

*Rastus and Hattie*  
*by Lisa Langford*

*16th Street Theater*

**DEAN HACKETT**

*(Holding paper)* It's brilliant, Needra, just brilliant. Brilliantly researched, brilliantly reasoned—the peer reviews were glowing—but we can't publish it. It's racist.

*(Rifles through paper)* Brilliant research, but, near the end, there's a paragraph, a passage, a pondering, — It's...racist. It's quite a projection. We can't publish...that.

Your rather Olympian leap from rats to racial harmony notwithstanding, your research would be completely overshadowed by this one paragraph. It would be Tuskegee all over again! Why don't we take that section out?

Needra, you've got this teaching fellowship in Alabama, you're moving to a new city— why stir up controversy? You've got a great career ahead of you. Get published, get tenure, then you can say all the crazy stuff you want. It's one paragraph. Take it out. Please? *(Hands Needra the paper.)* Think about it.

**STOREKEEPER**

What you call him? What you call him that for!

Mister!

Whooo! We got us a "mister!"

You didn't have to come all the way into town! You shoulda sent your girl.

*(to David:)* Tobacco? *(whispers)* Can I interest you in some, er ah, hooch? Made it myself.

*Storekeeper gets his rifle and tries to get a bead on Hattie.*

Right here in my store!! Delivered into my hand that I might smote the slaughterer—and restore God's order! *(Aiming his rifle)* If you'd move out the way I could get 'em both for ya!