

Interpersonal Relations

An Unlikely Comedy in One Act

by

Doug Brook

First performed at
Indian Springs School, in The Hut
Indian Springs, Alabama
February 20, 1990

Directed by Doug Brook

Peter: Adam Thomas
Nick: Chuck Wooding
Entity: Todd Lyles
Jennifer: Jane Lesnick
Kathryn: Ashley Hartsfield

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PREVIEW SCRIPT

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

PETER – Typical sixteen year old boy. A bit of a mama's-boy.

NICK – Sixteen, **PETER's** best friend. Thinks he's a jock. He isn't.

JENNIFER – The prototypical sixteen year old girl next door.

ENTITY – **PETER's** moralistic side. Only **PETER** can see or hear him.

KATHRYN – Eighteen. **PETER's** sister. The type of girl who dates the quarterback.

SECOND ENTITY – **NICK's ENTITY**. Only **NICK** can see or hear him.

PRODUCTION NOTES

The play was originally performed in a space with a built-in loft above and behind the stage, and a visible staircase leading up to it. A split-level stage is not required, and is beyond most high school budgets, but it gave good separation from the sidewalk scene, and felt more like a room over a suburban house's garage.

The room should be undecorated. A bed is stage left, perpendicular to the left wall. The bed has a blanket and pillow, and a pile of posters of bikini models on top. There is a phone on the floor in front of the bed, a window in the center of the upstage wall, and a lamp mounted on the wall above the head of the bed. Also, a wall panel should be easily slid/opened for **ENTITY's** entrances/exits.

The main stage served as a sidewalk for Scene Three with one entrance to a generic (does not need to be Starbuck's) coffee shop upright. This can be done simply on an empty part of the stage away from the bedroom set.

Since the initial production, some rewrites have occurred including, primarily, the addition of the **SECOND ENTITY** and the hole in the floor. I recommend not listing him in the program, to keep the surprise.

SCENE ONE

(Peter, Nick, Entity)

PETER

Now remember, Nick, I haven't seen it yet either, and I want you to give me your honest opinion.

(**THEY** enter the room.)

Wow! Look at this place. Isn't this the greatest?

NICK

Well, Pete, it's...

PETER

Well, of course, this isn't all of the furniture. And I'll hang up all of my posters...

(**PETER** holds up poster.)

So you can have something to stare at while I do your homework for you.

(**PETER** hands poster to **NICK**.)

NICK

(Gaining interest:) Thanks!

(**NICK** starts going through posters.)

PETER

Really, Nick, can you believe this?

NICK

(Gawking at poster:) God, no.

PETER

What do most guys get when they turn sixteen?

(**NICK** answers by pointing at poster girl, **PETER** doesn't notice.)

Cars. How many get their own loft? At first I wanted a car just like everyone else, but I got this instead. Isn't it great? It's like my own apartment. Who else in school has their own place?

(**MORE**)

PETER (CONT'D)

My parents said that since I've been good, never been arrested or gotten anyone pregnant that I could have the room above the garage, separate from the house, so I could learn to be independent. I'm really independent now. Who needs a car to be independent? I've got my own place. (Sigh.) So, what do you think?

NICK

(Another poster:) Awesome.

(**PETER** nods, then looks at **NICK**, sees the poster and grabs it from **HIM**.)

PETER

The room, Nick.

NICK

Oh, well, you wanted my honest opinion...

(**NICK** walks to the door.)

Hey, is your sister home?

PETER

Oh, come on, Nick... (Giving in:) I didn't notice.

NICK

(Calling downstairs:) Kathryn?

PETER

She's not home. Probably saw you coming and climbed out her window.

NICK

She's just playing hard to get.

PETER

She must be. Because for you, in reality she's impossible to get.

NICK

Your sister is awesome, Pete. It's a shame the good looks skipped your half of the generation.

PETER

Watch it, Nick. What could you possibly see in her anyway?

NICK

Pete, Kathryn is a goddess. You used to take baths with her when you were three years old so you're not supposed to find her attractive. If I, on the other hand, got her in a hot tub...

PETER

Jesus, Nick, she's my sister! All I can say is good luck. She is very picky about the guys she dates. Now can you forget about her for one minute? (Indicates room:) What do you think?

NICK

(Evaluating the floor:) I think that hole in the floor is right above her room!

(**NICK** glues his eye to the floor near the doorway. **PETER** kicks him, and he stands again.)

PETER

Stop it, Nick. Besides, you can't see anything but the front of her closet.

(**PETER** realizes what he's admitted to. **NICK** stares at him a moment.)

NICK

I thought you hadn't seen the room yet.

PETER

Well, not since it was remodeled.

NICK

Miss those old baths, do you?

PETER

You're just jealous. Now would you answer the question?

NICK

Sure. Yes, I'll bring over my camera later.

PETER

The question I asked you!

NICK

Well, Pete, you wanted my honest opinion... Do you know if she's free Saturday night?

(**PETER** glares at **NICK**.)

(MORE)

NICK (CONT'D)

All right! (Surveys room:) It's a room! It's not a car! And nobody's going to see the inside of this room, because you can't get them here without a car!

PETER

Who asked you? Come on, Nick. Look at this place. All right, it's not a car. But look at the possibilities. We could have our own parties. Think of it. This whole room packed full of people. Packed full of girls. I don't have a car to take dates anywhere so they'll just have to come over here.

NICK

Yea, that'll work...

PETER

Thirty of the most gorgeous girls from school packed into this room. Alone, with us. Dancing with us... And there's no air conditioning...

(**NICK** picks up various posters and dances with them around the room.)

Women like guys who are independent, shows them we can take care of them. We could pick out our favorites and send the rest to the movies or something. So, what do you think?

(**NICK** stops dancing.)

NICK

This room, this whole room, packed full of...

PETER

Girls.

NICK

Girls. (Again about the poster:) I guess this has possibilities.

(**NICK** resumes dancing.)

PETER

Possibilities, you bet! We could make this a weekly thing. When everyone's parents are out of town everyone could stay here all night. We wouldn't have to go to school anymore. A year-round vacation. And why just stop at girls from school? We could call the colleges and invite a whole sorority. This could be their new sorority house. I'll even invite Kathryn. (Under his breath.) Though she'd never come if you're here.

(**NICK** stops dancing, looks at **PETER**.)

(MORE)

PETER (CONT'D)

Think of it. More than just girls from school. I'm talking about women.

NICK

(In shock:) Whoa.

PETER

So what do you think?

NICK

This is looking pretty good, Pete.

PETER

Good. Glad you agree. Now I've got to take the first step. I'm going to call Jennifer Grayson and invite her over and...

NICK

Whoa. Wait a minute. Reality break. You're about to call Jennifer Grayson...

PETER

Yes.

NICK

And invite her over.

PETER

Yea.

NICK

Jennifer Grayson.

(**NICK** draws an hourglass figure with his hands.)

PETER

Yes...

NICK

After all the wonderful times you've had together, you're going to just call her up and invite her over...

PETER

Perfectly normal, friendly thing...

NICK

To your bedroom.

PETER

It's not like that, Nick. I just want to get to know her better.

NICK

Who doesn't.

PETER

It's not like that. Why is it that people always assume it's that.

NICK

Because it is!

PETER

How would you know? Maybe I just want to be a friendly host. Maybe I just want to talk to her.

NICK

Maybe that would last five minutes.

PETER

Says you.

NICK

Says common sense. She'll never believe it.

PETER

She'll believe it because it's the truth. She's smart enough to see the truth.

NICK

Pete, think hard. This girl has only lived here for three weeks. How well do you really know her?

PETER

I happen to know her very well. We've been pretty close.

NICK

Sitting two seats away from her in chemistry doesn't count as close! Pete, you've spoken to her once in your entire life and that was only for two minutes.

PETER

Oh, come on, Nick. (Beat.) It was two and a half and you know it.

NICK

Two.

PETER

And a half.

NICK

Two.

PETER

And a half.

NICK

Two.

PETER

All right, two. But those were two quality minutes.

NICK

The only time you've ever had two quality seconds with a girl in your whole life was when you stormed through the showers in the girls' locker room shouting: "Close your eyes, I'm coming through."

PETER

Look, Nick, I really like her. And I think that she may like me. I really want to talk to her. I'm going to call her right now.

NICK

Wait a minute, Pete. Read my lips. You are making a mistake. She does not know you.

PETER

Well, I'm going to fix that.

NICK

Yea. Call Jennifer up and tell her you'd like for her to come over to your bedroom so you can get to know her better.

(**NICK** and **PETER** look at each other.)

PETER

It could work!

NICK

(Simultaneously:) It won't work!

PETER

I'm calling her. Go play in traffic for a few minutes.

NICK

No sweat, Romeo. Just remember that it's only an eight foot drop from the window so you'll have to think of a better way to kill yourself when she says no.

PETER

Thank you. Get out.

NICK

I'll go downstairs and write my name on Kathryn's calendar for Saturday night.

(**NICK** exits.)

PETER

And you think I'll get rejected? (To himself:) Finally. Okay. I am going to call Jennifer.

(**PETER** stares at the phone.)

I am calling Jennifer.

(**PETER** stares at the phone.)

This is ridiculous! I'm a human being, she's a human being. That's not true. She's a goddess! But the only fundamental difference between us is a couple of body parts in discrete places... Alright! Why do I have such a big conscience that I can't think about a naked woman for five seconds without averting my eyes! I'm calling her now and that's the end of it. So there!

(**PETER** yanks up the phone.)

I don't know her number!

(**PETER** slams down the phone and fumbles for a slip of paper in his pocket.)

NICK

(Offstage:) Hey, Pete, are you alright up there? Has she dropped the big hurt on you yet?

PETER

No! She's still describing what she's wearing.

(**PETER** picks up the phone. After a moment, he sighs.)

Put down my sister's phone, Nick. (To himself:) Dammit. Why can't guys ever think of a good opening line? We lie to women the rest of the time. Why is it so hard the first time? (Thinks a moment.) I've got it. I'll be honest! She'll never know what hit her! She won't know how to deal with an honest guy. I don't know how to deal with being one, so we'll have something in common!

(**PETER** picks up the phone and talks into it - without dialing.)

'Hello, Jennifer? Hey, it's Peter. Are you doing anything?' No, too ordinary. I've got to be tough. Manly. 'Hey, babe. How about you get your tackle box, I'll get my rod and reel, and we can go fishing on the seas of love.' No. I can see what will probably happen. 'Hello, Jennifer? It's me. Peter. I was wondering... Peter Jameson. I'm in your biology class. I'm about (gives his height, hair and eye colors)...'

(Toward the end, **ENTITY** has entered through a hidden panel in the back wall, and now takes the phone from **PETER**.)

ENTITY

That's more like it. At least now you realize that if you call you'll get your butt kicked.

PETER

Who the hell are you? What are you doing here?

ENTITY

I'm your conscience, your alter-ego, all that supernatural crap. (Enthusiastically:) I'm your own personal devil.

(**ENTITY** hands **PETER** a blank business card.)

Here's my card. Anyway, I'm here. Let me show you something.

(**ENTITY** starts dialing the phone. **PETER** has been discretely crossing to the)

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