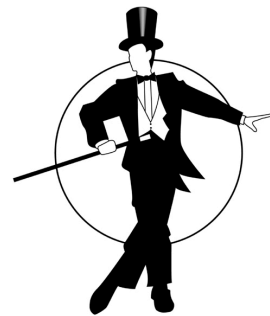


Tech Support

Arthur S. Keyser



ArtAge
Publications



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TECH SUPPORT

by

Arthur S. Keyser

Cast

CONSUMER: a woman in her mid-sixties (or, can be HENRY SMITH, a man in his mid-sixties).

TECH SUPPORT: a woman who resides in Calcutta, India (or can also be cast as a man).

Place

At stage right, LOIS is sitting on a chair at a desk, which is in a casual living room at the home where she and her husband live. There are several technical manuals, a phone, a computer, and a printer on the desk. At stage left, TECH SUPPORT is sitting at a large desk, in Calcutta, India. In TECH SUPPORT's office, in addition to the chair there is an ottoman, a large plug-in switchboard and TECH SUPPORT is wearing a telephone headset. TECH SUPPORT has her feet on the ottoman and is clearly very relaxed, wears fitness workout clothes. On TECH SUPPORT's desk, there are piles of consumer electronic equipment manuals, a pitcher of water, and a glass.

Time

Late afternoon.

Note: This play may be performed with both characters as women, as men, or by one woman and one man, in which event a woman can play either character and a man can play the other.

At Rise: CONSUMER is speaking on the phone.

CONSUMER: Thanks for the invite. I can always count on hearing from you, when I'm alone for a few days, but I'll have to pass. I have to do something about my new computer and printer. They're both not working and Henry keeps teasing me about my trying to learn how to use the equipment. I want everything

to be working when he gets back. Maybe I can take a rain check until tomorrow. I'll call you.

(CONSUMER hangs up the phone. CONSUMER then picks up a manual from the desk, lifts the phone and places a call. The switchboard, on the opposite side of the stage, begins to ring. TECH SUPPORT plugs a cord into the switchboard. Before pushing a button to connect the call, she fumbles through the manuals on her desk. The telephone continues ringing. After seven rings, TECH SUPPORT picks up one of the manuals, pushes a button and answers the call.)

TECH SUPPORT: Welcome to Dell technical support. We apologize for the delay. This is a recorded message. All of our support personnel are busy handling other calls. Please stay on the line and your call will be answered in the order in which calls are received. Your estimated wait time is between thirty seconds and two and one-half hours.

CONSUMER: Two and a half hours!

TECH SUPPORT: I was only kidding.

CONSUMER: What did you say? I thought I was connected to a recorded message.

TECH SUPPORT: You are. You're having a conversation with a recorded message.

CONSUMER: You sound like a live person.

TECH SUPPORT: I'm not. We're just a very innovative company.

CONSUMER: I'm very impressed.

TECH SUPPORT: Thank you for holding. Welcome to Dell Computer support. May I please have your full name and ten-digit telephone number, starting with your area code?

CONSUMER: Did anyone ever tell you that your voice sounds just like a recorded message?

TECH SUPPORT: What are you...a troublemaker? If you're not looking for technical support, why did you call me?

CONSUMER: I'm sorry. My name is Lois Smith and my phone number is 321-632-2929.

TECH SUPPORT: Would you like to share your e-mail address with us?

CONSUMER: Why?

TECH SUPPORT: So we can send announcements to you of new generations of computers that you may want to purchase.

CONSUMER: I already have a new computer that doesn't work. That's why I'm calling you.

TECH SUPPORT: Calm down. You'll give yourself an ulcer. May I have your password, please?

CONSUMER: What password? I don't have a password. This is the first time I've ever called about my new computer.

TECH SUPPORT: Oh. That is unfortunate. I can't help you if you don't have a password.

CONSUMER: You mean I've paid for a warranty I can't use?

TECH SUPPORT: Don't get so upset. You can apply for a new password.

CONSUMER: How do I do that?

TECH SUPPORT: Online. Just use your computer.

CONSUMER: I told you my computer isn't working!

TECH SUPPORT: You sound like you have high blood pressure. Have you spoken to your doctor about it?

CONSUMER: I have low blood pressure!! I don't need a doctor! I need a computer that works. Can you help me without a password?

TECH SUPPORT: Why don't you make one up? Use the name of your first dog.

CONSUMER: I never had a dog. I was always afraid of dogs.

TECH SUPPORT: I understand. I was always afraid of tigers.

CONSUMER: Do you understand I need help?

TECH SUPPORT: Okay. I'll waive the password...but only this time. I would like to give you a case number to use if you have to call about this problem again. Do you have a pencil handy?

CONSUMER: I'm ready.

TECH SUPPORT: Your case number is 6.

CONSUMER: That's it? Just 6?

TECH SUPPORT: That's it. Make sure you write it down so you don't forget it.

CONSUMER: I won't forget it.

TECH SUPPORT: I am required to tell you that this conversation may be recorded for training purposes.

CONSUMER: I've always wondered about that. Are you really recording this conversation?

TECH SUPPORT: Of course not.

CONSUMER: But you just said--

TECH SUPPORT: I said may be recorded...not will be recorded.

CONSUMER: I'm having trouble understanding you. Maybe it's the connection. Where are you?

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