

OUT OF GAS ON LOVERS LEAP

a difference between Paris and Seaside Heights.

GROUPER: *(Ice cold.)* Get in the car.

MYST: Where are we going?

GROUPER: We are going nowhere, that's where we're going.

MYST: Grouper—are you driving over the edge?

GROUPER: You'll wish. I'm dropping you at Whorrie Laurie's party.
(Tries to start car, it won't turn over.) Maybe you'll get lucky if somebody's looking for seconds.

MYST: Oh come on. Stop. This is our night.

GROUPER: Call your mother. Tell her to fly over early if you can reach her.

MYST: Did I say I'd go? I never said that.

GROUPER: You thought about it.

MYST: What if I did? What's wrong with that?

GROUPER: If you don't know there's nothing I can tell you.

THE RISE AND RISE OF DANIEL ROCKET

by Peter Parnell

Alice (13) - Richard (13)

The Play: Don't let the ages of these characters lead you astray. Peter Parnell's play is a play for all ages, as it deals with growing up and with what gets lost or destroyed when we become adults. The first act deals with a group of young people in a typical America community in the sixth-grade. In the second act, we return to the same people in the same community, twenty years later. The Daniel of the title is an exceptional boy, who believes that he can fly. For this belief others torture and ridicule him. No one believes the outrageous story. Alice has a crush on Richard, but Richard is oblivious. Daniel is in love with Alice, who eventually comes to care deeply for him when he stands up for himself in front of the others and "flies" off a cliff to the amazement of everyone. In a touching scene at the end of the first act, Daniel's conviction in what he believes leads him to everything he ever wanted: the ability to fly and the approval of others! However, the second act delivers the blow that cannot be survived. Daniel, now a celebrity—he flies!—returns to the community that caused him so much pain when growing up. The characters are older, but somehow they've not changed. Daniel is beginning to doubt himself, and those who knew him when he was younger are tired of hearing about him. The ridicule defeats him once more. In the end, Daniel crashes both emotionally and physically. The play has begun and ended with a hurtful destruction of something beautiful.

The Scene: Alice longs for Richard to take interest in her. Richard seems involved with almost everything except noticing Alice's intentions. Finally, she catches up with him for a moment alone.

THIS RISE AND RISE OF DANIEL ROCKET

(Schoolyard. Richard alone, taking pictures of the clouds. Alice heard calling, off.)

ALICE: Richard? Richard? *(Alice enter.)* Hello, Richard.

RICHARD: Oh. Hi, Alice. Have you seen Snood?

ALICE: You mean Daniel?

RICHARD: Yes.

ALICE: I think he went off with the other boys.

RICHARD: But I told him to wait for me here.

ALICE: Do people always do what you tell them?

RICHARD: Snood's not people. Snood's my friend.

ALICE: Aren't Roger and Steven your friends?

RICHARD: Well, sure. But, it's not the same.

ALICE: Oh.

RICHARD: I mean, Snood and I are *close* friends.

ALICE: Mmn.

RICHARD: We've been friends since practically the first grade. And that's a long time. That's almost six years. Which is great, if you think about it. To have a friend like that.

ALICE: It is great.

RICHARD: I think so.

ALICE: I do, too. *(Pause.)* Penny and I used to be close friends.

RICHARD: You were?

ALICE: Yes.

RICHARD: That's right. You and Penny.

ALICE: Since before the first grade. Since almost even before kindergarten. We did everything together till this year.

RICHARD: Then what happened?

ALICE: We had a fight. Penny accused me of stealing one of her boyfriends.

RICHARD: Boyfriends!

ALICE: It was just a joke.

RICHARD: Who was it?

ALICE: Steven.

RICHARD: *(Laughs.)* You and Steven...

ALICE: No, Penny and Steven! Not me and Steven! I hate Steven!

RICHARD: Did Steven know about it?

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ALICE: Of course not, silly!

RICHARD: You and Steven...

ALICE: Penny and Steven! I told you I hate him!

RICHARD: Yeah, yeah.

ALICE: I hate him!

RICHARD: Why do you hate him?

ALICE: I just do! *(Pause.)* What are you looking at?

RICHARD: Clouds.

ALICE: Yes.

RICHARD: Nimbostratus.

ALICE: I thought nimbostratus are rain clouds.

RICHARD: They are.

ALICE: It doesn't look like it's going to rain.

RICHARD: Then maybe they're altocumulus lenticularis. *(Alice laughs.)* Very rare medium-level.

ALICE: You know, I think it's really bright of you to take pictures of clouds for your science project, Richard.

RICHARD: You do?

ALICE: Clouds are nice. I've always loved clouds. I would have chosen to do a cloud project if Mrs. Rice hadn't asked for somebody to do photosynthesis.

RICHARD: Photosynthesis will be fun, Alice.

ALICE: Not as much fun as clouds, Richard.

RICHARD: I guess not.

ALICE: I know not. *(Pause.)* You know, I was thinking. I'll be needing someone to take pictures of the plants, the ones that grow in the dark and the ones I keep in the light, and since I'm not any good with a camera...

RICHARD: Well, I don't know, Alice.

ALICE: It wouldn't take much time...

RICHARD: I'll be spending alot of time looking at the clouds...

ALICE: And I'd be happy to mention your name, which means you'd get double-credit, which I think could be pretty nice, don't you? *(Pause.)*

RICHARD: The thing is, I was sort of expecting to help Snood build his wings.

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ALICE: We could both help him.
RICHARD: He doesn't like to have too many people around when he works.
ALICE: You think he wouldn't trust me?
RICHARD: It's not that, Alice.
ALICE: He can trust me.
RICHARD: I'm sure he can.
ALICE: I'll tell him the next time I see him. Or you can tell him, if you want. *(Pause.)* Snood's strange, isn't he? *(Pause.)* Real strange. *(Pause.)* There's something mysterious about him.
RICHARD: Mysterious?
ALICE: This morning I walked in on him standing on top of Mrs. Rice's desk, waving his arms up and down.
RICHARD: You saw that, Alice?
ALICE: Yes.
RICHARD: I've seen him do that, too.
ALICE: It's as if he's got some sort of special power. The way he looks at me, with those eyes. It's scary, a little.
RICHARD: Sometimes I think so, too. *(Pause.)*
ALICE: Just give him another twenty years.
RICHARD: What does that mean?
ALICE: It's what my Mom always says.
RICHARD: What's twenty years?
ALICE: A long time.
RICHARD: A very long time.
ALICE: We'll see if he's still strange.
RICHARD: He will be.
ALICE: My mom says people change when they grow up.
RICHARD: Snood won't change.
ALICE: What if he does?
RICHARD: He won't!
ALICE: Yes, but, according to my mom...
RICHARD: Yeah, well, what if your Mom is wrong, Alice?
ALICE: She's not!
RICHARD: How do you know?!
ALICE: Because! I just do! *(Pause.)* If Snood wasn't your friend,

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would he still be your friend?
RICHARD: Of course.
ALICE: Even though he's so strange?
RICHARD: He's not that strange.
ALICE: And everybody else hates him?
RICHARD: They don't hate him. They just don't understand him.
ALICE: Do you?
RICHARD: I'm trying.
ALICE: Do you understand me?
RICHARD: You, Alice?
ALICE: Yes.
RICHARD: I hadn't really thought about it.
ALICE: Well, think about it.
RICHARD: What? *(Pause.)*
ALICE: "Roses are red, violet are blue..."
RICHARD: You're acting a little strange yourself today, Alice.
ALICE: Am I, Richard?
RICHARD: Yes.
ALICE: Oh, really, oh am I really, really, really, Richard?
RICHARD: Alice...
ALICE: Well, what about you? *(Pause.)* "I love you, my Alice, I hope you love me, too."
RICHARD: What's that?
ALICE: "I love you, my Alice...!"
RICHARD: Alice, what are you talking about?
ALICE: "I hope you love me, too...!"
RICHARD: What are you saying?
ALICE: Don't you know, Richard?
RICHARD: Of course not!
ALICE: But I wrote you back an answer!
RICHARD: An answer?
ALICE: How can you be so cruel, Richard?
RICHARD: Me? I didn't do anything!
ALICE: You did, too!
RICHARD: What's happening? Stop crying, Alice. I didn't do anything. What did I do? *(Alice weeps.)*