

You Want What?

Penny Petersen



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ArtAge Publications
Bonnie L. Vorenberg, President
PO Box 19955
Portland OR 97280
503-246-3000 or 800-858-4998
bonniev@seniortheatre.com
www.seniortheatre.com

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YOU WANT WHAT?

By Penny Petersen

CAST

DAVID
LAURIE

SCENE ONE

Setting: The living room of DAVID and LAURIE, a middle class couple.

At Rise: DAVID is pacing, thinking. LAURIE is standing with her back to him and her arms crossed.

DAVID: Pluck.

LAURIE: (*accusatory*) Did you just say the "F" word?

DAVID: No, of course not. You know I never say that.

LAURIE: Well, what was it?

DAVID: Pluck (*emphasizes the 'P'*)

LAURIE: Like 'pluck, pluck, pluck?' (*imitating a chicken*)

DAVID: (*tedious*) No...

LAURIE: Well what then?

DAVID: It's what I have in abundance and in which you are deficient.

LAURIE: (*sarcastic*) According to you, that is probably everything.

DAVID: Stop it. I'm trying to help you.

LAURIE: Then, what is it, this word 'pluck?'

DAVID: (*struggles*) Ah...Courage, braveness, full of spirit, resolute.

LAURIE: So I'm a wimp.

DAVID: Well, in a word, (*hesitates*) yeah.

LAURIE: Don't you think I already know that? That's why I came to you for help. Besides, the definition of 'pluck' is 'to pull off feathers.' The word you're talking about is 'plucky.'

DAVID: See, that's why I married you when you were my accountant. So detail-oriented. Come on, we've been talking for thirty minutes and getting nowhere. You want to confront Steve, but you don't think you can do it. So, you come over to ask me what to do, but when I suggest a plan of action, you refuse to try it.

LAURIE: That's because all the things you've said will end up with me yelling at someone. You know better than anyone, I can't yell at people! It has to be a softer solution.

DAVID: Just pretend you're making a report in a Public Speaking class.

LAURIE: I never passed Public Speaking. I took it three times.

DAVID: But you graduated college with a 4.1.

LAURIE: I tried. Three times. But every time I had to get in front of the class, I froze. I'd stand there like a fresh-out-of-the-freezer red popsicle. Then I'd cry and sit down. The whole class felt sorry for me. I finally got a special exemption if I'd take 'Oral Communications.' So I took it. Most of the assignments were group activities. I got an 'A.'

DAVID: How come you never told me that before?

LAURIE: It never came up.

DAVID: Hum. (*thinking*)...Well, if you can't talk to him face to face, and you won't call him even with a script in front of you, and you won't let me do it for you, there's only one way left. Write him a letter.

LAURIE: That's stupid.

DAVID: What's stupid about it?

LAURIE: I have to be home in two hours, make dinner, and then sleep with him tonight. I can't create a rough draft, edit it, and write it by hand in 1½ hours.

DAVID: Why not?

LAURIE: I can't think that fast.

DAVID: I can. Remember that time our insurance company cheated us? We were both sooo angry. You were crying, I was shouting, and the kids were hiding. I slammed a glass on the table and it shattered all over the typewriter. As I picked up the pieces, it hit me. Write a scathing letter and send copies to the State Licensing Board as well as the insurance company. It worked.

LAURIE: That was 35 years ago. Before computers, instant gratification, and iPhones. That was before our divorce.

DAVID: *(he crosses to her, puts his arm around her and says gently)* It worked then. Worth a try? We haven't come up with anything better.

LAURIE: OK. But what if he gets mad when he reads it?

DAVID: I have no idea. I'm not married to him.

LAURIE: He's not violent. And I know he loves me...

DAVID: I wish you'd known that about me twenty years ago.

LAURIE: *(pauses)* Me too. I wonder...

DAVID: No. No, Too late for that. So, will you let me try sounding like you?

LAURIE: If anyone could sound like me, it would be you. Give it a shot. *(he exits to the other room. There is a pause--if using lights, the lights can dim slightly to denote the passage of time.)*

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!