

A Few Good Years: The Musical

Penny Petersen





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A Few Good Years

A Love Story with Music in Two Acts

Book & Lyrics
by
Penny Petersen

Music
by
Ron Petersen
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A Few Good Years

Time & Place: An active retirement country club, anywhere, any time.

Set: Empty stage. Scenery consists of a series of small drops which are changed according to location. There are 7 painted drops and 2 drops that are unpainted. Each drop is hung on two posts. Drops indicate where the action takes place. Minimal furniture (bench, 3 chairs, 2 small tables) become different set pieces. (See lists & sketches at end for specifics.)

Cast of Characters: 4 Women, 4 Men, 3-6 Mimes (One acts as Narrator, others change scenery and bring props. Could be done with 3 or 4 mimes if stagehands are used to move scenery.)

LIBBI: A widow
LARRY: A widower
GRACE: Libbi's daughter.
DON: Libbi's son-in-law
DOLORES: Larry's daughter.
STEVE: Larry's son-in-law
ACTRESS: Leading lady in community theatre (Gretchen)
ACTOR: Leading man in community theatre (Harold)
NARRATOR: One of the Mimes. Delivers prologues ACT I & II & Epilogue

SUMMARY: *A Few Good Years* can best be described as a “turn-around” of the popular musical, *The Fantasticks*, in subject matter and style. It pits two daughters against their widowed parents when the girls try to match up Libbi and Larry. Their efforts include a “chance” meeting, a fake robbery, a clown, and some bowling buddies. All result in disaster. A nightmare, an actor in drag, and mimes add to the hilarity. In keeping with the non-realistic style, the mimes represent Fate and influence the action. At one point, a wedding is planned until some unexpected information causes a ruckus and Larry gets cold feet. Finally, with the help of the mimes, forgiveness prevails and all is well.

NOTE: The Mimes are a “Theatrical” convention meant to stress the non-realistic nature of the presentation. None of the characters are aware of the mimes, but the mimes often communicate their feelings to the audience. Scene changes and some costume changes are done in full view of the audience. SL, SC and SR must have their own area lighting as well as being used together. Also, a single spot is needed DL, DC & DR. A follow spot is used for the mime changing signs. **Although lighting cues are written in, the play can be performed without lights by having actors turn their back when not in the focus. Thus the play could be performed in any venue.**

Scenes are numbered for rehearsal purposes. Action is continuous.

Information about costumes, makeup, properties, and etc. is listed in the appendix.

Musical Selections

ACT I

Title	Sung by
<i>Parents</i>	Grace & Dolores
<i>Mime Strut</i>	
<i>Feeling Young</i>	Larry
<i>I Never Thought I'd Feel This Way Again</i>	Libbi
<i>Bowling</i>	Don & Steve
<i>Why Did She Dump Me Blues</i>	Larry
<i>A Sizeable Donation</i>	Actors
<i>Foreign Places</i>	Libbi

ACT II

<i>Parents (Reprise)</i>	Grace & Dolores
<i>Nightmare</i>	
<i>Is It All Right With You?</i>	Libbi
<i>Forgiveness</i>	Libbi & Girls
<i>A Few Good Years</i>	Libbi & Larry
<i>Bowling (Reprise)</i>	Don, Steve, Larry
<i>Lesson of Love</i>	Grace & Dolores
<i>Forever Love (Wedding Music)</i>	
<i>A Few Good Years (Reprise)</i>	Company

ACT I

(NARRATOR/MIME enters & speaks to audience in spot DC. Center Drop is the show title "A Few Good Years." SL & SR drops are unpainted fabric. One chair is set DL, another DR.)

PROLOGUE - NARRATOR (Spoken as in a Shakespeare Play)

Just what is life? Why are we here?
What part is love? What part is fear?
What causes smiles? What brings a tear?
Things are not always as they appear.

Do we control it? Do we create
The things we crave? The things we hate?
And when it's time to choose a mate?
Do we control? Or is it fate?

Humm, we'll see.

We'll try to tell this story true;
With lights and music, just for you,
But settings here are mighty few,
So use your imagination too.

My friends and I will just appear
With prop or hat or sound to hear.
In the end, we hope it's clear,
Even though we're not Shakespeare.

So we begin, the end is true
The story calls, we bid adieu. (DC Spot out)

Scene 1: Intro & Church

(LIBBI enters & sits in SR chair reading a travel magazine. LARRY sits in the chair SL silently practicing his saxophone (or other instrument.) Neither sees or hears what's going on around them. Throughout the play, SR is LIBBI's side, SL is LARRY's side. GRACE enters DR. Spot on her. Dolores enters DL. No light on her until she's ready to sing.)

SONG: PARENTS (Grace & Dolores)

GRACE

Verse (Spot DR on Grace)

I have a mother, she's such a trip
She is attractive, smart as a whip
She's been a widow for several years
Tho she seems happy, one thing is clear

Chorus

She needs a companion to share nights and days
Someone who is caring and has gentle ways
But she doesn't think so, she's stubborn and bright.
She's busy with girlfriends, sleeps alone every night. (spot out on Grace; up on Dolores.)

DOLORES

Verse

I have a father, he's really great
Attractive, caring, he needs a mate
He's been alone now for several years
He gets so lonely, one thing is clear.

Chorus

He needs a companion, to share in his life
He'd be a great catch, and he needs a wife.
But he doesn't think so, ignoring his plight
He flirts and he dances, sleeps alone every night. (Spot up DC; DL off)

Verse (Girls move to DC spot. LARRY & LIBBY exit.)

If we could only, make them a match (Dolores)
Get them together, they would attach. (Grace)
My Dad is handsome, and he's so smart. (Dolores)
My Mom is pretty, and she has heart. (Grace)

Chorus (Together)

So what's the big problem? They think they are fine.
But, they are so stubborn, both yours and mine.
And we'll keep on trying, there must be a way
To get them together; we'll find a way.

(Spot up DR. DOLORES and GRACE move into spot. They have escaped from lunch with LIBBI and are talking in the restroom. They pantomime hand washing. MIMES set Center Stage for church. Title drop down. Church drop up. Table added. Bags of cans on table & boxes.)

Did you ask her?
DOLORES

(Not happy) Yeah.
GRACE

Well, what did she say?
DOLORES

She said, (Mimicking) “No way. I’m much too old for birth control.”
GRACE

What?
DOLORES

That’s her way of saying “No.”
GRACE

If she’d just meet my dad!. He’s perfect for her.
DOLORES

He’s perfect period! If I were 20 years older, I’d go for him.
GRACE

You’re just saying that.
DOLORES

No. I mean it. We’ve got to get them together.
GRACE

But how?
DOLORES

(MIME enters next to DOLORES and snap fingers. No response. Snaps again then backs up, staying onstage.)
I know! We’ll trick her into it.

Trick her?
GRACE

We’ll make the meeting an accident.
DOLORES

(laughs) Not bad. But how would we do it?
GRACE
(MIME walks closer, makes a motion with hand.)

DOLORES

I've got it! I'll volunteer Dad to help pack food baskets after church. You volunteer your mom. You give them something to do together, then,..wallah! They'll have to talk. They're too polite not to.

GRACE

What if it doesn't work?

DOLORES

What have we lost? A little time!

GRACE

They don't have much time. (Pause) But her doctor did say, "She could live to be 103."

DOLORES

That would give them A FEW GOOD YEARS together.
(MIME does the "Cut" sign, exits. GRACE looks around.)

GRACE

We'd better get back. Mom will wonder why it took so long.
(Spot down. GRACE & DOLORES exit. Lights come up stage center on a church reception room where there's a lunchroom table.)

SCENE 1: MIME places sign: CHURCH - A Week Later

(GRACE moves into church scene. MIME hands her an apron. She puts it on and calls to her mom.

GRACE

Come on, Mom, we've gotta sort these cans before noon.
(LIBBI enters in a matching apron and they begin sorting cans and putting like kinds in small boxes. A MIME rushes in with a grocery bag of cans when they run out.)

LIBBI

Wow. We've got lots of corn.

GRACE

It's always that way.

LIBBI

I don't think we have enough boxes for all these cans.

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