

## Educating Rita by Willy Russell

*Rita, a 26yr old hairdresser from Liverpool, has started an English Literature University course. In this scene she is talking to her tutor about why she missed his dinner party.*

RITA:

I did apologise. What does the word 'sorry' mean if it's not an apology? When I told Denny we were goin' to yours he went mad. We had a big fight about it. I told Denny if he wasn't gonna go I'd go on me own. An' I tried to. All day Saturday, all day in the shop I was thinkin' what to wear. They all looked bleedin' awful. An' all the time I'm trying to think of things I can say, what I can talk about. An' I can't remember anythin'. It's all jumbled up in me head. I can't remember if it's Wilde who's witty an' Shaw who was Shavian or who the hell wrote Howard's End.

Then I got the wrong bus to your house. It took me ages to find it. Then I walked up your drive, an' I saw y' all through the window, y' were sippin' drinks an' talkin' an' laughin'. An' I couldn't come in.

I don't wanna be charming and delightful; funny. What's funny? I don't wanna be funny. I wanna talk seriously with the rest of you, I don't wanna spend the night takin' the mick, comin' on with the funnies because that's the only way I can get into the conversation. I didn't want to come to your house just to play the court jester.

But I don't wanna be myself! Me? What's me? Some stupid woman who gives us all a laugh because she thinks she can learn, because she thinks that one day she'll be like the rest of them, talking seriously, confidently, with knowledge, livin' a civilised life. Well, she can't be like that really but bring her in because she's good for a laugh!

I'm alright with you, here in this room; but when I saw those people you were with I couldn't come in. I would have seized up. Because I'm a freak. I can't talk to the people I live with anymore. An' I can't talk to the likes of them on Saturday, or them out there, because I can't learn the language. I went back to the pub where Denny was, an' me mother, an' our Sandra, an' her mates. I'd decided I wasn't coming here again.