

~~GRACE. Just, like, the message that his voice mailbox ...~~

~~KATHERINE. ... is still full~~

~~(Knock at stage door entrance off centre stage left. GRACE goes to answer and returns with EDMUNDS, who flips open his badge and drops it. As he retrieves it.)~~

EDMUNDS. Good evening. Constable Edmunds here to service you ladies. *(As EDMUNDS talks, people can walk across the stage carrying costumes, putting props on the upstage table etc. EDMUNDS is fascinated by what is going on, and occasionally gets distracted by what they are doing as he speaks.)* My dispatcher said we had a missing persons call from this theatre. My wife and I are long-time theatre fans, and since I was in the area, I took it upon myself to conduct what we call a *(Air quotes.)* "preliminary investigation". *(Looking around.)* You know, an investigation that is in its...its preliminary stage. Now, how long has this missing person been...missing?

GRACE. Four hours?

EDMUNDS. Yes, but for how many hours?

GRACE. Like, for four hours?

EDMUNDS. Forty-four hours?

KATHERINE. No, since about four o'clock today.

EDMUNDS. And no one has seen or heard from this person since that time?

KATHERINE. No, that is why we reported him as a *(Air quotes.)* "missing person". You know, a person that is...missing?

EDMUNDS. I see. Unfortunately our department has a rule that we do not investigate missing persons, until these persons have been missing four days.

GRACE. For days? Like, how many days?

EDMUNDS. Four, just as I said, missing for four days. I personally am not from that school of camp, but that is the rule.

KATHERINE. Four days?! Constable we are opening our show tonight and have two more performances before your four day period is over. What do you suggest that we do?

EDMUNDS. I suggest that you try very hard to find him. But if you can't, my wife knows so much more about the theatre than I do. She says that the important roles in a show sometimes

have people who are available in case a leading person can't go on for some reason. I don't know what they are called, just that they study under those leads.

KATHERINE. That's a great suggestion Constable. We'll try it – next time.

EDMUNDS. Just some advice from my wife, who is the real theatre insider. Oh, and keep track of how long this person remains missing. You can report it again if he is still missing after the four days have passed. May I inquire as to the name of this missing person?

KATHERINE. It's Arthur Rechs. R-E-C-H-S.

EDMUNDS. Oh. *(Pause.)* Do Ms. Carey and Ms Wooster work here?

KATHERINE. Yes, they volunteer their time here in costumes, why?

EDMUNDS. They come here dressed in costumes to volunteer their time? I don't under... – ah I understand, they work in the group that prepares the costumes for your production. *(Pause.)* Sadly, I am not at liberty to divest that information, other than to say things have just become more urgent. I can assure you that I will consult with my superior officer and we will be in touch. *(Pause.)* Is your Mr. Rechs a large man by any chance?

KATHERINE. No, he's quite slight actually.

EDMUNDS. Hmm. Thank you for this information. I can find my way out. *(Turns to go, looks around, obviously lost, GRACE escorts him off centre stage left, then returns to KATHERINE.)*

KATHERINE. I don't think that guy could find himself in a mirror. *(Pause.)* Grace, let me ask you. If you were Arthur, you aren't afraid of speaking in front of an audience, you know all your lines, you're working opposite your girlfriend, and you aren't obviously depressed or suicidal, *(Pause.)* where the HELL would you be?

GRACE. *(GRACE should say this entire stream of consciousness speech standing still, looking straight at KATHERINE or out to the audience. It should gather speed gradually and run on, so don't pause at the question marks just, like, lift the sound?)* Katherine, I'm really not the right person to, like, answer that question? Audiences, like, terrify me? they have ever since I was, like, in Grade 1 in the Christmas pageant at public school and my angel halo fell off? and I bent over to pick it up and my pants ripped and people could, like, see my underwear? *(Out front.)* which was pink with white stripes and Nickolas and John teased me about that in class and at recess for, like, a whole week? *(Brief pause, then to KATHERINE.)* I can never remember lines and I, like, used to get all flustered and embarrassed in high school when we had to recite poems that we had, like, been told to learn the previous week? *(Out front.)* and of course I would forget most of the lines and get, like, a bad mark in English Literature? – or maybe it was,

like, Comprehension I don't understand the difference I'm sorry Katherine – and have to explain that to my parents when I, like, got my report card later that semester? (*Brief pause, then to KATHERINE.*) I don't have a girlfriend although I wish I did and (*Suddenly panicked.*) oh my god I have never told that to, like, anyone ever in my entire life before please don't tell anyone at all Katherine, especially, like, Margaret? who works in the box office and definitely not Maria who, like, helps with set painting? (*Brief pause, then out front.*) I sometimes get depressed – well, like, sad – for no obvious reason and it can, like, ruin my whole day? and once I felt that way for three days in a row and I just couldn't, like, shake it and my parents didn't know what to do and they were, like, we're going to call the doctor if you are still that way the next day? but luckily I wasn't so they, like, didn't, (*To KATHERINE.*) so I'm really sorry Katherine, but I, like, have no idea where the (*Deep breath, hesitates, before plunging, almost in tears from fear of the word. Imitating KATHERINE'S emphasis.*) HELL I would be if I were Arthur. (*Runs off upstage centre in tears, past MARY and LIZ, as they enter from upstage centre.*)

MARY. What's with Grace?

KATHERINE. She has a lot on her (*Pause, searching for the right word.*) mind.

LIZ. Grace?

MARY. Is she upset about not being able to find Arthur?

KATHERINE. I think finding Arthur is quite possibly the least of her concerns.

MARY. So some good news. We just checked with the rest of the cast about their costumes, and they all said they were happy, things still fit fine, no rips, and no one has spilled coffee on a costume.

LIZ. (*To MARY.*) Yet. (*Pause.*) And if Henry has to do the show again tomorrow night, by then we can alter Arthur's stuff so it will fit him a lot better.

KATHERINE. Thanks, but maybe not mention that last bit to Henry just yet okay? And keep people out of the costume area during intermission as well.

LIZ. Why?

KATHERINE. So he can look at Act II!

MARY. Really?

KATHERINE. Yeah, it's time that we faced the reality that, even if he is alive, our beloved Arthur is not coming back – at least not tonight. (*Pause.*) I have to go to the washroom and throw up before I speak to the cast. (*Exits upstage centre.*)