

## THE TRUTH OF RED

### CHARACTERS

- Daniel Folley/Henry - Director, playing our lead therapist
- Madeline Cross/Nattie - older woman, comedic relief, plays Nattie who is very nosey
- Renee Greene/Betty - younger actress, new, plays Betty- a young woman who's best friend just got murdered
- Arthur Lowell - Tech crew, doesn't understand that he can be seen by the audience
- Owen Hawthorn/Officer 1 - Actor, naive, got the role by chance
- Birdie Ross/Officer 2 - Actress, always forgotten about, clumsy

SCENE ONE

*(Light comes up center stage and we see **DANIEL FOLLEY**, a young director who is happy to be onstage. There are walls painted an almost too bright color of orange- built around the stage, set up as a simple therapist's office. Separated in between is another wall. On stage right we see a waiting area painted an unfortunate teal color and paintings of safari animals on the wall. A door is seen going off stage right and a simple overhead light hangs overhead.)*

DANIEL: Good Evening ladies and gentlemen and welcome to this evening's production of 'The Truth Of Red.' Now, unfortunately, you may have noticed a misprint on the marquis and your playbills are different from what I just said. There seemed to have been an insight on production and they seem to have mislabeled our show, simply titling it as 'Insert Title,' but no worry- we should have it fixed in a week. Now, unfortunately, we had another mistake and our leading actor will not be on tonight due to a mistake involving one of our stage lights and I will be filling in for him tonight instead. Now, without further adieu, please enjoy 'The Truth Of Red.'

*(Daniel exits stage right and attempts to go through the Stage Right door only for it to be jammed. He struggles for a minute, considering his options before going around downstage and exiting through the wings instead. There is a momentary pause as **MADLINE CROSS** attempts to enter the same way, only to find the door jammed again. She struggles and enters Stage Right the same way as Daniel and rushes to get to the desk as lights come up. There is a pause before we hear a conversation from offstage.)*

ARTHUR(*Offstage*): It's not my fault the light fell on Matty.

DANIEL(*Offstage*): I never said it was.

ARTHUR: Well, it was implied.

DANIEL: Look, all I'm asking is for you to tell me if you hear back from the hospital about Matty's concussion.

ARTHUR: Alright, alright.

DANIEL: Arthur... Arthur.

ARTHUR: What?

DANIEL: The mic is on.

ARTHUR: What?

DANIEL: Your headset, it's on.

ARTHUR: Do... Do you think they heard anything?

DANIEL: I'm sure they didn't.

ARTHUR: Do you think they heard about how we're currently under investigation for Matty's accident?

DANIEL: Well, don't repeat it now!

*(Microphone cuts out and Madeline suddenly gets back into character. An underscore plays as the play 'officially' begins. The doorknob turns for a second before an exasperated sigh is heard offstage from Daniel before he enters from the downstage right curtain now as HENRY. NATTIE, an older woman played by Madeline is seen at the receptionist's desk as Henry enters.)*

HENRY: Good morning Nattie, are all my appointments ready for the day?

NATTIE: Yes sir, you 8 am should be here shortly. I heard in the news that her friend had just been murdered and an investigation was underway.

HENRY: I don't make it a point to read anything on my patients before they tell me. However, based on the files it seems that's what she wants to come in for.

*(He goes to grab the manilla folder on Nattie's desk and opens it as all the papers fall to the ground. Daniel stands there for a second before resuming.)*

HENRY: I want you to fill out the papers from last week's patients. I've been getting complaints about clients who come in and tell their secrets, only for someone to hear about it later. Do you have any idea why?

NATTIE: No sir.

*(Nattie spares a glance to the audience.)*

HENRY: ...Very well. Send Miss (Reading from the now empty folder) Betty into my office when she arrives.

NATTIE: Of course, Sir.

*(Henry exits through the door leading into the study, hesitating before opening it, a notable look of relief on his face as the handle works. **RENEE GREENE** enters the stage right door with no trouble as **BETTY**, a tired high school teen who seems hesitant to even be in the office slowly makes her way over to Nattie's desk.)*

BETTY: Is this the right location for Dr. McCoy?

NATTIE: Indeed. Are you Miss. Betty?

BETTY: I am.

NATTIE: What's it like?

BETTY: What?

NATTIE: You know, the mystery!

BETTY(Uncomfortable): I don't quite feel comfortable-

NATTIE: This is a therapist's office hun, it's no point in coming if you feel uncomfortable-

(Henry comes in through the study door, frustrated as yet another doorknob betrays him. He stands defeated before saying his line from where he stands.)

HENRY: You must be Betty!

BETTY: I am. Are you Dr. McCoy?

HENRY: Indeed. Please don't mind Nattie, she means no harm. Please... follow me.

*(‘Betty’ stands still for a moment, watching ‘Henry’ through the door. She and Nattie share a look before Betty goes to the door, pausing before opening it with ease once again, and closing the door behind her.)*

HENRY: Please, have a seat.

BETTY: Thank you.

(The two sit in the two leather-bound chairs, right before Henry's chair collapses underneath him. He says nothing, sitting in a state of shock before continuing the scene as normal.)

HENRY: What made you want to come in today Miss. Tatters?

BETTY: I- you should have it written down, no?

HENRY: Yes, but I'd like to hear it from your own words. Sometimes people heal better by speaking about it.

BETTY: Well, you may have heard about it, but um... my best friend Lucy was recently killed in an accident and I just.. Well, I just need to talk to someone about it.

HENRY: Yes, it's always difficult losing someone dear to you.

BETTY: Yes.

HENRY: Feel free to deny if you want, but why don't you explain to me what happened and we can go from there?

*(In the waiting room, Nattie is perked up, listening in through the thin walls of the office. She overhears Henry, and quickly grabs her glass cup from the desk, noticing how comically large it is. She attempts to drink it all and spills some on her in the process. Still full, she looks around the room before tossing the rest of the water out the window, landing on ARTHUR who stands up from behind the window looking drenched.)*

BETTY: Well I-

*(‘Nattie’ continues, apologizing as Arthur gets into a squabble before she places the glass against the door, leaning her ear against it in an attempt to listen in.)*

BETTY *(Startled)*: Well, My friend, Lucy, had asked me that night to stay over after her parents had kept fighting. I, unfortunately, had my boyfriend already over and well... My parents don't like me having too many guests over unannounced so I had to decline. I guess I wish I had said yes, maybe I could've prevented... this.

HENRY: So, you feel some kind of guilt-

*(Daniel is interrupted as Arthur comes on, still drenched. He holds a new chair and tries to find a new place to put it amongst the remains of the previous chair and decides to place it over Daniel as he is now lying on the floor with a chair overtop him, struggling as Arthur exits Stage Left.)*

HENRY *(struggling)*: So, you feel some kind of guilt about what would've happened if you said yes?

BETTY: I suppose, yes. It was later that evening when the police came, alerting my parents of what happened.

HENRY: Why don't we take a break? You seem to be upset.

BETTY: Yes I just... Suppose all this is just a lot for me to handle, still fresh on my mind-

*(Madeline, still leaning against the door accidentally puts too much pressure against the wall and startles as the door collapses, pushing her down on the ground into the study, catching the attention of Renee and Daniel.)*

BETTY: But I think I would like to continue.

*(Madeline panics before standing, trying to find a new place to hide, and finds her place behind a tall plant, throwing the cup out the study window as it shatters in the distance.)*

HENRY: Of course. All at your own pace.

BETTY: Thank you. It's just when they told us what happened- I nearly fainted. I mean, who could expect to hear that your best friend and both of her parents were brutally murdered in the middle of the night, presumingly by her father? I mean, what kind of sick bastard-

*(A pause as a knock is heard at the waiting room door. The three pause as Madeline walks with the plant slowly back into the waiting room while still behind it.)*

NATTIE: I got it.

*(She places the plant down, relieved as she goes to the door and tries to open it, struggling as the door knob continues to stay jammed.)*

NATTIE: I... I got it-

*(Renee looks over to Daniel, still underneath the second chair, hesitating before slowly standing from her seat and moving over to the shattered door, opening the door for Madeline as two cops stand in front of the door played by OWEN HAWTHORN and BIRDIE ROSS, The four glance at each other momentarily before Renee goes back to her original chair.)*

NATTIE(*Feigned interest*): Good evening officers, may I help you?

OFFICER 1: Yes, I understand that there is a Miss. Betty Tatters here.

*(Out from under the chair with the help of Renee, out of breath and messy as he enters through the broken door frame.)*

HENRY: Can I help you, officers?

OFFICER 2: Are you Dr. McCoy?

HENRY: Indeed I am.

OFFICER 1: Ah, figures considering how neat... everything is here. I understand you have a patent here named Betty Tatters.

HENRY: Is everything the matter?

OFFICER 1: I'm unsure if you've heard, but Miss. Tatters was recently involved in the investigation of her ex-best friend Lucy Edwards-

HENRY: Wait, ex-friend, investigation? She said the two were still friends and the investigation was underway.

OFFICER 2: I'm afraid that Miss. Tatter's words have a sense of mistruth in them. For you see, we recently found traces of evidence containing Miss. Tatter's DNA at the scene leads us to believe she is involved in the death of the Edwards family-

HENRY: She's just through here officers-



(Henry guides the officers over the broken doors and we find Renee- having forgotten that she is supposed to be offstage by now attempting to climb out the window)

HENRY: She's gone-

*(Arthur enters upstage right and we see him through the window as he attempts to help Renee out of the window, the two struggling before she falls through, bringing Arthur down with her.)*

HENRY: She's gone!

OFFICER 1: Where on earth could she have gone!?

*(Arthur stands, rushing to get out of view from the audience.)*

HENRY: I swear she was here just moments ago-

OFFICER 2(Into walkie Talkie): Dispatch en route to... en route to... (hand over walkie talkie, to Daniel) Where are we?

HENRY(*Under his breath*): What?

OFFICER 2: En route to What street? The suspect is currently on the run, I need all officers on the scene now.

RANDOM VOICE(*could be done by an actor offstage*): Um... This is just Alex.

*(Daniel and Owen look down at the walkie-talkie, unaware that it worked, and ponder what to do before Owen continues the scene)*

OFFICER 2: Copy that, we're on our way now.

RANDOM VOICE: I'm not sure-

*(Tossing the walkie-talkie through the window, Owen and Daniel look at each other before Owen and Birdie exit in a rush, Birdie runs into the waiting room door, stumped once again by the broken knob before Owen pushes into her,*

*causing the second door to collapse offstage. Madeline walks over to Daniel, the two standing in front of the infamous window,)*

NATTIE: Well that was certainly exciting.

HENRY: Indeed-

*(The sound of something breaking is heard as Henry hesitates.)*

HENRY: Indeed I-

*(interrupted again, More breakage is heard before the entire set collapses over the two, saved from being hit by standing perfectly between the open study window as the two pull towards each other out of shock, the set now in shambles on the floor as the other actors all stand around Renee who is out cold from where she has been knocked out from when she fell through the window, looking out to the audience in shock.)*

HENRY: Indeed, I've certainly had enough for one day.

NATTIE(*Exasperated*): I think this was the most exciting day of my life.

*(Blackout, end of show)*