

**PLEASE BE AWARE THAT
THIS PLAY IS FULLY PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT**

All plays, books, music and other materials published by Heartland Plays, Inc. are fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries which the United States has reciprocal relations including, but not limited to all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, The Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention. All rights to the plays and materials on our website are strictly reserved including, and without limitation, professional and amateur performance rights; motion pictures; public reading; radio and television broadcasting; audio and video recording and reproduction of any type known or yet to be invented; information storage and retrieval systems of any type known or yet to be invented; and the rights of translation into any and all languages. No individual or organization whether amateur or stock may perform this or any play published by Heartland Plays, Inc. without first obtaining advance permission from Heartland Plays, Inc. and paying the appropriate fees including Royalties and Single-Use Copyright fees. Heartland Plays, Inc. collects royalties on behalf of the Playwrights whose plays it publishes. Unauthorized copying, transcribing or reproduction of this or any play or excerpt, or storage or transmittal in any form and by any means whether known or yet to be invented, is strictly forbidden except as provided by Agreement with Heartland Plays, Inc. Any unauthorized use is a violation of copyright laws and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

FIVE SIMPLE RULES TO REMEMBER

1. DO take advantage of the free online perusal of our plays to help you make the best choice for your particular needs or production.
2. DO enjoy the convenience of our online purchase application for performance rights and single-use copyright.
3. DO understand that this play and all plays and materials on our website are controlled by Heartland Plays, Inc. and fully protected by copyright.
4. DO NOT attempt in any way to copy, transcribe or reproduce this play by any means or perform this play or use any play or material from our website without first receiving permission from Heartland Plays, Inc. Any attempt to use this or any other work without first obtaining permission is a violation of copyright and punishable by law.
5. DO NOT rob this Author or any of the Authors we represent of their right to be paid for the use of their property. It is a crime and it is wrong!

Product Code A0878-SP

The Lovebirds

A Short Comedy by
Nancy Gall-Clayton

**ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
REPRODUCTION WITHOUT SPECIFIC WRITTEN PERMISSION PROHIBITED**

**Performance Rights Available Exclusively through
Heartland Plays, Inc. at heartlandplays.com
playsnow@heartlandplays.com
customer service: 406-431-7680**

Copyright © 2019 by Nancy Gall-Clayton

The Lovebirds
by Nancy Gall-Clayton

CHARACTERS

1F/1M

VERONICA: *Female 20-30s; nonconformist, knows her own mind (literally a peach-faced lovebird)*

NIKO: *Male, 20-30s; nice guy, social skills not perfect (literally, a peach-faced lovebird)*

Note: Actors can be any race or ethnicity. Characters need not look like birds. Colorful clothing, a feather behind the ear perhaps, bird-like movements, and the dialogue will convey that they are not human.

SETTING

Present-day Namibia in southwestern Africa; spring
(Can be played bare stage)

SYNOPSIS

Although lovebirds supposedly mate for life, neither Veronica nor Niko has found “the one” yet, so their parents have arranged a meeting hoping the two will become a couple during the mating season.

The Lovebirds
by Nancy Gall-Clayton

AT RISE:

VERONICA is awkwardly trying to examine the back of her neck. Throughout, the birds preen and smooth their feathers, flutter their wings, and otherwise make birdlike movements.

VERONICA

Why did I agree to meet him? Can't my parents understand I don't care if I never find a mate? ... Gee, I'm sure my neck feathers used to be a brighter color, but I can't twist far enough around to tell.

NIKO enters and observes VERONICA.

NIKO

(Startling VERONICA)

Are you a contortionist?

VERONICA

No! Are you a spy?

NIKO

No!

VERONICA

You're an idiot, that's what you are. An idiot who must leave.

NIKO

I think you're very pretty even with your neck twisted around.

VERONICA

I'm expecting someone, so I must ask you to leave. ... Well, go on!

NIKO

I'm Niko, the one you're supposed to meet.

VERONICA

Darn.

NIKO

You must be Veronica.

VERONICA

This wasn't my idea.

NIKO

Mine either, but here we are at the roots of the marula tree as requested by our parents.

VERONICA

Which is depressing, humiliating, and frustrating!

NIKO

They mean well. We're an embarrassment to them, at least that's what mine say about me.

VERONICA

I just want to be left alone, so I can have adventures, travel, explore, try new things—but no, my parents keep trying to find me a mate.

NIKO

Mine are pushing me, too. "It's spring," they say. "Don't you feel a biological imperative?" Plus they say it's unnatural to wait so long.

VERONICA

Being unnatural isn't the worst thing in the world. I enjoy being unnatural.

NIKO

Maybe that's why you've never—

VERONICA

You're a fine one to criticize!

NIKO

I don't know how to do this.

VERONICA

Clearly.

NIKO

Look! Fruits from the marula tree, there on that low branch. Don't they look juicy and delicious?

VERONICA

I'm not hungry.

NIKO

I love marula fruits.

VERONICA

Eat up. ... Geez, how long do we have to spend together to satisfy our parents?

NIKO

Mine said fifteen minutes. I do think you're pretty.

VERONICA

You think you're pretty?

NIKO

I didn't say that.

VERONICA

You don't have to. Lovebirds all look the same, male and female. It takes an expert to figure out lovebird gender.

NIKO

I know that. I just haven't got wooing behavior figured out.

VERONICA

Don't compliment my looks again or I'll fly back home and tell my parents they picked another dud.

NIKO

I've never gone courting before, it's not my fault.

VERONICA

Mom and Dad forced me to date, but they'll never force me to fall in love. I should have left home and joined a circus as soon as I could fly.

NIKO

I thought about leaving home, too, but I was afraid I'd hurt my parents' feelings if I broke tradition. Everyone in our family – except me – found a mate as soon as they matured.

VERONICA

At ten months.

NIKO

Right, they'd declare their love, the male would feed the female, the female would make a nest—

VERONICA

Why would the male feed the female? Female lovebirds can get their own food. I get my own. Oh, hold it! Didn't you ask if I wanted a piece of fruit? Were you attempting to engage in courting behavior, you ... you ... you...

NIKO

I did not feed you. There's a difference.

VERONICA

I certainly hope so, but let's move on to the nest. Why should the female build the nest?

NIKO

Because she's the one who's going to lay the eggs.

VERONICA

That doesn't seem fair either.

NIKO

It's biology.

VERONICA

Can't lovebirds rise above biology?

NIKO

Not on egg-laying. Males can help build a nest, but they usually don't.

VERONICA

Fine. So go on describing how things happened in your family. I ignored all that nonsense in my family.

NIKO

After the nest is ready, the pair – I hope I'm not shocking you – the two lovebirds, well, they, you know, uh, they make love.

VERONICA

Duh.

NIKO

And ten days later, the female lays an egg. And then she lays another egg in a day or two and another egg in another day or two, until there are at least four, maybe six or seven eggs.

VERONICA

And all this goes on while the male is just having a great old time, right Niko? Flying around, hanging out with friends, staying up late, eating marula fruit.

NIKO

Not at all! They're lovebirds. They love each other. They stay together. Are you sure you're not an orphan?

VERONICA

I'm clearly not an orphan. My parents conspired with your parents to arrange this meet-up.

NIKO

Oh, right.

VERONICA

I've made it a point to avoid watching lovey-dovey stuff. Any time I saw lovebirds courting, I'd close my eyes and fly in circles until I was so dizzy I had to lie down. My siblings and nieces and nephews may have acted exactly like yours, but I didn't see it. ... What happens next?

NIKO

The happy couple waits for the eggs to hatch.

VERONICA

Happy?

NIKO

So they say. The eggs hatch in three weeks.

VERONICA

The male feeds the female, and the next thing you know there's a whole family of lovebirds chirp-chirp-chirping away?

NIKO

Yup.

VERONICA

I might be willing to feed a male if he'd lay the eggs.

NIKO

You'd be willing to be with me? Really?

VERONICA

That's not what I said. I might be willing to feed a male if that male would do my part of the reproduction process.

NIKO

Males can't lay eggs, Veronica.

VERONICA

It's not fair!

NICO

I'd do everything possible to make our experience different if you'd like to, well, move in together. I'd do everything I could to make you happy. Honest.

VERONICA

Can you sing?

NIKO

I'm told I have a lovely voice.

NIKO sings ... Any kind of tweeting, la-la-la, etc. is fine, even a few bars from a familiar song in the public domain. but here's the real thing if you're so inclined:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dnzoRK4fz-k>

VERONICA

That was kind of nice, Niko.

NIKO

Any time.

VERONICA

Don't think I've accepted your unspoken offer.

NIKO

Uh-oh. Was I supposed to make an offer?

VERONICA

You make an offer, which I accept – or not.

NIKO

I wish I'd had more experience with courting, but you know what really matters? We're the same species, meaning we can create baby lovebirds.

VERONICA

I'd be a terrible mate and a terrible mother.

NIKO

I'm willing to take the risk.

VERONICA

If I felt miserable, I'd fly off into the wilderness. You'd never see me again. And by the way, I haven't accepted your offer.

NIKO

Please do. At the very least we'd be getting our parents to leave us alone.

VERONICA

Maybe we could skip the part about having baby chicks?

NIKO

Maybe.

VERONICA

Namibia has enough lovebirds already. My siblings have given my parents dozens of grand-chicks, great-grand-chicks, great-great-great, and so on and so forth. Anyway, how would you know what species we are?

NIKO

I followed some scientists around who were studying us here in Namibia. In case you're interested, we're both *Agapornis roseicollis*.*

[* Pronunciation doesn't really matter. But it's something like "ag-uh-poor-nus, rose-ike-aliss, <http://www.pronouncekiwi.com/Agapornis%20roseicollis> - 2nd US version]

VERONICA

You're a show-off and conceited. I don't think this meet-up was a very good idea, so if you'll excuse me, I've got better things to do. ... "I followed some scientists around!" Geez!

VERONICA starts to exit.

NIKO

I wasn't bragging, just explaining. I'm trying my best, Veronica.

VERONICA

See you later. Not.

NIKO

Before you go, I've got a little gift for you.

VERONICA

What kind of gift?

NIKO

Something to eat.

VERONICA

Sounds like a trick, but I'm starting to get hungry. What is it?

NIKO

Beetle larva.

VERONICA

I don't eat other animals.

NIKO

It's larva.

VERONICA

Even worse.

NIKO

I was trying to be thoughtful.

VERONICA

I like seeds. I could eat seeds all day, but larva – yuck! See ya, Niko. It wasn't meant to be.

NIKO

Wait, Veronica! I brought seeds, too. I thought beetle larva was more of a delicacy, but please have some seeds.

VERONICA

Let me think a minute.

NIKO

It doesn't mean we have to become a couple. I share food all the time.

VERONICA

Okay, I'll try some. ... Mmm, tasty, delicious! You say you share food?

NIKO

It's the least I can do since I'm not reproducing.

VERONICA

Right.

NIKO

You've never ever had a mate?

VERONICA

I've resisted all offers. I don't want to be stuck with one lovebird till I die.

NIKO

That's your only problem?

VERONICA

The biggest one.

NIKO

I've got news.

VERONICA

From your scientist friends?

NIKO

Actually, yes.

VERONICA

I'm listening. Sort of.

NIKO

Even though most lovebirds stay together their whole lives, some split up.

VERONICA

My mother would be mortified! A late bloomer daughter who finally finds a mate and then leaves him.

This is Not the End of the Play
Ending Intentionally Omitted for Security Purposes