

Mistranslations

Jack Rushton





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We help older performers fulfill their theatrical dreams!

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MISTRANSLATIONS

By Jack Rushton

CAST

Walter and Elise are any race or ethnicity, older than 55, and have been in their relationship for many years. They love each other. They enjoy each other's company. And, they even enjoy their passive-aggressiveness with each other, up to a point. But, because each of them think they know exactly what the other is saying, their relationship has become complicated by mistranslation.

WALTER: Has purchased Mistranslation Magic, a special hearing device system, to help them with their communication problems.

ELISE: Skeptical and more interested in maintaining the status-quo.

Place

Walter and Elise's Living Room.

Time

The present. Early evening.

MISTRANSLATIONS

Playwright's note: Walter and Elise can be sitting or standing, or some variation. The device can be as simple as two ear-plugs or as complex as a machine with gears, levers, and cords.

(Walter and Elise are in their living room. There's a box on a table between them, or one nearby. At rise, they are inspecting their ear devices. Walter is inserting his and Elise is having trouble inserting hers.)

WALTER: Is yours in?

ELISE: It's in, I think.

WALTER: It's in?

ELISE: I said it was in, didn't I?

WALTER: *(adjusting his ear device)* There...mine is definitely in.

ELISE: We don't need these things.

WALTER: So, let's try this...and talk.

ELISE: About?

WALTER: Anything. Anything at all.

ELISE: It's falling out.

WALTER: Put it back in!

ELISE: What is this thing anyway? ...take yours out.

WALTER: But I just put it in! I spent good money on these.

(Elise shoots him a look and reluctantly Walter takes his ear device out.)

ELISE: So now, let's talk.

WALTER: About?

ELISE: Anything. Anything at all.

WALTER: We got these because...

(Elise shoots him another look)

WALTER: All right! I hear it'll be nice tomorrow. Sunny, no rain.

ELISE: What's that supposed to mean?

WALTER: No rain and good weather, that's what it's supposed to mean.

ELISE: You mean as opposed to now?

WALTER: Tomorrow will be a nice day, okay?

ELISE: So, it's not nice today! Not nice today...right now.

WALTER: Did I say that?

ELISE: That's exactly what you said.

WALTER: If that's what you heard, that's something completely different than what I said.

ELISE: And what you say is never actually what you mean, it's always the meaning behind your words.

WALTER: No matter what I say you hear something else.

ELISE: And no matter what I say—

WALTER: You mistranslate!

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!