



# THE SWEET DELILAH SWIM CLUB

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DRAMATISTS  
PLAY SERVICE  
INC.



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*This play is dedicated to Donna Jo Fowler.  
Friends forever and then some ...*

## ON LICENSING *THE SWEET DELILAH SWIM CLUB*

We write strong female characters that are to be played by females. Under no circumstances should any role in this comedy be played by a male.

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All of the characters portrayed in *The Sweet Delilah Swim Club* are fictional creations, and any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

## AUTHORS' NOTE

We suggest uptempo Carolina-style beach music be played pre- and post-show and during scene transitions.

The pronunciation of the team captain's first name is Sher-EE.

We urge scene changes be made as quickly as possible to maintain a lively pace for the play.

The Sweet Delilah Cottage sign should be weathered as if it had been hanging on the outside of the cottage for years, only to have been blown down by some previous storm.

The play received its World Premiere at The Playhouse of Wilson at The Edna Boykin Center in Wilson, North Carolina, on September 21, 2007. It was directed by Jeff Creech; the set design was by Jeff Creech and Steve Witchey; the costume design was by Ann Brna; the lighting design was by Ray Williams; the sound design was by Greg Davis; the property design was by Kathy Witchey and Marge Rutter; and the stage manager was Bill Stewart. The cast was as follows:

SHEREE ..... Debbie Williams  
DINAH ..... Vicky Stewart  
LEXIE ..... Cyndi Broadwater  
JERI NEAL ..... Becky Vanden Bosch  
VERNADETTE ..... Kathy Creech

We are eternally grateful to them all.

## CHARACTERS

SHEREE HOLLINGER, the perennial team captain, is practical, supportive and a fount of boundless energy. Never without her to-do lists or Pocket Scheduler, her tendency to be hyper-organized occasionally drives her friends a bit crazy. She's the eternal tomboy, a health nut and an all-American mom who lives in Raleigh, North Carolina, with her family.

DINAH GRAYSON, the wise-cracking cynic of the group, has fought her way to the top and relishes the view. A lawyer in the biggest and most prestigious law firm in Atlanta, Dinah excels at everything ... except romance. Armed with a dry martini and an even drier sense of humor, Dinah seldom reveals her softer side as she tackles life head-on.

LEXIE RICHARDS, from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, is the delightfully vain, youth-obsessed event planner for a chain of four-star hotels. She has never shied away from the occasional nip or tuck and keeps her cosmetic surgeon on speed dial. Always one to revel in her status as a man-magnet, Lexie can be counted on to share wild and hilarious tales of her romantic exploits.

JERI NEAL MCFEELEY is the ditz ray of sunshine of the group. She's perky and naïve and always sees the positive side of everything. Having been a nun for many years, Jeri Neal has been protected from life's seamier side. Even though she appears to be predictable on the surface, Jeri Neal, recently relocated to Roanoke, Virginia, continually makes life choices that surprise and amaze her friends.

VERNADETTE SIMMS is a hard luck case if there ever was one. Marriage and motherhood came shortly after college, a dark cloud has hovered above her ever since. A public school teacher, with limited finances and a problematic home life in Spivey's Corner, North Carolina, Vernadette is self-deprecating by necessity. She faces her tribulations with gallows humor and the unwavering support of these lifelong friends.

The characters in this play will be portrayed at ages forty-four, forty-nine, fifty-four and seventy-seven.

## **PLACE**

The living room of a beach cottage  
on the Outer Banks of North Carolina.

## **TIME**

One weekend in August.

### **ACT ONE**

Scene 1: Twenty-two years after the characters' college graduation.

Scene 2: Five years later.

### **ACT TWO**

Scene 1: Five years later.

Scene 2: Twenty-three years later.



# THE SWEET DELILAH SWIM CLUB

## ACT ONE

### Scene 1

*Lights come up on the living room of a simple and charming North Carolina beach cottage. It's late afternoon. Lively beach music plays on a radio. Upstage center is a table cluttered with grocery bags and a small ice chest. Down right is a screen door to the porch and parking area. Upstage center is the doorway to the hall that leads to bedrooms and the bathroom. Down left is a door to the kitchen. Liquor bottles, an ice bucket, a pitcher of iced tea and assorted glasses sit on a small table outside the kitchen that serves as a bar. On the wall above is an old, weathered sign that reads "Sweet Delilah Cottage." A couch, easy chairs, lamps and end tables are arranged center stage. There is a potted plant on the stage right end table. A suitcase sits nearby. Sheree Hollinger, mid-forties, dressed in khaki shorts, polo shirt and tennis shoes, dances to the music as she unpacks and organizes the room. She gets into the music and dances with abandon. Lexie Richards, mid-forties, in a sexy off-the-shoulder sundress and a large straw hat, enters unseen through the screen door with a suitcase and a bundle of roses. She watches Sheree's energetic gyrations, pulls a camera from her purse, then snaps a picture as Sheree shakes her fanny. Sheree whirls around, startled.*

SHEREE. Lexie! (*Snaps off the music.*) You can't sneak up and take a picture of someone when they think nobody's watching.

LEXIE. Yeah, that's what my second ex-husband said, but it was the look of surprise on his assistant's face that got me the big divorce settlement, wasn't it?

SHEREE. (*Laughs.*) Oh, hush. (*Gives Lexie a hug.*) It's so good to see you.

LEXIE. You, too, Sheree. Lord, I just *live* for these weekends. (*Walks to the "picture window" that looks out onto the ocean, i.e., out toward the audience.*) Oh, look. Isn't that the most gorgeous thing you've ever seen?

SHEREE. (*Joins her.*) Yeah, there's nothing more beautiful than afternoon sun sparkling on the Atlantic Ocean.

LEXIE. Actually, I was talkin' about me. I just caught my reflection in the window and these highlights in my hair are divine.

SHEREE. What took you so long to get here? There wasn't any traffic coming in from Raleigh.

LEXIE. Well, there was this very attractive young man selling blueberries at the stoplight. So, I rolled down my window and told him, "If you can show me a cute tattoo, I'll buy a pint of blueberries."

SHEREE. Yeah. And...?

LEXIE. Well, I am here to tell you... (*Leans out the screen door and brings in two large bags filled with berries.*) It's surprising all the places you can put a tattoo. (*Hands Sheree the bags.*)

SHEREE. So, I guess we'll be having these on...everything.

LEXIE. Y'all can. I've never been a big fan of blueberries. (*Puts roses into a vase.*)

SHEREE. Lexie, those roses! You always bring such beautiful flowers.

LEXIE. I can't help myself. I thrive on the lovely things in life: flowers in sterling vases, hand-lettered place cards and flickering candlelight. Blame my refined and genteel Southern nature for the— (*Drops all pretension.*) Ooh, iced tea! I'm drier than a cow chip in a dust storm. (*Pours herself a glass of tea.*)

SHEREE. Did you bring the propane lighter for the grill?

LEXIE. Uh, sorry, I forgot it.

SHEREE. You forgot it last year, too. Not to worry. I've got it.

LEXIE. Well, if you were gonna bring it, why did you ask me to?

SHEREE. Same reason I buy every gadget that promises painless underarm hair removal: I keep hoping for a miracle. (*Picks up a note pad.*) I was just about to go over my list when you drove up: Turn in rental contract for cottage, check. Confirm Sweet Delilah for next year, check. Emergency kits...oh, shoot! I forgot the nori.

LEXIE. Nori? What do you need seaweed for?

SHEREE. My hors d'oeuvres.

LEXIE. For your—? (*Covering her alarm.*) Why, Sheree Hollinger, after you whipped up all those...delightful snacks last year, we agreed the rest of us would bring them this year. You shouldn't have to do everything.

SHEREE. Hey, once team captain, always team captain. Besides, y'all know I'm all about good nutrition. At least this way you girls eat healthy *once* a year. (*Pulls a Tupperware out of the ice chest.*) Let me just put these in the fridge. Ooh, this is fabulous: mung bean paste with goji berries and herring oil. Try it.

LEXIE. No, I don't think I— (*Sheree pops one into Lexie's mouth and exits into the kitchen with grocery bags. Disgusted, Lexie spits the snack into a potted plant.*)

SHEREE. (*Calls from offstage.*) What do you think?

LEXIE. (*Loudly.*) I think you've outdone yourself. Hey, are we going to Colonel Shad's Flounder Palace for supper tonight?

SHEREE. (*Reenters.*) You mean, the place they asked us to leave last year because every time the waiter leaned down, you licked his ear?

LEXIE. Sheree, he'd recently arrived from Honduras. I was merely showing him how hospitable we North Carolinians can be. (*Reacts to Sheree's look.*) Oh, don't worry, I no longer behave like that in public.

SHEREE. Today's tattooed blueberry boy notwithstanding.

LEXIE. Temporary lapse. Won't happen again.

SHEREE. Until you spot the first guy on the beach with tight abs.

LEXIE. Well, I am strong, but I'm not made of stone. (*Dinah Grayson, mid-forties, steps into the cottage dressed in executive chic.*

*She brings in a shoulder tote bag, a suitcase on wheels and a portable bar in a case.)*

DINAH. Out of the way, girls. I've got a martini shaker and I'm not afraid to use it.

SHEREE. Dinah! *(They hug.)* How was the drive from Atlanta?

DINAH. It took forever. Then some idiot buying blueberries had traffic backed up all the way to the bridge. *(Sheree gives Lexie a look, as Dinah gives Lexie a hug.)* I had no idea it would take this long to— *(Pulls back and looks at Lexie.)* Oh, my God, Lexie, you had your eyes done.

LEXIE. Why, yes I did. *(For Sheree's benefit.)* It's so nice when *someone* appreciates personal improvement.

SHEREE. Okay, Dinah. I missed it. How did you notice that right off?

DINAH. Please, I'm a lawyer. The second thing they teach you in the shark pool is "developing an eye for detail." It comes right after "negotiating top dollar for your soul."

SHEREE. Don't you think it's a bit early to opt for cosmetic surgery, Lex?

LEXIE. Well, don't look now, sugar, but we are forty-four. We've got to stay on top of gravity from here on out. I mean, just look what it's already done to Dinah's chest.

DINAH. I'll remember that remark. Especially when you beg me to file suit after your next eye job turns you into a Siamese cat. *(Sets her portable bar up on the table and starts mixing.)* Now, excuse me while I slip into something chilled.

SHEREE. Oh, eat this first, Dinah. You probably didn't have a thing for lunch.

DINAH. No, I actually had a—

SHEREE. *(Pops an hors d'oeuvre into Dinah's mouth.)* I'll get the ice. *(Grabs the ice bucket and exits into the kitchen. Dinah is frozen with the hors d'oeuvre in her mouth.)*

LEXIE. I share your pain. *(Holds the potted plant up.)* Fire away.

DINAH. *(Spits into the plant.)* That tastes like moldy grout. What is it?

LEXIE. Go with the grout. The truth is worse. *(Eyes Dinah's bag.)* That bag looks suspiciously like a briefcase to me. I think someone's

forgotten the “special weekend” rules: No men, no kids, no work. Just us girls. Sheree’s going to be mighty sore if she finds out.

DINAH. (*Low.*) Okay, look, I’ve got a case that’s turned into a real bear. I had no choice but to bring some things I’ve got to tie up. Give me a break, it’s the first time I’ve breached the rules in twenty-two years. Just don’t mention it to her.

LEXIE. Okay, but this is going to cost you.

DINAH. Like how?

SHEREE. (*Reenters with another tray.*) There are plenty more snacks. I know how much you girls love these.

LEXIE. Well, no one loves them more than Dinah. Here you go, Hon. (*Pops an hors d’oeuvre in Dinah’s mouth.*) You can have my share. (*Dinah shoots Lexie a look just as Vernadette Simms, mid-forties, flies through the screen door toward the hall that leads to the bathroom. Vernadette, in baggy pants and an oversized Hawaiian shirt, has one arm in a sling. She rolls her suitcase in behind her.*)

VERNADETTE. Hi, y’all! Everyone’s lookin’ great. Ooooh, Lord! I don’t know if I can make it! Eeeekkkk! (*Exits to bathroom.*)

DINAH. I’d say Vernadette has arrived.

SHEREE. I swear that woman’s bladder gets smaller every year.

LEXIE. (*Looks out the screen door.*) Wow. How did a pickup that old actually make it all the way to the Outer Banks?

DINAH. (*Glances over Lexie’s shoulder.*) It does look like she’s had some repairs. I’m positive that’s brand-new duct tape holding the bumper on.

LEXIE. Bless her heart, a dark cloud’s been following that girl since the day she was born.

SHEREE. Did y’all hear Burl lost another job?

LEXIE. Great. An unemployed husband. That’ll put the spring back in her step.

SHEREE. Wonder how Vernadette hurt her arm.

DINAH. I know the answer: When that tree crushed their roof and knocked the deer head off the wall, she thought she was strong enough to catch it. Turns out, she was wrong.

# THE SWEET DELILAH SWIM CLUB

by Jessie Jones, Nicholas Hope, Jamie Wooten

5 women

Five Southern women, whose friendships began many years ago on their college swim team, set aside a long weekend every August to recharge those relationships. Free from husbands, kids, and jobs, they meet at the same beach cottage, the “Sweet Delilah,” on North Carolina’s Outer Banks to catch up, laugh, and meddle in each other’s lives. THE SWEET DELILAH SWIM CLUB focuses on four of those weekends and spans a period of thirty-three years. Sheree, the spunky team captain, desperately tries to maintain her organized and “perfect” life, and continues to be the group’s leader. Dinah, the wisecracking overachiever, is a career dynamo. But her victories in the courtroom are in stark contrast to the frustrations of her personal life. Lexie, pampered and outspoken, is determined to hold on to her looks and youth as long as possible. She enjoys being married—over and over and over again. The self-deprecating and acerbic Vernadette, acutely aware of the dark cloud that hovers over her life, has decided to just give in and embrace the chaos. And sweet, eager-to-please Jeri Neal experiences a late entry into motherhood that takes them all by surprise. As their lives unfold and the years pass, these women increasingly rely on one another, through advice and raucous repartee, to get through the challenges (men, sex, marriage, parenting, divorce, aging) that life flings at them. And when fate throws a wrench into one of their lives in the second act, these friends, proving the enduring power of “teamwork,” rally ’round their own with the strength and love that takes this comedy in a poignant and surprising direction. THE SWEET DELILAH SWIM CLUB is the story of these five unforgettable women—a hilarious and touching comedy about friendships that last forever...

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