

We Interrupt This Program

Arthur Keyser





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We help older performers fulfill their theatrical dreams!

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WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM

By Arthur Keyser

CAST

CYRUS FINNEY: a fifty-nine-year-old man.

PHOEBE FINNEY: a fifty-seven-year-old woman, who is married to Cyrus.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: (*off-stage*).

Place

The interior of a living room in a modest home,
located in the suburbs of a small city in the Midwestern United States.

Despite the fact that the play occurs in the current period,
the characters' costumes, furniture and furnishings are reminiscent
of what one might have seen in a middle-class home in the 1930s.

There is no TV, but there is a radio, vintage 1937.

Time

A weekday morning on June 3 of the current year.

WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM

At rise: (Cyrus and Phoebe, who have been married to each other for thirty-nine years, are sitting in upholstered chairs in the living room. Music is playing quietly on the radio. Phoebe is knitting and Cyrus is reading the morning newspaper. Phoebe looks up from her knitting. Throughout the play, neither ever raises his or her voice above a normal level.)

PHOEBE: Anything of interest in the paper this morning, Mr. Finney?

CYRUS: Just the usual things...weather, church announcements, and something about the boys down at the high school and their annual bonfire.

PHOEBE: They must have had a good time.

CYRUS: Seems as though they did...but the fire got bigger than usual.

PHOEBE: Things like that can happen.

CYRUS: Burned down the whole school.

PHOEBE: Boys will be boys.

CYRUS: What's that you're knitting?

PHOEBE: A throw for Mother's bed.

CYRUS: Guessing it's going to take you a while.

PHOEBE: About three years.

CYRUS: Think she'll make it. Didn't she just turn ninety-six?

PHOEBE: Ninety-seven.

CYRUS: Is it a surprise?

PHOEBE: She says waking up each morning is a surprise.

CYRUS: She fancies being a stand-up comedian. Shame, she never learned how to smile.

PHOEBE: Come to think of it, I never did see her smile much...certainly not when I told her you and I were planning to marry.

CYRUS: Thought I saw a small smile at your father's funeral, but I might be wrong. It could have been indigestion.

(The music coming from the radio suddenly stops and a voice is heard.)

RADIO ANNOUNCER: We interrupt this broadcast for a special report. From the oval office in the White House, a spokesman has informed us that a space object, called the Texas Asteroid because of its size, originally expected to pass safely past the earth, has changed its course and is now heading directly toward us. Scientific calculations confirm that the asteroid will strike us on September 3rd, exactly three months from now and destroy our planet. The President has asked all Americans to turn to whatever spiritual or religious faith you may follow in these last few months of our existence. All radio stations and TV networks will be asked to have a short period of silence after which regular broadcasting may be resumed.

(Cyrus puts down his newspaper and Phoebe puts down her knitting. They turn to each other.)

PHOEBE: Did you hear that?

CYRUS: Sure did. I've been meaning to tell you that the scratching noise on the radio has been getting worse. Can't complain. It was my grandfather's and those radios never lasted more than seventy-five years.

PHOEBE: With that asteroid coming in three months, we can probably get a good deal on a new one at the mall.

CYRUS: I'll stop at the appliance store tomorrow.

PHOEBE: I've been meaning to talk to you about our living room furniture for a while. It was my grandmother's and starting to look a bit worn. This might be a good time to look for a new sofa.

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!