

Daveena Clark's Revenge

by Michael Olsen

Characters:

DAVEENA CLARK

Her friends: CASSIE WALLACE
JUSTINE BROWN
DAVID HUDSON

REBECCA ELLIOTT

Her friends: SHELLY PATTERSON
PENELOPE NEWMAN
MARCEL TIPPET

Her boyfriend: CARL BOWERS

The TECHNICIANS: GARY BENSON
DARREN MUNRO
(DARREN wears baggy overalls as a TECHNICIAN,
and school uniform as a student)

Other school student: LARISSA THOMASINI

Setting: Castle Hill High School, a country high school. Downstage right there are a bank of lockers, while stretching around the stage left area there are a number of chairs—enough to seat the entire cast.

Half light comes up on stage right, where we see DAVEENA CLARK. Her eyes are closed. Like all the characters except the Technicians, she is dressed in a school uniform. Hold for a moment. The TECHNICIANS enter from stage right, ignoring Daveena. They are looking up at the lighting. GARY takes out a control box, points it up at the lights, clicks.

GARY: Do you reckon it's broken?

DARREN: Couldn't be. We checked it yesterday.

Gary takes out a clipboard, checks through it.

DARREN: Try it again.

Gary zaps the light again. This time, full light comes up so the whole stage is lit. Daveena opens her eyes. The Technicians haven't noticed.

DARREN: Beautiful! Look at that! When we fix something, it stays fixed.

GARY: What's the name of this show again?

DARREN: Daveena Clark's something-or-other.

GARY: I've seen it before. It's boring.

DARREN: Yeah?

GARY: Ends all mushy. There are no car chases. I think there's some kissing in it. Boring.

DAVEENA: It's called Daveena Clark's Revenge.

The Technicians jump.

DARREN: You've already started?

DAVEENA: Yeah! So wrack off!

With a wave of her hands, Daveena sends the Technicians scurrying off. We now see Daveena Clark is a girl around 16, 17, with a quiet intensity about her: she might not say a lot, but you know she's watching you all the time.

DAVEENA: My name's Daveena Clark and once, I was the scariest girl at school. You don't believe me? Typical. You tell parents today what it's really like at school and they don't believe you. I'll tell you the truth. I'll tell you how it really was. I won't make anything up. So where to begin? The teachers? Nah. They're just the side show. My friends? Yes, but not straight away. I think I have to start with Rebecca Elliott and her gang.

REBECCA, SHELLYy, PENELOPE and MARCEL enter. As each enters, Daveena gives her little spiel on each.

DAVEENA: First there was Rebecca. Sweet little butter-wouldn't-melt-in-my-mouth Rebecca Elliott, and then there was Smelly Shelly Patterson (*Shelly gives Daveena the finger*), Penelope Pee-a-lot Newman (*a sarcastic curtsey from Penelope*) and Marcel the Frogwoman Tippet (*Marcel waves*). None of them the brightest crayon in the pack, but then, you can't have everything. Not that I can talk. In my gang I had Cassie Wallace, Justine Brown, and David Hudson.

One by one these characters come out, so that stage right we have Rebecca and her gang, and stage left we have Daveena's gang.

DAVEENA: What made me unique at school—what no-one else had ever had in the history of Castle Hill High—ever—was my own Revenge Club.

Daveena's gang strike a pose like Charlie's Angels. Still trying to hold the pose, they show the little ID cards they have.

JUSTINE: We had our own I.D. cards for the club as well!

They break up and start pushing and shoving each other.

DAVEENA: They might not have looked like much, but they were all I had, and they were devoted to me. You needed to be dedicated to carry out what we did. Whenever someone came to us, and paid us money, or food, or whatever, we could do their revenge for them, so no-one would ever suspect it was them. The greatest revenge we had was against Mr Clarkson in 306. It took all night, but we loosened every

nut in that room till it was just sitting there, hanging—and when Clarkson came in and banged that door open, everything fell apart.

All the students on stage fall down in a messy heap. Daveena claps her hands. Students scramble up. The Revenge Club congratulate each other.

DAVEENA: Out! Out! Shoo!

The stage is empty. Daveena turns back.

DAVEENA: Everything would have been OK. Everything would have kept going along just nicely thank you very much. But there was one problem. One little problem I never saw coming. Rebecca Elliott.

Rebecca Elliott enters stage right. Rebecca clicks her fingers and her gang pour onstage. Daveena is stage left, watching.

DAVEENA: I don't know if she hated me. Or she was just a bitch. Whatever it was, things started to happen.

Rebecca stares at Daveena until Daveena leaves stage left. Rebecca's girls sit down to sun their legs.

REBECCA: I'm bored. I'm bored bored bored.

SHELLY: Why you bored Bec? There's always plenty to see.

PENELOPE: It was great when you glued Larissa Thomasini's hand to her head with superglue.

Larissa rushes in from stage left with her hand stuck to her head. She cries out but nobody helps her. She rushes off stage right.

REBECCA: It's small-time stuff.

MARCEL: But that's what we specialise in. The best small-time stuff around. No-one messes with us.

SHELLY: Yeah. We're top.

PENELOPE: Absa-bloody-lutely.

REBECCA: No we're not.

SHELLY: What?

REBECCA: We need something bigger. Better. The Big Kahuna of targets—then everyone'll know we're top.

PENELOPE: So who do ya reckon?

Rebecca looks at them all.

SHELLY: You don't mean—

MARCEL: You couldn't—not—

SHELLY: Surely not—

PENELOPE: Who? Who?

REBECCA: Daveena Clark, of course.

PENELOPE: Oh no.

REBECCA: She's had her moment in the sun. Her 15 minutes of fame. Now it's my turn.

DAVID enters, chewing gum loudly. Rebecca sidles up to him.

REBECCA: Hello, David.

DAVID: Um—hello.

REBECCA: I was wondering if you could tell me a few things.

DAVID: Sure. Anything.

Rebecca by now is running her hand through his hair. David is very unsure of this, but he's decided to go with the flow.

REBECCA: I need to know about Daveena.

DAVID: (*alarmed*) Daveena?

REBECCA: It's OK. I don't want to know much. I know you're a friend of hers, so—

DAVID: But—

REBECCA: Remember, I know a lot of things. For instance I know why you take so long in the toilets every day.

David's face changes to one of utter horror.

DAVID: You wouldn't!

REBECCA: I'd have to tell the whole school about your—

DAVID: Would you?

Rebecca nods.

DAVID: Alright. Well. Daveena—

MARCEL: How did you know that Bec?

REBECCA: I didn't, but my older sister, who's in Med School, reckons 90% of boys do it, and the 10% who say they don't are lying.

David and Rebecca exit stage left, talking. Rebecca's gang are impressed. Daveena enters stage right.

DAVEENA: I had no idea what was going on.

All the students enter, forming a semi-circle around Daveena who has by now moved downstage centre.

DAVEENA: Everyone was talking about me, but I didn't know it.

They are all whispering to each other, and pointing at Daveena.

DAVEENA: I was the last to hear what was going on. The first time ever in my life.

CASSIE steps forward and taps Daveena on the shoulder. Cassie whispers in Daveena's ear. Daveena's face transforms into one of shock and horror.

DAVEENA: I couldn't believe it. It was horrible. Of course it wasn't true. Of course it wasn't. *(Pause)* Apparently, I'd slept with Darren Munro!

DARREN moves away from the group, moves into Daveena's space, smiling: he's pretty pleased with himself. Even if it's not true, it's nice to be King for a Minute.

DAVEENA: Darren Munro. The lowest form of life in the school. Not even a life. An amoeba. One single cell, that just thought of nothing but dirt 24 hours a day. It was rumoured that he only washed once a month. But it got worse—

The group breaks up laughing at Daveena.

DAVEENA: —and worse—

One by one the group turn their back on Daveena. The light tightens on Daveena. The group disperse one by one.

DAVEENA: I couldn't believe it. One day I was top dog, the next I was dog poo. For years I'd made it clear that no-one could mess with me and get away with it, but this really kicked the Christmas stuffing out of me. I couldn't believe that everyone could turn away from me.

Cassie, Justine and Libby step back in to the light as well, but shake their heads and move away.

DAVEENA: It took me a day or two to come to my senses and realise that I had to fight back. I had to get the gang back, and most important of all, I had to get back the respect of every kid in the school. It didn't take me too long to figure out what had happened—or more importantly, who had set me up.

Marcel enters. Daveena rushes up to her and drags her downstage into the light. Marcel is clearly terrified. Daveena has both hands on Marcel's forearm.

DAVEENA: Tell me the truth now, Marcel. If you don't tell me the truth, I'll Chinese burn right through your arm. *(to audience:)* I couldn't really, but I was pretty mad.

MARCEL: *(to audience:)* When someone says that to you, you believe them!

DAVEENA: Was it Rebecca?

Marcel nods yes.

DAVEENA: She thought this up all by herself, didn't she?

Marcel nods again. Daveena pushes Marcel away.

DAVEENA: I knew my enemy now and I was going to get satisfaction. But not the usual way. Rebecca was just the tip of the iceberg as far as I was concerned. I wanted to get them all. It was still February—in the days when February used to be really hot.

From her bag Daveena pulls out a fish. She goes over to a locker, pries it open, throws the fish in, and clogs up the lock with Superglue. She moves off. Shelly, Penelope and Marcel enter. Shelly finds she can't fit her key in her lock. Penelope and Marcel are the ones who notice the smell first. Then it hits Shelly, and the smell is overwhelming.

The Technicians enter wearing gas masks, or pegs on their noses, and bash into the locker, and remove the fish at arm's length.

DAVEENA: That was just the beginning.

Penelope, Marcel and Shelly are talking down stage left, when Daveena sneaks up and takes Penelope's mobile from her back pack. Penelope, Marcel and Shelly wander off.

DAVEENA: I'd always wanted to do this. I knew they'd trace the call back to Penelope's mobile. *(into mobile, in a sweet, Penelope voice:)* Hello? This is the National Front for the Liberation of—that's not important. All you have to know is that a bomb is going to go off at Castle Hill High School in 20 minutes.

Daveena hangs up the mobile and puts it on the ground. A crowd rushes from one side of the stage to the other. Penelope enters, sees the phone, and picks it up. A spotlight narrows on Penelope.

PENELOPE: But it wasn't me!

DAVEENA: *(to Penelope:)* Just confess! Straightaway! It always makes life a little easier. *(to audience:)* Penelope got a week's suspension. As you can imagine, I was heartbroken. *(Pause)* And then, of course, there was David, who I figured hadn't heard that old saying "loose lips sink ships." I was saving something special for him.

LARISSA enters. Daveena beckons Larissa over. Larissa cautiously approaches Daveena, who finally whispers something in her ear. At first Larissa is amazed—and then extremely delighted.

DAVEENA: I told her David was in love with her—but was very shy. However, once her course is set, Larissa is the kind of person who gives new meaning to the word "persistence."

David enters, and instantly Larissa is with him, hounding him, trying to get his attention, trying to be his new girlfriend.

DAVEENA: I only found out later he was gay. Poetic justice I call it.

David and Larissa exit, leaving the stage empty except for Daveena. As Daveena speaks, Rebecca enters, and acts out the things that Daveena is describing.

DAVEENA: And now for the piece de resistance. Rebecca. She knew what was going on. But she was cunning. She never left her stuff alone for a second. She always checked the toilets before she went in—and she never went in alone. She covered herself every step of every day. She must have thought that all that was part of my plan, but it wasn't. I suddenly had no idea what to do. Me, the great Daveena: revenger's block.

Daveena's friends enter, shy of approaching Daveena again, so they hang back, then scurry across and exit.

DAVEENA: There was just me, and for the first time, I realised I was the only one I could rely on. It was up to me to pull the greatest white rabbit out of the hat. So eventually, of course, I did.

The students flow back onstage into a semi circle around Daveena, chanting. Daveena grabs Carl and pulls him into the centre with her. He is laughing, then Daveena kisses him—long and hard. This shuts everyone up instantly. Everyone is shocked—including Rebecca. Daveena rushes off. Rebecca rushes up to Carl and slaps him, then storms off. Daveena breaks through and comes centre stage again.

DAVEENA: It was—inspired, I thought. Spur of the moment. Liberating. Exciting. Daring. Unpredictable. And everyone got the message. The only trouble was, that wasn't the end of it. In fact, it was just the beginning.

The students exit. The Technicians enter again, laughing. They carry a ladder which they set up. Darren climbs up while Gary foots it.

GARY: Nah, not that one. *That* one. Yeah, that's it.

DAVEENA: Do you mind?

GARY: Mind what?

DAVEENA: We're in the middle of a show here.

GARY: Oh yeah. So I see. Won't be long.

DAVEENA: Won't be—You shouldn't be here at all!

GARY: Listen, if you don't behave yourself, there won't be any damn show at all. If they can't see, they can't connect, and if they can't connect they don't give a damn, and if they don't give a damn why are you here?

DAVEENA: Alright! Alright! Just hurry up.

Gary salutes Daveena. Darren comes down the ladder.

DARREN: What's her problem?

GARY: Thinks she's the star of the show.

DARREN: Oh right. Typical.

The two Technicians carry the ladder out.

DAVEENA: Back to me. Back to me. Where was I? Ah yes. Revenge not happening, spooking out old Rebecca, then kissing her boyfriend. I'd somehow entered a new plane of existence. Suddenly everyone was talking about it—talking about me and Carl.

Daveena puts on a pair of sunglasses and wraps a scarf around her neck and over her head. The crowd move across stage waving at Daveena like she's a superstar, and Daveena laps it all up.

DAVEENA: I didn't mind. I didn't mind at all. And Carl! Well, he wasn't ugly—and most important of all, it got right up Rebecca's nose.

CARL enters and rushes up to hug Daveena from behind, his arms around her. They are stage left.

DAVEENA: In fact, I kind of liked it. Even some old friends came to see me.

Cassie, Justine and David enter and crowd around, enjoying Daveena being hugged by Carl.

DAVEENA: Pretty cool, huh? For a moment I enjoyed everything. I'd won. There was no doubt about it. And more importantly, everyone knew it.

Larissa rushes up and shakes Daveena's hand.

LARISSA: How does it feel to be the top kid at school?

DAVEENA: How do you think!

LARISSA: Things feel kind of—I don't know—odd, though. Don't ya reckon?

Silence crashes down onto the stage.

DAVEENA: And she was right. I mean, I'd won, everyone now thought Rebecca was a total loser—

Rebecca enters, goes downstage right. It's clear she's been crying—and is more than a little distraught. One by one her friends Shelly, Penelope and Marcel enter and go up to her. Rebecca lashes out, driving them away.

DAVEENA: —but everything was—different. Everything came to a head in Maths.

The students sit in the chairs in rows, with Daveena and Rebecca at the front. Rebecca stands and throws something at Daveena.

DAVEENA: We didn't have to show you what it was, but it was a clag bomb.

Daveena stands to pick gooey bits of clag out of her hair and wipe it off her face. All the other students in class are stunned. Daveena and Rebecca fall into a scrag fight. The other students start cheering them on. Then everyone freezes. Daveena untangles herself from Rebecca.

DAVEENA: Of course the teacher saw us. Which is exactly what Rebecca wanted.

The students exit, clearing the stage as they go.

DAVEENA: At school they don't punish you anymore. They confront you with Natural Consequences—you have to face the consequences of your actions. It kind of backfired on Rebecca. We had to spend half an hour with each other every day after school for three weeks, in a room with two chairs stuck together. I couldn't imagine anything worse.

The Technicians bring out two chairs that are stuck together. Daveena stands off. Rebecca pulls out a hacksaw from her bag and saws through the join of the two chairs, so they're now separate. Rebecca grabs a chair and moves to the other

side of the room from Daveena, but it's clear from the looks on both their faces that neither is good at keeping quiet for too long. Finally:

REBECCA: You must be happy with yourself. You got me.

DAVEENA: Even Steven, now.

REBECCA: No, not even Steven. What I said about you and Darren Munro wasn't true. You know that. But what you did to Carl is real. Everyone saw it. Carl and me are through.

DAVEENA: *(to audience:)* She had a point, but I didn't care. *(to Rebecca:)* If you want to play in the big league, be prepared to play for keeps.

Pause

REBECCA: Got all your friends back.

DAVEENA: Of course.

REBECCA: Not like mine.

DAVEENA: If they're real friends, they'll be back.

Pause

REBECCA: There's no way you're getting away with it, you know?

DAVEENA: Really?

REBECCA: Yes.

DAVEENA: This isn't Mills and Boon. No-one rides off into the sunset. No-one swoons in anyone's arms. It's like a soap opera: it just goes on forever.

Rebecca smiles.

REBECCA: If it's like a soap opera, the good guy becomes the bad guy, and vice versa—and anything can happen.

Daveena snorts dismissively.

DAVEENA: She was right but I didn't know it at the time. Like a lot of life, I realise, you're only wise after it's all blown up in your face. The first sign that things weren't going well was Carl.

Rebecca exits. Carl enters.

DAVEENA: Why did you want to meet here—behind the shelter sheds? It's so—melodramatic.

CARL: Whatever. I thought we could—you know.

Carl moves closer to Daveena, who manoeuvres nicely away.

DAVEENA: What? *(to audience:)* I knew exactly what he meant but I thought I'd play him along a bit.

CARL: Do I have to say it?

DAVEENA: Say what?

CARL: I want to—be with you.

DAVEENA: And I want to be with you.

CARL: You know what I mean.

DAVEENA: Oh. You mean—

CARL: Yes.

DAVEENA: —you want to go steady?

CARL: I want—I want us to be together.

Carl again makes a move on Daveena, and this time she lets him, but after 30 seconds of enjoying it, Carl's getting more and more insistent and Daveena knows she doesn't want to go any further. She pushes Carl away again.

CARL: Daveena!

DAVEENA: I've had enough.

CARL: But you let me—

DAVEENA: (*louder*) I said I've had enough, alright?

CARL: Typical. You're just a cock tease, Daveena—and everyone's gonna know.

Carl storms off.

DAVEENA: I didn't worry—but I should have. Of course, pretty soon, everyone knew.

We see the students flowing on and off stage, whispering: "Have you heard?" "I'm not surprised" "Typical" "I always knew she was a tart" Daveena stands there not believing what she's hearing.

DAVEENA: I don't know why I was shocked. I guess you never quite know how bad it can get—till it gets that bad!