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Dramatic Publishing



I'VE HIT AN ICEBERG

By
DANNA CALL



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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I’ve Hit an Iceberg was first produced in 2003 at the Estrogenius Festival at Manhattan Theatre Source in New York City. The production was directed by Maryna Harrison and included the following:

Character A: Dyanne Court*

Character B: Dayna Steinfeld*

Costumes: Anna Marie Gottfried

Sound: Giovanna Sgarlata

Lighting: Jason Jeunnette

The play received a second production in 2004 at P.A.C.T. Theatre Company in New York City with the same director and cast.

Lighting/Sound: Jak Prince

* Denotes member of Actors’ Equity Association, the union for professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

I'VE HIT AN ICEBERG

CHARACTERS

CHARACTER A

CHARACTER B

I'VE HIT AN ICEBERG

Lights up on two people sitting or standing near a kitchen table with chairs. A head of Iceberg lettuce rests in the middle of the table.

A: So you're telling me this head of Iceberg spoke to you?

B: I'm afraid so.

A: Did it speak in a male voice or a female voice?

B: I...I...I'm not sure.

A: Would you say it was ominous?

B: No...not really...no.

A: Did it have an accent?

B: Why would it have an accent?

A: Why not? Look, I'm only trying to get the facts. Did you hear the voice inside your head or was it audible throughout the room?

B: I'm not sure. It could have been speaking out loud to me, like you are now, but there wasn't anybody else in the room who would have heard.

A: Like if a tree falls in the woods and no one's there to hear...

B: Yes...sort of...no, I was here. I heard it!

A: So you said.

B: You don't believe me do you?

A: I didn't say that.

B: You're patronizing me.

A: No I'm not.

B (*pause—stares at A for a beat*): Yes you are. I never should have told you.

A: I'm only trying to understand. You have to admit it's not every day a person has a conversation with a vegetable.

B: My aunt talks to her garden.

A: Does it talk back?

B: Not that she's admitted. But that's beside the point. It wasn't a conversation anyway.

A: Okay, okay. It was one sided. The Iceberg spoke to you.

B: More like *at me*. I felt like my mother was in the room.

A: But she wasn't.

B: No, like I said it was just me and the Iceberg!...and...a tomato...and an...onion. I was making a salad.

A: But the tomato and the onion didn't say anything?

B: No.

A: Maybe the Iceberg is their leader.

B: Now you're mocking me.

A: Sorry. So what did the Iceberg say...to the tomato?
(*Laughs at own joke.*)

B: This is not a joke. I am not a punch-line!

A: Okay, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Please continue. Please.

B (*sits in silence*):

A: Please?

B: It asked me "What are you doing with your life?"

A: I thought you said it wasn't a conversation?

B: It wasn't.

A: Well, if it asked you a question I assume it wanted an answer back, therefore creating a dialogue.

B: It was rhetorical.

A: Oh.

B: It sat there on my counter and asked me “What are you doing with your life?”

A: Did it say anything else?

B: No. (*They both stare at the head of lettuce.*) I should have spent the extra money and bought the mixed mesclun. It's better for you. Iceberg has no nutritional value. It's like water. (*Directed at the head of lettuce.*) It's just watery, pasty green, tasteless leaves of roughage.

A: Insulting the Iceberg isn't going to help.

B: How dare this lump of leaves sit in judgment of me! “What are you doing with your life?” What is it doing with *its* life?! (*To the Iceberg.*) You sat in the dirt, in a row with your identical lettuce friends. Then you were picked, washed and shipped to a supermarket where you lounged around all day listening to muzak until I reached in the bin and pulled you out.

A: Maybe what you heard wasn't a “judgment.”

B: I detected a distinct smugness.

A: You're getting very upset.

B: Wouldn't you?!

A: Yes, yes I admit I'd be upset if (*indicates head of lettuce*) that spoke to me. But it seems you're much more disturbed by *what* it said and not so much that it may have actually talked. It appears to me this head of lettuce has struck some sort of a nerve.

B: What do you mean?

A: Well, you said it asked “What are you doing with your life?” Now I admit I wasn't present so I don't know what tone of voice it used. You felt it was smug or judgmental...

B: It was.

A: Are you sure? Perhaps the Iceberg asked this question to merely encourage you to reflect upon your life, to “check in,” so to speak, to see if you’re living to your fullest potential.

B (*stares at A distrustfully*):

A: You don’t see it that way. Okay. The Iceberg’s question has obviously made you defensive. Why?

B: Because it’s none of its business!

A: Like I said, defensive. Let me try another angle. You said there were three vegetables present: the Iceberg lettuce, the tomato and the onion. Of these three only the Iceberg spoke to you.

B (*exasperated*): Yes.

A: Why? Why not the other two?

B: I don’t know! I didn’t expect any of them to speak!

A: Hmmm, I don’t think it’s a coincidence that the Iceberg was the one to “speak” to you. In my opinion you’re projecting. I think you see this head of Iceberg as a symbol.

B: A symbol? A symbol of what?

A: Of your life.

B (*beat*): Are you mocking me again?

A: No, listen. I think I’m on to something. (*Picks up head of lettuce and paces the room with it.*) This head of lettuce, or what you yourself refer to as a poor, anemic excuse for a head of lettuce, spoke to you about your life. Why the dullest, most tasteless vegetation in existence? Why wasn’t it the zesty tomato? Or the powerful, tear-inducing onion? Hmmm?

B: I don’t know.

A: It's obvious. This head of Iceberg lettuce speaks your language.

B: What?!

A: Deep down inside, my friend, you see your life as the disposable garnish on the entrée plate of life. (*Presenting the lettuce to B.*)

B: I do?

A (*nods head*):

B: I just wanted to make a salad! Ohhhhhh! (*Breaks down crying.*)

A: It's okay. Let it out. This is good. You're having what's called a breakthrough.

B: I'll show you a breakthrough! (*Grabs the head of lettuce from A and starts ripping it apart. To A.*) Okay, Doctor Freud, do you want blue cheese or creamy Italian?!

A: Stop! (*Grabs head of lettuce back.*) Tearing into this Iceberg isn't going to accomplish anything. You'd only be eating the messenger.

B: If that's the messenger, then who's the sender?

A: That's what I've been trying to explain. You are, or more specifically, your subconscious.

B: My head hurts.

A: Now, I could be wrong about this subconscious thing, but I don't think I am, because otherwise, the fact that you "heard" a voice emanating from a head of lettuce would mean you're psychotic. And I don't feel that's the case.

B: Thanks, that makes me feel better.

A: If you were psychotic the lettuce would have told you to do something to somebody.

B (*looks at A*): Let's wait, maybe it will.

A: There's no need for the sarcasm I'm only trying to help. Remember, you're the one who called and asked me to come over.

B: I know, you're right. I'm sorry, I'm tense. This has never happened before.

A: Well, it has now, and it may not necessarily be negative. I'm a firm believer that everything happens for a reason.

B: That's easy for you to say. You're not the one it spoke to. What if your theory about my subconscious is wrong and I am crazy. (*Beat.*) Or...what if this Iceberg really is able to speak and if it can why was I able to understand? Do I have some sort of special ability like Doctor Dolittle? I'm I the Vegetable Whisperer!? (*Looks at A for confirmation.*)

A & B (*look at each other then they shake their heads*):

A: If we want to get to the bottom of this, we need to examine what you heard the lettuce say. (*Pacing.*) "What are you doing with your life?" "What are you doing with your life?" (*Stops behind B, bends over her and asks in her ear.*) What are you doing with your life?

B: Living it.

A: But how are you living it? Let's do some dissecting.

B: Do we have to?

A: If we want to get to the bottom of this, yes, we do. Let's begin with today. What was your day like, what did you do? From the beginning please.

B: My alarm went off, I got up, took a shower, then ate breakfast.

A: What did you eat?