

**The Last Point of View**

A play by

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## **Setting**

George and Kay's kitchen.

## **Characters**

George      Thirty to forty  
Marie      Neighbor, older than George and Kay  
Kay         George's wife, thirty to forty  
Miles      Physicist, older than George and Kay

## **Synopsis**

What if you changed everyday but only your wife knew how? And what if she changed and only you knew what was different? What if you didn't see eye to eye anyhow?

*The Last Point of View* humorously explores "you're not the person I married." The microwave-sized time machine George built has a side effect—it changes he and his wife Kay, their differences perceivable only to the other person. Seduced and alienated by what it can do, they struggle in a marriage that was shaky before it became unstable. Like a guy trying to fix a recipe with too much salt, George tries to fix their relationship, only to make it worse, and then nonexistent. His one chance to retrieve what he once had is an all or nothing gamble, which succeeds.

## **Notes on the time machine:**

1. Each time the machine runs, the lights dim.
2. Each use is accompanied by a degree of dizziness by George and Kay. The degree varies from nearly none to much according to situation.
3. Each time it is used, reality changes in some slight way, varying with situation from slight and not noticed (when used with neutral item like banana) to large and noticeable (when used with personal item shared by married couple). Create as possible: changed items, moved items, overall slight change in tint of lighting, etc.)

**Scene 1**

Messy kitchen, counter littered with dishes, etc. Refrigerator, wall phone, radio. Easily readable clock, calendar. Table and two chairs.

*(GEORGE sits at table staring at his LAPTOP, papers spread out around him. After a minute there is KNOCKING. GEORGE starts to rise but changes his mind.)*

GEORGE

WHO IS IT?

MARIE

MARIE!

GEORGE

COME ON IN!

*(MARIE enters.)*

MARIE

Hi, George.

GEORGE

Hi, Marie.

MARIE

Workin at home this weekend?

GEORGE

Yeah.

MARIE

Gettin anything done?

GEORGE

Not yet.

MARIE

Coulda answered the door then. ... But then if you coulda done that, you probably coulda cleaned the kitchen too.

GEORGE

Been busy.

MARIE

Doin what? Not writing and not cleaning the kitchen. Got writer's block?

GEORGE

It's more like...paralysis.

*(GEORGE looks around the kitchen, taking in the mess as if it's new.)*

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Kay's coming home tonight. I should clean up.

MARIE

You should. The little things matter, you know.

GEORGE

You know something I don't?

MARIE

I ran into Kay. She said... I dunno, seems you've been missing in action for awhile. Some project. Not this one I guess. Hard to miss you in the middle of the kitchen.

GEORGE

Another one. This is for work.

MARIE

Well, good luck with Kay. Can I borrow your cooler? The one you keep in the garage.

GEORGE

Sure, know where it is?

MARIE

It's in the back of my car. Thanks. See you later. I'm off to have fun. Try it some time.

GEORGE

No need. I read about it in a book.

*(MARIE leaves. GEORGE stares at his laptop, unmoving. The hands on the CLOCK spin forward to 3:00. GEORGE looks at his watch, and gets up. He walks to stage left, walks back a short distance, and turns, now pacing back and forth anxiously, waiting.)*

*(As GEORGE relocates, the LIGHTS go down on kitchen and up on two chairs facing audience where George paces.)*

**Scene 2**

White zone at airport.

VOICE

The White Zone is for the loading and unloading of passengers only. There is no parking in the white zone.

*(GEORGE looks up at the voice.)*

VOICE (CONT'D)

There is no parking in the white zone. The White Zone is for the loading and unloading of passengers only. ... You cannot park here.

*(GEORGE gives voice the finger as KAY walks up with suitcase, carrying a purse.)*

KAY

Hi, George.

*(KAY accepts a peck on the cheek. GEORGE puts her bag behind seat, ushers her into car, and gets in.)*

GEORGE

Hi. You look good. I'm glad you're back.

KAY

You noticed I was gone. How nice. I had a marvelous time.

GEORGE

How's your sister?

KAY

She's fine, says hi. I needed a break.

GEORGE

You look rested.

*(A CAR HORN honks. GEORGE drives off. As he negotiates traffic, KAY studies him.)*

KAY

You look tired. Are you all right?

GEORGE

I've been working hard. *(Pause.)* Kay, I finished the unified field modulator, the time machine. It's finished. Done.

KAY

That's nice, George. I know how much it means to you. Have you been getting enough sleep?

GEORGE

*(forcibly calm)*

Kay, I—

KAY

*(pointing)*

—What kind of car is that?

GEORGE

What? It's a Porsche. Kay—

KAY

—could we afford one?

GEORGE

We could buy one. We couldn't afford one. Kay, will you listen to me for a minute?

KAY

I'm sorry. You were saying. You finished your project. The one that kept you in the basement for months. While I used our season tickets to the theater, alone, and made excuses for you at parties, and Miles' funeral.

GEORGE

Our Miles? Physicist Miles across the street?

KAY

Yes, our Miles. While you were in the basement. When I came down dressed in black and asked if you wanted to go to the service, you said you were busy. As I remember, you had an accent that day. You missed the chance to hear him described as a humble servant of science.

*(Pause.)*

GEORGE

Miles? Humble? ... I was saying that I finished the time machine. Finished it. It's done. It works.

KAY

Of course, the time machine. So you can ... travel in it?

GEORGE

No. It's a little one.

KAY

That's right. A little one. So, with this little time machine, you can, like, put a pencil or something in it and move it to, say, next week?

GEORGE

Yes.

KAY

And it doesn't disappear?

GEORGE

No, it's just older. Lives at that date, but today.

KAY

Why doesn't it go to tomorrow? Disappear in the today?

GEORGE

I couldn't afford to build that part of it, even in a model. And if I did, I couldn't test it, because the pencil would be gone. I didn't get how to retrieve anything. Yet.

KAY

I see.

*(Pause.)*

KAY (CONT'D)

You've done this, put something in the machine, a spoon or pencil or something, and moved it in time?

GEORGE

Yes. I've done it.

KAY

And you can tell your machine works because the pencil or whatever is older?

GEORGE

Kay, think I'm crazy if you like. But don't think I'm stupid!

*(GEORGE looks and leans toward KAY, moving the wheel; the car drifts and there is a HONK and GEORGE swerves back into his lane.)*

KAY

Watch out! ... No, no, I didn't mean it that way. I thought, maybe, the eraser was smaller or something. Really. (Pause, no answer.) George? ... Shit.

*(GEORGE drives in silence. TRAFFIC sounds and passing lights show passage of time. GEORGE turns into driveway and stops. He gets out of car and CLOSES DOOR and starts to leave.)*

KAY (CONT'D)

What about my bag?

*(LIGHT fades on car and comes up on kitchen unit during following actions.)*

*(GEORGE gets the bag and hurries to kitchen. He drops the bag on the floor. KAY follows.)*

**Scene 3**

Kitchen.

*(GEORGE begins looking frantically in refrigerator. KAY enters and puts her purse on the table.)*

KAY

George, what's the matter with you? Calm down. You're making me nervous.

*(GEORGE stops. KAY takes a liquor bottle from cupboard and pours a glass.)*

KAY (CONT'D)

Here.

GEORGE

The bananas are rotten!

KAY

If the bananas are rotten, I'm sure they can wait another minute.

*(GEORGE gets down on his knees and begins frantically searching in fridge.)*

GEORGE

I want to show you how this thing works. I know they're in here somewhere! I put them in here!

KAY

Get a grip, George! When you were building this thing, I thought you'd been lobotomized. *(Takes a drink.)* Now you're too wired to even drink. Can't you find some middle ground? I think its time for a pill. Join me? They come in fruit flavors now.

*(KAY puts her glass down and begins looking through her purse.)*

GEORGE

I'll calm down when I show you I'm not crazy! .. AH-HA!

*(KAY jerks involuntarily and the contents of her purse erupt. GEORGE looks at her, smiling, holding up a SHRIVELED BLACK BANANA.)*

GEORGE (CONT'D)

It's perfect!

KAY

Yes, George. It's perfect. But I'm not. I'm going to lie down. *(Starts to leave.)*

GEORGE

No! Wait!

*(GEORGE scurries to KAY on his hands and knees and guides her to a chair. He gives her her drink and sits opposite her with his banana. He holds it up and turns it over in his hand like a fine cigar.)*

GEORGE (CONT'D)

How old would you say this banana is?

KAY

I don't know. I don't care. Tell me, how old is your banana?

GEORGE

Let's see. I didn't buy them. You must have, before you left. When was that?

KAY

Does it really matter? It's a bad banana. I can see that.

GEORGE

How do you like your bananas?

*(Pause.)*

KAY

Slightly green on the ends. No black spots. No bruises. No more than two labels on it if possible. Organic. Dolphin safe. And I'm just playing along here. Don't think we're having a real conversation.

GEORGE

I'll send it back oh a week and a half, and you'll have a lovely slightly green on the ends banana.

*(GEORGE moves some bags on the counter and reveals his microwave-derived time machine.)*

KAY

Is that my new \$600 microwave with auto-defrost, speed cook, convection, and crisping! Crisping, Dammit I waited my whole life for that microwave!

GEORGE

Please, Kay, just give me a minute to show you. You'll forget about the microwave.

*(GEORGE puts the banana in the time machine and punches buttons to set the time, then pushes a button on top. The RED LIGHT comes on steady as the machine HUMS. Then the GREEN LIGHT comes on with an mobile phone RINGTONE.)*