

**Characters**

RICHARD, an acting student.

ASHLEY, also an acting student.

**Scene**

Richard and Ashley are meeting to rehearse a scene for their Acting Class, which begins in an hour. Ashley arrived on time for the rehearsal and has been waiting impatiently for Richard. Ashley is very prepared and very serious, Richard is neither.

*(A theatre. Worklights. ASHLEY is doing warm-up exercises and periodically checking her watch. RICHARD enters.)*

RICHARD. Hi. You ready to go?

ASHLEY. Where've you been?

RICHARD. What?

ASHLEY. You're late.

RICHARD. Three-thirty, right?

ASHLEY. We said three o'clock.

RICHARD. Three-thirty.

ASHLEY. Three o'clock.

RICHARD. Three-thirty.

ASHLEY. I wrote it down in my calendar book three o'clock.

*(She shows him her calendar book.)*

RICHARD. I wrote it down on my shoe three-thirty.

*(He shows her his shoe.)*

ASHLEY. We said three o'clock.

RICHARD. I'm sure we said three-thirty.

ASHLEY. No.

RICHARD. I guess we have a difference of opinion.

ASHLEY. I guess so.

RICHARD. Should we keep arguing about it or should we start rehearsing?

ASHLEY. Fine. This is the sofa. I start sitting here. That chair is the chair. Coffee table and the door's the door.

RICHARD. We can't have the chair there.

ASHLEY. Where do you want the chair?

RICHARD. If we put the chair there they can't see my face at the beginning of the scene.

ASHLEY. But if you put it over there you have to come halfway across the room when you propose to me.

RICHARD. So what?

ASHLEY. Fine.

RICHARD. It'll be a moment.

ASHLEY. Do you mind if we start now?

RICHARD. You have your lines down?

ASHLEY. Yes, I have my lines down. Do you have your lines down?

RICHARD. Pretty much.

ASHLEY. Pretty much?

RICHARD. Pretty much.

ASHLEY. What does pretty much mean?

RICHARD. Most of them.

ASHLEY. So you're not only fifty minutes late, but you don't even—

RICHARD. Twenty.

ASHLEY. Fifty.

RICHARD. We were supposed to start at three-thirty.

*(ASHLEY picks up her calendar book. RICHARD lifts his foot.)*

ASHLEY. I don't see where you have any room to talk. Even if we did say three-thirty, which we didn't, you're still twenty-three minutes late.

RICHARD. Twenty.

ASHLEY. You show up that late to a professional theatre and it's your job.

RICHARD. This ain't no professional theatre.

ASHLEY. At least you could show some professionalism.

RICHARD. Oh, professionalism. I knew I forgot something.

ASHLEY. Cut it out.

**RICHARD.** So I'm twenty minutes late. What difference does it make? Besides making you freak.

**ASHLEY.** We could have rehearsed our scene three times already.

**RICHARD.** Maybe four if you don't take the time to berate me.

*(ASHLEY gives him a look of extreme anger.)*

That's good. Remember that. You can use that on stage.

**ASHLEY.** I don't believe you.

**RICHARD.** You keep saying we have to rehearse, but you keep stopping to point out my lack of professionalism.

**ASHLEY.** I'm just asking for a little common courtesy.

**RICHARD.** I'm just asking you to relax for God's sake. Like it's really a big deal.

**ASHLEY.** To some of us it is a big deal.

**RICHARD.** You mean those of us going into THE BUSINESS?

**ASHLEY.** Those of us who are majors.

**RICHARD.** Oh, I see. Those of us who are majors are more dedicated.

**ASHLEY.** Those of us who are majors show up on time.

**RICHARD.** And waste more time by arguing with those of us who are a few minutes late.

**ASHLEY.** Could we please just do the scene?

**RICHARD.** I thought you'd never ask.

*(They take starting positions.)*

**ASHLEY.** Scene.

**RICHARD.** The only answer I can see is for us to get married.

**ASHLEY.** What?

**RICHARD.** *(Much louder:)* The only answer I can see is for us—

**ASHLEY.** We're not starting there.

**RICHARD.** Where then?

**ASHLEY.** What did your father say?

**RICHARD.** What did your father say?

**ASHLEY.** Wait a second.

**RICHARD.** Oh, I'm sorry. You have to get into character. Get those substitutions working. My fault.

**ASHLEY.** Scene.

**RICHARD.** What did your father say?

**ASHLEY.** He didn't like it.

**RICHARD.** The only answer I can see is for us to—

**ASHLEY.** No. What do you think we should do?

**RICHARD.** What do you think we should do?

**ASHLEY.** Wait.

**RICHARD.** Sorry.

**ASHLEY.** He didn't like it.

**RICHARD.** You in character yet? I can't tell if you don't say—

**ASHLEY.** Scene. He didn't like it.

**RICHARD.** What do you think we should do?

**ASHLEY.** I think you should leave.

**RICHARD.** I'm not leaving without you.

**ASHLEY.** Go. I don't love you any more. I hate you.

**RICHARD.** The only answer I—now?

**ASHLEY.** Yes.

**RICHARD.** The only answer I can see is for us—

**ASHLEY.** Take it back, please.

**RICHARD.** Sorry... Scene?

**ASHLEY.** Scene.

**RICHARD.** What did your father say?

**ASHLEY.** He didn't like it.

**RICHARD.** What do you think we should do?

**ASHLEY.** I think you should leave.

**RICHARD.** I'm not leaving without you.

**ASHLEY.** Go. I don't love you any more. I hate you.

**RICHARD.** The only answer I can see is for us to get married.

**ASHLEY.** Do you mean it?

**RICHARD.** Gloria, will you please marry me?

*(They hug. They look as if they are about to kiss.)*

**ASHLEY.** Hold on.

**RICHARD.** Script says we kiss twice here.

**ASHLEY.** I know what the script says.

**RICHARD.** Let's be professional about this.

**ASHLEY.** You...jerk.

**RICHARD.** Maybe we could choose another scene. How long do we have 'til class, an hour?

**ASHLEY.** Will you stop it?

**RICHARD.** Now, Ashley, don't get upset. Professionalism, remember?

**ASHLEY.** Scene.

**RICHARD.** Scene?

**ASHLEY.** Scene.

## THE LESS THAN HUMAN CLUB

by Timothy Mason

### Characters

DAVIS DANIELS, a high school junior.

KIRSTEN SABO, a high school junior.

### Scene

It's 1968. There's racial strife around the nation, and a rapidly escalating war in Southeast Asia, but at Nathan Hale High School the urgent questions involve who's in love with whom. 17-year-old Davis is trying to work his way through his own sexual ambiguities by inviting his innocent classmate, Kirsten, to the Sno Daze dance. This date means one thing to Davis and, heart-wrenchingly, quite another to Kirsten.

*(KIRSTEN sits on a staircase in the school. From down the hall we hear music over the gymnasium PA system, maybe something on the order of a Chuck Berry number, e.g. "Rock & Roll Music" or "School Days" or perhaps the Stones' "Under the Boardwalk," and then something like the Beatles' "She's Leaving Home." DAVIS approaches with hot cider in Dixie cups.)*

**KIRSTEN.** Oh, thanks!

**DAVIS.** Look out, they're hot.

**KIRSTEN.** Steaming. It's my dad's recipe multiplied by a couple hundred. Heavy on the cinnamon.

**DAVIS.** It smells great.

**KIRSTEN.** Thank you. I made the fruit salad, too. You're a wonderful dancer.

**DAVIS.** Thanks, I'm not that...

**KIRSTEN.** I mean, you never go to dances, where did you learn to dance like that?

**DAVIS.** I don't know.

**KIRSTEN.** You're just amazing.

**DAVIS.** You tired or anything?

*(Beat.)*

**KIRSTEN.** My dad helps me with so much, he's such a great guy, I mean, he's a little quiet, he's a mailman.