

THE SPOT

By Ken Bradbury

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CAST: ONE and TWO

(As the scene begins, Character ONE stands in one spot. HE [or SHE] is waiting for something. Occasionally ONE will check his watch or fiddle with an item of clothing. Enter TWO, hurriedly. Having slept late, HE is anxious to get here on time, perhaps still tucking in an item of clothing. TWO rushes into the space, then sees ONE standing there. Surprise turns to anxiety. ONE takes a vague notice of TWO, then goes about his business. TWO becomes increasingly anxious for no apparent reason. Finally, HE can stay silent no longer.)

TWO: Excuse me? *(ONE simply looks at TWO then continues his waiting)* I said...Excuse me.

ONE: Are you talking to me?

TWO: Yes...uh...I was wondering...

ONE: What? You were wondering what?

TWO: I...well, I was just wondering...

ONE: Do I know you?

TWO: No. I don't think so. It's just that...

ONE: Are you sick or something?

TWO: Sick? No. Not sick. It's just tha...

ONE: Yes?

TWO: You're...uh...you're standing... Listen, could you move over just a bit?

ONE: *(a long take, strange request, then)* Pardon me?

TWO: Could you just move over...just a foot or two either direction?

ONE: *(begins to chuckle, then checks himself)* Why?

TWO: I...I mean, it's hard to explain. You're...uh...you're standing on my spot.

ONE: *(nearly laughing)* I'm doing what?

TWO: My spot. Mine. You. You're...uh...you're standing on it.

ONE: I'm standing on your spot?

TWO: Yes. Exactly.

ONE: You sure you're all right?

TWO: Yes. I mean No. Not as long as... Look, I really need to stand on that spot. I was late this morning, you see, and...well, I've always stood on that spot and now you're standing on that spot and I...well, I can't stand there as long as you're standing there.

ONE: Are you crazy?

TWO: *(a beat)* Is that a serious question?

ONE: Very. Are you nuts or what?

TWO: No...I mean, not yet. Look, I know it's a strange request, and I know I must seem out of my mind to you, but you've got to help me with this. I wait here every morning. I think about things. I work things out, you know? And...well, once you become accustomed to living so much of your life in a certain spot, to suddenly come along and see somebody else standing there, it's...well, it's a shock. It...it throws you off your stride, if you know what I mean.

ONE: Did...uh...did you have it marked or something?

TWO: Marked? No! Of course not. That would be ridiculous. I mean, it's not like I actually own the property or anything. Everybody knows it's my spot.

ONE: I didn't.

TWO: Are you new here?

ONE: No. Just early. I usually come later but it seemed like such a beautiful morning. I don't know. I just thought I'd come here and wait. To this spot.

TWO: Oh. Oh, that explains it. I mean, I'm late and you're early and...well, we've probably been sharing the same spot for years and didn't even know it.

ONE: No.

TWO: Huh?

ONE: No, I usually stand over there, but this morning...who knows why we do these things...this morning I just decided to stand here. On this spot.

TWO: My spot.

ONE: I'm sorry, but it's not your spot. Spots are free. They're community property. There's lots of spots around here. Take one. Look...there's a good one. Go stand in that spot.

TWO: **(becoming desperate but trying to avoid a complete breakdown)** Look, that's my spot, OK? It's not like you can't stand somewhere else. You obviously don't care where you stand, but I do. It's important to me.

ONE: This is getting more ridiculous by the minute.

TWO: You don't understand. I...I've lived so much of my life in that spot. I've thought about my future there...I've planned things, I've dreamed dreams there. My...my family often comes here with me. I just don't feel comfortable anywhere else.

ONE: Your family comes here with you? And you all stand on this spot? Isn't that crowding things up a bit?

TWO: Well, not all of us actually stand on this same spot. They all have their little spot around my spot. Sometimes the kids will run off to a different spot but they always come back here. It's a family thing. You're standing on a family thing.

ONE: I am not. Spots are free for the taking. Stand somewhere else today. Tomorrow you'll be earlier and I'll be later and we won't have to worry about it.

TWO: If that spot isn't special, why do you insist on standing there?

ONE: Well, frankly, it's because you're making such a thing of it. I didn't care where I stood until you came in and insisted I get off your spot. Sometimes I just get tired of being pushed around. You can understand that, can't you?

TWO: Of course, I can understand that. But this is such a piddly little issue. I mean, after all, standing on a spot. It's not like I'm ordering you off of it.

ONE: You aren't?

TWO: No. **(his desperation finally breaking through)** Yes I am! I am! Get off my spot!

ONE: I won't!

TWO: I'll make you.

ONE: You'll what?

TWO: I'll make you. I'll make you get off my spot. Here. Here's another spot. **(rubs a spot on the ground)** Look, I'll clean it off for you. I'll make it better than the spot you're on. I'm going out of my way to make you happy. Can you see that?

ONE: I see you're rubbing the ground. I see you're making a fool of yourself.

TWO: **(breaking down into tears)** Why are you doing this to me? Why do you want to hurt me like this?

ONE: I don't want to hurt you. Look, it's almost time to go. Surely you can hold out that long.

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