



## **Barefoot in the Park**

*Neil Simon*

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## **Barefoot in the Park** Neil Simon

Paul and Corie Bratter are newlyweds in every sense of the word. He's a straight-as-an-arrow lawyer and she's a free spirit always looking for the latest kick. Their new apartment is her most recent find-too expensive with bad plumbing and in need of a paint job.

After a six day honeymoon, they get a surprise visit from Corie's loopy mother and decide to play matchmaker during a dinner with their neighbor-in-the-attic Velasco, where everything that can go wrong, does. Paul just doesn't understand Corie, as she sees it. He's too staid, too boring and she just wants him to be a little more spontaneous, running "barefoot in the park" would be a start...

## **Barefoot in the Park Details**

Date : Published March 30th 2010 by Samuel French, Inc. (first published 1963)

ISBN : 9780573605857

Author : Neil Simon

Format : Paperback 108 pages

Genre : Plays, Theatre, Fiction, Humor, Comedy, Drama, Audiobook

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## From Reader Review Barefoot in the Park for online ebook

### Alana says

This was a fun, quirky little tale essentially about the first real fight between a newlywed couple. Funny, ridiculous in points, and just enough to make you appreciate the relationships in your life. Not a classic by any means, but a short, interesting read, and I'm sure a fun comedy to see on stage.

3/5

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### Rachel Swords says

Kind of hard to like this play since Corie is such an airhead. I guess one has to see it fully performed to enjoy the whole thing.

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### Diane says

Paul and Corie Bratter have been married just six days when they move into their first home together - an apartment five floors up (six, if you count the stoop) with a broken skylight (in winter), no furniture, and no bathtub. About the only thing that works is the phone. Paul is conservative, down to earth, and sensible. Corie is his total opposite - happy, extroverted, and fun loving. She sees the best in everything and everyone.

Oh, the neighbor in the attic (Victor Velasco) has to climb through the Bratters' bedroom window to get to his own apartment because he has been locked out by the landlord due to not paying his rent. Victor befriends Corie, though Paul has serious doubts about him - Victor has been married three times and is referred to as a "Bluebeard." Charming, funny, and totally unconventional, he has more in common with Corie than Paul does. On the other hand, Paul is much more like

Corie sees Victor as a potential match for her widowed mother, Ethel Banks, who is trying to deal with the marriage of her only child. Ethel is not the stereotypical interfering mother/mother-in-law. She's worried about her daughter, but also lonely. It's as if Corie's newfound independence has left Ethel with no purpose in life. Corie sets her mother up on a blind date with Victor - though she doesn't mention this to Ethel. The four of them go to an Albanian restaurant chosen by Victor, and the differences between Corie and Paul become extremely evident. Corie and Paul have to decide - is their marriage worth saving? Are they two different to stay together?

"Barefoot in the Park" has its serious moments, but it's mostly very funny. The last time I laughed this much listening to an audiobook was Cabin Pressure. Laura Linney (as Corie) and Eric Stoltz (as Paul) are hilarious. I loved Paul's descriptions of their neighbors, especially the one in Apartment 4D:

"No one has come in or gone out in three years, except every morning there are nine empty cans of tuna fish outside the door." (Paul)

"Really? Who do you think lives there?" (Corie)





### Sanjaaab says

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### ?Susan? says

This was thoroughly enjoyable and far too short. The cast was fantastic and perfect for this Neil Simon's timeless story.

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### Cassie says

An American classic comedy. It's a little dated, but still pretty entertaining. The audiobook I listened to had Laura Linney as Corie, and I think it was a perfect match.

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### Arezu Wishka says

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### Lindsay Wilson says

Yeah, okay. I get why people like this play. It's charming and reasonably funny, but it's also gotten very dated, particularly in terms of gender roles. And if we're being honest here, Corie is kind of a huge baby, no? She and Paul have their first and only fight and she's hysterically shrieking about wanting a divorce and then doesn't let up about it til the play is basically over. It's hard to sympathize with her when Paul is being so reasonable and she's losing her shit. I also had a hard time understanding why she cares so much about what

her mother thinks of her apartment when she's supposed to be this unencumbered free-spirit. Anyway, the play has a nice ending that will leave audiences smiling, but I think it's lost a lot of the appeal it probably had when it first debuted.

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### **Brad says**

I can't believe I hadn't seen this before. Not on stage, not on screen. I am kind of glad I hadn't, however. There is something about reading a play blankly that inspires the imagination, and never having seen this staged allowed me to direct it all in my head with the gentle nudging of Neil Simon.

I did like *Barefoot in the Park*. I did laugh. I am seriously looking forward to watching it now, but ...

... But, I dunno. It is from the seventies. It is cheesy. It is problematic. But fuck that! It was still fun, and isn't fun what it is all about with a comedy? I think so.

Later ...

Now that was a lame, late night, too much wine review. I think I said the same thing about fun being what comedy is all about when I discussed *Last of the Red Hot Lovers*, and the repetition of that sentiment doesn't sit well in my head. Sure fun and humour are good, but for a comedy to really hold up (especially forty years and more later) there has to be something more to it than mere fun. I am not sure there is much more to *Barefoot in the Park*.

So yes, I reiterate that it is fun. But beyond that I am struggling to see what it has going for it; in fact, having rewatched episodes of *Brady Bunch*, *Mary Tyler Moore*, *WKRP*, and *M\*A\*S\*H\** this week, *Barefoot in the Park* seems to have less going for it than those half-hour sit-coms. If anything, *Barefoot in the Park* is just a long form sit-com. Attractive, newlywed couple in a slightly smaller version of Monica's *Friends* apartment, dealing with their wacky neighbours and Mother(-in-law) newly returned to the dating game with the suavest of their neighbours. There are the usual husband-wife, overly emotional, let's get divorced hi-jinx, absentee landlord annoyances, silly NYC jokes, and that is about it. Meanwhile, the sitcoms I watched in the same period dealt with issues of relationship age gaps, the conventions around death and funerals, gender roles in the work place, homo and transphobia, medical ethics, anti-war criticism and lots of different takes on sexuality. I'll take the four sit-coms over *Barefoot in the Park*, I think. So I am dropping my initial three star review to a two star. I think that better suits my sober feelings.

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### **Gary says**

I guess half the sitcoms of the 60s-70s have Neil Simon's humor. It's great stuff.

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### **Amanda says**

5 stars for the great mood I'm in right now. This play is just plain silliness, which normally doesn't float my boat. But man, oh, man, today it just hit the spot. We meet this young newlywed couple. She's happy-go-

lucky and he's... Well, he's a lawyer. And a real stuffed- shirt. And in the face of a tiny Manhattan apartment with a hole in the skylight and reversed plumbing, their 2 week old marriage falls apart! But not to worry-- they get back together. (Don't bitch about spoilers, people. First off, you weren't gonna read this anyway, and second, it's Neil Simon so you have to expect a happy ending.) Ok, anyway, they get back together, but not before lots of whackiness ensues. Their upstairs neighbor (who lives in the attic) is really my kinda guy-- eating funky foods, saying funky stuff--I'd fix him up with my grandmother if he existed in real life. And thanks to the funky neighbor, they all sorta get a whole new lease on life and re-learn to love each other and live happily after (and hopefully, have fantastic sex 3-5 times per week for all eternity).

Hey, Jini and Christina, let's do this play in February. It's a technician's nightmare and we can't afford to build a set, but it sure is a cute love story!!!

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### **Lori says**

I picked the perfect time of year to read this cozy, funny little play about a couple just beginning to carve out their new lives together as newlyweds. I love autumn in NY!

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### **Kat says**

Basic Plot: Paul and Corie are two newlyweds trying to figure each other out and make their brand-new marriage work despite their personal differences.

This play was cute, but is getting to be considerably dated. As it was first performed in 1963 (and was written for that time period), I think that marriage is a bit different today. Paul and Corie hardly seem to know what they've gotten into by marrying each other. Paul is shocked by Corie's adventurousness, and she is annoyed by his conservatism. I can't help but think that today, people getting married seem to have a much better idea of what they are getting into when they marry. Why is this an issue? Well, as a theatre person who would theoretically be seeking to put on the show, I would have trouble getting my actors to connect to the character interactions. The cast and I would then have trouble selling it to an audience who doesn't operate this way anymore and doesn't have the benefit of weeks of getting used to the ideas the director bashes into the heads of the actors. Considering my acting pool is a bunch of teenagers, this is doubly hard. Corie is a housewife and happy in that position. The big lesson of the play is that she needs to try to take care of her husband and make him happy. Now, I agree with this, but as one side of a two-sided coin that involves BOTH spouses taking care of each OTHER and making EACH OTHER happy. The funniest moments in the play involve Paul being drunk, and most of the other funny moments relate to other characters drinking/being drunk. This is fine for adults, but at the high school level isn't entirely appropriate. Overall it's not bad, but I don't know that it's a show I'd ever actually seek to put on.

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