

Decisions

By Lauren Denson

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CHARACTERS

DAVID A confused white-collar worker (male).

LINDA His wife (female).

COSTUMES

DAVID
Ruffled suit
Untucked shirt
Untied tieShoe-laces untied, etc

LINDA
Pajamas
Robe

PROP LIST

Chair
Lamp
Telephone (although the lamp and telephone can be imagined)

Decisions was first performed with a series of other short pieces in a nonprofit show at Fort Worth Christian School in August of 2005. The entire show was directed by Lauren Denson, David was played by Matthew Newell and Linda was played by Grace Enlow.

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AT RISE: One chair is standing in a large spot light. DAVID is standing next to it, staring intently at it. HE sits, his knees shake and HE wipes his brow. HE jumps up and repeats the process several times. Finally HE stands and holds onto the back of the chair, exhausted. Enter LINDA.

LINDA: David?

DAVID: Yes?

LINDA: It's so late, why aren't you in bed? What are you doing out here?

DAVID: I don't think I can tell you.

LINDA: Oh, darling . . . what's the matter?

DAVID: I don't know . . . I don't know . . .

LINDA: Tell me.

DAVID: But, Linda, I can't. I mean, I could, but-

LINDA: Did something happen at work?

DAVID: Yes.

LINDA: You weren't fired?!

DAVID: No.

LINDA: Of course you weren't. They'd be crazy to fire you.

DAVID: Why is there a chair in here?

LINDA: What are you talking about? There has always been a chair in here. Remember, it was here before we even moved in.

DAVID: But, why?

LINDA: Gees, David, I don't know. I've never really thought about it.

DAVID: It's Blake's fault, you know.

LINDA: Who's Blake?

DAVID: He's the office finance clerk. And I think he knows what's going on.

LINDA: Well, I sure don't. David, are you in some kind of trouble?

DAVID: Yesterday Blake asked me to go over the finance report and choose the one department to be downsized in the coming quarter.

LINDA: And?

DAVID: That means people . . . our boss had pushed the decision off on Blake and Blake has pushed it off on me.

LINDA: Couldn't you just push it off on somebody else . . . I mean, if it bothers you so much.

DAVID: Oh, Linda, that's just the beginning of my problems.

LINDA: Sit down and tell me.

DAVID: I can't.

LINDA: Please tell me.

DAVID: No, I mean I can't sit down.

LINDA: Forget that and tell me.

DAVID: I can't do that either.

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LINDA: David, what's wrong with you? It's late . . . tell me and then let's go to bed.

DAVID: I could tell you, but then again I could not tell you. Or I could not not tell you.

LINDA: I am getting a migraine.

DAVID: You see, today I was sitting at my desk filling out these forms. Then I get to the space where I'm suppose to write in the name of the first guy to get the ax. Just a blank and my pen . . . my choice. It's so easy to just write a name down, without thinking about the repercussions of that.

LINDA: David . . . **(sits down and rubs her temples)**

DAVID: Wayne Stanson . . . that's the first guy I thought of. But wait, Wayne's wife just had a new baby. If I fire him then how are they going to pay all their bills and the costs of the new kid? I might be condemning the future president of the United States or the doctor who cures cancer to a childhood of poverty and ruin. What if Wayne gets so depressed he turns to alcohol and then his wife leaves him because she just can't take it anymore and the kid joins a gang because he feels empty when it comes to a family life? That's what writing Wayne's name in the blank means.

LINDA: David, that's all some hypothetical nonsense your mind made up because you don't like making decisions.

DAVID: Just because something isn't likely to happen does not mean it can't happen.

LINDA: So did you?

DAVID: Did I what?

LINDA: Fire Wayne?

DAVID: No.

LINDA: So who did you fire?

DAVID: Well, I decided to keep all the guys whose wives have had a baby within the last five years.

LINDA: Okay, and how many did that leave you as candidates for elimination?

DAVID: Less. I thought about Mike Rodgers. Do you remember him? He always threw those great New Year's parties.

LINDA: Oh yes . . . I remember Mike. No worries about him turning to alcoholism . . . he's already there. I will miss those wild parties though.

DAVID: No, I didn't fire him either.

LINDA: Why not?

DAVID: I owe him some money.

LINDA: So pay him back and then fire him.

DAVID: I can't do that.

LINDA: Why not?

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