

WHO`S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF

GEORGE

So? (Pause) So . . . you're in the math department, eh?

NICK

No ... uh, no.

GEORGE

Martha said you were. I think that's what she said. What made you decide to be a teacher?

NICK

Oh . . . well, the same things that . . . uh . . . motivated you, I imagine.

GEORGE

What were they?

NICK

Pardon?

GEORGE

I said, what were they? What were the things that motivated me?

NICK

Well . . . I'm sure I don't know.

GEORGE

You just finished saying that the things that motivated you were the same things that motivated me.

NICK

I said I imagined they were.

GEORGE

Did you? Well. .You like it here?

NICK

Yes . . . it's . . . it's fine.

GEORGE

I mean the University.

Nick

Oh. ... I thought you meant. . . .

GEORGE

Yes ... I can see you did. I meant the University.

NICK

Well, I ... I like it . . . fine. Just fine. You . . . you've been here quite a long time, haven't you?

GEORGE

What? Oh . . . yes. Ever since I married . . . uh, What's-her-name . . . uh, Martha. Even before that. Forever. Dashed hopes, and good intentions. Good, better, best, bested. do you like that for a declension, young man? Eh?

NICK

Sir, I'm sorry if we. . . .

GEORGE

You didn't answer my question.

NICK

Sir?

GEORGE

Don't you condescend to me! I asked you how you liked that for a declension: Good; better; best; bested. Hm? Well?

NICK

I really don't know what to say.

GEORGE

You really don't know what to say?

NICK

All right . . . what do you want me to say? Do you want me to say it's funny, so you can contradict me and say it's sad? Or do you want me to say it's sad so you can turn around and say no, it's funny. You can play that damn little game any way you want to, you know!

GEORGE

Very good! Very good!

NICK

And when my wife comes back, I think we'll just. . . .

GEORGE

Now, now . . . calm down, my boy. You want another drink?

NICK

. you and your wife . . . seem to be having some sort of a . . .

GEORGE

Martha and I are having . . . nothing. Martha and I are merely . . . exercising . . . that's all .Don't pay any attention to it.

NICK

It's just that I don't like to . . . become involved .uh . . . in other people's affairs.

GEORGE

Well, you'll get over that. . . small college and all. Musical beds is the faculty sport around here.

NICK

Sir?

GEORGE

How old are you?

NICK

Twenty-eight.

GEORGE

I'm forty something. Aren't you surprised? I mean . . . don't I look older? Doesn't this . . . gray quality suggest the fifties?

NICK

I think you look . . . fine.

GEORGE

I've always been lean ... I haven't put on five pounds since I was your age. I don't have a paunch, either. . . . What I've got . . . I've got this little distension just below the belt ... but it's hard . . . It's not soft flesh. I use the handball courts. How much do you weigh?

NICK

Hundred and fifty-five, sixty .

GEORGE

Martha is a hundred and eight . . . years old. She weighs somewhat more than that. How old is your wife?

NICK

She's twenty-six.

GEORGE

Martha is a remarkable woman. I would imagine she weighs around a hundred and ten.

NICK

Your . . . wife . . . weighs . . . ?

GEORGE

No, no, my boy. Yours! Your wife. My wife is Martha.

NICK

Yes ... I know.

GEORGE

If you were married to Martha you would know what it means. But then, if I were married to your wife I would know what that means, too . . . wouldn't I?

NICK

Yes.

GEORGE

Martha says you're in the Math Department, or something.

NICK

No . . . I'm not.

GEORGE

Martha is seldom mistaken . . . maybe you should be in the Math Department, or something.

NICK

I'm a biologist. I'm in the Biology Department.

GEORGE

Martha tells me often, that I am in the History Department ... as opposed to being the History Department ... in the sense of running the History Department. I do not run the History Department.

NICK

Well, I don't run the Biology Department.

GEORGE
You're twenty-one!

NICK
Twenty-eight.

GEORGE
Twenty-eight! Perhaps when you're forty something and look fifty-five, you will run the History Department. . . .

NICK
. . . Biology. . . .

GEORGE
... the Biology Department. Your wife doesn't have any hips ... has she ... does she?

NICK
What?

GEORGE
I don't mean to suggest that I'm hip-happy. . I was implying that your wife is . . . slim-hipped.

NICK
Yes ... she is.

GEORGE
You have any kids?

NICK
Uh ... no ... not yet. You?

GEORGE
No kids

NICK
Not yet.

GEORGE
But you are going to have kids . . . anyway.

NICK
Yes . . . certainly. We . . . want to wait ... a little . . . until we're settled. I hope we'll stay here.

GEORGE

And every definition has its boundaries, eh? Well, it isn't a bad college

NICK

I don't mean . . . forever.

GEORGE

How many kids you going to have?

NICK

I ... I don't know ... My wife is. . . .

GEORGE

Slim-hipped.

NICK

Yes.