

The Pride

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Notes

Characters

BRUCE A male lion who's past his prime

LINDA A lioness, Bruce's young wife

JAMES A young lion who lives next door to Bruce and Linda

All characters wear lion suits at all times.

Setting

The entire play takes place in Bruce and Linda's home, a domestic setting with table and chairs. The furnishings are kitsch and ad-hoc and the place is run down. On the walls of the house is old, peeling wallpaper.

The Pride

PROLOGUE

BRUCE enters carrying a bucket of water; he crosses the stage and puts the bucket on the floor in front of the table. On the table there are three cubs, he playfully coaxes each one to jump into the bucket from the table. He then picks up the bucket and places it on the table, he reaches in and holds the cubs under the water, they struggle for a time and then they are still.

Feeling guilty BRUCE gives a pleading look to the audience and then exits.

SCENE 1 — GETTING THE ANSWER MACHINE

LINDA enters and takes a seat. She excitedly drums on the table. BRUCE enters with a new answering machine, still in its box. He puts it down on the table and then points at it excitedly.

LINDA *[Laughs]* OH MY GOD! You didn't?! You didn't?

BRUCE I did.

They both laugh and then do a jumping high five.

LINDA Oh my! *[Laughs]* Did you lease it or buy it outright?

BRUCE nods his head and points at the answering machine.

You bought it outright!!!

They high five again.

Say something Bruce!

They both laugh and squeal excitedly while pointing at the answering machine. They go over to it and BRUCE opens the box.

BRUCE 1 ... 2 ... 3

They both squeal with excitement and then sigh simultaneously.

Smell it, it's new, smell it ...

LINDA It's going to make life so much easier.

BRUCE Well I'm glad you like it.

LINDA I love it.

BRUCE I love you.

LINDA Oh Bruce this is amazing!

BRUCE So now when [*he clicks his fingers trying to remember*]

LINDA Miranda and Louise ... !

BRUCE Miranda and Louise try to call; they'll be there, flashing.

TOGETHER Yeeeeeaaahhhh!

LINDA Well I guess, let's set it up ...

And now let's record our greeting message.

TOGETHER Oooooooooo!

BRUCE Well I've got some ideas ...

LINDA Gee I just wish I had some more time to think!

BRUCE Well we could just keep it simple or, well, we could do loads ... we could do a trial one ...

- LINDA Yeah!
- BRUCE Or we could have a song playing in the background and then be like, “Hey you’ve reached” ... or like, “Hey Kids!”
- LINDA Or we could be like, we could be like, “Hey caller, thanks for calling”.
- BRUCE Caller, that’s not very warm —
- LINDA Or, or ... “Hey Friend” ... oh but —
- BRUCE Yeah it might not be a friend.
- LINDA Well it needs to be warm —
- BRUCE And groovy ... it’s like we’ve got our very own recording studio!
- LINDA Or Bruce, you could sing, you’ve got such a beautiful voice.
- BRUCE *[Coy]* Ooh well ...
- LINDA No that would be great!
- BRUCE We should do a duet because this is about us.
- LINDA Oh Bruce. *[BRUCE looks down embarrassed, LINDA goes for a high five but he’s not looking]* Don’t leave me hanging!
- They do a jumping high five.*
- Let’s think of a duet.
- They go through the motions of actively thinking and then BRUCE has a good idea and begins to hum, LINDA picks up on the idea.*
- Ohhhhhh yes ... because you ... and then me ... yes ... yes ... yes.
- BRUCE *[Singing]* Hi, you’ve called Bruce and Linda.
- LINDA That’s good.
- BRUCE You try.

LINDA *[Singing badly]* Hi you've called Bruce and Linda.

BRUCE I'll do a harmony.

They sing together. BRUCE desperately wants LINDA to sing in tune, he demonstrates the pitch with his hand.

TOGETHER Hi, you've called Bruce and Linda.

BRUCE Look at the hand ...

LINDA That's great!

BRUCE I'm looking at you and I'm thinking beats.

LINDA Really? *[LINDA starts to stamp and clap to a rhythm]*

BRUCE *[To the audience]* That's my wife.

[Singing] Hi you've called Bruce and Linda —

LINDA Bruce that sounds a bit church-y.

BRUCE Deep Forrest.

LINDA No, it needs to be fun and up-tempo!

BRUCE Funky?

TOGETHER Yeaahhh.

BRUCE Let's go for a take.

They jump up; LINDA grabs the answering machine and they record their greeting message. LINDA does the rhythm section and BRUCE sings.

TOGETHER Hi you've called Bruce and Linda
 We can't make it to the phone right now
 Please leave a message
 And we'll get back to ya
 As soon as we can-a!

After recording the message they squeal with joy and do a jumping high five.

BRUCE Oh God, what are people going to think when they call, they won't even know.

They'll be like [*miming a phone*] "Oh hi guys".

LINDA [*Laughs*] Oh I just want it to ring!

BRUCE Look at you, you're so excited ... I love you.

LINDA I love you too ... Bruce this is the best present that I ever received. And you know what else?

LINDA puts her hand on her stomach and nods. BRUCE, overcome by the emotion of the moment, comes closer and touches her stomach as Everlasting Love by Rex Smith begins to play ...

Toy cubs rain down from the sky. BRUCE and LINDA pick them up adoringly and a cub raising montage ensues.

LINDA and BRUCE exit, carrying the cubs.

SCENE 2 — THE MOUSTACHE

BRUCE enters carrying an old fruit bon-bons tin. He sits down at the table, opens the tin and, with a look to the audience, takes out a fake, slightly grey moustache. He sticks the moustache on. A passage of time has passed.

SCENE 3 — CLAP LIGHTS

BRUCE is sat at the table.

LINDA *[Offstage]* Bruce, is it ready?

BRUCE Just a minute.

BRUCE gets up and bustles about.

Close your eyes.

LINDA They're closed.

BRUCE Walk forwards.

LINDA enters with two mugs in hand, eyes closed.

LINDA *[Excitedly]* Bruce, what is it? What is it?!

BRUCE Stop. *[he leans over her shoulder and whispers]* Happy Anniversary!

LINDA opens her eyes and looks around slowly; there is no apparent surprise.

Seemingly nothing ...

LINDA Yeah.

BRUCE Clap your hands.

BRUCE takes the mugs from LINDA and puts them on the table. LINDA claps and the lights turn off.

LINDA *[Confused]* Oooohhhh.

BRUCE claps (lights on).

[Trying to be excited] Ohhhh?

BRUCE laughs excitedly and raises his hand for a high five. They high five, which turns the lights off.

TOGETHER

[Disappointed, in the dark] Uuhhhhh.

BRUCE claps the lights on.

[Happier] Oooooooh.

LINDA

[Underwhelmed] Oh my God, Bruce, I didn't even know I wanted this until you put it in.

BRUCE

Everything, all the lights, clap on, clap off, clap on, clap off.

LINDA

Well, I just don't know what to say Bruce.

BRUCE

Just makes life so much easier; clap on.

LINDA

Well, thank you.

BRUCE

I did it for you; clap off ... and a little bit for me!

LINDA moves to go and sit at the table. BRUCE comes over and raises his mug to make a toast.

Cheers, to us. You're the light of my life, my lover, my best friend and my wife.

LINDA

Cheers.

LINDA, clearly disappointed, looks up at the lights as BRUCE sits down.

BRUCE

I was waiting for you, for the surprise.

LINDA

Bruce —

BRUCE

Here we go, yep, no, go on, here's a big surprise, what did you want to complain about?

LINDA

No, no I love the surprise; it's just not a real solution.

BRUCE

Yes it is ... What's this drink?

LINDA

Bruce, the cubs are growing up, it's time for my sisters to move in, and you need to get onto doing a few things to the house.