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Lisa Strata's Big Idea

By
JON JORY

Based on Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*

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Lisa Strata's Big Idea

CHARACTERS

WOMEN:

Lisa Strata	Big Corine
Mobi	Little Corine
Big Foot	Perlina
Betta	Bonita
Quanisha	Caroline
Su-Su	Candy
Donatella	Ratwoman
Georgina	Andi

MEN:

Jake	Big Willie
Cesar	Diet Pepsi
Robo	Josh
Little Skittle	

NOTE: The chorus at the beginning and end may be separate from the other women, if desirable, making the cast as large as 40.

Lisa Strata's Big Idea

(A bare stage painted a bright color. The time is any time to choose between the 1950s and today. As the lights come up we see a group of women in formation wearing pseudo-Greek outfits made from white sheets. They speak in unison.)

CHORUS. Hi. We're a Greek chorus. We made these costumes out of sheets. Cute, huh? We speak in unison, which is a pain. You'll probably think it's boring. Get over it. This is vaguely like a Greek play called *Lysistrata*. Greek play/Greek chorus. They go together like and peas and carrots or, as they say in Greece, fried octopus and rats' livers. Anyway—this all takes place at Watahootchie High School in Texas. Texas is pretty much like ancient Greece. Anyway we hope you enjoy the play, but really that's your problem. Oh! Here comes Lisa Strata.

(LISA STRATA enters.)

CHORUS *(cont'd)*. She's a student leader, and you know what they are like. At the moment, she's got a hair up her nose. That's an ancient Greek saying. Watch, oh watch what happens, noble audience. Watch and learn!

(Another student, MOBI, enters. LISA calls out to her. The CHORUS exits.)

LISA. Mobi! Over here, Mobi!

MOBI. What, Lisa? I've got band practice.

LISA. It's big, and I mean B-I-G, big!

MOBI. What's "big" and how "big"?

LISA. Huge, monstrous, ginormous.

MOBI. Hurry up, I have to flirt with a really cute flutist.

LISA. You heard about the fights over at Grim Prep?

MOBI. Not again. We hate Grim Prep. They are so elitest, they have a curling team.

LISA. Our guys went over there ...

MOBI. Looking for trouble ...

LISA. Exactly. Some Grim guys said we were badly dressed.

MOBI. They wear ties! Actual ties! It's sooo shady.

LISA. They wear ties, they drive BMWs, they read Greek plays in Greek.

MOBI. Snotty to the max. That is so smoked!

LISA. Words were exchanged, somebody spit on somebody ...

MOBI. Mucho gross!

LISA. The preps pulled out their lacrosse sticks, we roll our bowling balls, war breaks out, big time.

MOBI. And?

LISA. Carnage. And here's the bad news, Alejandro ...

MOBI. My Alejandro? My cutie pie, main squeeze, dolly boy, Alejandro?

(LISA nods.)

MOBI *(cont'd)*. No, no, no, no, no—what?

LISA. A broken leg. Six places. In the midst of the brawl a prep backed his car over Alejandro in the parking lot twice.

MOBI. A broken leg? He can't have a broken leg. Prom's in two weeks. I can't go with a guy in a body cast, I'm not Dr. Frankenstein. I'll be laughed out of school.

LISA. Everybody's a mess. Cody has two black eyes and a little finger at a forty-five-degree angle. They held Boogie Wilson down and shaved his head. Zot the Rotten got thrown into a dumpster full of molasses. Shall I go on?

MOBI. This is so dark! Now the Grim guys will retaliate by coming over here and Watahootchie High will look like a Civil War hospital. I am head of decorations for the prom and there will be no prom. I haaaate this!

LISA. I have a plan. I was up all night. I drank almost a case of Mountain Dew. Actually, I'm not sure it was Mountain Dew, I drank it in the dark.

MOBI. What plan? Every girl I know has bought her prom dress, her heels and her perfume. My dress is so sexy, I had to buy two so mom thinks I'm wearing something else.

LISA. All right. I have texted Sofia, Luciana, Donatella, Ratwoman, Mariana, Su-Su, Betta, Candy, Little Corine, Big Corine, Akeely, Andi, Fiona, Big Foot, Perlina, Georgina and Quanisha who bench presses two-fifty.

MOBI. Jonalyn?

LISA. Jonalyn's in prison, remember?

MOBI. Oh, right. But that murder was flat-out righteous.

LISA. He used the word "fat."

MOBI. He deserved it, but maybe not right at Taco Bell.

LISA. They're coming from the gym, they're coming from the library, they are coming from the restrooms. It's like ants!

(The WOMEN start arriving.)

WOMEN. We have arrived. Women of Watahootchie!
(Pause.) And we aren't ants.

LISA. Women of Watahootchie, listen up.

WOMEN. We're all ears!

LISA. Righty-tighty. Prom is coming.

WOMEN. Two weeks.

LISA. I know you all have prom dates.

PERLINA. I had thirty-seven offers.

WOMEN. A world record!

PERLINA. What's up, girl?

LISA. Right this minute your boyfriends are pumping iron for semi-mortal combat with Grim Prep.

WOMEN. Cool!

LISA. Wrong. The first thing Principal Rossetti will do is cancel the prom.

WOMEN. What?!

LISA. You heard me. We will be left sitting at home in our prom dresses eating celery sticks and watching old *Star Trek* movies. Prom is the one high-school memory even your toothless old grandmother treasures.

BIG FOOT. My grandmother has teeth.

LISA. That was a figure of speech.

BIG FOOT. She keeps them in an Altoids tin and shines them with pieces of her old chinchilla coat she was married in, in Nome, Alaska.

LISA. OK, Big Foot.

BIG FOOT. Her prom date got buried in a blizzard, so she came with her Siberian Husky.

LISA. OK, Big Foot.

BIG FOOT. They danced cheek to cheek to old Beatles songs played by a guy on a pair of cymbals.

LISA. OK, Big Foot. And if, by any chance, the prom isn't canceled, your boyfriends will be there on stretchers.

WOMEN. No! We won't stand for it!

BETTA. They have got to stop with the macho!

QUANISHA. My boyfriend had three teeth knocked out and when he talks he sounds like a harmonica.

SU-SU. This is the first time I've been asked to the prom. My heart is broken. (*Sobs.*)

LISA. It's all right, Su-Su. Somebody please give Su-Su a Mounds bar.

SU-SU (*sobbing*). I love Mounds bars.

DONATELLA. Here, Su-Su, don't cry.

SU-SU. A Mounds bar! Thank you, Donatella, you rock.

LISA. Now listen up!

WOMEN. We're listening.

LISA. I will tell you my top-secret plan.

WOMEN. Tell us, Lisa Strata!

LISA. So here's the big idea.

WOMEN. Go, Lisa, go!

LISA. As long as the war goes on, we don't let them touch us.

(The WOMEN all start to leave.)

LISA (*cont'd*). Hey!

WOMEN. What?!

GEORGINA. You actually mean touch as in "touch"?

LISA. No kissing, no hugging, no hand-holding, and no escalation of any of those. No touching.

GEORGINA. Very funny.

LISA. I am dead serious. I have run out of bandages, ointment, crutches and sympathy. There is no conversation about anything but the Grim Prep Mafia. Nobody hangs out,

because their parents have grounded them. Who wants to cuddle with guys who are bloody from head to toe? When the last guy kissed me, his tooth fell out. I spent New Year's Eve with a date in intensive care. I used to have to watch out for guys' hands, now I have to watch out for their stumps.

WOMEN. You exaggerate.

LISA. Just barely. Ladies, we have to stop being male dependent. We put up with guys who think we're squeeze dolls, we have to listen to endless conversations about the shotgun formation and the nickel defense, whatever that is. We have to sit around listening to terrible garage bands and watching third grade skateboarding. We have to cuddle up with guys who haven't showered since April. Now we're supporting an entirely unnecessary war and practically living in emergency rooms. It's demeaning. We are powerful, independent, highly dimensional, first-rate minds, not just support systems!

WOMAN. That's right.

WOMAN #2. We're mad as hell and we're not going to take this anymore!

LISA. What do you think, Big Corine?

BIG CORINE. Big Corine likes to cuddle. It's more fun than calculus. It takes long time to teach guys to cuddle nice. Big Corine has to bang them on the head sometimes, but we should keep them around in case we're in the mood. Big Corine doesn't like the gang war stuff, it makes Big Corine maaaaaaad!

WOMEN. Easy, Big Corine.

BIG CORINE. Big Corine says, "Cut 'em off!"

LITTLE CORINE. You betcha!

WOMAN. Cut 'em off!

LISA. Voice vote.

WOMEN. Cut 'em off!

PERLINA. Maybe for three days?

LISA. Till they surrender. Here's how it works, we wear high heels to school ...

MOBI. High heels are medieval torture.

LISA. Guys squeal for heels. We wear short skirts and low-cut everything, until they pant and drool. Then, when they are hot and bothered we say ...

WOMEN. No!

LISA. Exactly. We're all guys think about. I have seven brothers, they let me in on it. They won't get anything done. They'll be mooning around and walking into walls. They'll completely forget about Grim Prep. We'll perfume them into oblivion.

MOBI. Lisa, believe me, when guys have no access to us, they'll just think about money.

LISA. They will be so busy longing for us, they'll lose their jobs. In a couple of weeks they'll be broke.

WOMEN. Wow, broke and horny, men can't survive that!

LISA. Are we agreed?

WOMEN. Agreed!

LISA. We need to sacrifice something to make our promises steel clad.

BONITA. How about the football team?

LISA. Seriously.

QUANISHA. Our limitations. Let's sacrifice those.

LISA. Perfect. Somebody drag over a trash barrel.

(Two WOMEN go to get one.)

LISA (*cont'd*). This is amazing! We cannot only stop war dead in its tracks, we can be who we are and not how the guys see us.

WOMEN. Yes!

CAROLINE. Excuse me. (*Stepping forward.*) What will happen to me? I'm not very smart, but the boys think I'm pretty, so I'm popular. If I can't be pretty, I won't be anything.

BIG FOOT. Who says you aren't smart?

CAROLINE. Well, I was smart when I was a freshman, but the guys didn't like that, they called me smelly-brain. Nobody asked me out, except the tech nerds, but they were too petrified to touch me. One tried to kiss me, but he missed and knocked out two teeth on the dashboard. Then my aunt, who had been a runner-up in the Miss South Dakota beauty contest, took me to Sephora and transformed me. She told me never to talk about science or philosophy or literature or law or history of ideas of any kind, but to smile and giggle when boys talk to you and say "oh, wow" a lot! Then I was popular and learned what a zone defense was in basketball. I really miss being smart though, but it was way too lonely. I mean, Lisa, let's be real, you aren't anything without a boyfriend. What will become of me?

LISA. Well, you'll be yourself for one thing, Caroline. Plus, once all of us keep the guys a minimum of ten feet away, you'll have everybody here to talk to. And believe me, we need your brains and we need you to drive the men crazy with your beauty. Actually, from this moment on, you're a diva.

CAROLINE. I am?

WOMEN. You are!

CAROLINE. Oh wow! I mean, it seems like a good use of my resources.

LISA. Cool. You're in charge of tactics and makeup.

CAROLINE (*saluting*). I'm on it. (*Disappears into the crowd. A trash barrel is brought on.*)

LISA. All right. Everyone put your limitations in the barrel.

MOBI (*tossing an imaginary limitation into the barrel*). I was not put on this earth to spend fifty percent of my time fixing guys' fragile egos.

CANDY. War is for everywhere, let's just not do it. (*Tosses in the limitation.*)

GEORGINA. I don't want to make just eighty percent of what guys make.

RATWOMAN. I'm engaged to Billy Podesta ...

WOMEN. Bad choice!

RATWOMAN. He does nothing but eat ...

WOMEN. Yuck!

RATWOMAN. And I'm not doing the cooking.

(WOMEN cheer.)

ANDI. When I go to an auto parts store, like for an inlet valve with my squeeze, Lobo, they always talk to him and not me, like a woman couldn't fix a car ...

WOMEN. Boo!

ANDI. Lobo couldn't fix a little red wagon ...

WOMEN. That's right!

ANDI. What am I, chopped liver?

WOMEN. You are not chopped liver!

ANDI. We gotta get these guys straightened out.

WOMEN. Word!

LISA. All right, everybody go home and dress sexy, be back at one o'clock sharp. I got a meeting set with the guys.

(WOMEN exit.)

MOBI. This is going to work, right?

LISA. Guaranteed.

(JAKE enters, his right arm in a sling.)

MOBI. Jake.

LISA. Jake.

JAKE. I'm Jake.

MOBI. Boy, you are really cute.

JAKE. Thanks.

MOBI. Really, really cute.

JAKE. Thanks.

MOBI. Really, really, really cute.

LISA. Mobi.

MOBI. Sorry. Catch you later. *(Stops.)* But he's cute. *(Exits.)*

LISA. What happened to your arm?

JAKE. Ummm, we ran into some guys from Grim Prep.

LISA. What happened to your arm?

JAKE. They said some inconsiderate stuff about our women.

LISA. You're using the possessive.

JAKE. Beg your pardon?

LISA. Our women.

JAKE. Yeah, our women.

LISA. Jake, Jake, Jake.

JAKE. What?

LISA. What happened to your arm?

JAKE. This guy, William Haversham from Grim Prep kinda whacked me with a lacrosse stick. So I kinda whacked him