

TWEED HARRIS - CHATLINES

**CHATLINES ( A Romantic Comedy)**

**1 young male, 1 young female.**

**A dual setting of two desks with laptops, two chairs.**

Two young people chat online and some dialogue is cheeky but eventually the audience realizes that both people are physically handicapped. They also realize, or maybe just hope, that this could be the start of a fine romance.

# CHATLINES

A short play

By

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## **CHAT LINES**

### **Cast:**

**JIM**            A young man  
**JO**             A young woman

### **Setting**

Two rooms, each with a desk and computer.

### **Time**

The present

### **PRODUCTION NOTES FOR OUTSIDE MELBOURNE**

1. All character names may be changed to suit ethnicity of the performing artists.
2. On page 5, the name of the station may be changed to suit locale.

## CHAT LINES.

*(Jimmie and Joanne are two young people in their twenties. They are sitting at desks with computers on and both are on the phone using earpieces whilst looking at their computer screens. You cannot see either person's legs).*

JIM Yes you were.

JO No, I wasn't.

JIM Yes you were

JO I wasn't I...

JIM You were looking at my crutch

JO That is ridiculous.

JIM No it isn't I could see where you were looking.

JO Look, you might be one of those clever dicks...

JIM *( He looks down )* Clever dick?

JO Look you know what I mean, you might be clever and able to type with your eyes closed but I need to look at the keyboard. I was looking down at the keyboard.

Jim Nah, you were definitely looking at my crutch. Anyway it is hidden from view now.

Jo What's so special about your crutch?

Jim Well, it's one of a kind for a start.

Jo I doubt that.

JIM You wait till you get a closer look, then you will understand.

JO Sounds as though you are in love with your own crutch.

JIM Oh, I am. Every night just before I go to sleep I look at my crutch and say, 'good-night crutch.'

JO And I suppose every morning you say 'Good morning crutch'.

JIM How did you know?

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JO Stop being silly.

JIM No I am deadly serious. My crutch and I are inseparable.

JO Look can we talk about something else other than your crutch?

JIM OK, let's talk about yours.

JO My what?

JIM Your crutch.

JO *(Nervous)*. What are you talking about?

JIM Your phone – that is your crutch isn't it? Oh yes, I know it's not the same kind of crutch we were talking about but it is your crutch. You depend on it.

Jo I do not.

Jim Yes you do. You told me you only chat with people on line, then you make obscene phone calls.

Jo Obscene. What do you mean obscene?

Jim Talking about crutches.

JO You started that, saying I was looking at yours.

JIM OK, then who said dick first?

JO Now you are being silly and getting too close to being rude.

JIM Sorry. Sometimes my sense of humour goes – well for want of a better word awry.

JO Wow, trying to impress me with your big vocab now are you?

JIM Did it work?

JO You do know that if I wasn't already impressed I wouldn't be on the phone don't you?

JIM Yes. Thank you. *(Pause)* So why do you only chat on line and phone people? Why not meet?

JO I don't know. I think I feel secure on line and on the phone but in real life I am – well, I was going to say shy but it's more like embarrassed.

JIM Embarrassed! But why? You are a really pretty girl.

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JO *(Pause)* Am I? Do you really think so?

JIM Yes I do. Surely other men have told you so.

JO No, not really.

Jim Then you definitely have to get out more. Joanne, you are very, very pretty. Well in my eyes. *(Long pause)*. Did I say something wrong?

JO No. It's just – well I was savouring the moment and thinking about what you said.

JIM About you being pretty?

JO No. About in your eyes.

JIM Why?

JO Cos, that's what I liked about you the first time I saw you on cam. You have beautiful eyes, Jimmie.

JIM Do I? *(Pause)* Now I am savouring the moment.

JO You know they say the eyes are the window to the soul, well I am not sure I believe that but I do know that when I look in people's eyes I see more deeply than most people. I liked what I saw in your eyes. I still do.

JIM Joanne, why can't we meet? *(Pause)* Joanne?

JO *(Pause)* When?

JIM You mean you will?

JO *(Quickly)* No. No I didn't mean I would. I just wanted to know when you would want to meet if I agreed.

JIM Tonight.

JO *(Quickly)* No, not tonight. I am thinking about it but I need time. It is a long time since I met anyone.

JIM Tell me when Joanne. I will meet whenever you feel ready. *(Pause)* Please?

JO *(Pause)* Tomorrow? Eight o'clock?

JIM *(Excited)* Yes, Joanne. Will I come to pick you up? Where?

JO No. I will meet you at Flinders Street on the steps outside the station.

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JIM But I drive and can....

JO No, it's OK. Let's please meet at the station.

JIM OK, will do. Thank you Joanne. Thank you.

JO No, thank you Jimmie. I am going out at long last.

JIM Joanne.

JO Yes Jimmie.

JIM If it makes you feel any better, I have not met anyone for some time either. Same reason I guess.

JO Shy?

JIM Embarrassed.

JO *(Laughs)* You embarrassed. About what? Unless it's your crutch.

JIM Yes.

JO You really are a silly man.

JIM Too silly for you?

JO No, I didn't mean silly silly I meant silly as in funny. You make me laugh, you make me smile. You make me feel good – about myself.

JIM That's a good thing isn't it?

JO Yes, Jimmie it is – a very good thing. *(Pause)* Jimmie?

JIM Yes.

JO I will come up the steps to you. Wait for me on the top step.

JIM Why on the top step?

JO Please?

JIM OK. Whatever you say.

JO I want you to see me walking towards you and I just hope you like what you see.

JIM I already like what I see Joanne. I was serious when I said I thought you were very pretty. I was not just spinning a line.

JO I know that. If I didn't feel you meant it I wouldn't be meeting you.

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JIM You sure you don't want to meet tonight.

JO I am sure. I need to prepare a few things tonight but tomorrow I will be there.

JIM Promise?

JO Yes, Jimmie, I promise. Jimmie I am so excited about meeting you, I might stumble on those steps and...

JIM Don't worry I will catch you.

JO No. Let me make it on my own. It's like I am walking into a new life and I want to make a grand entrance.

JIM A bit of an actress are you?

JO No, but I would like to be a star for you.

JIM You are Joanne. A bright star that has suddenly made my night sparkle.

JO Oh, more fancy words.

JIM My own words just wouldn't seem adequate somehow.

JO Will you stop with the dictionary words.

JIM *(Pause)* See you tomorrow Joanne. Will I dress up? Will we go somewhere nice for dinner?

JO Simple, Jimmie. Just casual. I do not need to be impressed any further.

JIM You mean you are already impressed?

JO Yes, Jimmie, I am. I told you so earlier, remember.

JIM Yes, I remember. Thank you. *(Pause)*

JO See you tomorrow. I will be wearing.....

JIM You don't need to tell me that, Joanne, I will recognise you. Really I will.

JO And all I have to do is look out for your crutch, right?

JIM Right. *(Beat)* Goodnight Joanne. Sleep well.

JO Goodnight Jimmie. *(They hang up)*

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*(Joanne gets up and walks towards her bedroom with both legs in walking irons).*

*(Jimmie picks up a crutch from under the desk and hobbles towards the kitchen. If at all possible the actor playing Jimmie should appear to have one leg).*

*(They are both smiling happily)*



