

Stolen Kiss

A comedy in three acts

By

Edgar E. Eaton

Stolen Kiss

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Cast of Characters 5w, 7 m

Several minor parts could be either men or women

Ginny Attractive woman in her 50's who has just lost 64 pounds

Kate Woman in her 50's, never married.

Di: Widow in her 50's who decides to go back to college

Randi College co-ed, could be any age over 18

Mack Older college student in his 30's or older

Dr. Reimer Distinguished, could be man or woman with some changes in dialogue

Jean Female college student

Jay Male college student

Chad Male college student

Phil Male college student

Some of the students could be either men or women, with slight changes in dialogue

Mike A middle aged man Ginny swims with daily

Ray His brother

Time Setting and Costumes

The time is today in modern, casual dress appropriate for home or school. A costume change is suggested for each new setting or time.

Ed Eaton's first three act play, "Ginny, Kate, and Lady Di", is available through I.E. Clark in Schulenburg, Texas.

“Stolen Kiss”

Act I Scene I

The play opens in the home of DI with her roommates, GINNY and KATE, sitting around a table

Ginny: Mail’s here.

Kate: Anything for me?

Ginny: Class schedule from the college.

Kate: I don’t want that.

Di: I do.

Ginny: You got it.

Kate: Anything else?

Ginny: You’re pre-approved for a loan to build a house.

Kate: I don’t want that either. I’m in a house. . . don’t need another one.

Di: It’s my house.

Kate: Are you saying you want me to build my own?

Di: Not really, but if you’ve been pre-approved for a loan . . .

Kate: I’ve been pre-approved for a loan to remodel the kitchen. Do you want me to take that?

Di: You make one change to my kitchen and you’ll be living in your grandmother’s basement with the mice.

Ginny: The pre-approved loan goes into the recycle box. OK?

Kate: Fine. Anything else?

Ginny: *Reader’s Digest* Sweepstakes is offering me a 7 million to one chance I’ll win its grand prize but I’ll gladly give it to you if you’ll take me and my husband on a cruise with the winnings.

Kate: I don’t have a husband.

Ginny: No, but with 7 million dollars you can probably find one for each of us.

Kate: I don't want a husband that's for sale, even one whose asking price is more than a million dollars.

Di: You're awfully choosy in your old age.

Kate: I was choosy in my young age.

Ginny: Di, here's a letter from your Aunt Dalene in Seattle.

Di: Good. I hope she and her husband are getting along better. Maybe he quit gambling.

Ginny: Oh, here's one for you, Kate.

Kate: This is addressed to Occupant.

Ginny: It's the best offer you've had so far, although it doesn't say you've been pre-approved.

Kate: It's announcing a revival meeting at that new church up in the north end of town.

Di: I'm sure you pre-approved for that.

Ginny: Yes, I hear they take all sinners.

Kate: All right, I've had it with you wise guys. If there's no more mail, I'm going to go watch a soap opera or Oprah or professional wrestling.

Ginny: Here's one for Resident.

Kate: That's me, I'm sure. . . It's an ad for something to cure post nasal drip. We're getting as much Spam in our mailbox as we get on e-mail.

Ginny: You got that right. (She sits down.) Di, since when are you interested in the quarter schedule for the college?

Di: I'm thinking of taking a class or two. Got any ideas?

Ginny: How to find a husband without really trying.

Di: Right. That's all I need, an 18 year-old with a boom box playing rock and roll CD's on his headphones who's scouting for someone to take dancing.

Kate: You could keep up with any 18 year-old I know, Di.

Di: I don't want to keep with the 18 year-olds I know, let alone those you know.

Ginny: You could both count the 18 year-olds you know on one hand.

Kate: She's got a point. College would give you a chance to meet all the 18 year-olds you'd ever want to know.

Ginny: I read where the average age of students at our community college is 28.

Di: That's the most misleading statistic ever released, There may not be anyone in the whole school who is 28 but the average could still be 28. You enroll a few folks our age, maybe even someone in her eighties, and it throws the – quote – average age -- clear off 'cause there's no one enrolling who's one or two years old to offset the number.

Kate: I see what you mean. The age of most students is probably pretty young, by our standards, being that we're all over 39.

Ginny: Make that 49.

Kate: I was being nice.

Ginny: But I know some people our age going to college.

Di: Maybe so, but they're a minority.

Kate: That's true.

Di: But I wouldn't mind being in that minority.

Ginny: They're called DAR's.

Di: DAR's?

Ginny: Da. . .

Kate: (jumping in quickly) DARNed Average Raisers.

Di: Why?

Ginny: Because older students are usually pretty darn serious students. They're not in college because their parents are paying their way, not there to find a date for Saturday night, not there to win a letter in sports, or even delay going out and competing in the real world. They're there to learn, paying their own tuition and not about to waste one penny of their investment. They take the whole business pretty seriously and therefore they usually do their home work, come to class every day, and GET GOOD GRADES. That's the name of the game for them. They're tough competition to people working and going to school, to those who have to find time to study in between dating, sports, and trying to survive living in a dorm or an apartment or even at home. If the professor is grading on the curve, older students indeed become DAR's. We're guilty.

Kate: What do you mean WE, Tonto? Di's the one reading the class schedule.

Di: Tonto?

Ginny: You've never heard that joke?

Kate: That was before her time

Ginny: The Lone Ranger and Tonto are surrounded by Indians. The Lone Ranger says, "There's Indians to the north of us, Indians to the South, on the east and on the west. What are we going to do, Tonto?" and Tonto says, "What do you mean WE, Paleface?"

Di: I think that is a politically incorrect joke, ladies.

Ginny: You're right, Di. Don't tell it in class.

Kate: That joke is pretty mild compared to what she could hear on that campus.

Di: You two have me already enrolled and going to class. I just said I'm curious. I didn't say I was going to go.

Kate: Right, Di.. While you're there see if you can find me a handsome 18 year-old freshman with rich parents who is looking for an attractive, more experienced female companion.

Di: OK, the attractive, more experienced woman is you?

Kate: Who else?

Di: Just checking. If I find such a unique catch, how do you know Ginny won't steal him away from you?

Ginny: I'm not really interested. My ideal mate should be at least 19.

Di: A matchmaker I'm not. If – and that is a big IF – I go to college it will be to be the best DAR I can be, not a scout for my roommates.

(Curtain)

Act I Scene 2

The scene is a college classroom, students in desks with the professor up front. Most of the students do not have speaking parts. It gives young actors a chance to be on stage and learn to react to what is happening there.

Di: Well, I've survived three weeks now in the college environment and no one has thrown me out yet. I went to college just out of high school, fell in love, got married and . . .

Randi: And?

Di: It's not something I talk about . . . not any more.

Randi: Sorry. I didn't mean to pry.

Di: It's all right. My husband was killed in a plane crash and I dropped out of school. But it's starting to come back now. College is easier when you don't have to worry about the dating scene, a part-time job, the whole bit.

Randi: You said they haven't thrown you out yet. That's because you bring snacks. (She eats a cookie as Di explains where the snacks come from.) You may not have to worry about the dating scene yet, but three weeks is not nearly enough time to find Mr. Right.

Di: I'm not looking for Mr. Right. I just want to get an education. I bring snacks not in search of a guy but just to get rid the goodies. My roommate Ginny likes to make cookies that she can give away. She has lost weight but hasn't given up her love for cookies. But she's learned control and does sneak a bite or two while mixing up the batter and eats a cookie or two after they're out of the oven. But that's it. She sends the cookies to school with me and I never have trouble getting rid of them. There's never any left when I go home.

Randi: We're both winners.

Di: Right. She maintains her weight loss and you guys get the cookies.

Randi: How many roommates to you have?

Di: Two. Ginny and Kate. Ginny used to be overweight but has lost 64 pounds going on a diet and will be to her goal in another few pounds. She went through a divorce several years ago and gained a lot of weight dealing with the emotion of that experience. But she's doing fine. She wants me find her an 18 year-old, good-looking freshman to keep. Kate wants a 19 year-old 'cause she's older.

Randi: How about the Backer twins, Tim and Tom?

Di: I wouldn't do that to Hillary Clinton, let alone my roommates.

Randi: All right. I admit they just fell off the turnip truck on their way into town to spend the egg money but I think they're the only ones you could get to go home with you by just waving cookies under their nose.

Di: It would serve them right

Randi: Tim and Tom or Kate and Ginny?

Di: Kate and Ginny, for appointing me their matchmaker.

Randi: What is Kate like?

Di: She's a marvel. Never married but is willing to give it try if I can find her a freshman who wants a mature genius.

Randi: Genius?

Di: Yeh. She's an inventor. She devised a remote control that she points at cars playing loud rock and roll music and blows up their radio.

Randi: Blows it up? Like KAPOW? (She makes an explosion sound that gets the attention of the whole class, quietly visiting with each other while waiting for Dr.Reimer to arrive and start class.)

Di: It doesn't actually blow them up like terrorists blow things up. Although some people, the ones with boomboxes that rock the neighborhood, think she's the worst kind of terrorist. Whatever beam she hits the radio with works. The radio goes dead and the neighborhood can go back to sleep.

Randi: That's wild. You guys must have a ball with her around.

Di: Ginny and Kate are the most wonderful people in the world. But they're a bad influence on me.

Randi: Really? How?

Di: I find myself wanting to see that folks get their just desserts. Once I saw a perfectly able-bodied bozo park in a handicapped zone because he didn't want to walk any farther than he had to when he stopped for a cup of coffee. I pointed out to him that his sports car was parked in a handicapped zone and he flipped me an obscene gesture. So while he was in coffee shop I let the air out of all four of his tires. (She pulls a little valve stem remover out of her purse.) One of these really comes in handy.

Randi: Did you really do that?

Di: It made the police blotter in the paper. It didn't mention me because I made a clean get away. I was hiding behind a car a couple cars down from his, laughing my head off when he came out and discovered the *vandalism*. That's what the newspaper called it. My roommates read the paper and knew I was the one who did it because I've done it before and they recognized my M.O.

Randi: M.O.?

Di: That's from old radio and tv shows before your time. It means Method of Operation. Cops were always talking about criminals' M.O. that gave them away. My Method of Operation was so well known to my roommates, they recognized the vandal was obviously me. They cut the article out of the paper, blew it up to eight by ten on the copy machine, and framed it. It's hanging on our wall.

(Dr. Reimer enters from stage left. He can be any age between 29 and 69,

any size, any color, but must be a commanding presence. He is a highly respected teacher The part could be played by a woman.)

Dr. Reimer: Sorry I'm late. The phone rang just as I was leaving my office, one of these calls that's hard to get away from. Today we're going to talk about the election of 1824. We've talked about the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists which Jefferson renamed the Republicans. Adams followed Washington as second president of the United States but Jefferson led the Republicans into office at the turn of the century. He was succeeded by his Secretary of State, James Madison. What happened during Madison's eight years in office?

Mack: War with the British, War of 1812 which was fought in 1814.

Dr. Reimer: It began in 1812 and actually lasted until 1815. But what happened politically?

Di: The Federalists disappeared. Jefferson's Republican Party was the only political party left. With no party differences, they called it the Era of Good Feeling.

Mack: With the British burning down the White House I would hardly refer to it as the Era of Good Feeling.

Di: I didn't ask you to call it that. That's what some historians called it.

Mack: Some historians are jerks.

Dr. Reimer: Thanks a lot, Mack. I have written a textbook on this period. And the Madison presidency was called the Era of Good Feeling. I have a chapter called The Era of Good Feeling.

Mack: I have read it, Dr. Reimer. I apologize. I didn't mean you were a jerk.

Di: Changing your tune now, Mack? Time to polish the apple?

Mack: Look, lady, I'm not afraid to argue with the teacher when I think he needs straightened out. I just didn't mean to call him a jerk.

Lynn: It takes one to know one.

Dr. Reimer: Time out! I was just kidding Mack about calling me a jerk. Actually, he's right. At least I think some historians are jerks just like some students are jerks but they are few and far between. That's not what this debate is about. Mack, why do you feel this was not an era of good feeling? It is true that we were at war but that term, Era of Good Feeling, had nothing to do with the war. It had to do with the political climate.

Mack: Right. Forget the war. It still was not a time for feeling good, just because the Federalists became obsolete.

Dr. Reimer: Excellent point, Mack. But since there were no Federalists to criticize, whom did the Republicans have to argue with?

Lynn The same people they have to argue with today – each other.

Dr. Reimer: You're right, Lynn -- sort of. The Republicans of 1824 weren't Republicans as we know them today. They were the forerunners of today's Democrats. The Republicans today call themselves the GOP. What does that stand for?

Randi: Grand Old Party.

Dr. Reimer: Right. The Republicans trace their political genealogy to the original American political party, the Federalists – Washington and Adams.

Randi: How can they do that if the Federalists were dead by Madison's presidency?

Dr. Reimer: Good question. Let's try to answer that by explaining what happened in 1824 when – as Lynn points out – the Republicans started arguing with each other. Some of them carried on the policies of the Federalists which later were adopted by the Whigs and then the new Republican Party that elected Abraham Lincoln president. So it went from our day back to Lincoln to the Whigs to the National Republicans to some of the Republicans to the Federalists, the Grand Old Party. Who were the candidates for President in 1824?

Mack: That idiot Andrew Jackson for one.

Di: Is everyone either a jerk or an idiot to you, Mack?

Mack: Jackson was both. You ever heard what he did to the Indians?

Di: Yeh, but you have to see things in context. Yes, the Indians got a raw deal from Jackson's treaty with them that resulted in the Trail of Tears, marching them from the Deep South to Oklahoma. It is a sad story in American history. But in those days the Indians were the enemy, seen by many as savages, and Jackson became an American frontier hero by fighting the Indians and signing that treaty that caused them to have to move.

Mack: That doesn't make it right.

Di: It wasn't right, Mack. We can see that with our marvelous hindsight, not being involved in that ugly war, not losing our loved ones in the frontier conflicts. But at the time, Andrew Jackson was the rough and tough man of the people, the man who protected us from the Indians.

Dr. Reimer: Thank you for this excellent summary of a period that really cannot be called an Era of Good Feeling. Mack was right about that. But back to the election, deciding who would replace Madison as president. Jackson was one candidate. Was he the only one?

Di: No, John Adams' son, John Quincy Adams, was a candidate.

Dr. Reimer: That's interesting. John Adams really headed the Federalist Party because Washington wasn't interested in party politics. But here is Adams' son running as a Republican. Why?

Mack: He had no choice. The Federalist party was dead. The Republicans had the only team on the field.

Dr. Reimer: Right. So we have Jackson and Adams. Who else?

Jean: The Speaker of the House, Henry Clay. Didn't he run several times.?

Dr. Reimer: Indeed he did. But this was his first try at the presidency. I think I counted nine elections where he was considered a candidate although he didn't get the nomination nine times. One more candidate. Who was he?

Jay: Hugh Crawford, but he came in fourth and died shortly after the election.

Dr. Reimer: Very good.

Jean: That he died?

Dr. Reimer: No, that Jay knew so much about this also-ran. We know who came in fourth. Who won?

Lynn: John Quincy Adams.

Dr. Reimer: Are you sure?

Lynn: I can prove it.

Dr. Reimer: Make your case.

Lynn: Back of the book. . . Chart 7B. . . The Presidents Washington, John Adams, Jefferson, Madison and *ta da dat da da* JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

Mack: He didn't win. Jackson did.

Lynn: Nope, he came in after Adams, the sixth president. . Jackson was the *seventh* president, even got his picture on the 20 dollar bill.

Mack: I don't care if he got his picture on the three dollar bill. More people, stupid as they are sometimes, voted for Jackson than Adams.

Dr. Reimer: Is Mack right? Lynn has the textbook to back him up. Lynn must be right.

Mack: You have to read the textbook, not just the graphs and tables and charts.

Dr. Reimer: Mack is right. . . this time any way. The chart is not wrong. How can Mack be right?

Di: I didn't think I would ever agree with Mack in a debate in this class, but he's right. Jackson won, Adams came in second, Clay was third and the other guy . . .

Jay Hugh Crawford.

Di: Yeh, Crawford, came in fourth.

Jay And then he died.

Jean: Right there, while they were counting the votes?

Jay: No, it was a few days later. But he did die.

Dr. Reimer: Could we focus more on the election and less on Crawford's death?

Jay: Sorry. I just thought it was interesting.

Dr. Reimer: If Jackson won, why does the book say John Quincy Adams was the next president?

Di: It was Alexander Hamilton's fault.

Mack: Hamilton was killed years earlier in a duel with Aaron Burr, Jefferson's vice president. What did Hamilton have to do with the 1824 election, two decades after he died?

Dr. Reimer: Dianne is right. But I think I'll let her explain.

Di: In the constitutional convention of 1787, Hamilton felt that since we didn't have radio or tv and 90 percent of the people couldn't read, they weren't qualified to choose a president. He suggested we vote for electors, local people we knew who we felt were smart enough to choose the president. So the delegates to the convention approved his idea of an Electoral College. The people choose electors and they select the president. And we still have it today.

Jay: So?

Di: To get a person elected president, even today, a majority of the electors have to vote for him. Otherwise, the election goes to the House of Representatives to make the decision. Whenever we have a strong third party candidate, there is a chance the House of Representatives will choose our president if one person doesn't get more than 50 percent of the votes in the Electoral College.

Dr. Reimer: And in 1824, Jackson won the election, but not by a majority. So the election went to the House of Representatives. Henry Clay, a distant third, knew he couldn't win even though he was Speaker of the House, so he went to Adams and said, "How would you like to be president?" Adams said, "Daddy liked the job. Sure, I'd like to be president; that's why I ran." Clay pointed out that as Speaker of the House he carried a lot of influence and he didn't care much for Jackson. So when the House voted, who do think won?

Jay: Adams.

Dr. Reimer: Right. And who do you think he appointed as his Secretary of State?
(There is a pause before Lynn speaks up)

Lynn: Henry Clay?

Dr. Reimer: How did you ever guess? It's called nepotism, appointing your friends, those who help you get elected, to important positions in government. How do you think Jackson felt about this?

Mack: He was furious.

Dr. Reimer: That he was. And he campaigned for the next four years, accusing Adams of political favoritism, rewarding his allies with cabinet positions, etc. The supporters of the President, John Quincy Adams, called themselves the National Republicans and were more similar to the old Federalists than Jackson's party, the Democratic Republicans. Democrats today trace their roots to that party. But this election was personal to Jackson who felt he had been robbed in 1824 and Adams was abusing his office by dishing out jobs to supporters like Henry Clay.

Mack: Jackson had no room to talk. He won the election of 1828 by a landslide and was the first president to appoint a kitchen cabinet, personal political advisers. Adams didn't know the first thing about nepotism compared to Jackson.

Di: But that's not always bad. The people you work with, particularly those you observe first hand as part of your election team, are the kind of people who want helping you run government. Kennedy appointed his brother attorney general and I don't think Bobby Kennedy had that much experience as a lawyer. But I happen to think he was one of the best attorney generals we ever had.

Mack: You and I are not about to agree on that one.

Di: Why am I not surprised?

Mack: Jackson was a fake, claiming to be a man of the people. Ever been to the Hermitage, just outside of Nashville. People point to it and say that's where poor, humble Andrew Jackson lived, in a log cabin. The Hermitage was no log cabin. I've been through it. Yeh, it was originally a log cabin but as Jackson got more and more successful he

expanded it until it was the Mount Vernon of the West. Tennessee was the West in those days. Mount Vernon, Washington's plantation outside Washington, D.C., is a mansion. Well, frankly, the Hermitage is a lot like it, in my opinion. Jackson was an aristocrat as much as Washington.

Di: Jackson freed his slaves in his will when he died. He established a national bank which helped the common man.

Dr. Reimer: End of round I. Tomorrow we will talk about Jackson as President, his vice-president John C. Calhoun who resigned, his political flack, Martin Van Buren, the national bank, and more. I'm going to let you out a little early today so you can head for the library to narrow down your possible topics for a term paper and also to read up on Jackson so more than Mack and Dianne can get involved in the debate. That's it for today. Thanks for your participation. I love this job. **(Curtain)**

Act II Scene I

(Back at the house)

Di: He's a pompous fool.

Kate: Who? Andrew Jackson?

Di: You're as bad as the blowhard, Mack. Not Andrew Jackson. Mack Forrest.

Kate: I'm happy to hear you've found someone you like already. But you're supposed to be finding someone for me and Ginny.

Di: You can have Mack, if you promise never to bring him in this house. Besides he's not an 18 year-old freshman like you ordered.

Kate:I ordered a 19 year-old.

Di: I don't know how old Mack is but he's been around for a while. The kids think he's a DAR, just like me. I think he's a DAR. He sure gets good grades, even if he is a jerk.

Kate:See, I knew you liked him.

Di: I just said he gets good grades. That means the teachers like him but I certainly don't. He's too pompous for me.

Kate:Does he like you?

Di: Of course not, but he does like Gunny's cookies. Everyone does.

Ginny: Then why hasn't some young, handsome dude followed you home yet?

Di: They do every day. I just ditch them before they get here.

Ginny: Then you're not paying attention. We never told you to ditch them.

Di: I do that on my own. I don't want to set you up with someone who can be bought with a chocolate chip cookie.

Ginny: Would peanut butter cookies be better? Cup cakes? Pie?

Di: You don't want someone who can be won with goodies. You don't want someone who is governed by his taste buds rather than his mind.

Ginny: You just get them here, Di.. We'll decide whether or not to keep them or throw them back and re-bate the hook.

Di: I'll remember that. Ginny, are there any good looking guys in that swimming aerobics class you're taking?

Ginny: Lots of them if you don't mind guys who are at least 65 and weigh more than I do. And most of them are married.

Kate: Ginny, stop picturing yourself at more than 200 pounds. You look terrific. You're almost to your goal.

Ginny: And when I get there I'm going to celebrate big time.

Di: You're not to go on a chocolate binge, are you?

Ginny: Nope. I'm in this for keeps. Even when I get to goal I'm going to follow my plan or I'll just gain it all back. There are plenty of people who have.

Di: I'm proud of you, Gin. You're terrific. But how are you going to celebrate?

Ginny: There's one guy there named Mike that gives me a bad time. . . because he knows I love it. He says when I get to goal he's going to give me a big kiss.

Kate: I want to be there for that.

Ginny: I'll invite you and Di and all the front desk folks at the pool and anyone who wants to be there. I'm going to be a little late after weighing on the scales in the dressing room. At the top of the stairs going into the pool I'll announce I just reached goal. I'll leap into the pool, rush over to Mike who I don't think was really going to kiss me anyway. And I'll grab him, bend him over backwards, and give him the biggest kiss he ever got – under water. When I let him up for air, if I decide to, I'll shout out, "Who's next?"

Di: What if others want to be kissed?

Ginny: You mean, drowned? I'll dunk everyone who's willing.

Kate: What about the women?

Ginny: If there are any of them who want to be kissed, I'll turn them over to Mike and Jerry. Jerry gives all the ladies hugs every morning. I'm sure he would throw in a kiss or two to add to the celebration. But I will announce that my homemade cookies will be available at the front desk for women and even men, kissed or not. We'll go into the weight room if anyone wants to take my picture on the scales.

Kate: Why not on the official scales in the dressing room?

Ginny: KATE !!!

Kate: Oh, I forgot. That's where you weigh in your birthday suit.

Ginny: And I don't care how good I look, no photos will be allowed. Playboy has already called and I turned them down.

Di: You really like that class, don't you?

Ginny: They're a good audience for my jokes. There's a sign by the scales in the dressing room that says, "These scales are sensitive. Treat them gently."

Kate: I remember when you made that sign on your computer that said, "I am sensitive. I wish the scales would treat me gently."

Ginny: I hung it by the other sign. It's still there.

Di: Good.

Ginny: Today we were doing that horrible exercise where you hold on the sides of the pool and, with your back to the wall, slowly lift your legs up until you break the surface of the water with your toes. I remembered when I had a stomach in the way how hard it was to get my legs up that high. One day I shouted out to our instructor, "Gary, when you get old like me and your memory starts to go, I hope this exercise is the first thing you forget." (*She has a strain in her voice like it very difficult to get the words out. Then, back to normal, she says*) Today I thought how much easier it is now. My work is paying off. But it is still hard to keep my back against the wall. So I shouted out, "If God wanted my back against the wall he would have put velcro there and a strip of velcro down my backbone."

Kate: Did they laugh?

Ginny: Yeh, they're used to me complaining about that exercise. Some of them even like it.

Di: But that exercise is one of the reasons you're so close to your goal.

Ginny: Yeh, but I suppose you guys hiding the cookies and taking them to school had something to do with it.

Kate: We love you, Ginny..

Ginny: Isn't that what families are for?

Di: We're a pretty good family for not even being related, don't you think?

(Curtain)

Act II Sceme II

(Back in the classroom)

Dr. Reimer: That's it for today but before we leave I have an announcement to make. I read in the paper this morning a rather interesting story about one of our students. Jay Johnson was on his way to school yesterday when he saw flames coming from an apartment house and he immediately called 911 on his cell phone and reported it. That alone is enough to be a hero in my book but he saw a small child on a balcony of the apartment on fire four floors up from the ground. I didn't know this, but the article reported that Jay happens to be an experienced rock climber and he immediately went up the wall, grabbing hold wherever he could and quickly got to the child, picked him up and held him under one arm while using just one arm to climb down and soon had them both on solid ground, just as the fire trucks arrived. He looked up and the flames had spread to the balcony in that short time. He indeed saved the boy's life.

(The class immediately applauds and gives Jay a standing ovation.)

Jay: Thank you. But I didn't do it for applause. I have climbed a lot of cliffs in eastern Washington with my climbing friends. It is something I know how to do. Once I even raced a friend climbing up a Seattle skyscraper so I knew I could climb buildings as easily as cliffs. Actually, they're easier – but more dangerous. We both spent the night in jail for that little demonstration. Apparently it's illegal – unless the building is on fire.

(The class laughs, then applauds him again. Then most of them file out, talking, patting Jay on the back, and smiling. A few students stay behind – Dianne, Randi:, Jean, Phil, and Chad. Mack leaves with the others but is seen – among others – drying his eyes with a handkerchief.)

Di: That was a pretty impressive feat.

Phil: Yea, but not that impressive. Did you see some of those people, Mack in particular, get all choked up?

Di: You didn't?

Phil: I don't even cry at funerals.

Randi: But don't you cry at some movies, even some TV shows when something really neat happens.

Phil: No, they're just stories. Get real.

Di: But this wasn't just a story, It was real. I feel sorry for you.

Phil: You feel sorry for ME? This doesn't have anything to do with me. It's about Mack and those other wimps.

Randi: I can't believe this.

Chad Why do you feel sorry for Phil? He's right, to an extent. Lots of people bawl about anything, especially women. Men shouldn't get so emotional. That's irritating to me.

Di: Then I feel sorry for you, too.

Randi: I do, too.

Phil: For not being a cry-baby? I didn't know you even liked Mack. What is it with you?

Di: I feel sorry for anyone who goes through life without ever having enough emotion to cry about something some time. Sure, some people cry more than others. I didn't cry during that story but I have cried when something really moved me. My life would be boring if I could never feel strongly enough about something that it moved me to tears.

Chad: You think my life is boring?

Di: I don't know you that well.

Randi: I do. His life is boring.

Chad: Thanks a lot, Randi:. I'll bet you're a cry-baby, too.

Randi: As a matter of fact I am. I was really choked up when Dr. Reimer told us about Jay. And do you know what?

Phil: What?

Randi: I feel better. That story made my day. And, thank goodness, there are some things in life that choke me up once in a while.

Di: Yes, a life would be boring without having experiences like that occasionally.

Phil: But Mack? You are moved by seeing Mack bawl? You two can't stand each other.

Di: He's not my favorite guy, I'll admit but I saw a Mack today I have never seen before. Because Mack and I seem to be on different sides every time there is a debate in this class – and there seems to be a lot of them – you're right. I have a hard time liking him. But today (*she pauses*) I discovered Mack has a heart. Tears do that. They give away what is in your heart.

Randi: You're right, Di. You're absolutely right. When I feel so moved by something that I cry, it is my heart speaking.

Chad: I never thought of it that way.

Phil: Bah, humbug. I'm outta here. (*He leaves Chad follows him, but takes his time picking up his books, and he shuffles out of the room you can tell he is thinking about their conversation.*)

Randi: You're not saying you like Mack, are you?

Di: I'm not THAT moved. But I did gain a new appreciation for him. I am impressed to know that his feelings can be touched. I'm afraid he'll always be a conservative but I'm not sure there's no hope for him.

Randi: Di, I'm sort of conservative sometimes myself.

Di: But there's hope for you if you repent.

(*Randi: hits Di on the shoulder*)

Jean: I doubt if there's any hope for either one of you.

Di: You've been awfully quiet, Sunshine.

Jean: I have been quiet but I haven't been silent. I've had a lot to say but couldn't get a word in edgewise.

Di: Sorry. I'd love to hear what you have to say.

Randi: Me, too.

Jean: First of all, I didn't show any tears. I was raised to never to do that, even as a child when I was hurt my parents didn't want me to cry. If I wanted their approval, I held my tears inside.

Di: That's sad.

Jean: That's why I know what you're talking about. I wanted to cry today, just like Mack. And, because I was bottling it up inside me, I was too choked up to say anything or I would

have cried. But the emotions were surging through me and I felt like standing and leading a brass band during the standing ovation for Jay. It felt wonderful. You're right. I am going to feel better the rest of the day because of this morning's experience. I may not have said anything outloud, but I was participating in my way.

Randi: Thank you for sharing that with us, Jean. It has helped to make my day.

(The three of them start to pick up their books, coats, etc. and head toward the door when Mack comes in. They stop. It is obvious no one knows what to say.)

Mack: Could I talk to you for a minute, Dianne?

Di: Am I in trouble? You're calling me Dianne.

Mack: Dr. Reimer calls you Dianne.

Di: That's my name on the class roster. Teachers seldom know how to get beyond the class list. But you're not a teacher.

Mack: I think you give teachers too much credit. They have to be put in their place once in a while. They're not God, you know.

Di: I'd rather hold back on some of the things I disagree with than nit-pick all the time. You must be a very unhappy soul to think you have to go looking for things to criticize. Do you ever see anything good?

Mack: *(He pauses for a moment before he responds.)* You don't hold back on any of your punches. You may not point out anything the teachers says that you don't agree with, but you land with both feet on me.

Di: Wait a minute, I make my point whenever I have a different viewpoint than teachers express; I'm just not always looking for a fight.

Mack: Except with me?

Di: Except with you. You're right. Sometimes you just push all my buttons and I . . . I kind of explode. Teachers usually don't make me do that. At least not Dr. Reimer. But you do, I admit.

Mack: I'm sorry. *(quickly)* But don't faint. Please let me apologize without fainting.

Di: Not even a fake faint.

Mack: No.

Di: Good, 'cause that kind of hurt the other day. I'm too old to fall on the floor more than once a quarter.

Mack: I am so glad to hear that.

Di: Glad, because I'm old.

Mack: No, because it wasn't easy hitting the floor. I hit my head on the floor yesterday when I did that, but there was no way I was going to let anyone know I hurt. But now that I know you didn't fare that well either, I feel better.

Di: Thanks a lot.

Mack: Think nothing of it.

Di: Since I can't think of anything else to argue with you about, I must ask What are you doing here? You left.

Mack: I ran into Chad and he was in kind of a daze.

Di: A daze?

Mack: Yeh. He said – if I understood him right – you were defending me.

Di: Now don't get the wrong idea. He heard no conservative propaganda coming out of my mouth.

Mack: He said it had to do with Jay.

Di: Mack, you were almost moved to tears by that story Dr. Reimer told. I knew you felt passionately about things but I never dreamed . . .

Mack: I dream all the time, Di. But it embarrasses me to cry. I didn't want anyone to notice that I was kind of choked up. That was really a brave thing Jay did.

Di: You dream all the time?

Mack: Did I say that?

Di: Yes you did. I have accused you of having pipe dreams before but I never dreamed you had real dreams.

Mack: You don't know me very well. I have the most beautiful dreams in the world. My life would be pretty shallow without them. And I don't dare express them outloud for fear of being accused of having pipe dreams.

Di: Be bold, Mack. What do you dream?

Mack: For dreams to be real, they have to be secret.

Di: That's nonsense. The greatest ideas in the world started as dreams – Edison's electric light, Franklin's hope for a public library, Bell's invention of the telephone.

Mack: My dreams are greater than those.

Di: They are? (*Mack doesn't look at her but is in deep thought.*) Go on.

Mack: Really, Lady Di., you don't want to know.

Di: Lady Di? Now I want to know more than ever. (*She waits but he offers no answer.*) A dollar for your thoughts.

Mack: A dollar? What happened to a penny for your thoughts?

Di: I can tell this thought is worth a lot more than a penny, probably worth more than a dollar. Probably a solution for world peace.

Mack: Bigger than that. (*He searches for the right words*) You won't believe this but . . . they're about you. (*Then he steps up to her, puts an arm gently around her and his other hand rests easily under her chin and he kisses her softly, a kiss that lasts beyond the dimming of the lights. How long depends on the two actors.*)

(Curtain)_

To Read The Rest Please Purchase The Script.