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Dramatic Publishing

HUBIE'S BEST FRIEND

by

JULES TASCA



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • London, England • Melbourne, Australia

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(HUBIE'S BEST FRIEND)

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HUBIE'S BEST FRIEND

A One-Act Play
For Two Men and One Woman

CHARACTERS

HUBIE a nerdish college student

ALVIN a handsome college student

BEATRICE the fantasy of an attractive young co-ed

TIME: The present.

PLACE: A small college town.

HUBIE'S BEST FRIEND, was first produced at the West
Coast Theater Ensemble with the following artists:

Hubie *Jason Broad*
Alvin *Johnathan Bott*
Beatrice *Melissa Fahn*

Directed by Alison Vail

HUBIE'S BEST FRIEND

AT RISE: *Lights up on three chairs. Two U on which sit ALVIN and BEATRICE. On the chair at the apex of the triangle, DC sits HUBIE.*

HUBIE (*rises and addresses audience*). I'm Hubie. Hubie Kane. (*BEATRICE theme music comes up. Points.*) That's Beatrice back there...Nobody ever forgets his college sweetheart...I'll get back to her...The fellow is Alvin Amato. He was my best friend. When I was little I had two best friends—my mother and Alvin. Then there was just Alvin. We grew up together. We were the perfect pair of opposites. I was an honor student. He got C's. I was quiet and introspective. Alvin's wild and outspoken. He gulps life down while I...I sort of sip now and then...and spit up occasionally. I used to let him cheat from my exams in high school. And I hung on to him because...because people thought that if Alvin Amato was my friend, well, then I couldn't be one hundred percent uncool, as Alvin would phrase it. (*HUBIE rises.*) Eventually, he and I roomed together at college. Look at him. The girls loved him. Too many girls loved him. That was the part of him I could never stand. If I learned anything from my relationship then it's this: love is a transformation. And I had to learn that the hard way. (*As the music fades.*) Even now that I've graduated, it rankles me to think back...

(HUBIE crosses DL to telescope. He peers through. ALVIN rises and crosses to him.)

ALVIN. Hey. What in hell're you doing? *(Pause. HUBIE ignores him.)* Hey, Hub...what're you up to?

HUBIE. I am looking at Venus.

ALVIN. Five-thirty in the morning you're star gazing?

HUBIE. Venus is not a star. It is one of the planets.

ALVIN. Okay. Don't bust a nerd gasket. Hub, a favor. I need a term paper.

HUBIE. Why don't you see if Theresa could give you one of her term papers. If you were there until five-thirty, you obviously got everything else from her.

ALVIN. Hey, Hubie, don't be uncool. Theresa...and I're cut out for each other.

HUBIE. You're supposed to go steady with Olga.

ALVIN. I *do* go steady with Olga.

HUBIE. Well, I guess Olga deserves this betrayal for breaking off with me.

ALVIN. Breaking off with you? Hub...Hub, she sat in the cafeteria with you and talked about Greek drama because she had the course with you. She explained to you that she wasn't interested in you...in that way...

HUBIE. ...Because you broke it up...

ALVIN. I didn't break anything up. Olga and me, we're cut out for each other.

HUBIE. I thought Theresa was different. I told everybody that Theresa and I were...

ALVIN. You shouldn't have told people you and Theresa were an item. She just needed help with the statistic problems.

HUBIE. It's embarrassing. Now everybody'll ask why Theresa and I aren't together.

ALVIN. Nobody'll ask you that. You blow up everything inside your head. Theresa, Jesus, Hubie. Do you know how many times you've done this?

HUBIE (*to audience*). First semester at college I loved six girls. Second semester, five. Second year, four co-eds, a high school senior and my French prof. My junior year—I'm more mature now—I loved just Olga and now Theresa. But, when they meet Alvin, they go into a passion frenzy. He always knows how to make the right moves. Look at him. Alvin Amato, who hasn't quite mastered English, seduced my French prof, Jeanne Renet...

ALVIN (*standing, to audience*). Jeanne Renet and me were cut out for each other. (*Goes to the file cabinet.*)

HUBIE. No girl's cut out for him. But, when they meet him, they fall into the quicksand of his male finesse and his sexual charm. They never see me again as anything but an aid to studying. To the female gender, I am nothing but walking *Cliff Notes*. (*ALVIN rises and pulls out a box of term papers from under his chair.*)

ALVIN (*going through his papers*). So forget Theresa. Listen, I got four hours to do my psych paper.

HUBIE. You've got everything. My girls. My term papers, and I just noticed, you're even wearing my shirt.

ALVIN. I didn't think you minded. It brings out the color in my eyes. My psych prof will love this paper. I'm gonna take a shower. How about typing a new cover sheet for me? Huh? Be a pal.

HUBIE. You're not even going to read it?

ALVIN. It's thirty pages. Jesus. I wish I had that kind of time. Oh, and I'm gonna borrow your overnight bag.

HUBIE. For what?

ALVIN. We're going to Atlantic City.

HUBIE. It's February.

ALVIN. We're not going swimming, Hub. We're going to a hotel.

HUBIE. You feel guilty over what you did with Theresa, so you're treating Olga to a big weekend.

ALVIN. I'm taking Theresa. Olga thinks I'm working on my psych paper this weekend...Hub, please don't look at me that way. This is life on earth, man. You have to land your craft on terra firma and stop star gazing. *(Goes to his chair. A telephone receiver drops down to HUBIE.)*

HUBIE. Maybe Alvin is rooted in the folkways of the earth in a way I am not. I'll make a call. *(Into the receiver.)* Hello, Lynne?...Guess who this is...No...No...No...Nope...Wrong again...Lynne, take one more guess. I sit next to you in history...No, he's on the other side of you...yes, I'm Hubie...Hubie Kane...Lynne? Are you there Lynne?... I know it's five-thirty in the morning...But, I was sitting here thinking about you and...because...because I was wondering if you'd want to go to Atlantic City...I know it's February. Best time to go. The beaches won't be crowded and we could collect shells...Hello? Hello, Lynne?...Lynne? *(The receiver is pulled up into the fly space.)* Now if Alvin had called Lynne...*(BEATRICE theme music comes up softly.)* It was the phone call and my losing Theresa to him that was a watershed. So I decided to wreak some kind of retributive justice on Alvin. Sometimes revenge, I hypothesized, was a way of establishing balance in a cosmos that tilted toward unfairness. After all, Alvin Amato's prowess with the female side is just a result of a random throw of the genetic dice. The black hair, the white teeth, the swarthy skin, his build. I have the same needs as he, but I'm left out. Revenge. Yes, revenge is the only corrective for crimes of unfairness, crimes for which

no objective body of law has ever been created. Think of Hamlet. Think of Orestes. Think of Medea...think of...

BEATRICE (*rising from her chair*). Hubie...what will you call me?

HUBIE. Beatrice. After Dante's idealized love in the *Divine Comedy*.

BEATRICE (*crossing to HUBIE*). Are you sure you're not making a mistake, Hubie?

HUBIE. You're so desirable. How could I be making a mistake?

BEATRICE. Well, to be candid, Hubie, you play in your head too much. There are some who are too much within themselves.

HUBIE. You sound like my mother now. You know how many times I've reached out. Where else can I go now? Where?

BEATRICE. I understand. But, I warn you, Hubie. You are toying with psychic black magic.

HUBIE (*to audience*). She exaggerates. All right. Yes. I invented her. I created her. I had to. I made Beatrice up from the best part of all the girls, I'd ever known. Height...

BEATRICE. Five foot, four.

HUBIE. Hair...

BEATRICE. Jet black.

HUBIE. Eyes...

BEATRICE. Brown.

HUBIE. Chest...

BEATRICE. Thirty-four.

HUBIE. I argued for larger breasts, but Beatrice talked me out of it.

BEATRICE. Balance, proportion, symmetry. Remember the Greeks.

HUBIE. You see? She practically created herself. IQ...

BEATRICE. One-sixty.

HUBIE. Yes. She's a Mensa chick in a playboy body. Alvin Amato, eat your lustful heart out! (*BEATRICE sits back down on her chair as her theme goes out with final string of a chord. HUBIE holds up a page from a memo pad.*) I began by putting notes on our apartment door, so Alvin would see them. I signed her name.

BEATRICE. Hubie, I'll meet you at the same place tonight. Beatrice. (*HUBIE pulls another memo pad page out of his pocket.*)

HUBIE. Every few days another note on the door.

BEATRICE. Thank you for a wonderful Saturday night. Your pal, Beatrice.

HUBIE (*pulling out another note*). I made him think I got progressively more involved with her.

BEATRICE. Sorry I missed you. Mom and Dad loved having you for dinner. Call me. Love, Beatrice.

ALVIN (*rising, holding a note*). Love, Beatrice. (*HUBIE crosses to ALVIN.*) Oh, you're home. Another note from this Beatrice was on the door. "The college newspaper accepted my article!" Exclamation point. "We celebrate tonight!" Exclamation point. "Love Beatrice!!" Two explanation points. (*ALVIN hands the note to HUBIE.*)

HUBIE. Oh, I'm so happy for her.

ALVIN. All these notes. Doesn't this Beatrice have a phone?

HUBIE. Of course, she's got a phone. But she often stops by hoping...hoping to catch me in the flesh.

ALVIN. Really? To catch you in the...Hub, land that craft, huh? You're hovering again. Retro-rockets. Ease it on down.

HUBIE. Alvin, I don't care what you think. Excuse me, I'm going to her place to congratulate her on her newspaper article.