

Discussion forum post

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Significance of the Set Directions in a Play Naked Lunch The play tells the story of two former lovers, Vernon and Lucy, who have met for a lunch. The scene takes place at the man`s apartment where he had laid a table and prepared steaks and wine. Suddenly it turns out the woman, Lucy, became a vegetarian and cannot eat meat. This novelty drives Vernon crazy and he becomes aggressive and dominant. First, he questions Lucy to find out the reason of turning to vegetarianism. Vernon even suggests that reason was in him and blames Lucy for her behavior:

“ You were always fond of cataloguing the careless things I said or did”.

At this moment the viewer realizes that misunderstanding between the couple is deep and serious, and Lucy`s refusal from steaks serves only as an excuse for the argument (and it is no wonder they broke up). Unexpectedly Lucy claims she does not want to eat anything with face. Vernon stands up and says that he does not see any face, but Lucy keeps mentioning her arguments. Finally Vernon utters his key phrase:

“ I invite you over, cook a nice steak, set out flowers, napkins, the whole nine yards...Figure I`ll open a bottle of wine, apologize... maybe we`ll get naked, be like old times.”

The point is that the author mentions in the beginning of the play that there must be “ a small vase with too many flowers or a large vase with too few” which can be interpreted that there is never enough. It can be any vase, but it still will not match with the flowers. This hint on Vernon`s carelessness and inability to find the right vase for the right quantity of flowers implies hidden conflict of the couple. No matter what he did or does, everything seems purposeless and not matching. Lucy notices this awkward vase and says:

“ I appreciate the napkins”.

So both of them feel that nothing can work out because everything is made on spot and even flowers that are supposed to adorn the dining room feel awkward. Thus, this simple detail allows creating the atmosphere of discomfort and senselessness.