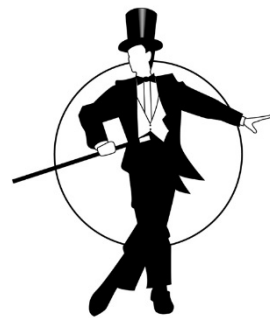


# Playing the Game

Joyce Schwartz



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ArtAge Publications  
Bonnie L. Vorenberg, President  
PO Box 19955  
Portland OR 97280  
503-246-3000 or 800-858-4998  
[bonniev@seniortheatre.com](mailto:bonniev@seniortheatre.com)  
[www.seniortheatre.com](http://www.seniortheatre.com)

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PLAYING THE GAME

By Joyce Schwartz

CAST

EARL HARPER: Single, seventy years young. Fancies himself a ladies' man. Takes pride in his appearance. Considers himself an expert on relationships.

OZZY BEAN: Divorced, late sixties, shortest in the group, insecure, hasn't dated in years, wants to get back in the game, but has no idea where to begin.

GEORGE DAVIS: Widower, seventy, pleasant demeanor, has held up well on the 'outside,' is in a serious relationship.

Place

Active adult community in Florida.

Time

A July Morning.

PLAYING THE GAME

*Setting: Outdoors. At Center is a park bench. There are clusters of trees behind the bench.*

EARL: I'm *really* hot.

OZZY: That's funny, I was just thinking it's a little on the cool side for July.

EARL: Not *that* kind of hot. I mean like desirable, irresistible hot.

GEORGE: Did you see Severino pitch last night? That's hot. You're not.

EARL: He was just lucky.

GEORGE: Oh yeah? When was the last time *you* got lucky?

EARL: It just so happens it was at the community cookout. I scored. Hit a home run!

OZZY: I was at the cookout the whole night. I didn't see you get to first base with anyone.

EARL: We were very discreet.

OZZY: Who's we?

EARL: Me and Olga.

GEORGE: You scored with Olga? Was she wearing red sneakers?

EARL: Red sneakers?

GEORGE: Yeah, like at the Villages. That's how you know they're available.

EARL: No red sneakers, just sandals. (*moves like he's swinging a bat*) I hit it right of the park. Wham, bam, thank you ma'am!

OZZY: Which one? I mean, where?

EARL: The broom closet in the clubhouse.

OZZY: Come on, you can't get in that closet. It's always locked.

EARL: Not if you know the secret to getting the keys to the kingdom.

GEORGE: I don't know what it cost you, but I hope his majesty got his money's worth.

EARL: Let's just say my investment paid off in dividends.

GEORGE: I have to admit, I'm impressed. So what sales pitch did you give her?

EARL: I told her I found her exotic. I loved her accent. It turns me on.

OZZY: Her accent turns you on? Are you nuts? She's from Brooklyn for Pete's sake.

EARL: You've obviously been out of commission for too long. You've forgotten how to win 'em over.

GEORGE: Yeah. You actually have to get off the bench to play the game. How long has it been since your divorce from Florence?

OZZY: Not long enough. I should have ended our marriage the day I came home from military duty. After two years away, I come home to an empty house. No note, nothing. A few hours later Florence comes walking in. You know where she was? At the movies. She said, "Ya didn't expect me to sit around all day waiting, for you, did ya?" Then she says, "I'll be back in a little while. I'm gonna take a nap." Nothing like a warm welcome home.

EARL: I would have walked out that very day. But look Ozzy, it's in the past. You deserve better now. Let's make up for lost time and get you on the right track. You can start by standing up straight (*demonstrates*). Exude an air of confidence. Whose eye to you want to catch?

OZZY: I kinda like Celeste.

EARL: Be careful with that one. You know how we like to commiserate on our health issues? One day she told me she has a hammer toe and a trigger finger. I said to myself, "This is a hidden message. Do things her way or she'll either beat you to death, or shoot you." Personally, I don't think she's that good looking to take the risk! But hey, whatever! George, pretend you're Celeste. Ozzy, you catch Celeste's eye and wink.

OZZY: (*winks*)

GEORGE: (*slaps Ozzy*)

OZZY: Why'd you do that?

GEORGE: You were being fresh.

OZZY: All I did was wink.

GEORGE: It was the way you did it. It was condescending.

OZZY: Oh give me a break. Earl locked Olga in the broom closet for heaven sake.

GEORGE: Well, I'm not that kind of girl.

OZZY: (*sits down again*) Earl, I just can't believe you and Olga are an item.

EARL: Yep, I'm in the big leagues now. We were rockin' and rollin', in this tiny broom closet. Good thing the door didn't swing open, we would have come flyin' out!

OZZY: You would have made the morning news with that one. So tell me, after you did it...

EARL: Did what?

OZZY: You know, 'it'. Did Olga light a cigarette?

EARL: Are you crazy? We were in a broom closet. If we did, we wouldn't be the only ones on fire! As it was, we barely had room to do the 7<sup>th</sup> inning stretch.

GEORGE: Do you always talk about your love life in baseball terms?

EARL: Hey, "I call it as I see it." By the way George, how are things going with you and Rhonda?

GEORGE: Couldn't be better. Unlike my late wife, Rhonda knows what balancing a check book means. And it isn't walking around balancing it on your head. I kid you not. Rhonda is so versed in finance, that when she took over her husband's business, the profits soared. Did the same with their portfolios. Mine too, I might add. She's attractive, funny, independent, and interesting. She really inspires me.

OZZY: I don't know about you but, I couldn't be attracted to a woman who makes me perspire.

EARL: He said *inspire*. Not perspire. Do you even know what the word means? What George is saying is, Rhonda opens his mind to endless possibilities. She makes him a better person.

OZZY: He can speak for himself. I think I'm fine the way I am.

GEORGE: Really? Here's my sunglasses. Take a look at your reflection. What do you see?

OZZY: Nothing?

GEORGE: *Exactly*. I rest my case. You want to attract women? You have to have a strategy. Both of you stand. (*they stand, facing each other*) Ozzy pretend Earl is a looker. I know I'm asking a lot. Act as if you really want to get to know her. What would you do?

OZZY: First I'll have to take my imagination to a whole new level. Like beyond the Twilight Zone. Let's see, I would approach Celeste using my most charming smile (*greatly exaggerated*), and say, "hel-loo lady."

## END OF FREEVIEW

*You'll want to read and perform this show!*