

RUDE GIRLS  
By Ken Green

## CHARACTERS

NICOLE, African American, 16, a high school senior at Senn High School

RHONDA, African American, 15 and NICOLE'S sister; a high school junior at Senn High School

JOYCE, 16, Bi-racial, a friend of NICOLE'S and also a senior at Senn

SAM, 16, white, friend of NICOLE and JOYCE, also a senior at Senn

MJ – female, white, 17, high school graduate (graduated at 15). Smart and cool.

MOM, originally from Jamaica, mid-30s, mother of NICOLE and RHONDA

MISS RANKIN, African American, mid-30s, teacher and music instructor at Senn High School

DAMON – bi-racial, 17, high school senior, bit of a self-assured asshole

EDDIE – white, 18, high school graduate, bit of a slacker and a Chicago guy.

ACT II  
Scene 3

SCENE

The music room of Senn High School. NICOLE, RHONDA, JOYCE and SAM are trying to practice their instruments but getting nowhere. The frustration of some of the members is evident but NICOLE tries to hold them together.

NICOLE

No, stop, stop. Guys, we gotta pick it up a little, it's gotta be more .... you know.... (snaps fingers quickly to suggest the rhythm). Just....you know, a little faster. (The girls try again and they play a tune, but it is slow and not in harmony, etc.)

JOYCE

Ugh, I hate this...

NICOLE

No, you don't.

JOYCE

Yes, I do. Hate it. NICOLE (lead guitar) Look, we can do this, OK? It's not that hard. RHONDA (bass) Maybe not for you. I can't do this.

NICOLE

Yes, you can. Just gotta keep at it. Look at Joyce. JOYCE (keyboard) No, don't look at me. I don't know what I'm doing either. SAM (drums) I'm not gonna, like, pretend or anything, but I'm not too sure what I'm going over here either.

JOYCE

You're on the drums. You just gotta beat on `em.

SAM

Yeah, but I'm supposed to do it in rhythm, right? Sometimes I forget.

RHONDA

You white, it's expected.

SAM

Like you can talk. You stink on bass. Are you supposed to be good at bass like Bootsy?

RHONDA

Face it. We all stink.

NICOLE

Ahhhh! Will all of you shut up? Yes, we all stink. You stink on bass, you stink on keyboards and you stink on drums. We all stink. But that's why we're practicing, so we don't stink no more.

JOYCE

Ahhhh! Why can't we just be good now?

NICOLE

You gotta practice. You can't just be good. We gotta practice. We're gonna practice and we're gonna practice some more and we're gonna be good. We just gotta take it slow. We'll get it.

SAM

Take it slow. We've been taking it slow for about a month now and we haven't gotten any better.

NICOLE

Then we'll take it slower. Concentrate.

JOYCE

UGH!! Why? Why are we doing this? I mean, really, what's the point of all this? We're not gonna be rich or famous or anything.

NICOLE

Who says we won't? Where's it say we won't become rich or famous or superstars or anything? Where's it say we can't do this and be anything we want to be? You know where it says that? Nowhere. We can do whatever the hell we want, if we want it bad enough.

SAM

Ah, you're killing me with this stuff. Look where we live. Ain't nobody famous coming out of here now or ever. This ain't that kinda place. This is just a neighborhood. With some regular old people. Like us.

NICOLE

So? You know how many famous people come out of regular old neighborhoods like this one?

JOYCE

How many?

NICOLE

A lot. And all they did was get together and have an idea to do something. And they stuck with it. Like we can do. Just gotta put our minds to it.

RHONDA

I been putting my mind to it and my mind ain't working.

NICOLE

Then put some more of your mind to it. You're smart.

RHONDA

Ugh, I don't wanna think no more about it. I hate thinking.

NICOLE

Man, I don't get you guys. Hate thinking? If I didn't get to use my brain it would drive me crazy. C'mon, guys, why not do this? What else are you doing? Huh? What else do we have to do?

JOYCE

Meet some boys. We could go over to the Brickyard Mall and hang out there for a while.

NICOLE

Aw, c'mon, that's it? That's all you wanna do? Just meet some boys? That's all you think you're good enough for, to hang on some boy and make stupid eyes at him and make him feel like he a big man. That's all you think you're meant for?

JOYCE

Well, I mean, if he's cute...

NICOLE

C'mon, guys, we can be more than that. Remember that march last year?

SAM

What happened in March last year?

NICOLE

Not March the month, dummy, a "march." You know marching. Walking. Protesting. That march last year? In D.C.? There was, like, a million women out there protesting.

SAM

Protesting for what?

NICOLE

For what? For you. For us. For us to be able to do what we want to do. For a woman to start a band.

JOYCE

We're girls.

NICOLE

We're woman too.

RHONDA

How we gonna be both?

NICOLE

We just are, OK? We're girls and women. And that march was for us. So that we can do what a boy can do and even do it better if we want. I mean, why you gotta go to Brickyard Mall to look for a boy? Why can't you be going there to have a boy look for you?

JOYCE

We can do that?

NICOLE

Hell, yeah, we can do that. You can be in a band. Hell, you're already in a band. You are in a band! As of right now, you kick ass! You rock! Boys are gonna be coming for you. (all others look at themselves and break out into smiles)

Ok, but it's not just about boys, right?

JOYCE

(meekly)

No, no, we know. It's not just about boys.

NICOLE

It's about doing something for ourselves. You know, start our own band. Do our own thing. Not wait for anybody else to give us permission.

RHONDA

Yeah. Ourselves.

NICOLE

OK?

(all give half-hearted agreement)

NICOLE

(more forcefully) OK?

RHONDA

Ok, right.

*The group begins practicing again with MISS RANKIN, the biology and music teacher, comes into the room. They do not see her come in.*

MISS RANKIN

Hey. (music keeping playing, speaks louder) HEY!

NICOLE

Oh, hey Miss Rankin.

MISS RANKIN

Who said you kids could be in here?

NICOLE

Uh, Principal Davis. He said we could use it after school if there wasn't band practice or anything.

MISS RANKIN

He did, huh? Do I have to check on that?

NICOLE

You can. I swear, he did!

MISS RANKIN

Alright, calm down, I believe you. So what is this, what are you doing?

NICOLE

Just trying to practice.

RHONDA

We suc...We stink.

NICOLE

No, we don't. We're not that bad. We're not good yet, but we're not that bad.

MISS RANKIN

Play something.

NICOLE

What?

MISS RANKIN

Play something. Let me hear how you sound. (Band starts playing. Badly)

MISS RANKIN

Ok, stop, stop, hold it.

NICOLE  
What?

MISS RANKIN  
Remember what Rhonda said?

NICOLE  
We stink?

MISS RANKIN  
I'm not going to say that but... yeah, it could be better.

JOYCE  
A LOT better.

MISS RANKIN  
SOMEwhat better. But sure, you guys need some more work.

SAM  
Ugh. This is pointless.

MISS RANKIN  
I didn't say that. I said you need more work, not that what you're doing has no point. Music always has a point.

RHONDA  
Not ours.

NICOLE  
Yes, it does. Shut up.

MISS RANKIN  
What were you playing, or trying to play?

NICOLE  
Just some song I wrote.

MISS RANKIN  
YOU wrote? Can I see it?

NICOLE  
Nope. It's not written down.



MISS RANKIN

First mistake. How are you all going to be on the same page if you don't even know what the page looks like. Play.

NICOLE

What?

MISS RANKIN

Play the song you were playing when I walked in.

*Band begins to play again. MISS RANKIN begins to talk over music.*

OK, now keep going but listen to my fingers. (she begins to snap fingers rhythmically. Band begins to play music in time with her finger snapping and music comes together. It's rough but it begins to sound like a song.)

SAM

Whoa!

JOYCE

That actually sounded like something.

MISS RANKIN

It's called tempo. Unless you're all on the same tempo, you'll never have a song. I can let you use the metronome, that might help.

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