member of the ABC's of dating therapy group. *(18 lines)*

COZETTE (f).....Organizer of the ABC's of Dating therapy group. *(29 lines)*

**AT START:** *Simple set. Very upbeat music. Lights up on a fun looking coffee cart entitled “The Busy Bean”. We are outside on a beautiful morning. There is a table with five chairs. Our narrator, BARISTA, is making coffee.*

**BARISTA:** *(To the audience.)* Rise and grind everyone! And good morning! In fact you mocha me happy that you are all here today. Okay, one more and I'm done. How do coffee cups greet each other? *(Beat.)* With mugs and kisses! *(Beat.)* Okay, okay I'm not a comedian, that's for sure! Now on another subject... Let's face it, dating... is difficult. It's challenging, it's frustrating. No matter how old you are or how many dates you go on. It takes all *types* that's for sure. You see dating is a bit like a cup of coffee. Some like theirs sweet with a whole lot of sugar. Some like it spicy with a dash of cardamom. While others tend to look at dating like, a single shot of espresso: very clear and direct. And still others tend to have problems figuring out what they want. *(Imitating a customer.)* “Um... let's see... um... I'll have a honey, oat milk latte with two dashes of cinnamon... uh, no I mean just one dash and an ounce of honey... oh could you add three ounces... or is that too much? Actually forget the honey, in fact forget the whole thing. Let me start again and I'll have a triple chocolate iced latte with no whip, I mean, double whip, oh do you have non-dairy whip? I can't make up my mind! AHHH!” *(She's smiles a little.)* Look, if you want a piece of advice? You shouldn't dilute your dating life with those elements that you don't want. After all it's a challenge sometimes figuring out what to order here at the coffee shop, let alone what you want for a dating partner! As a barista I see all kinds here, but you know the folks that I really like? It's the ladies in the dating groups. Now, those women know exactly what they want! They do not want their relationships to come to a bitter end. *(Beat.)* See what I did there? Okay, seriously I really admire the focus groups, those individuals that are looking to change the course of their lives a little through *positive* intervention. Take this group of audacious and awesome ladies... they call their organization *The ABC's of Dating* where they discuss the rules or what I like to think of as the *Cliff Notes* of dating.

*The BARISTA smiles as the lights crossfade to the coffee table. ILSA, DENISE, OLIVIA, COZETTE are dressed for brunch. They are sitting around the table sipping their coffee and nibbling on pastries.*

**COZETTE:** Ladies I want to welcome you once again to The ABC's of Dating Therapy... ahem Focus Group. Actually we're a non-profit organization! It's not easy to throw yourself out into the dating world and through this support system we can tackle those *challenging* dating situations. It's not easy being fabulous *and* single. We have been working on a new program in which each month we date a guy with a new letter of the alphabet. Um... I know that Denise you have had a little trouble on a recent date. Would you like to share?

**DENISE:** Sure. This is a little embarrassing but... I can't stop... dating the M's.

**COZETTE:** Did one of the M's stand you up again?

**DENISE:** Perhaps.

**ILSA:** Mitch?

**DENISE:** No.

**COZETTE:** Michael?

**DENISE:** No.

**OLIVIA:** Matthew?

**DENISE:** No.

**COZETTE:** Maurice?

**OLIVIA:** I really think you need to move on to a different letter of the alphabet.

**DENISE:** I've tried but I'm stuck on M. I've gone through Allan, Billy, Charley, Douglas, Eli, Frankie, George, Harold, Ian, Jack, Kevin, Liernan.

**COZETTE:** Liernan?

**DENISE:** He was Swedish.

**COZETTE, OLIVIA, and ISLA:** Ah!

**DENISE:** He worked at the food court in IKEA.

**COZETTE, OLIVIA, and ISLA:** Oh!

**ILSA:** Why *do* they have a restaurant in a furniture store?

**COZETTE:** Never mind that.

**DENISE:** Yes, never mind that. I have a serious problem. (*Beat.*) I'm stuck on M!

**COZETTE:** The thing is ladies... dating is like playing roulette. You may have to spin the wheel over and over and over...

**ILSA:** You can go on date after date after date...

**OLIVIA:** And you never know what you're going to get.

**COZETTE:** Why don't you go online?

**DENISE:** I want to find someone organically, not electronically.

**ILSA:** Maybe I should take a singles cruise, like Elaine.

**DENISE:** On that cruise ship all you're going to find are guys with hearing aids, so you would definitely find a guy electronically.

**ILSA:** Caroline did that.

**DENISE:** Sounds like a lonely cruise.

**COZETTE:** Do we like guys that are older than us?

**DENISE:** I hope so. Going out with guys that are younger than us feels like I'm on a date with an intern.

**ILSA:** It was just a suggestion.

**COZETTE:** I don't know.

**DENISE:** Oh come on. We could all go. It would be a hoot!

**ILSA:** A hoot?

**OLIVIA:** I didn't want to look desperate in the middle of the ocean.

**COZETTE:** And that's better than looking desperate sitting at home.

**OLIVIA:** We are women. And how we look may be important, but it's not the *most* important.

**COZETTE, ISLA, and DENISE:** Here, here.

**OLIVIA:** We have lines...

**COZETTE:** Curves...

**DENISE:** Dimples...

**ILSA:** Straight hair...

**DENISE:** Curly hair...

**OLIVIA:** Purple hair...

**COZETTE:** How we look is not our defining feature. It's who we are *inside!*

**ISLA, DENISE, and OLIVIA:** Here, here.

**COZETTE:** Ladies we must remember the ABC's of dating. These twenty-six rules are the most respected and highly guaranteed way of finding true love. Let's review. Olivia, will you start us off?

**OLIVIA:** A. Always be looking.

**DENISE:** B. Be totally honest... about nothing.

**ILSA:** C. Control him. Make him think that spending \$300 on a first date is a good idea.

**COZETTE:** D. Dominate... his credit cards. Don't let them collect dust.

**OLIVIA:** E. Expect nothing. Guys can be like taco shells. Strong and sturdy. They may appear to have all the fillings but there's usually a hot, spicy mess in there.

**DENISE:** F. Find the perfect outfit for your first date!

**ILSA:** G. Go with the flow. Guys can be sweet, tender and nervous just like you.

**COZETTE:** H. Hair. Curl your hair if it's straight. Straighten it if it's curly.

**ILSA:** I. I don't care what he thinks. Just be yourself.

**DENISE:** J. Joke around. Laugh at all of his jokes good and bad.

**ILSA:** K. Keratin! Before that first date get your nails done and trim your hair!

**COZETTE:** L. Love. (*Beat.*) Okay, this may seem obvious but not. I'm not saying that you should love the guy on the first date or anything but just love the fact that he found you attractive or pretty or smart or fun or nerdy. Just love the experience of a first date. It's a crazy thing to do, but... just love that you're out on the town and not sitting at home with your six cats.

**OLIVIA:** M! Make the first move. Guys can be.... uh, how do I say this...

**ALL THE GIRLS:** Dumb.

**DENISE:** Okay, for a lack of a better term yeah, sometimes guys just don't know when to make the first move. If you do, then you're always in control.

**ILSA:** N. Never let him see you... without your make-up.

**COZETTE:** O. Other women. (*Stern.*) Don't let him look at them, talk to them, converse with them, text them, call them—

**OLIVIA:** P. Present your credit card at the end of dinner as a gesture, but never, *ever* pay for the date.

**DENISE:** Q. Quit complaining that he doesn't have a car and uses public transportation. He's saving the environment for your future children.

**ILSA:** R. Remember to give him compliments, but not too many compliments or else it will go to his head.

**COZETTE:** S. Stick to your opinions when getting into political conversations.

**OLIVIA:** T. Try to laugh when he tells an absolutely horrible joke. Like this.

*She laughs a very fake laugh. They all watch her. Beat. She stops. Beat.*

**DENISE:** U. Understand that the guy is just as nervous as you are.

**ILSA:** V. Verify his credit report before he picks you up.

**COZETTE:** W. Wishing something doesn't make it so. It may be hard to accept him, but remember dating is a slew of choices.

**OLIVIA:** X. Xylophone. If your date plays the xylophone for a living, you're probably with the wrong guy.

**DENISE:** Y. You are always the first priority.

**ILSA:** Z. Zoology. We can look at online profiles and attempt to put people in boxes of what should be the right choice and look at how we may compare to him on paper, but ultimately it's the instincts between the two of you. Do you laugh at the same jokes? Do you share the same values? Do you love each other even with all of each other's faults? If it's there, it's there. If it's not there then it wasn't meant to be. It doesn't mean that either of you are a bad person if it doesn't work out. But if it does... it's...

**ALL THE GIRLS:** Magic.

**COZETTE:** Well said ladies, well said. And with that let's get to work and make those magical connections.

*They stand up with energy and excitement and exit. Music. The lights cross fade to the BARISTA.*

**BARISTA:** You've got to hand it to those ladies. They know what they want. And that's half the battle right there.

*COZETTE re-enters and chats with the BARISTA.*

**COZETTE:** Hi there.

**BARISTA:** Hi. Refill on your coffee?

**COZETTE:** *(With confidence.)* No thank you. I'm looking for a little adventure here. Actually could I order a triple espresso, almond milk latte with a little whip and two dashes of cinnamon, to go please.

**BARISTA:** (*Aside to the audience.*) Now there's a lady who knows what she wants. (*To COZETTE.*) It'll be right up. I'll call your drink out in just a minute.

**COZETTE:** Thank you. (*She exits.*)

**BARISTA:** (*To the audience.*) Don't be afraid to know what you want. Sending you all a whole latté love in your search for romance. Have fun out there and be safe. Ciao!

*Sound of espresso machine. Lights fade.*

**THE END**

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