

# Rachel Holds Court

Bara Swain





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## RACHEL HOLDS COURT

a short play by  
Bara Swain

### CAST

RACHEL: 60s-70s. Energetic and vital single Jewish woman. She is animated, outspoken and overly sensitive, and tends to dominate conversations. Rachel is wearing a bright sweater or cardigan and chemise, diamond-studded earrings and pendant. Her lipstick is bright red. Rachel lives in Queens and commutes to NYC for work. She is an experienced lover, active on the dating scene.

LENORE: 60s-70s. Rachel's best friend. Lenore is personable but less flamboyant. She is practical, and lacks Rachel's confidence and experience in the romance arena. She wears black liquid eyeliner and is dressed in a patterned blouse, slacks or skirt, and a chemise. She is also single and lives in Queens.

Time:

Present.

Place:

Lenore's home, Queens, New York.

*At Rise: RACHEL and LENORE are discovered in LENORE's home in the middle of a conversation.*

RACHEL: Dating advice!? Oh, I'm the last person to give advice about dating. You're better off watching Oprah or reading your horoscope, Lenore. But I can give you some tips about your eye liner.

LENORE: What's wrong with my eyeliner?

RACHEL: I'd advise you to lose the liquid and use a pencil instead. You might also consider a face powder, Lenore. Jane Fonda wears face powder. Laura Bush wears face powder. A woman cannot age gracefully without a good face powder and underwire support. (*confidentially*) Clinique and Maidenform are my best friends.

LENORE: I'm your best friend!

RACHEL: It's a metaphor.

LENORE: No, it's not!

RACHEL: Why do you always cross-examine me?

LENORE: I was correcting you, not—

RACHEL: I think it's fallout from dating a lawyer.

LENORE: What's that supposed to mean? Besides, Aaron isn't an attorney. He's an accountant.

RACHEL: What's the difference between a lawyer and an attorney?

LENORE: There is no difference.

RACHEL: Then why did you say he isn't an attorney?

LENORE: Because he's not an attorney.

RACHEL: But I said he wasn't a lawyer.

LENORE: Aaron isn't a lawyer. He's a certified public accountant!

RACHEL: So what's the difference between a lawyer and an accountant?  
(before LENORE can respond) Don't answer that! It's not a rhetorical question.

LENORE: If there's no expectation of a reply, then what do you call it?

RACHEL: A joke, Lenore, a joke! WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A  
LAWYER AND AN ACCOUNTANT?

LENORE: I'm not supposed to answer you, right?

RACHEL: No, Lenore. You're supposed to wait for the punch line.

(Silence. LENORE fixes her hair)

LENORE: I'm waiting.

RACHEL: (*gloomily*) You've already ruined it.

LENORE: Oh, don't go sensitive on me, Rachel.

RACHEL: Do I hate loud noises or loud music? No. (*louder*) Do I find it hard to tolerate high or low temperatures? No. (*louder*) DO I STOP FOR MORE THAN THREE MINUTES WHEN I SEE AN ACCIDENT ON THE STREET IN ORDER TO WATCH? NO!

LENORE: Do you get emotionally entangled at work? Yes. (*gently*) What happened at the office this week, Rachel. Did Dr. Bukberg---

RACHEL: NOTHING! (*gloomily*) A left bundle branch block.

LENORE: Is that bad?

RACHEL: Does it sound good?

LENORE: It sounds like a crochet pattern or a Girl Scout cookie or a--

RACHEL: RHETORIC!!! (*after a moment*) Does aortic stenosis sound good? No. (*louder*) Does dilated cardiomyopathy or extensive coronary artery disease sound good? No. ALL MY LIFE I WANTED TO WEAR A WHITE LAB COAT AT WORK! I should've been a butcher or a manicurist or a chef.

LENORE: Or an overly-sensitive EKG Technician.

RACHEL: I AM AN OVERLY-SENSITIVE EKG TECHNICIAN!  
(*SHE starts to laugh*) Oh, I think it's time to retire.

LENORE: They'll carry you out in a box, Rachel. You love your job too much.

(*RACHEL leans forward as if to share an intimate conversation. Pause.*)

RACHEL: Lenore?

LENORE: Yes?

*(RACHEL falters. SHE lowers her gaze to LENORE's chest)*

Are you looking at my breasts?

RACHEL: That color suits you. *(indicating LENORE's outfit)* The blouse.

LENORE: *(warily)* You think so?

RACHEL: Undo the top two buttons.

*(LENORE unbuttons one button)*

TWO buttons, Lenore. Show a little cleavage, for crying out loud. You only live once!

*(LENORE unbuttons the second button. RACHEL is satisfied)*

Perfect.

LENORE: *(pleased)* Really? I found it in the back of my closet. I think you gave it to me. I think I admired the pattern. I think it's polyester.

RACHEL: You think too much, Lenore. That's your problem. Besides, what's wrong with polyester? My mother always wore polyester.

LENORE: It's synthetic. It doesn't breathe.

RACHEL: I'm pretty sure my mother was still breathing when she wore it.

LENORE: You gave me your dead mother's blouse?

RACHEL: She had no use for it.

LENORE: Do you want it back?

RACHEL: No, it brings out the color of your eyes. You keep it.

LENORE: Are you positive?

RACHEL: Affirmative. Wear it in good health.

*(LENORE is pleased. SHE and RACHEL sit in comfortable silence)*

Do you have a little seltzer?

LENORE: *(apologetically)* I left the bottle cap off. It's flat.

RACHEL: Some of my favorite things are flat--Banana pancakes with walnuts, my patent leather Dolce & Gabbanas, my grandmother Dorothy...*(She flattens her breasts with her hands)*

LENORE: Do you want a glass of white wine?

RACHEL: No, I want to make passionate love.

LENORE: To...?

RACHEL: Anything available. *(She looks around, then takes a shoe off and holds it between her breasts.)* To my left shoe.

LENORE: Whatever turns you on, Rachel.

RACHEL: To George Clooney. I'm raising my standards.

LENORE: I didn't know you had any standards.

RACHEL: Poor taste is not synonymous with standards.

*(RACHEL smiles mischievously. She sighs, then raises her face to the ceiling. LENORE also looks up)*

LENORE: What're you looking at?

**END OF FREEVIEW**

**You'll want to read and perform this show!**