

A MELODRAMA IN THE STUDENT AFFRONT'S OFFICE

A Student Play in one act . . .

by No. 69035278621
of The Ontarion

Cast:

Sidney Q. Pauper—impoverished student
Penelope Pulchmire—impoverished student
Gaunt and Haggard Couple—impoverished students
Miss Agatha Grindstone—black-haired secretary, etc.
Mrs. Remugient—Student Affronts Officer (perhaps—actually never seen)
Gretchen Gruel—employee in Student Affronts Office

Setting:

Physics Annex Student (Walk In) Affronts Office

Action: Sidney Q. Pauper:

Uh, is my student loan in yet?

Miss Grindstone:

How long ago did you apply?

Sid:

About six weeks ago.

Grind:

Let me check. [Walks over to file. Pretends to look intently at card which actually reads, "Requisitions for Kumquats filed under 'B'." Turns to him] It should be in next week.

Sid:

But you told me that six weeks ago.

Grind:

Young man, don't get insolent. Now get out of here before I call the campus police to "card" you. NEXT!

Penelope Pulchmire:

I'd like to know . . .

Grind:

Don't talk to me now, I'm busy!

Pen:

[Meekly] Yes'm.

[Grind opens drawer, fumbles around and extracts a pencil. Walks over to a pencil sharpener, grinds it down to a stub then puts it in a box full of other stubs. Then marks a line through nine strokes making a bundle of ten on a sheet of paper in front of her.]

Grind:

Now what can I do you for? Ha Ha Ha.

Pen:

I'd like to know if Mrs. Remugient is in?

Grind:

Whad'ya wanna see her for?

Pen:

I want to appeal my loan.

Grind:

How much did you get?

Pen:

One hundred and twenty-three dollars and nineteen cents.

Grind:

So?

Pen:

I've got no money, my mother's a widow, I'm supporting my twelve brothers and sisters working nights at the Greasy spoon.

Grind:

What! You've got a job? Give me that Cert. of Eligibility. [She tears it into little pieces then pulls nineteen cents out of Petty Cash and throws it at her.] Now get out of here you lying cheat before I have the Campus Police Fraud Squad on you.

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[Four hour break for lunch.]

xxxx

Enter a Gaunt and Haggard-looking couple—obviously impoverished students. They stand respectfully in front of the receptionist's desk. Finally the young man coughs. Miss Grindstone looks up from her crossword puzzle.

Grind:

Well, what do you want? I didn't hear you knock!

G. & H. Boy:

The sign on the door says . . .

Grind:

Never mind the sign on the door. Get on with it.

G. & H. Girl:

My husband and I need our student awards. We're starving, our landlady is threatening to throw us out. [Starts to sob.]

[G. & H. Boy puts his foot on her desk, exposing a large hole in the bottom of his shoe.]

G. & H. Boy:

Please, you've got to get us some money. [Now becoming frantic.]

Grind:

Just a moment, I'll check. Let's see your Student No's. [Picks up phone, sound of phone ringing in another office through the door her desk guards.] There's no answer. Miss Clumsy must have gone home. I'm sorry, you'll have to come back next week.

G. & H. Girl:

What about my loan—can't you check on that?

Grind:

I'm sorry, Miss Clumsy handles the checking. You'll have to come back next week.

G. & H. Boy:

[Becoming angry] But it's only three-thirty. I thought this office was open 'til five. How come she's gone? [Shaking a finger at her.]

Grind:

I'm not standing for any more of this! Now get out of here!

G. & H. Couple:

[Both talking] But . . . please! We're hungry . . . our clothes . . .

Grind:

[Screaming at them] I've warned you, now GET OUT OF HERE!! or I'll call the Campus Police Riot Squad!

[Exit G. & H. Couple]

Phone rings . . .

Grind:

Student Affronts Office . . . No, I'm sorry I can't tell you when you'll get your money . . . No, there's nobody else you can talk to . . . The Director? . . . Oh no, he doesn't talk to students. You must be joking . . . I'm sorry his assistant doesn't talk to students either . . . Who talks to students? . . . Well, of course I do, then there's the janitor, he does too, but no one else does . . . Now, now, don't be abusive sir, or I'll have to call the Campus Police Wire-tap Squad to trace the call. Good Bye.

[Goes back to her game of solitaire while a young female student stands at her desk, waiting to be heard.]

Grind:

[After cheating to win the game] What can I do for you?

Young Female Student:

I've phoned five times and been here three times about my loan.

Grind:

[Shrugs and walks over to the file, a black look on her face] There's no file on you, you mustn't have sent it in.

Y.F.S.:

[Horror stricken] But I sent it in three months ago!

Grind:

We don't have it. You must be mistaken.

Y.F.S.:

But . . .

Grind:

Here's a new application . . . Fill it out and apply.

Y.F.S.:

When will I get it?

Grind:

In about six weeks or so.

Y.F.S.:

[a panic stricken look crossed her face] But I can't live that long!

Grind:

Why don't you try the Campus Pimping Service. Maybe they can do something for you.

[Y.F.S. resignedly fills out the form then hands it in to Miss Grindstone.]

Enter from inner sanctum, Gretchen Gruel.

Gretchen Gruel:

Well, it's four o'clock Miss Grindstone, shall we take our coffee break?

Grind:

Oh yes let's do, we can go to the coffee shop for an hour and then go home.

Gretch:

What about the line-up of students outside who've been waiting for hours to see someone. What's the Student Affronts Office going to do about them, all wanting their money, claiming that they're starving, and being evicted by their landlords, etc.

Grind:

[Turning out the lights and locking the door] TO HELL WITH THEM!