

EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

By Ron Dune

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CHARACTERS
(1f, 1m, 6either)

DICK	(M) An average guy
JANE	(F) An average gal
LOVE	(M/F) Wears opposite colors as Hate and sash which bares his/her name
HATE	(M/F) Wears opposite colors as Love and sash which bares his/her name
HAPPY	(M/F) Wears opposite colors as Sad and sash which bares his/her name
SAD	(M/F) Wears opposite colors as Happy and sash which bares his/her name
BRAVE	(M/F) Wears opposite colors as Scared and sash which bares his/her name
SCARED	(M/F) Wears opposite colors as Brave and sash which bares his/her name

Note: Each EMOTION wears a sash baring his/her name.

TIME

Anytime.

SETTING

Anywhere.

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SETTING: A table and two chairs are down center.

AT RISE: *DICK and JANE enter from Left. They walk to the table. Throughout the play THEY never see the EMOTION characters. THEY are only affected by them subconsciously.*

JANE: I love walking in the park in the spring.

DICK: Me too.

JANE: The air always smells, I dunno, different.

DICK: I know what you mean, it's fresher somehow.

JANE: Yes, fresher.

DICK: There's a table, would you like to sit down, Jane?

JANE: I'd love to, Dick.

(THEY sit.)

DICK: What a super day.

JANE: Yes. Oh look, we can see the ocean from here.

DICK: I love the ocean.

JANE: Me too. It's so darn. . . wet.

DICK: Yes. So darn, darn. . . wet.

(LOVE enters from Left and listens to their conversation.)

JANE: So, tell me how was your day at the office?

DICK: Well, it was pretty much the same as usual. Perkins had gas and stunk up the place real good.

(JANE feels awkward and embarrassed. LOVE hurries to the table and stands behind DICK.)

LOVE: Amateur. *(LOVE whispers in DICK's ear.)*

DICK: Actually, I was counting the minutes until I could see you.

JANE: *(perking up)* Oh?

(LOVE whispers in DICK's ear again.)

DICK: Yes, there's no one I'd rather be with than you, Jane.

JANE: Oh, Dick. You're so goofy sometimes.

(DICK looks awkward. This is not what HE wanted to hear.)

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LOVE: Oh, brother. (*LOVE walks around behind JANE and whispers in her ear.*)

JANE: What I mean is sometimes my feelings for you make me feel all goofy inside.

(*DICK smiles.*)

LOVE: That's better.

DICK: Oh, Jane.

JANE: Oh, Dick.

(*LOVE stands between them as THEY hold hands across the table.*)

LOVE: It's a thing of beauty.

(*HATE enters from Right.*)

LOVE: Oh no. What are you doing here?

HATE: Hey, I've got as much right to be here as you do.

LOVE: No way! They're doing just fine. You stay away from them!

HATE: Like that's gonna happen. You know it's just a matter of time. I'm inevitable. (*HE approaches JANE.*)

LOVE: I'm not gonna let you ruin them. (*LOVE whispers in DICK's ear.*)

DICK: Jane, I . . . I'm falling in love with you.

(*JANE looks happy.*)

HATE: That's so easy!

(*HATE whispers in JANE's ear. The smile fades from her face.*)

JANE: Oh, dear.

DICK: What? What's wrong?

(*HATE whispers again.*)

JANE: Well, this is all very sudden.

DICK: What do you mean?

(*HATE whispers again.*)

JANE: You said the "L" word. I mean, don't you think that's taking it a bit fast?

(*LOVE whispers in DICK's ear.*)

DICK: Oh, Jane. I can't help myself. I love you, I love you, I love you!

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(HATE whispers to JANE.)

JANE: Stop it!

(LOVE whispers to DICK.)

DICK: I can't. I want to tell the world. *(HE stands up.)* I love Jane! Dick loves Jane! I want everyone to know that Dick loves Jane!

(HATE whispers to JANE.)

JANE: Stop it! Stop it! You're embarrassing me!

(HATE runs over to DICK and whispers in his ear.)

DICK: Embarrassing you?! Well, thank you very much. That's what I get for revealing myself to you.

(LOVE runs over and whispers in JANE's ear.)

JANE: Dick, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings.

(HATE whispers again.)

DICK: I think you did. You are so pretentious.

JANE: Pretentious?!

(JANE is now very angry. LOVE whispers in her ear. JANE shows signs of softening and then snaps back into being angry)

Pretentious?! You don't even know what that word means!

DICK: Yeah I do. It means. . . you're ugly.

(HATE stands back and smiles.)

JANE: Why you sniveling little pus bucket.

DICK: Pus from all the infected sores on your face.

JANE: Ooooh! I hate you, Dick!

DICK: I hate you more, Jane!

(DICK exits off Left as JANE stomps off Right. HATE brushes his hands triumphantly.)

HATE: Well, I guess I won that one.

LOVE: You always ruin everything!

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HATE: Come on, I don't always win.

LOVE: Lately you have.

HATE: (*cocky*) That's true. The last few times I've just been on.

LOVE: You make me so mad!

HATE: Get used to it.

LOVE: Oooo! I . . . (*tries to say "hate" but it won't come out*) I ha . . . Love you.

HATE: (*smug*) I know. And I hate you.

LOVE: Whaaa!

(*LOVE runs out Left. HATE laughs and exits Right. Lights change slightly. A beat. DICK and JANE enter from both sides. THEY meet in the middle. It's a little awkward.*)

DICK: Hey.

JANE: Hey.

(*Pause.*)

DICK: Listen, I'm sorry about yesterday.

JANE: Yeah, me too.

DICK: How about if we just start over?

JANE: Sounds good to me.

(*Pause.*)

DICK: So what's new with you?

JANE: Nothin'. You?

DICK: Nothin'.

(*HAPPY enters from Left and watches.*)

JANE: So, would you like to sit down?

DICK: Oh, yes, let's sit down.

JANE: Oh, I almost forgot to tell you, I got pulled over the other day.

DICK: (*relieved that THEY have something to talk about*) Really? What happened?

JANE: I was speeding. But I did it. I did exactly what we talked about doing.

DICK: No way! Really? What happened?

JANE: Okay, so the cop walks up to my window and does the classic, "License and registration, please." So I just look at him and say, "How many teaspoons of linoleum does it take to catch an apricot tree?"

DICK: You did not!

JANE: I sure did.

(*HAPPY whispers in DICK's ear. Dick starts laughing.*)

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DICK: Then what'd he do?

JANE: He just stands there like this. *(SHE stands up and just stares at DICK.)*
And then he's all monotone, "License and registration, please."

(HAPPY whispers in DICK's ear again, and HE busts out laughing.)

DICK: *(through the laughter)* Oh, man! I wish I could've been there.

(HAPPY whispers in JANE's ear, and SHE starts laughing with DICK.)

JANE: Okay! Okay! So I just look at him and say, "My batteries weren't included."

(HAPPY whispers in DICK's ear and DICK is not able to contain his laughter)

DICK: Oh, man. Oh, man. I can't believe it!

(HAPPY whispers in JANE's ear and SHE laughs harder.)

JANE: So he just looks at me like he doesn't know what to do and finally he just says, "License and registration, please."

(HAPPY laughs with them. SAD enters and watches.)

DICK: Oh man! He's got to be about to arrest you!

JANE: Not yet. One more time, I just look at him and say, "Nickels don't fit in the quarter slots."

(HAPPY, JANE and DICK all crack up at this.)

DICK: *(through laughter)* Lemme guess, lemme guess. "License and registration, please."

(THEY bust up again. The laugh is quite long. SAD can take this no longer and approaches them. HAPPY sees SAD and stops laughing. DICK and JANE continue laughing.)

HAPPY: *(irritated)* Oh man. What are you doing here?

(SAD whispers in JANE's ear and SHE immediately stops laughing.)

JANE: Then he made me get out of the car.

(SAD whispers in DICK's ear and HE stops laughing.)

DICK: He did?

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HAPPY: *(to SAD)* You ruined it!

JANE: I had to take a sobriety test.

(HAPPY whispers into DICK's ear.)

DICK: *(DICK laughs)* You did?

(HE laughs more but then SAD whispers in his ear and HE stops.)

DICK: That sucks.

JANE: Yeah. He made me walk the line.

(SAD whispers in her ear. SHE gets even sadder.)

And people drove by that I knew and saw me.

(HAPPY decides to give it one last try and whispers in her ear but SAD whispers in her other ear at the same time. SHE starts her sentence sort of happy, but then ends it in tears.)

I got an eighty five dollar ticket.

(Both DICK and JANE cry.)

HAPPY: Couldn't you just stay away for once? They were doing just fine until you got here.

SAD: I'd say they're doing just fine now. Watch this.

JANE: My parents grounded me for a month.

(DICK and JANE are crying loudly and SAD starts directing them like a music conductor. THEY reach a swell where THEY run out of breath and SAD "holds them" with his conducting. And then brings his hands back into the conductor's pattern as the two continue their crying.)

DICK: This is terrible.

JANE: I'm so sad.

DICK: I gotta go.

JANE: Me too.

(DICK and JANE exit off different ways.)

SAD: Well, that was easy.

HAPPY: Why don't you mind your own business?

SAD: Weren't you watching? That is my business.

HAPPY: I got here first.

SAD: So? I got here second. And two is higher than one.

HAPPY: You're really irritating.

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SAD: No, that's my cousin. Well, I gotta get going. There's more work to be done.

HAPPY: *(through gritting teeth)* I'm very . . . happy . . . to see you. *(HAPPY stomps off Left.)*

SAD: I know. Of course I can't say the same thing about you.

(SAD exits Right. Slight Light change. A beat. DICK and JANE enter from the Left.)

JANE: Dick?

DICK: Yes, Jane?

JANE: I had a wonderful time tonight.

DICK: Me too.

JANE: It's getting a little chilly.

DICK: Oh, uh, here. *(HE puts his arm around her.)* Does that help?

JANE: Yes.

(SHE snuggles into him. THEY reach the table.)

Should we sit down?

DICK: Yes, here.

(HE takes the chairs and sits them side by side facing the audience. Then THEY both sit.)

JANE: Look there's a spider.

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