*Remedial Logic*

A dark comedy by Henry Holben

Dramatis Personae

PROFFESSOR: a professor of logic and philosophy at a large university, he secretly despises teaching remedial logic, but hides it well

CAMILLA: A remedial logic student with a pocketknife

CLAUDIA: An amateur chemist who is in remedial logic class

CHLOE: A lethargic student in remedial logic class

CAL: A very dedicated e-sports player, who also happens to be taking remedial logic

CARLISLE: A shy, timid student in remedial logic class who is probably harboring a terrible secret

KYLE: a remedial logic student who might be dead

1. INT. A hallway in a university class building, DAY

A PROFFESSOR closes a door behind him, walks down the hallway, and enters a classroom. PROFFESSOR walks to a whiteboard. CAMILLA is sharpening a bundle of sticks with a pocket knife. KAILEE is sitting with her head on a desk and eyes closed. CLAUDIA is carefully pouring water from one container into another and back again. CAL is playing a video game on a laptop. CARLISLE is coloring in a coloring book. KYLE is frozen in place, holding a pen in his fist to a piece of crumpled paper.

PROFFESSOR

Good morning everyone. Let’s have at it. If you did your reading over the weekend you should all be very familiar the syllogism. As is tradition we’ll start with a classic example- (begins writing syllogism on board) All men are mortal. Socrates is a man. Therefore, Socrates is-

PROFFESSOR waves his hand in front of KYLE’S eyes. PROFFESSOR leans over to read what is on the crumpled sheet of paper. PROFFESSOR takes the paper. KYLE falls out of his chair. CAL, and CAMILLA look up to see what happened to KYLE, and then resume their respective activities. PROFFESSOR reads the note carefully.

PROFFESSOR (mildly irritated)

Ok guys, who killed Kyle?

CAMILLA

Kyle hasn’t been to class in three weeks!

CHLOE

Had it comin’.

PROFFESSOR

Seriously guys. This a violation of the university’s academic integrity policy. That’s a big problem. Who killed Kyle?

CLAUDIA

Is he really dead? Kyle always looks dead at 8 AM.

CAL

Yeah duh he’s dead- he has blood oozing out his nose. Everyone knows that means your spine’s broken.

CHLOE

That’s your ears doofus.

CAL

Then how come his spine’s broken? His spine’s broken so there must be blood comin’ out his nose.

PROFFESSOR

Actually Cal, that’s the circular reasoning fallacy. We covered that last chapter.

CHLOE

I told you that’s not true.

PROFFESSOR

And that is the argument from fallacy fallacy

CHLOE

Aw shoot. Not that.

CAMILLA

Kyle bleeds out his nose like all the time.

KAILEE (points at STUDENT 1)

Hasty generalization.

CLAUDIA

No, actually I’ve seen it too. Bloody nose, all the time

PROFFESSOR (quietly)

Carlisle, go trigger the campus safety alarm outside.

CARLISLE gets up and bolts for the door.

PROFFESSOR

Wait!

CARLISLE stops PROFFESSOR hands CARLISLE a cell phone.

PROFFESSOR

Call the police too.

CARLISLE almost bolts for the door.

PROFFESSOR

Wait!

CARLISLE stops

PROFFESSOR

You’d better go find the college president. Give him this.

PROFFESSOR hands CARLISLE the crumpled note

CARLISLE nods and turns for the door.

PROFFESSOR

Hold on!

CARLISLE stops

PROFFESSOR

Call the cleaning staff, tell them there’s a lot of blood on the floor. That’s all.

CARLISLE nods and turns for the door.

PROFFESSOR

Oh, wait I almost forgot!

CARLISLE stops

PROFFESSOR (talking quietly)

Here’s some cash. While you’re at it, could you run by the grill and pick up a coffee for me?

PROFFESSOR gives CARLISLE some money.

PROFFESSOR

(Handing over his car keys) And put it in my car.

CARLISLE nods and runs out the door.

PROFFESSOR

Did anybody notice when Kyle came in?

CLASS shrugs and shakes heads.

CAMILLA

I like, did not even know that Kyle was even in here.

CAL

Yeah, I didn’t see him either.

PROFFESSOR (suspiciously)

Alright. Who was in here first?

CHLOE

I was.

PROFFESSOR

Did you see or hear anything that might be good for us to know?

KAILEE

Don’t ask me. I was pretty late getting in last night. This morning was just a pain to get up, I’m so tired.

CLAUDIA

Objection!

PROFFESSOR

What?

CLAUDIA

Objection! That’s the appeal to pity fallacy!

PROFFESSOR

Uh- yes, actually that is. Good point.

CAMILLA

Kyle used to use the appeal to pity fallacy, like all the time.

CAL

You do that more than Kyle

CAMILLA

Tu quoque! Tu quoque!

CAL

Ah Touché

PROFFESSOR (irritated)

Ok, who came in next?

CLASS looks around and shrugs

PROFFESSOR (furious)

Nobody knows who murdered Kyle?!

CAL (starting to take interest)

Do we even know that Kyle was murdered? Maybe he was just sick.

CHLOE

His blood’s all over the floor, doofus!

CAMILLA

Kyle was sick like all the time.

CLAUDIA (annoyed)

Look, all I know is when I got here, Cammilla, Cal, and Carlisle were in the room. I’m not sure about Kyle

PROFFESSOR

That’s interesting, that contradicts what Chloe told us.

CHLOE

Huh?

PROFFESSOR

(pointing at Chloe) You said you were here first. But CLAUDIA just said you weren’t here when she came in. I was going to wait until next week to start truth tables, but a student is dead. (goes to whiteboard). Let’s call CLAUDIA’s statement statement A, and KAILEE’s statement B (begins drawing table). If A is true then B is false, and if B is true A, then what do we know?

CAMILLA

If B is like false then A is like true

PROFFESSOR

Good try Camilla, that would be the converse of the statement which is-

CAL

Claudia killed Kyle?!

CLAUDIA looks up and starts to take notice of her surroundings

PROFFESSOR

Uh, no we can’t prove that.

CAL

Chloe killed Kyle?

CHLOE

Nope.

PROFESSOR

Well see we don’t know-

CAL

Camilla killed Kyle?

CAMILLA

I like, did not even like talking to Kyle

There is a long pause while the class thinks

PROFESSOR (pointing to board)

What can we conclude about-?

CAL

Kyle killed Camilla?

CLAUDIA

Hey we’re did CARLISLE go?

There is a long pause while PROFFESSOR contemplates this. The STUDENTS look around to try to figure out where CARLISLE went.

PROFFESSOR

Carlisle.

PROFFESSOR looks at wristwatch and bolts out the door.



