



The Milk of Human Kindness

Characters: Dr Lo, Bax, Ted, Daisy, Alysha, 1st Woman, 2nd Woman, Man, Nurse, Loretta

Synopsis: Dr Lo sends his journalism students out to cover a story about HIV in Hong Kong. Alysha's Father stops her going and Daisy refuses to go. Outside the clinic Bax and Ted are mistaken for HIV clients of the clinic and they are abused by local residents. Inside the Nurse explains that the residents anger is due to their fear of falling property prices.

Scene 1 Dr Lo's Office

Ted: Hi Baxy.

Bax: Hey... Where is everyone?

Ted: Dunno... I was first here... which is... well... (Laughing) kind of a first for me.

Bax: Where's Doctor Lo... he's usually smack on time.

Ted: Hey Baxi... I wonder what grades we got for our last assignment?

Baxi: Dunno.... d'you think Dr Lo has marked them yet?

Ted: Sure... I mean we've put the stories on the Cyber News web site... all he has to do is read them and give them a mark.

Aly: Hi Ted, hi Bax.

Ted: Hi Aly.

Bax: Hi Alysha.

Aly: You're early Ted... this must be the first time you've got to a tutorial before me.

Ted: I know... I don't know what's happening to me... Maybe I should see a doctor.

Aly: Or maybe... you're just enjoying the course.

Ted: Me? enjoy studying? I don't think so.

Aly: But doing this journalism course isn't like studying... it's fun don't you think Ted? I really enjoy interviewing people.

Bax: Here's Doc Lo.

Dr Lo: (Slight pause) Hello everyone... sorry I'm a bit late.

Ted: That's okay Patrick... hey... you're only human.

Dr Lo: I do my best Ted. (pause) Um... someone's missing.

Bax: Daisy.

Dr Lo: Anyone know where she is?

Ted: In the toilet?

Dr Lo: (Humorous) Is that a rumour or an informed statement Ted.

Ted: Just a guess I guess.

Dr Lo: Okay, well lets start without her.

Aly: Have you marked our assignments Dr Lo?

Dr Lo: Yes Alysha... I have.

Aly: Were they any good Sir? Did you like them?

Dr Lo: Yes... not bad.... But a few points. First... the font size was too small.... Cyber News needs to look attractive... when I clicked on to your story I was immediately put off.

Aly: Why Sir?

Dr Lo: Too much print... too small... too close together. You should have put the first paragraph in bold and you should have taken some key quotes from the story and highlighted them.

Aly: We'll do that next time Sir.

Ted: What about the stories Patrick... were they any good?

Dr Lo: Well... you're task was to interview two Hong Kong writers and then write an article in which you tried to project Hong Kong as a cultural city.

Aly: Didn't we do that Sir?

Dr Lo: They were comprehensive stories but... they lacked bite.

Bax: (Puzzled) Bite?

Dr Lo: Yes Bax... bite... I hoped, that after reading the stories on Xu Xi and Mani Rao I'd feel like... wow! Hong Kong has these funky writers!... Wow! Hong Kong isn't just a commercial city after all! That would have been the bite Bax.

Bax: (Sulky) But we wrote down what they said.

Dr Lo: And that was interesting... but you're journalists right?

Ted: (Laughing) Trying to be.

Dr Lo: So you can put your own style into the piece... link it together in your own way to create your own angle.

Aly: Shall we do it again Sir?

Dr Lo: No... just play around with the lay out a bit... that's all.... make it look more reader friendly.

Bax: So what grade did we get?
Dr Lo: Your group grade was... C minus.
Bax: (Sulky) C minus...?! But... we worked so hard on it.
Dr Lo: C minus is okay Bax... it's a pass... and that was your first assignment...
Now for your next assignment I want more bite in the story... more
intervention.
Ted: What's the subject Patrick?
Dr Lo: Prejudice.
Aly: (Bitter) Prejudice? I can write about that.
Dr Lo: There are many forms of prejudice Alysha ... the prejudice I want you
to write about is prejudice against people with HIV.
Aly: AIDS?!
Dr Lo: Yes Alysha. Your second assignment is to investigate and write a
story on HIV... and the angle is to expose the negative attitude of some
Hong Kong people towards people with HIV.
Bax: But we don't know anything about AIDS Sir.
Dr Lo: You soon will Bax... Tomorrow I'm sending you to the eastern Clinic in
Kowloon.
Aly: To an AIDS clinic Sir?
Dr Lo: Yes Alysha. I've arranged for you to speak to Nurse Yang... she'll tell
you about her work and she's arranged for you to speak to three people
who visit the clinic.
Ted: You mean... people with AIDS?
Dr Lo: Yes Ted.
Ted: Wow... I've never met anyone with AIDS before.
Dr Lo: Not as far as you know Ted... People with HIV can look very healthy...
and now with new drugs they can stay looking healthy for a very long
time.
Ted: Really?
Bax: So we're gonna interview a bunch of people with AIDS Sir?
Dr Lo: And a nurse and then the day after tomorrow you're going to go to
AIDS Concern and talk to Loretta.
Ted: What's AIDS Concern?
Dr Lo: That's your first question for Loretta.
Ted: Has she got AIDS?
Dr Lo: No... she just helps people who have and helps people who haven't not
to have.
Ted: Er... right.

Dr Lo: Okay... now this story needs bite... okay.
Bax: Right... Bite.
Dr Lo: There's a lot of ugly prejudice against people with AIDS out there... I want your story to balance that prejudice with knowledge, understanding and compassion.
Aly: We'll do our best Sir.
Bax: Bite... right Sir?
Dr Lo: Yes Bax.... bite.
Ted: Where's the clinic Patrick?
Dr Lo: Okay... here's the address... it's Wealthy Gardens Estate....
Ted: It's on an estate?
Dr Lo: Yes. Wealthy Gardens Estate, Po Luk Chun Road... Kowloon Bay...

(Fade on the address)

Scene 2 UUCC Corridor

Daisy: (Out of breath) Ted! Bax! Alysha! Wait!
Aly: It's Daisy.
Ted: (Laughing) Nice one Daisy.... you missed the lot.
Daisy: Damn! My stupid alarm clock didn't go off!
Bax: Our group mark for the last story was C minus.
Daisy: C minus? That sucks!
Bax: It didn't have enough bite.
Daisy: Bite?! Hey, you were supposed to read it, not eat it.
Bax: That's what Doc Lo said.
Aly: Our next story is about AIDS.
Daisy: AIDS?! You're kidding!
Aly: We've got to go to an AIDS clinic and talk to people with AIDS.
Daisy: What?! No way! I'm not talking to people with AIDS!
Ted: Hey Daisy... you got to.
Daisy: You talk to them.
Ted: This is a group project Daisy... and you are a member of that group.
Bax: Yeah, if you'd done more to help on the last story we might not have got a C minus.
Daisy: Hey Bax... I did as much as you.
Bax: I don't think so.
Ted: We've got an appointment with Nurse Yang tomorrow at four o'clock.

Aly: And she's going to introduce us to people with AIDS.
Daisy: Introduce YOU you mean.
Bax: And you.
Daisy: No way no way... I'm not going and that's it! (Sighs) I don't wanna do this stuff anyway I wanna do beauty engineering.
Bax: Well why don't you then?
Daisy: You know why!
Bax: Yeah, they don't want you.
Daisy: The course is full! That's all! But as soon as someone drops out I'm in!
Bax: Well I hope that's soon!
Ted: Hey guys... we're all in the same group, remember? Now I don't wanna get another C minus so let's pull together on this one, okay... let's write a really good story.
Bax: With bite.
Ted: Right.
Daisy: I'll help with the web site okay... you give me the stuff and I'll put it up.
Ted: You got to come Daisy.
Daisy: And get AIDS... no way.
Ted: What are you talking about Daisy... we're just talking to people with AIDS that's all.
Daisy: What if I wanna go to the toilet.
Ted: You go.
Daisy: You're crazy... sit on the same toilet as those AIDS people! And what if they sneeze in my face?
Ted: That doesn't matter.... (Unsure) Does it?... I dunno... anyway, no one's gonna sneeze in your face.
Daisy: I'll do the web site... I'll do it real good.... but I'm not going to the clinic.
Ted: (Sighs) What do you think guys?
Bax: She's not getting out of it!
Daisy: I'm not! I said I'll put the story up on the Cyber News web site and make it look really good.... that'll take hours.
Aly: Let her do that. I don't mind. The three of us can go... that'll be enough.
Ted: We're supposed to be writing a story AGAINST prejudice!
Aly: I know I know and we will... but there's no point in forcing Daisy to come.
Ted: Bax?
Bax: (Sulky) Oh let her do the web site thing then... but it better be good!

Daisy: It will be.
Ted: Okay... that's settled... now lets go and work out what questions to ask Nurse Yang at the clinic.

Scene 3 At a mini bus stop in the street

(SFX: Street sounds)

Bax: Where's Alysha? We're gonna be late for our appointment if she doesn't come soon.
Ted: Yeah, I wonder where she is.

(SFX: Ted's mobile phone rings)

Ted: Wai?
Aly: (Upset) Hi ted, it's me Alysha.
Ted: Hey Aly... where are you... we're gonna be late!
Aly: (Very upset) Ted... I'm really sorry.... I (Overcome with emotion)
Ted: What? What is it Aly? What's the matter?
Bax: Tell her to be quick Ted!
Ted: Aly? Are you there? Alysha? Hello?
Aly: I can't come Ted.
Ted: What?!
Bax: What did she say?
Ted: (To Bax) She can't come.
Bax: (Very Annoyed) Oh great! Some group THIS is! First Daisy, now her!-
Ted: (To Bax) Hang on, hang on Bax... (To Aly) Why can't you come Alysha?
Aly: (Upset) I told my brother I was going to do an interview at an AIDS and he told my Dad and my Dad said I mustn't go.
Ted: Did you tell your Dad it was for an assignment?
Aly: (Upset) Yes... and he said he wanted to speak to Doctor Lo.
Ted: Oh boy!
Aly: So I can't come Ted... my Dad would go crazy... he's mad enough as it is... and I can't slip out because my brother's watching me like a hawk! My Father told him to.
Bax: (In a sing song voice) Ted... I see a C minus in the sky.
Ted: Okay Alysha, don't worry about it, I'll go with Bax and we can tell you

about it and you can help us write it up.

Aly: I'm really sorry Ted... please say sorry to Bax for me too won't you.

Ted: Sure.... bye Aly.

Aly: Bye Ted.

Bax: So what's her problem?

Ted: Her Dad... her brother told him she was going to an AIDS clinic and he hit the roof. Come on... let's hop on this mini bus... with a bit of luck we can still get there on time.

(SFX: Mini bus/coach driving away)

Scene 4 In the mini bus

(SFX: Inside a mini bus/coach)

Ted: There it is.... Wealthy Estate... (He calls out in Cantonese for the mini bus to stop) Yaulot!

(SFX: Mini bus stops)

(Pause)

Bax: We're ten minutes late.

Ted: I know I know.... (Sighs) Where's the clinic?

Bax: I dunno... Dr Lo just said go to Wealthy Gardens... but Wealthy Gardens is a big place!

Ted: Let's ask someone. Look, that old guy... he'll know. (Pause) Um... excuse me Sir.

Man: (Unfriendly) What?

Ted: Can you tell us where the... um.... the AIDS clinic is please?

Man: (Calling to his neighbours. Unpleasant tone) Hey.... over here... they wanna go to the AIDS clinic.

1st Woman: (Angry) Who? Him?

Man And the other one.

2nd Woman: What's going on?

1st Woman: These two wanna go to that AIDS clinic.

2nd Woman: (Angry) Go somewhere else... we don't want you or that filthy place here.

Ted: What? Hey... look if you don't know where it is I'll ask someone else.
Come on Baxi.

Man: We don't want your kind around here!

2nd Woman: Filth!

1st Woman: We don't want your AIDS here... there are children here... families...
take your AIDS somewhere else!

Man: We don't want your sort here!

1st Woman: You should be ashamed!

2nd Woman: Look at them coming here.... Shameless!

1st Woman: With their filthy diseases.

2nd Woman: To our neighbourhood.

Bax: Hey... we haven't got any diseases.

1st Woman: Liar. We know what you've got.

Man: AIDS.

2nd Woman: You should be ashamed!

Man: We don't want your sort down here.

1st Woman: They should shut down that filthy clinic.

2nd Woman: Yes... shut it down!

Man: If they want to open up an AIDS clinic they should open one up in Lan
Kwai Fong... not here where decent people live.

1st Woman: This is a family neighbourhood.

2nd Woman: Not a place for riff raff with diseases.

Bax: If you must know we are first year journalism students at UUC and
we're here to...

Man: (Interrupting) Clear off!

2nd Woman: Take your filthy illness somewhere else!

Ted: Hey Bax... I've just spotted the clinic... it's over there. Come on, let's
get away from these loonies.

Bax: These people are seriously nuts!

Man: They're going there... they're going to the clinic... look at them...
they're going to that cess pit!

1st Woman: (Shouting) We don't want your filth around here!

2nd Woman: (Shouting) Close the clinic!

Man: (Shouting) Close the clinic... clean up the neighbourhood!

Interval

Scene 5 In the Clinic

Bax: Nurse Yang?
Nurse: Yes, and you must be the students from UUCC.
Ted: That's right.
Nurse: I thought there were supposed to be.... four of you?
Ted: Um... yes there were but.... two of them were sick... with colds... they had colds.
Nurse: Right... so... you're studying journalism.
Bax: Yes.
Nurse: And you're writing a story about HTV AIDS in Hong Kong for your newspaper?
Ted: Right... Cyber News, it's an on-line newspaper.
Nurse: Good. Well in a minute I can introduce you to some of our regular clients who have agreed to talk to you.
Bax: Thanks Nurse.
Nurse: It's very nice of them to talk to you... they only agreed because I said you were students writing for a student newspaper... they felt they wanted you to know the truth so you could share it with your young readers. Before I introduce you to them is there anything you'd like to ask me first?
Bax: Yes.... like... who are those crazy people outside?
Nurse: Crazy people? Oh... you mean the local residents?
Bax: They screamed and shouted at us... they were like really horrible.
Nurse: Didn't Dr Lo tell you about them?
Bax: No.
Nurse: They probably thought you were clients.
Ted: They said we had AIDS and we were filthy and they told us to go away.
Nurse: They're worried about the price of their property.
Bax: What?!
Nurse: Yes... they think with the clinic so close to their homes it will reduce the resale value of their flats.
Bax: Is THAT what all that was about?!
Nurse: Yes... money... like a lot of other things in this town.
Bax: They are seriously disturbed.
Nurse: I'm sorry you had to go through that.... but... well... now you know what it's like for our regular clients... they have to put up with that everytime they come here.
Ted: That's terrible.

Nurse: I know.
Ted: And all those banners they've put up outside your clinic? Can't you take them down?
Nurse: (Sighs) We could I suppose... but my attitude is... ignore them and they will eventually go away.
Bax: D'you think they will... they seem pretty worked up about things.
Nurse: They are... the price of their property... anyway... if you'd like to come through here I have three of our regular clients waiting to talk to you.
Ted: Thanks Nurse.

(Fade up to....)

Man: Close the clinic!
2nd Woman: Get rid of the filth!
1st Woman: Take your rubbish somewhere else!
Man: We don't want your sort here!
1st Woman: You should be ashamed!
2nd Woman: Ashamed!
All: (SFX:Echo) Ashamed.

(Pause)

Nurse: They're just worried about the price of their property.

The End