

A script from



“The Tutor”

by
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What True story. A college teacher encounters a young inner city tough guy who restores his sense of mission—and of the calling *everyone* has to redeem the lives of others. **Themes:** Drama, Ensemble, Teaching, Redemption, Isaiah, Good Samaritan

Who Hank – A community college tutor. Idealistic, but a bit burnt-out.

Trina – A veteran tutor who has refused to become jaded.

Roland – Looks like a hoodlum, but there’s something about him that says, “That’s where I came from, not who I *am*.”

Student #1 - (Written as female, but may be played by a male) Young, slouchy, disinterested. No spoken lines.

Student #2 - (Written as male, but may be played by a female) Earnest, studious. Possibly foreign-born. No spoken lines.

When Present

**Wear
(Props)** Two tables
Four chairs.
Modern day dress

Why Isaiah 58:6; I Timothy 4:16; Luke 10:25-37

How Actors do not need to sit behind tables the whole time. As Roland tells his story, he can stand and even move around a bit; Hank may join him at some point. Find the underlying truth.

Time Approximately 6 minutes

Trina sits alone, typing at a table in the background. Hank is at a table in the foreground with Student #1. Student rises as Hank answers her (unheard) question.

Hank: Because it's a college essay, not a text message, that's why!

Student #1 shrugs and leaves.

Hank: *(Continuing—calling after her)* And because punctuation is the only thing that separates us from the lower animals!

Trina: Good point. My dog still can't use a semi-colon. You really think she heard anything besides "wah-wah-wah"?

Hank: I think if I get another "I'm-only-here-because-my-teacher-made-me" knucklehead, I'm going to become a custodian.

Trina: Hey, this is community college. You're already in the recycling biz.

Hank rolls his eyes. Student #2 enters. Trina rises to greet him.

Trina: *(Continuing)* Hi, welcome to the Writing Lab. Is this your first time here?

Trina and Student #2 sit at the table in the background as...

Roland enters. He has a "don't-mess-with-me" look. In a word: scary. Sees Hank.

Roland: You Henry Des...Desra—?

Hank: "Hank." Are you Roland?

Roland: Yeah. So I wrote this essay and I just need to know if I messed it up, or if it's OK.

Hank: *(Takes essay from Roland)* Ah, Radnowsky—good teacher. Makes you think.

Roland: Yeah, she does.

Hank: *(Gestures to Roland to sit. Looks at heading)* "Redemption Essay?"

Roland: Yeah, we're supposed to talk about how everybody can redeem somebody else, you know, like save their life and stuff.

Hank: So you wrote about...?

Roland: My cousin Mikey. I just wanna know if I said it right.

Hank: Depends. What did you want to say?

Roland: Well, Mikey, he's—what you call it?—slow, real slow.

Hank: Learning-disabled?

Roland: Yeah. So everybody in our family, they just kind of gave up on him, you know? Didn't even try and show him stuff anymore cuz they said he's "unteachable."

Hank: But you...?

Roland: Well, he's my cousin. So one day I start trying to teach him to catch a ball. He didn't get it, and everybody say, "See, we told you." But the next day when I come home from school, Mikey he's waiting with the ball. So I try to teach him some more.

Hank: And he caught the ball?

Roland: *(Smiling)* Nah. But the next day and the day after that he keeps coming back. And then, after about a month and a half, he—

Hank: *(Fully engaged)* Finally caught it?

Roland: *(Grinning)* Well, he ain't gonna play for the Yankees...but, yeah, he caught the ball.

Hank: Yes!

Roland: Anyway, from then on, Mikey he goes wherever I go and does whatever I do, you know? Or at least he tries to.

Hank: Which got a little old, I imagine.

Roland: He's my cousin. But, yeah, I was in high school, and a lotta my friends they just didn't... *(trails off)*

Hank: Didn't get it?

Roland: Yeah, cuz Mikey he wants to, like, do everything we do, and we, well... *(hesitates)*

Hank: You did things he couldn't do?

Roland: *(A little cryptic)* Yeah. *(Switching gears)* Anyhow, by then I'm showing Mikey how to draw a circle, right, cuz he never could draw nothing that

looked like anything. *(Smiling proudly)* But he finally gets it. And then he gets how a circle can be, like, a face and other things, you know?

Hank: *(Impressed)* You are a teacher, my friend!

Roland: *(Smiling)* Yeah, maybe. And then, cuz he's always seeing me write my name, he wants to know how he can do that too. It took him two years, but he finally got it.

Hank: That's great, Roland! So this is the story about how you saved Mikey, how you *redeemed* him. Perfect! *(Pulling the essay to him)* Let's just take a look at your mechanics.

Roland: *(Ignoring Hank)* But, you see, before Mikey...well, me and my friends was starting to get into some bad stuff, you know? Selling drugs and guns, and always having to prove we was bad so everybody be "respecting" us, and all that kinda protecting your turf crap that never ends. Anyway, half of 'em is in lock-up now and the other half got ankle bracelets. Three of 'em are dead, including my best friend.

Hank: But you...?

Roland: Well, see, that's just it. I...I couldn't be doing that no more cuz Mikey, well, he was watching me all the time.

Hank: And he wanted to do—

Roland: Everything I did, yeah.

Hank: *(Realizing)* So this *isn't* the story of how you saved Mikey?

Roland: *(Holding back tears)* No, man...it's the story of how Mikey saved *me*.

Hank: *(After a long pause)* You really are a teacher, Roland.

Roland: Yeah, that's what I want to be, anyway. Hey, can I go use the...
(indicating the restroom)

Hank: Hmm? Oh, sure, go ahead. I'll be here.

Roland exits.

Hank: Definitely. *(He begins marking the essay with a red pen.)*

Trina leaves her **Student** on his own and slips over to **Hank's** table.

Trina: *(With mock strictness)* There'd better be some tutoring going on over here.

Hank: There is. And I think I actually *learned* something for a change.

Trina: Well, that's why we teach, right? So we can learn. And what did you learn today, young man?

Hank: That sometimes teaching is a chore...but sometimes it's an amazing privilege.

Trina: And?

Hank: And that we all have the ability to redeem others. *All of us.* *

Trina: So I guess that means you won't be going into sanitation?

Hank: Not this week.

End of scene.

*** Alternate Ending:**

Hank: And that we all have the ability to redeem others. *All of us.*

Trina: Isaiah 58.

Hank: What?

Trina: Look it up. So I guess that means you won't be going into sanitation?

Hank: Not this week.

End of scene.

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