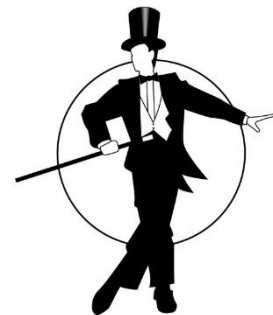


The Refrigerator

Darlene Thompson



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ArtAge Publications

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THE REFRIGERATOR
A Play for Humans or Puppets

by Darlene Thompson

If you're going to use puppets, the playwright recommends human-arm and mouth puppets, but you can use whichever technique you wish.

CAST

PHIL: A spry 81-year old man.

DOROTHY: Phil's daughter, 50-something, practical.

BOUNDER: Phil's dog.

SAM: An appliance salesman, any age, cheerful.

Place

Scenes 1 and 3 take place in Phil's apartment. Scene 2 is in the appliance store.

Time

The present. Spring.

SCENE ONE

Setting: PHIL's home, which has shabby curtains, a section of a wall with photos and artwork, a table, an old rusty refrigerator.

At Rise: LIGHTS UP on BOUNDER, whining and watching the door. PHIL enters, wearing a T-shirt. BOUNDER barks and wags his tail. PHIL pets him.

PHIL: Hey, Bounder. How are you? Good. Me too. I had a good workout in yoga class-- gotta keep the old limbs limber! We did the Warrior One pose, and the Cobra, and Down Dog--that's just a pose, it really doesn't have anything to do with a dog. Although 'down dog' does sound like something I might say when you get a little too rowdy. "Down, dog!"

(BOUNDER licks PHIL's face. PHIL chuckles.)

PHIL: That's all right. I don't mind your kisses.

(BOUNDER continues licking PHIL's face)

PHIL: All right; now you're getting my beard wet. Down, dog! Ha ha.

(BOUNDER stops licking)

PHIL: You're a good dog, though. You're good company. And speaking of company, guess who's coming over--Dorothy!

(BOUNDER cocks his head)

PHIL: You know, Dorothy, my daughter. She's the one who brought you the venison jerky, remember? I think I need a drink. Yoga always makes me thirsty. I think, I think, I think I need a drink. How do you like my poetry? All right, I'm no Robert Frost. Want to help me open the fridge door? It's a little tricky. You have to tap it on the side and then pull on the door hinge.

(BOUNDER butts his head against the side of the fridge. SOUND EFFECT: a knock at the door.)

PHIL: Oh, that must be her now. *(closes the fridge door, calls to offstage)* It's open! Come in!

(DOROTHY enters, carrying a case of Gatorade.)

DOROTHY: Hi, Dad.

PHIL: Hi, Sweetie. *(they hug)*

DOROTHY: You shouldn't leave your door unlocked. Anybody could just walk in. I've told you a thousand times.

PHIL: *(chuckling)* You say that every time, but it never happens. What do I have that anyone else could want?

DOROTHY: *(looking around)* Well--

PHIL: *The Complete Works of e.e. cummings!*

DOROTHY: You can joke about it, but I worry about you here, all by yourself.

PHIL: I'm fine, and I'm not all by myself. Bounder protects me.

DOROTHY: (*pets BOUNDER*) Good dog. So how was yoga today?

PHIL: It was fun. Stretching with all those other people makes me forget what an old geezer I am!

DOROTHY: Oh, Dad, you're not a geezer! Look at you--you don't wear a hearing aid--not even reading glasses. You exercise. You're taking a poetry class; you're a marvel!

PHIL: And yet you come by to make sure I'm okay.

DOROTHY: Is your cell phone charged up?

PHIL: You ask me that every time, and yes, it is. (*noticing the Gatorade*) What did you bring me?

DOROTHY: I was at the store and Gatorade was on sale, so I picked some up for you.

PHIL: You know, I can buy my own Gatorade.

DOROTHY: I know--I just enjoy doing things for you. Let me put this in the fridge. (*she tries to open the refrigerator door*) This seems to be stuck. (*she tugs at it*)

PHIL: It's a bit temperamental. You have to tap it on the side, then give the hinge a little push.

(*DOROTHY continues tugging at the door. It comes off. BOUNDER jumps back.*)

DOROTHY: Oh, look what I did! I'm so sorry!

PHIL: It's--it's all right.

DOROTHY: It is *not* all right. Everything in your freezer will thaw out! (*looks inside the fridge*) It's so iced over, you can't tell what's in there!

PHIL: (*pointing*) Oh, that's--leftover Chinese, that's a piece of chicken, and--I don't know what that is in the back. (*chuckles*) It would take an archaeological dig to discover what all's in there!

DOROTHY: Well, we need to get this fixed immediately!

PHIL: I'll call the super in the morning.

DOROTHY: Immediately! *(she pulls out a cell phone)* What's the make of this thing?

PHIL: Uh--it's a Penguin's Pal.

DOROTHY: 'Penguin's Pal?' *(dialing the phone)* How old is it?

PHIL: Well, let's see--it was here when I moved in. That was sixteen years ago, and it wasn't new then. I could ask the super. He would know for sure.

DOROTHY: Forget the super! *(on the phone)* Yes, hello. I need to order some replacement parts for a Penguin's Pal refrigerator...A Penguin's Pal...I think it's at least 20 years old. *(to PHIL)* Is there a serial number?

PHIL: *(looks behind the fridge)* Hmm. I don't see one.

(BOUNDER looks behind the fridge, shakes his head)

DOROTHY: *(looking behind the fridge)* Wow, is it ever rusty back there! *(on the phone)* Okay, I have the serial number. It's VIG 7856844. Is it possible to get a new door? It just came completely off!...What?

PHIL: What?

(BOUNDER whines)

DOROTHY: *(into the phone)* Okay, thanks. *(she hangs up)* Penguin's Pal went out of business nine years ago. It's impossible to get parts. We'll have to junk it.

PHIL: Maybe I can just duct tape the door back on.

DOROTHY: NO, you are not duct taping the door back on! You're getting a new refrigerator.

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!