

An excerpt from...

**“CAUGHT IN THE ACT”
A One Act Comedy
For Two Trapped Characters
By Bruce Kane**

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**“CAUGHT IN THE ACT”
by Bruce Kane**

(Lights Up on Annie and Don sitting up in bed, side by side, under the covers. Annie is attractive and in her late twenties. She is angry and insecure. Don is nice looking and in his early thirties He is sweet, gentle and most of all confused)

DON: So... Amy... How... uh... was it?

ANNIE: How was what?

DON: It... The sex.

ANNIE: Why? You want the judges score? Like in the Olympics. Technical merit four point five. Artistic achievement three point two.

DON: I was just inquiring to see if you found it... I don't know... pleasing... satisfying... The least bit entertaining.

ANNIE: No, I didn't find it pleasing or satisfying or the least bit entertaining.

DON: Oh. I'm sorry I asked.

ANNIE: I didn't find it pleasing or satisfying or the least bit entertaining for the simple reason, we didn't do it.

DON: We didn't?

ANNIE: No we didn't. We've never done it and the way things stand we're never going to do it. And one more thing.

DON: I can't wait.

ANNIE: My name isn't Amy.

DON: It isn't?

ANNIE: It's Annie.

DON: Annie?

ANNIE: Annie.

DON: I could've sworn it was Amy.

ANNIE: It was.

DON: (*really confused*) What do you mean, it was?

ANNIE: In draft numbers three, five and nine.

DON: Drafts? What drafts?

ANNIE: Play drafts. This is the fifteenth.

DON: What are you talking about?

ANNIE: You're a character.

DON: A character? Really? That mean you mean you find me charming... quirky... off beat.

ANNIE: Don't be ridiculous. Not that kind of character. You're a character... I'm a character . We're both characters in a play. Only right now it's not exactly a play. It's more a work in progress. Except the writer isn't making much... Progress that is.

DON: No, no, no. Wait just a minute. That doesn't make any sense. I'm here... You're here. I'm flesh and blood. You're definitely flesh and blood. I'm talking in complete sentences. And you're saying I'm some kind of fictional construct?

ANNIE: Look around. What do you see?

DON: You... Me... A bed.

ANNIE: Anything else?

DON: No.

ANNIE: Don't you find that a little strange?

DON: I suppose.

ANNIE: It's called a limbo set. We could be anywhere.

DON: There's gotta be another explanation.

ANNIE: Okay... Let me ask you this... Where were you born?

DON: Where was I born?

ANNIE: A simple question.

DON: I was born.... uh... Let me think.

ANNIE: While you're working on that, tell me your mother's name.

DON: Well, that's easy... It was ...uh... It was...

ANNIE: What did you have for breakfast?

DON: Breakfast... Breakfast...

ANNIE: Yes, breakfast. The most important meal of the day. Don't know, do you?

DON: God, I must have amnesia

ANNIE: No you don't have amnesia. It would be an interesting twist, but he's not that clever.

DON: He? Who he?

ANNIE: The writer.

DON: How come you know all this stuff and I don't?

ANNIE: Probably because he's re-written your dialogue so many times. It's a wonder you know your own name.

DON: That I know. It's Ted.

ANNIE: Don.

DON: Don?

ANNIE: Don.

DON: When did I become Don?

ANNIE: In the new stage directions.

DON: Stage directions?

ANNIE: You really have no idea what I'm talking about.

DON: Not a clue.

ANNIE: Stage directions are that stuff in a script that describes the set, the characters... emotions, action... That sort of thing.

DON: In that case, maybe I'm an actor just playing a part.

ANNIE: An actor? Oh God, I hope not

DON: I could be an actor just playing the part of a character who has amnesia.

ANNIE: You don't have amnesia. Trust me. You're a character. But someday you may be played by an actor. But I sincerely doubt it. Anyway, if it helps, before the last rewrite you actually were Ted. Before that Ken, Bob, and Tom.

DON: All three letter names.

ANNIE: Easier to type.

DON: What's wrong with me that he, whoever the hell he is, has to keep changing my name and deleting everything I say?

ANNIE: He's not sure what you want?

DON: I'm here... In bed... With you. What's so hard to figure out?

ANNIE: Don't look at me. It's not my fault.

DON: You're saying... it's... me?

ANNIE: Yep. That's what I'm saying. It's you.

DON: Is there something wrong...like with my plumbing or... something?

ANNIE: Not that I can tell.

DON: Then what's the deal?

ANNIE: You're the noble one in this piece. You want more than sex

DON: There's more?

ANNIE: Apparently.

DON: Really? Like what?

ANNIE: Like a real, honest to God relationship.

DON: (*surprised*) I want a real relationship? Not you... Me. I must be a character in a play. And what do you want?

ANNIE: To get laid.

DON: I see. No, I don't see.

ANNIE: I want it for the wrong reason.

DON: There's a wrong reason for wanting to... uh?

ANNIE: Get laid. It's okay, you can say it. There's only the two of us here

DON: I give up. What's the wrong reason?

ANNIE: I want it as a form of reassurance... A way of validating my attractiveness... My sexuality.

DON: You're kidding. Why would you need reassurance?

ANNIE: My husband... Ed... Phil... Roger... Arnie... left me for my best friend... or an aerobics instructor or a co-worker. I'm not to clear at this point. I'm feeling rejected and I'm using you to reassure me that I'm still desirable.

DON: Using me?

ANNIE: You're a reluctant participant.

DON: Reluctant? Because I want a real relationship? (*Annie nods*) Is this writer... (*points upward*) ... gay?

ANNIE: I have no idea... But, this is a nice change

DON: What change is that?

ANNIE: Your attitude.

DON: What about it?

ANNIE: For the first time in fourteen drafts you don't seem so reluctant... You actually seem interested.

DON: I am.

ANNIE: Maybe he's going in a new direction.

DON: I wouldn't know. But I see no reason not to be interested. Very interested.

ANNIE: I don't want to get my hopes up. That's all this guy does... is go in new directions.

DON: So, what can you tell me about me, besides that I want a (*mockingly*) "real relationship"?

ANNIE: For one thing, you're a dentist.

DON: A dentist? Have I always been a dentist?

ANNIE: That's never changed. He thinks dentists are funny.

DON: What kind of warped mind are we dealing with here?

ANNIE: What can I tell ya?

DON: Then this is not a comedy, is it?

ANNIE: Not intentionally.

DON: You know, I vaguely remember saying something about dentists having the highest suicide rate of any profession.

ANNIE: He keeps going back to that. Usually when the conversation turns to sex. As it does a lot.

DON: Does he have some kind of obsession...with sex?

ANNIE: Mostly an oral fixation?

DON: He's hung up on oral sex?

ANNIE: Only if you consider endless talking on the subject... oral sex.

DON: For a moment there I was almost encouraged. So why do I want a real relationship?

(The Play Continues...)

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