

H 983

# A DATE WITH DISASTER



MARY JANE KLETKE

TV

**The Prom is truly a dream date turned nightmare. No, there isn't any cheerleaders-turned-murderers or teenage arsonists in this entertaining hour-long comedy/drama airing Sunday at 9 p.m. on 9(6).**

It's more horrific than that.  
*The Prom* is about blind date gone bad.  
 Rebecca (*DeGrassi High's* Stacie Mistysyn) is set to go to the prom with the captain of the basketball team. Instead, she gets Ralph (Sean Roberge), an accident-prone yet likable nerd.  
 "There's the standard nerd who's great in school and has a computer," explains Roberge, 18, during an telephone interview from his home in Ontario.  
 "And then there's the nerd who doesn't hang out with the 'in' crowd. He doesn't spend Friday and Saturday nights at parties and he's awkward in those situations. So he could be the greatest guy but nobody's going to know."  
 That's Ralph, alright.  
 He's a good guy who's a little inexperienced.  
 Roberge says he can relate to that, having grown up being the "young looking, short guy" in high school.  
 "I wasn't the big guy who went to all the parties but I got by," he says.  
 Roberge says he had more confidence than your average nerd because he's been acting since the age of eight.  
 "My first acting experience was a commercial for a grocery store," he says. "All I did was eat all day. In one scene, I went from eating chocolate eclairs to carrots. I wasn't feeling too well afterwards."  
 Roberge wasn't feeling too well after his first date.  
 "On my first date, I went to an Eric Clapton concert," he recalls. "I was about 15 years old and it was a blind date that my stepmother set up."  
 "When I picked the girl up, she was really nervous. She was shaking because she'd never been to a concert, let alone downtown. So I'm talking to her on our way to the concert and I found out she was in Grade 8!"

**Nerdy glasses**  
 And what nerd would be complete without a pair of specs? Actually, Ralph wasn't suppose to wear glasses in the script but Roberge had to wear his own glasses in order to drive his character's date to the prom.  
 "I never thought of my glasses as nerd-type glasses . . . but they worked for the nerd guy."  
 Thankfully, Ralph isn't your typical obnoxious geek. In fact, he's kinda like *MacGyver* with glasses.  
 When Ralph and Rebecca get into trouble, he demonstrates his knot-tying and sewing capabilities. (Roberge says the only sewing he does is darning his own socks . . . if he has to.)  
 "(Ralph's) mother tried to expose him to every opportunity," he says. "She thought, 'We'll put him in Scouts, give him a little violin lessons and then try a little swimming and see how he likes it.' That's why he's got all these Scout badges."  
 Roberge will get to stretch his acting muscles playing a gang member in an upcoming *Katts and Dog* episode and a paraplegic in *Neon Rider*. But he says it's back to "nerds in a nightmare" for a guest spot on *Maniac Mansion*.

Sean Roberge (l) and *DeGrassi High's* Stacie Mistysyn are a mismatched couple in the CBC movie, *The Prom*.

