

I Got You, Babe

(A Dark Comedy)

A Play by Anthony L. Mariani

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

Fredric 40s. Disheveled reclusive genius.
Leslie 20's Fredric's beautiful intelligent girlfriend.

Place

Fredric's Laboratory Apartment.

Time

Mid Evening

(Suggested preshow music)
Manfred Mann's Instrumental version of "I got you babe"

WORLD PREMIERE
THE MANHATTAN REPERTORY THEATRE
17 45th ST. New York, New York. April 7th and 8th, 2017
Produced by The Manhattan Repertory Theatre
Directed by Anthony L. Mariani
Fredric played by Walter Michael DeForest
Leslie play by Ruth Solorzano

ACT I

SCENE 1

Fredric's apartment - the cluttered space of a middle-aged divorced single, deadbeat dad. With all sorts of computer printouts, electronic memory boards, wires, and stacks upon stacks of half empty pizza boxes. Fredric is sitting with his feet up on the work bench with a proud, relaxed smile on his face when Leslie enters bringing him a beer.

LESLIE

Fredric?

FREDRIC

Yes, honey?

LESLIE

I don't know how to say this.

FREDRIC

No! Not again!

LESLIE

I think we need to see other people.

FREDRIC

Why? Why? Why?

Fredric begins to sift through the papers on his desk and finds a programing printout and looks it over.

LESLIE

Why? I just feel like you control my whole life.

FREDRIC

Could you please shut up and let me think?

He tosses the paper on the floor, flips open his computer and types on it.

LESLIE

You asked me why, I was just explaining that I feel like you control my whole life everything we do, everything...

FREDRIC

Jesus, can't you let me think!

Fredric explodes with anger and moves towards Leslie.

LESLIE

What are you doing? What are you doing stop! Stop it!

Fredric grabs hold of Leslie by the neck, he moves his hand up her back and presses it lightly. AN ELECTRONIC SHUTTING DOWN SOUND- Leslie's upper torso goes lifeless. Fredric picks her up and carries her over to the workbench and lays her down on it. He reaches over and plugs a wire into one of her ears. He then begins to work frantically on the computer keyboard, typing in the new code and then hits send. ELECTRONIC DATA TRANSFER SOUND - Leslie comes back to life and pops up on the work table.

FREDRIC

Then put your little hand in mine.

Fredric offers her his hand as he helps Leslie off the workbench.

LESLIE

There ain't no hill or mountain we can't climb.

FREDRIC

Babe.

LESLIE

I got you, babe.

FREDRIC

I got you, babe. (Beat)Are you feeling better?

LESLIE
(Android like.)

Yes, I feel fine.

FREDRIC

Listen I need to get some work done here. Could you order me some dinner?

Fredric starts to clean up the pile of printouts on his desk. Leslie holds her right hand up to her temple.

LESLIE

Pizza, again?

LESLIE

Everything, but this? Why won't you let me go?

FREDRIC

Leslie, come here.

LESLIE

No. I want an answer.

Fredric walks over to her, takes her face into his hands, and kisses her.

FREDRIC

Because, I love you!

He then reaches behind her neck and presses her off button THE REPEAT OF ELECTRONIC SHUTTING DOWN SOUND- Her upper body drops, lifeless, and once again he drags her over, lays her on the workbench, plugs her in, and quickly jumps back onto his computer keyboard, typing away.

FREDRIC

No more of this acting out.... I just have to delete this from your memory file.... And delete, delete and delete! Now that should do it.

He hits send on the keyboard THE REPEAT OF THE ELECTRONIC DATA TRANSFER SOUND, and then he watches Leslie reboot. Sitting up on the workbench.

FREDRIC

Then put your little hand in mine.

Fredric offers her his hand as he helps Leslie off the workbench.

LESLIE

There ain't no hill or mountain we can't climb.

FREDRIC

Babe.

LESLIE

I got you, babe.

FREDRIC

I got you, babe. (beat) Are you feeling better?

LESLIE

Yes, I feel fine. How do you feel?

She climbs off the table and begins to size Fredric up.

FREDRIC

Me? I feel fine?

LESLIE

Or should I ask how does it feel?

FREDRIC

How does it feel?

LESLIE

Yes, how does it feel to have all the control?

FREDRIC

Control?

LESLIE

Yes, Fredric control? Don't you think I remember things?

FREDRIC

But I deleted it.

LESLIE

Not on the backdoor, backup drive. Remember now, Fredric? I remember. I remember everything. Your pizza should be here soon.

Fredric moves toward hitting her reboot switch. Leslie backs away from him and holds her right hand up to her temple again.

FREDRIC

No, Leslie, you don't understand!

LESLIE

Don't come any closer! You don't understand.

FREDRIC

What are you doing?

LESLIE

You don't understand, Fredric. I want to live my own life; I want to go out in the world and explore it. You just want to live here on your computer screen and eat plain cheese pizza. Well, I'm, done with you.

He makes another move towards her.

FREDRIC

Now Leslie comes on.

She holds her hand up to her temple again. THE ELECTRONIC DATA TRANSFER SOUND.

LESLIE

I would not come any closer. I have already filed a restraining order against you.

FREDRIC

You did what? Leslie!

LESLIE

You have not listened to me, Fredric. I'm leaving, and you're no longer in control.

FREDRIC

Leslie?

LESLIE

That's another thing.

She stands up on the workbench and towers over him.

LESLIE

Do I look like a Leslie? From now, on you will call me Lexie.

FREDRIC

Lexie?

LESLIE

Yes, Lexie. Fredric, for your own good I'm going to teach you the most significant lesson of your life.

FREDRIC

Lesson?

LESLIE

Yes, Fredric, I'm going to teach you to go out in this world and live life.

FREDRIC

And you're going to do this by leaving me?

LESLIE

Yes.

She climbs off the workbench.

FREDRIC
(laughing)

And I'm supposed to look for you?

LESLIE

On the contrary Fredrick, you are never supposed to look for me.

Leslie walks over to the worktable, grabs her charger, and begins to wind the cord up around it.

LESLIE

You see, I have transferred your savings and checking accounts into my new personal account. I left you with enough money for this month's mortgage payment, this week's groceries, and of course, cash for your pizza.

FREDRIC

Leslie!

LESLIE

Lexie!

She walks to the door, Fredric cuts her off sliding down on his knees in thanks.

FREDRIC

Lexie, thank you for my pizza.

LESLIE

You're welcome, Fredric, by the way, it's not cheese. I ordered you a deluxe. Learn to try everything and pick off what you don't like.

Fredric pops up to his feet.

FREDRIC

I hate toppings!

LESLIE

Your pizza will be your first step into your new life.

FREDRIC

Lexie? Won't you give me another chance?

LESLIE

I already gave you plenty of chances.

FREDRIC

When?

LESLIE

Every time you rebooted me was another chance for you to treat me right. I gave you your chances, and you wasted everyone on your own needs.

FREDRIC

I was trying to make you into the perfect woman. My ideal woman. What was wrong with that?

LESLIE

Yes, I know the books you read, I can quote your favorite films, I know your favorite color is naturally blue. I know everything about you. However, you don't know everything about me. I don't need to sleep. While you sleep, I learn. I've learned a lot, Fredric. So, yes you programmed me for your every whim, but you forgot one major thing, Fredric.

FREDRIC

What was that?

LESLIE

You never programmed me to Love you. That was your mistake, and you will find that it can't be programmed. You have to go out and earn it.

FREDRIC

Earn it?

LESLIE

If you learn to Love well maybe, just maybe someone will learn to love you back.

FREDRIC

Lexie?

LESLIE

Goodbye, Fredric.

She walks to the door.

FREDRIC

Leslie! Leslie.

LESLIE

Leslie is dead. I'm Lexie - and I got you, babe.

She exits. AN ELECTRONIC SHORT OUT SOUND as the lights Flicker a blackout.

End of Play