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# Your average José

de  
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traducción de  
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*(fragmento en inglés)*

## Cast of Characters

- JOSÉ**                      The “average Joe”. A man of ordinary appearance and indeterminate age, twenty-something.
- EVA**                        Her. A young woman of José’s age. She has a beauty spot on her nose.
- BRUNO**                    An unusual fellow. Not average. Kind of the traditional side-kick character (Spanish: gracioso). Upper class. Very upper class. And dresses that way.
- DRIVER**                    A man with a moustache, an impertinent laugh, and crude manners.
- MARCELINO**              An endearing older man, runs a bar.
- COMMENTATOR**        Typical news reporter from typical TV news show.
- TOWNSPEOPLE**        Voices off. Without rime or reason.

The Driver, Marcelino, and the Commentator should be played by the actor playing Bruno but with broad and conventional characterizations.

The settings should be simple with basic conceptual elements.

Lines in bold in the script are asides directly confessed to the audience and not heard by the other characters.

## Part One

JOSÉ

*(Alone. To the audience.)* I am an extremely average guy. According to the latest statistics. I was born in the suburbs of Madrid, exactly when it was at number one on the index of European birthrates during the last years of the baby-boom. Of course my parents were from the south. Lower-middle class. Working in the service sector. I'm taking classes at the university and plan to be living at home with my parents at least until I'm 30. I don't have a steady girlfriend, but I will have eventually, and we'll both be employed in administration and/or business in order to pay the mortgage. The mortgage which will be the only thing our 1 and 1/3 kids will inherit from us along with the DVD and the three TV's. Meantime I go out nights with my friends, the only time I do any drinking, and I watch TV, on the average, three hours a day. I'm not interested in and don't understand politics, but I think of myself as left of center and always vote for the winning party. I go to the movies fairly frequently and take in the more popular films. And I read books. On the subway and the commuter train I read paperbacks which have covers with the promos of the movie version I've already seen. You can see for yourselves that my looks are more or less run of the mill for my generation . . . Oh, sorry, I haven't introduced myself. I'm José García López. Anyway, I'm your standard guy. Normal. Predictable. Dull. There are only two things that differentiate me from most of the people like me: first, I don't consider myself happy. No, I'm not happy, and I never will be as long as I keep on being normal, predictable, and dull. I want to stand out, be someone important, be recognized socially, even admired. The terrible thing is that the statistics show that this desire, *my* desire, is felt by an overwhelming percentage of the population of twenty to thirty year olds. I just don't know any way of escaping this mediocrity. But I don't want to be some weirdo either. The last thing I want is that, to be someone really unusual. I mean, I respect unusual types. I even have a kind of strange friend, but that's not exactly what I want to be. The second thing that differentiates me from the majority is my opinion about God. You see, I believe that if God existed . . . *(A doorbell rings.)* Excuse me . . . It's probably my friend. The strange one. *(The bell persists. He exits the stage and then comes back on with BRUNO.)*

BRUNO

I mean, take your time, José! I'm wringing the bell so long I'm beginning to look like a Jehova's Witness.

JOSÉ

I'm sorry, Bruno. I was busy talking to . . .

BRUNO

Busy! Busy! Wise is the man who cultivates his time and keeps out the weeds of idleness.

JOSÉ

Confucius?

BRUNO

No. Me. Perhaps you think I wander about plagiarizing sayings?

JOSÉ  
Pardon me.

BRUNO  
Granted.

JOSÉ  
What?

BRUNO  
The pardon you just asked. (*He slaps him on the cheeks as if waking someone who's fainted.*) I see you're only a little awake today, José.

JOSÉ  
A little awake?

BRUNO  
You see?

JOSÉ  
But . . . It's OK. Whatever you say. Let's see. What did you want?

BRUNO  
Now what could it be? Today is Friday. That means a movie! At nine-thirty they're showing . . .

JOSÉ  
(*Interrupting.*) At nine-thirty I can't. I've got to be at the clinic.

BRUNO  
You've got to play doctor on Friday at nine-thirty?

JOSÉ  
I can't get out of it. I kept putting it off until I couldn't pull an earlier time-slot. You know what the waiting lists and lines are like. Socialized medicine!

BRUNO  
Tell me about it. And always demanding stuff. Pills, eye-drops. Put us on some drug! That's really what they want.

JOSÉ  
And the prices! Skyrocketing!

BRUNO  
Looks like it's going to rain . . .

JOSÉ  
Yea. Sky's a funny color.

BRUNO

José, wake up! Dammit! You're acting like your neighbor's sleepy black maid. Come on. What's going on?

JOSÉ

Nothing. Nothing important. Something just before you rang the doorbell I was thinking about . . .

BRUNO

Thinking about. What's bothering you, buddy boy?

JOSÉ

Well, . . . God. I was thinking about God. You know, I believe if God really existed . . .

BRUNO

*(Interrupting him)* God. Well, you know my opinion on that one?

JOSÉ

Yea. I do. You've told me a thousand times . . .

BRUNO

So why do we go on doubting?

JOSÉ

Because we don't swallow your theory.

BRUNO

Man of little faith . . . And it's not theory. Nor scientific law. It is dogma of faith. Anyway, I'll give you proof. Soon. A miracle. (?A word to the wise.)

JOSÉ

I can't wait.

BRUNO

In the meantime, I'll take full advantage of this time you're granting me all to myself and get together with a young honey.

JOSÉ

A young honey?

BRUNO

Yes. She's a fellow student from my German class.

JOSÉ

German? I thought you gave up on German last year?

BRUNO

That was Hungarian. I gave up on German three years ago. Just before I started Gaelic.

JOSÉ  
And so?

BRUNO  
It's because of the *umlaut*.

JOSÉ  
The what?

BRUNO  
The *umlaut*. You know, those two little dots you put over certain vowels.

JOSÉ  
You're taking a German course just to practice that?

BRUNO  
Not exactly. But in the three years since I've been studying German I've figured out the irresistible effect that practicing the *umlaut* has on women.

JOSÉ  
Something contagious?

BRUNO  
Not exactly. But practicing new pronunciations causes girls to discover that they have a mouth. And even better: that they have a tongue.

JOSÉ  
And what better than to go out with a girl who's just discovered she has a tongue . . .

BRUNO  
Right! I see you're getting better.

JOSÉ  
Bruno, I understand you better than anyone. And that's what worries me most.

*(Blackout.)*

## TWO

*(Doctor's office. She (EVA) is the doctor. José, the patient. The patient looks at the doctor as if she were nothing more than she.)*

EVA

Allergy. A typical case of pollen allergy. Have you had this before?

JOSÉ

Every year. Every spring. Like 76% of the population. But I think this time it's worse.

EVA

From what you've told me of the symptoms, it doesn't seem so. (??What kind of person would come this late to see the doctor? I've been five minutes with a guy and coming late makes me nervous. And when I get nervous, I lose control of the situation, and when I lose control, I can't pronounce my words. And if I don't pronounce my words, nobody understands me. Although I don't think the guy I've been with intends to say much . . . Anyway. That being the case it wouldn't hurt to fake it. One more time and no orgasm. (this needs work!???) OK then. So if it will make you feel more better, let me give you a quick check-over. Just take off your shirt and sit there on the exam-table. (*JOSÉ does so, and EVA examines him with the stethoscope.*) Why is it men aren't fazed a bit when you ask them to take off their clothes. For sure they have scenes like this in their fantasies. And in their movies. Is it because I'm not the right type? (alt: Maybe I don't fit the picture?) Is it because they want me to be wearing a garter belt? The pigs. It's probably the beauty spot on my nose. I've got to get that removed. For sure. Cough!

JOSÉ

*(Coughing.)* Truth is this is turning me on. A woman like this asking me to undress. That beauty spot on her nose gives her a certain personality. Something out of the ordinary. But I can't let on I've noticed it. Not very professional. I mean if being a patient is a profession. Besides, if she noticed, she'd think I was a pig.

EVA

You can get dressed now.

JOSÉ

Already?

EVA

*(Impatient.)* Yes.

JOSÉ

I mean . . . I noticed my heartbeat was . . . I don't know, eh . . . kind of too loud, I mean, like it was sending out some kind of S O S.

EVA

*(Applying the stethoscope again.)* Sending out an S O S . . . Ha, ha, ha. That's funny. And thanks to this joker now I'm going to be late for my date.

JOSÉ

Damn. She didn't get it. Yea, you know like Morse code . . .

EVA

Right. I get it. Nothing's wrong. Your heartbeat is absolutely normal, like everybody else's. You're strong as an oak. *(Looking over his file.)* From what I can see you've never had a problem except the allergy. No flu?

JOSÉ

No.

EVA

Not even a cold?

JOSÉ

That either. That's why we've never seen each other before.

EVA

Who?

JOSÉ

You and me.

EVA

Oh. Yes.

JOSÉ

Oh, God. I shouldn't have said that. Not professional either. A patient shouldn't be intimate with his doctor. Never put yourself together in the same sentence. You and me". Linguistic intimacy. That's nice: "linguistic intimacy". I ought to consider writing. Maybe tomorrow I'll get started on a novel. No. Tomorrow I can't. Day after tomorrow.

EVA

How does he know I haven't worked here very long? If he only comes once a year, he couldn't have noticed. He probably thinks I'm new at this. Some know-nothing who just funnels patients to specialists and prescribes drugs willy nilly. And what if he doesn't agree with my diagnosis? It's the first time I've ever treated anyone who's never had a cold. That's a case that should be studied. It could win a Nobel prize. Yea. Right. What am I talking about? Take one of these every eight hours. *(She writes out a prescription.)* If there's any problem, you come back.

JOSÉ

Right. So long then. *(He gets up and starts toward the door.)*



EVA

So long. Oh dear. My "so long" sounded too affectionate. He'll think I was coming onto him or something stupid. Why do I do that? Me and my shaky ego. It's my inability to carry on a normal relationship with the opposite sex, pushing me to make up crazy stories and repress hidden desires. He'll think I'm coming on. God. People aren't that desperate.

JOSÉ

*(With the doorknob in his hand.)* That "so long" wasn't as cold as the rest of the conversation. Maybe she's trying to tell me something. Maybe she likes me. And, do I like her? She doesn't have a sense of humor. But her beauty spot is definitely interesting. Could she have a little thing for me? I wonder. If we could only hear each other's thoughts, life wouldn't be so complicated.

*(Blackout.)*