

**SNEEZING
WITH YOUR
EYES
OPEN**



Bradley Hayward

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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SNEEZING WITH YOUR EYES OPEN

COMEDY. This collection of 10-minute plays features a host of zany relationships. In “Cutlery,” a wife and husband argue over how to place the knives in the dishwasher. In “The Yogurt Connection,” a man and woman find love in the dairy section of a supermarket. And in “The Dead Body Play,” a love triangle goes very, very wrong.

Performance Time: Approximately 30 minutes.

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CUTLERY

(1 m, 1 w)

MARLENE: 40s, may have been attractive in her younger days,
but certainly isn't anymore.

RANDY: 40s, unattractive.

THE YOGURT CONNECTION

(1w, 1m)

MAN

WOMAN

THE DEAD BODY PLAY

(3 m, 1 w)

DAVID

JAN

EARL

"DEAD" BODY

SETTING

CUTLERY: Dining room and kitchen.

THE YOGURT CONNECTION: The dairy case at a supermarket.

THE DEAD BODY PLAY: A park.

PROPS/SPECIAL EFFECTS

CUTLERY

Dishwasher
2 dirty plates
Silverware

Bowl of mashed potatoes
Sound of forks, knives cutting
food on plates

THE YOGURT CONNECTION

Container of banana yogurt
Cell phone
Pack of gum
Purse
Cigarettes

Tampon
Birth-control pills
2 Tickets
Key chain
Lighter

THE DEAD BODY PLAY

Knife
Gun

CUTLERY

"Why did you marry me?"

—Marlene

CUTLERY

(AT RISE: Stage is black. We hear the sound of forks and knives cutting food on plates. Two people are seated at a table eating.)

MARLENE: Would you like some more potatoes?

RANDY: No thank you, dear. I've had plenty.

MARLENE: Oh, come on. Have some more.

RANDY: I've almost cleared my plate.

MARLENE: Just one more scoop.

RANDY: You like me to clear my plate, and I have.

MARLENE: All right, all right. You don't have to say it.

RANDY: Say what?

MARLENE: You don't like the potatoes.

RANDY: I do like them. They're terrific.

MARLENE: They're awful, and the thought of choking down one more bite makes you vomit. I'll take them away.

RANDY: I like them. You even put in real garlic. I love that.

(Marlene starts to cry.)

MARLENE: Don't start. You hate garlic.

RANDY: I love garlic.

MARLENE: You like the powder. Garlic powder is what you like. But I screwed it all up and put in the real stuff.

RANDY: Fine. One more scoop.

MARLENE: You don't want anymore, so you don't get anymore. You've hurt my feelings.

RANDY: Garlic is garlic. I love garlic.

MARLENE: Garlic is not garlic. You like the powder, and I gave you the real stuff. If you have even one more bite, you'll puke. And since I just mopped the floor, you shouldn't puke on it.

RANDY: You're right. I hate these potatoes. These potatoes taste like crap. But I ate them anyway. I ate these potatoes because I love you.

(Randy kisses Marlene.)

MARLENE: Don't kiss me. You're breath reeks.

RANDY: I just scarfed down ten tons of garlic potatoes.

MARLENE: And now you're breath stinks. Great going.

RANDY: Give me your plate. You stew over the potatoes, and I'll load the dishwasher.

MARLENE: Forget it.

RANDY: I will. Now give me your plate. *(Lights rise on a dishwasher. It's closed. Randy enters, carrying two dirty plates stacked with cutlery. In his other hand, he has the bowl of potatoes. He opens the dishwasher and puts the cutlery into the cutlery compartment, the knives pointing upward. Marlene enters.)* Can you please get me some plastic wrap?

MARLENE: What for?

RANDY: So I can cover the potatoes. We might want leftovers.

MARLENE: Is that a joke? Are you making fun of my potatoes?

RANDY: No.

MARLENE: You're making fun of me, then.

RANDY: I'm not making fun of anything. I don't think they should go to waste. There are starving people all over the world who would love these potatoes.

MARLENE: Unless you plan on inviting them over for dinner, dump them in the trash.

RANDY: Whatever you say. *(He sets the potatoes on top of the dishwasher and then proceeds to put in the plates.)*

MARLENE: What are you doing?

RANDY: Loading the dishwasher.

MARLENE: Not like that, you're not.

RANDY: Like what?

MARLENE: With the knives up. They go down.

RANDY: No, they go up.

MARLENE: They go down.

RANDY: Up.

MARLENE: Down.

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RANDY: They go up, so you don't cut yourself.
MARLENE: No. They go down, so you don't cut yourself.
RANDY: This way, when you unload the dishwasher, you know where the knives are. Then you don't cut yourself.
MARLENE: But if it's not full, I might put in another plate and cut myself.
RANDY: All you have to do is look. It's a dishwasher, not a booby trap.
MARLENE: Never mind. I get it.
RANDY: Get what?
MARLENE: You're hoping I'll cut myself.
RANDY: I am not.
MARLENE: You know I only run a full dishwasher, and it's clearly not full. You know I always have a midnight snack. And you know I always have cereal. So tonight, you're hoping I'll have my Fruit Loops and stick myself with one of those knives when I put the bowl in there. Then you'll wake up, and I'll be laying lifeless on the floor in a pool of blood...you know.
RANDY: No, I don't know.
MARLENE: And since when do you unload the dishwasher? I do everything around here, so shouldn't I say whether they go up or down?
RANDY: All I'm saying is that they should go up. I don't want you to hurt yourself.
MARLENE: Down.
RANDY: Up.
MARLENE: Down.
RANDY: Up.
MARLENE: I want a divorce.
RANDY: You do not. You're talking nonsense.
MARLENE: Jesus Christ! Don't tell me I'm talking nonsense. If I'm going to cut myself, I want to do it on purpose. Not while I'm trying to do the dishes.
RANDY: If you want me to do the dishes from now on, just say so. But for the love of God, stop playing these games.
MARLENE: I'm not playing any games.

RANDY: You are. You know you are.

MARLENE: Fine. From now on, I'll do the dishes. Are you happy now?

RANDY: Not if you're upset.

MARLENE: I'm not upset!

RANDY: What do you want me to do? Just say the word, and I'll do it.

MARLENE: I want the knives to go down. If you can't give me that, I want a divorce.

RANDY: Fine. Turn the knives upside down. They're your fingers.

MARLENE: I'm not going to turn them upside down.

RANDY: Finally. You've come to your senses.

MARLENE: I'm going to turn them right side up.

(Randy takes a deep breath.)

RANDY: Do what you want.

MARLENE: It's not like you ever unload it anyway.

(Marlene starts to turn the knives around. As she does, Randy takes out a dirty spoon. She glares at him.)

RANDY: Don't worry. I'm not touching any knives.

(She continues to turn the knives as he takes the bowl of potatoes and starts scooping them into the trash.)

MARLENE: What are you doing?

RANDY: Getting rid of the potatoes.

MARLENE: And put them to waste?

RANDY: You told me to get rid of them.

MARLENE: What if I wanted some more? You're always thinking of yourself. It's always you, you, you!

RANDY: But you said—

MARLENE: I never said anything. Besides, don't you have some friends from Ethiopia coming by?

RANDY: Marlene —

MARLENE: Don't "Marlene" me.

RANDY: You're being ridiculous.

MARLENE: You said people from all over the world would love my potatoes. Invite them over so they can all have a bite. Then afterwards, they can puke on my nice, clean floor. I've never seen foreign vomit. It probably tastes better than the potatoes.

RANDY: For crying out loud, do you want me to save them or not?

MARLENE: I want you eat them. That's what I want.

(Randy finally loses his temper and starts shoveling potatoes into his mouth.)

RANDY: There, I'm eating them! Are you happy now? I'm eating your stupid potatoes! They're delicious!

MARLENE: No need to get nasty.

RANDY: I'm not! I love these potatoes!

MARLENE: At least let me warm them up for you.

RANDY: I like them cold. The chill enhances the flavor. *(He finishes every last bite and tries his hardest not to gag.)*

MARLENE: Would you like me to make you some more?

RANDY: Don't bother. There's plenty right here. *(He grabs a dirty plate from the dishwasher and licks the remains off. He acts like he enjoys every lick.)*

MARLENE: Two can play at this game!

(She yanks the other plate out of the dishwasher and licks it. They both lick like crazy for some time. It becomes a race. Who can clean their plate first? Randy wins.)

[End of Freeview]

THE YOGURT CONNECTION

"Banana yogurt is my security blanket."

—Man

THE YOGURT CONNECTION

(AT RISE: The dairy section in a supermarket is empty. There is one container of banana yogurt. Man saunters up to the container of yogurt and picks it up. His cell phone rings. He sets down the yogurt and answers his phone.)

MAN: *(Into phone.)* Yeah? Hi, Paul. I'm just at the supermarket picking up some banana yogurt. *(Pause.)* Yeah, same old me. Hey, don't worry about the figures. I'll go in tomorrow and straighten them out. *(Pause.)* I know it's a Saturday, but I always come in on weekends. *(Pause.)* What's a weekend, anyway? It's the two days before Monday. Go! Have fun. Bring me a t-shirt. *(Woman enters. She's on a mission. She grabs the container of banana yogurt.)* Hold on. *(To Woman.)* That's my yogurt.

WOMAN: Excuse me?

MAN: I'm buying that yogurt.

WOMAN: No you're not.

MAN: Excuse me, but I just picked it up.

WOMAN: Excuse me, but you set it down.

MAN: *(Into phone.)* Paul, get this. Some lady is trying to steal my yogurt.

WOMAN: I'm not stealing it. It was on the shelf. I picked it up. And now I'm going to buy it.

MAN: *(Into phone.)* She is seriously going to go home with the last container of banana yogurt.

WOMAN: Is that a crime? I was here first.

MAN: *(To Woman.)* You were not. *(Into phone.)* Paul, tell this woman how much I need my banana yogurt.

(Man hands the phone to Woman.)

WOMAN: *(To Man.)* I hate people like you.

MAN: People like what?

WOMAN: People who live in a cellular world. You who can't go anywhere without radio waves pouring into your brains. Radio waves kill.

MAN: They're completely safe.

WOMAN: Not you. They kill me. The radio waves go in your brain, and they alter your state of thinking. Suddenly they make you so deluded that you have no regard for others. You turn right on all red lights, don't you? Even the ones that say not to. That pisses me off. Wait your turn!

MAN: Hey, now. Calm down.

WOMAN: What's really sad is that you think you're connected, but you're really not. You're the farthest thing from it. You're completely unable to be with a person face to face. Disconnected. *(Yells into phone.)* You too, Paul! Get a life!

(Woman shuts off the phone.)

MAN: Hey, I was talking to him.

(Woman tosses the phone over the dairy case.)

WOMAN: And now you're not.

MAN: Lady, I've had a hard day. The only thing that ever gets me through is knowing that I can come home to 16 ounces of tasty banana yogurt.

WOMAN: It's mine and I want it.

MAN: It's mine and I need it.

WOMAN: You're really sad.

MAN: Why don't you just try another flavor? Raspberry.

WOMAN: Raspberry?! I don't want raspberry. I have three tubs of raspberry yogurt at home.

MAN: Then why are you here?

WOMAN: I had a craving.

MAN: Every day after work I have banana yogurt. I don't know why, but it soothes me.

WOMAN: You have it every day. This is the first craving for me, so I think it's only fair that I get the banana.

MAN: Everything will be off balance...

WOMAN: You're in a rut. Snap out of it. Try a new flavor.

MAN: I can't handle change.

WOMAN: If you don't give me the yogurt, I'll kick you right now and perform a sex change.

MAN: I'm serious, I can't handle change. It always backfires. Banana yogurt is my security blanket.

WOMAN: Listen, I don't have time to sit here and fight. I have three kids at home who are most certainly turning the living room into a nuclear holocaust. I came here for yogurt with chunks of banana, and I'm not leaving until I have yogurt with chunks of banana.

MAN: Neither am I. Why don't you cut a banana into some plain yogurt?

WOMAN: Why don't you?

MAN: It's not the same.

WOMAN: Believe me, you don't want to mess with me. I'm a very dangerous woman...I'm having my period.

[End of Freeview]

THE DEAD BODY PLAY

"I don't want him to be a knick-knack.
I hate porcelain downs enough already."

—Earl

THE DEAD BODY PLAY

(AT RISE: A dead body lies on the ground with a knife sticking out the chest. Earl, startled and speechless, stands over the body. Jan and David rush in.)

JAN: Is it over?

EARL: What?

JAN: Is he dead?

EARL: He's right here.

DAVID: Oh, my gosh. I can't believe he's dead.

JAN: This is no time to mill around, David. We're here to help Earl dispose of the body. What can we do?

EARL: Help me get rid of him.

DAVID: I know that, but what do you want us to do with him?

EARL: Nothing weird. Let's just get rid of him peacefully.

JAN: What do you mean, nothing weird?

EARL: Don't put him in a dress or something.

DAVID: Why would we do that?

EARL: For fun. You two are always up to something weird.

DAVID: What's that supposed to mean?

EARL: I don't know. You're just twisted.

JAN: Give us an example.

EARL: Of what?

JAN: Something "twisted."

EARL: I can't think of anything off the top of my head.

JAN: Come on. I want to know.

EARL: All right. You showed up at my wedding in a black dress.

JAN: I like black dresses. So what?

EARL: I'm talking to David.

DAVID: It was a phase. Besides, did your marriage last anyway?

EARL: No, but that's not the point.

DAVID: Sure it is. Now people remember me and my dress instead of you and your defunct marriage.

JAN: And what did I do? You can't chastise me for something David wore to your wedding.
DAVID: Don't even start...your dress was plastic.
JAN: Yeah, but it was designer plastic.
DAVID: It was two layers thicker than cellophane.
JAN: So?
DAVID: And just as see-through.
JAN: You just don't know fashion.
EARL: What does any of this matter anyway? What are we going to do with him? (*Indicates body.*)

(They think for a long moment.)

JAN: Let's cremate him.
DAVID: Huh?
JAN: Cremate him.
EARL: How are we going to do that?
JAN: Earl, do you still smoke?
EARL: Yeah.
JAN: So you have matches. Burn him.
EARL: I'm not going to burn him.
JAN: David will.
DAVID: Are you nuts?
EARL: Talk about twisted.
JAN: That's not twisted. People get cremated all the time.
DAVID: But not with matches.
EARL: From the Holiday Inn, no less.
JAN: It's simple. You take some gas outta the car. Give him a bath. Light a match. Poof! Cremated.
DAVID: Where do you hear these things?
JAN: I don't see either of you with any ideas.
DAVID: We're waiting for a good idea.
JAN: Mine's a good idea.
EARL: Say we do cremate him. What would we do with his ashes?
JAN: Scatter them, stupid.

EARL: Where?

JAN: In the lake.

DAVID: But he hated water.

JAN: What does it matter? He's dead.

DAVID: I specifically remember him saying that he wouldn't be caught dead in the water.

JAN: So what?

DAVID: We can't throw his ashes in the lake.

JAN: Then keep his ashes, for all I care.

EARL: Gross! We can't keep his ashes.

JAN: Why not?

EARL: Because it's disgusting. And I wanted to get rid of him...not keep him.

JAN: You're such a prude.

DAVID: We could keep his ashes in something decorative.

JAN: Huh?

DAVID: We could put his ashes in something around the house.

JAN: Like what?

DAVID: Something on the mantle.

EARL: That's gross! I don't want him to be a knick-knack. I hate porcelain clowns enough already.

JAN: How about something practical?

EARL: Practical? That's icky.

DAVID: Like what?

JAN: I don't know...a lamp or something.

DAVID: He could be a lamp.

JAN: Or an egg timer.

DAVID: Egg timer...no. He shouldn't be an egg timer.

JAN: Okay.

DAVID: I like the lamp idea.

JAN: Really?

DAVID: Yeah. He'd be of some use.

EARL: Some use. He'll be dead either way. This way, he's just dead in a lamp.

DAVID: But he'd still be around.

JAN: I think it's a good idea.

EARL: So, okay, he's in a lamp. Then what?

DAVID: What do you mean, then what?

EARL: What do I mean? Okay, say he's in my lamp. I turn him
on and off and think of him every time I need a little light.

JAN: He'd be the light of your life.

[End of Freeview]