

# APR

By Robert O'Connell

## **CAST:**

Ricky – Male, Any age or gender

Vicky – Female, Any age or gender

**It's time for the Annual Performance Review. Don't try this at home.**

Robert O'Connell is a career educator and the author of five books. His novels, Flash Mob, Cruise Mob, and Campus Mob, are comedy-romance mysteries. He has also published two anthologies of essays and short plays from his blog, The Day I Dressed Better Than My Wife, and The Death of Comedy. He has three children and lives with his wife in North Carolina.

**APR**

**CAST:**

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Vicky – Female, Any age or gender

**SETTING:**

Living room. Two chairs with a small table in between.

*Ricky is sitting in a chair rifling through some papers. Vicky is offstage.*

**Ricky:**

Vicky! Can you come out here for a minute?

**Vicky:**

*From offstage.*

Do you need something?

**Ricky:**

(Drops his head in frustration.) No, I don't *need* anything. I just want to talk to you!

**Vicky:**

*Vicky walks into the room wearing rubber gloves and an apron. She stands next to the empty chair.*

I'm sorry, Ricky. I must have misheard you. (Sarcastically) It sounded like you said you didn't need anything.

**Ricky:**

Har-de-har. You heard me right.

**Vicky:**

Yes, but then, it sounded like you just wanted to talk. I guess with the water running...

**Ricky:**

(Slumps his shoulders.)

Yeah. Yeah. I get it. We talk plenty, wiseguy.

**Vicky:**

Yes, we talk mostly when you need something. You know I was in the middle of washing the dishes.

**Ricky:**

The dishes can wait. Come relax and have a seat.

**Vicky:**

Sure, the dishes can always wait. You know what we get then? More dishes.

**Ricky:**

Hey, I made dinner.

**Vicky:**

Yes. That's why I'm still doing the dishes. What you did to my good frying pan...

**Ricky:**

Now it's a good frying pan? When I got it for you, I was in the doghouse for a week.

**Vicky:**

(Glares at Ricky.)

You got it for our second anniversary!

**Ricky:**

Who knew it was cotton that year. I'm still pretty sure that the second anniversary is Teflon.

**Vicky:**

Okay. So, what do you want to talk about?

**Ricky:**

Please sit down and take off those gloves. You know I can't resist the smell of lemon on you.

**Vicky:**

Fine! (She sits, peels off the gloves and places them on her lap.) Let's have it.

**Ricky:**

Let's have what?

**Vicky:**

(Blows out a breath.)

This is typically how you bring up the subject of something crazy.

**Ricky:**

What are you talking about?

**Vicky:**

You know. 'We should live on a boat.' 'We should raise alpacas.' 'We should get off the grid.'"

**Ricky:**

I'm not sure that I would characterize any of those as crazy.

**Vicky:**

You know, you're right. I shouldn't be so judgmental. (Leans in to him and smiles.) Please, let's share.

**Ricky:**

(Cautiously) Okay. I just had my APR at work and it gave me an idea.

**Vicky:**

APR? What is an APR?

**Ricky:**

Annual Performance Review.

**Vicky:**

Right. As I recall, you got pretty much the standard raise. The bonuses were a bit better this year. We don't use APRs at the clinic, but the doctors take care of us pretty well.

**Ricky:**

I'm not talking about work, Vicky.

**Vicky:**

(Looks surprised) Not talking about work...but...

**Ricky:**

I mean for here at home.

**Vicky:**

You know, I'd better get back to those dishes. I'd hate to get dinged on my review.

**Ricky:**

You see? You're already overreacting. I'll have you know that I've already given you high marks in the domestic category.

**Vicky:**

(Glares at him and snatches the paper out of his hands) Let me see that!

**Ricky:**

Fine. We're supposed to discuss the findings. It's the 360 concept. All I ask is that you...I mean *we*, keep things professional.

**Vicky:**

You even put my name on the form! How many wives do you have? I see you wrote 'Vicky'. In the interest of professionalism, why not use 'Victoria'?

**Ricky:**

You know I'm not a big fan of 'Victoria'. It sounds too...um...Victorian.

**Vicky:**

Well let me tell you something, *Ricardo*. Your life is about to get pretty Victorian.

**Ricky:**

I'm no longer your Little Ricky? Look at those great ratings I gave you. I didn't even ding you for the 'Thanksgiving Incident'.

**Vicky:**

Ding me? It was your mother who swore that she thawed the turkey. How about if we rate her?

**Ricky:**

Don't change the subject.

**Vicky:**

All right, but before we start, I do have a question.

**Ricky:**

Fire away.

**Vicky:**

These rating criteria...I mean, I know what poor and fair mean, but isn't 'Meets Expectations' and 'Exceeds Expectations' a bit subjective?

**Ricky:**

Hmm...I never thought about it. You had a lot of 'Exceeds Expectations' on the household stuff.

**Vicky:**

But won't consistently exceeding expectations eventually lead to a rise in the standards? Next year, I may only be meeting expectations even with the same performance.

**Ricky:**

Why do you have to make everything so complicated, Vic?

**Vicky:**

That's another thing. Exceeded expectations may not be exclusively positive. For example, I just made this more complicated than you expected. Is that a positive?

**Ricky:**

I'll tell you what. Why don't we put that question aside and just try this out, okay? I didn't want to rate you in the bedroom without your input.

**Vicky:**

(Looks surprised) The bedroom? Did you just say the bedroom?

**Ricky:**

I thought that it was the most respectful way to handle this sensitive area.

**Vicky:**

(Shakes her head in disbelief) Okay, sure. Why not? It's cheaper than couple's therapy.

**Ricky:**

Okay. Now this section is for the bedroom performance.

**Vicky:**

You mean sexually, I assume.

**Ricky:**

What else is there? Sleeping? I mean, you occasionally snore, but I just give you a little nudge and I'm back asleep.

**Vicky:**

Remind me to address that during your review. Okay, sex. Bring it on, Buster.

**Ricky:**

Good. The first thing here is 'Works to Full Potential'. I'd rate you as 'Fair'. Next, we have 'Quality of Work'. There, I'd go with 'Meets Expectations'.

**Vicky:**

(Looks a bit horrified) Maybe we should change 'Exceeds Expectations' to 'Screws like a Porn Star'.

**Ricky:**

Can I help it if my expectations are high? Look at this next one, 'Work Consistency'. Certainly, you can see some room for improvement in this area. And next is 'Communication'. You rarely speak during sex.

**Vicky:**

So more of (breathy) 'Give it to me! Give me more, you stallion!' might improve my standing?

**Ricky:**

Stallion? I can see how that might be a distraction. We'll skip the next category.

**Vicky:**

Wait, what is it?

**Ricky:**

It doesn't apply.

**Vicky:**

Shouldn't that be a mutual decision?

**Ricky:**

Fine. Its 'Independent Work'.

**Vicky:**

How do you know how much independent work I do? Well, certainly nowhere near your production.

**Ricky:**

(Shocked) What do you mean?



**Vicky:**

Please! I do the laundry. If you used all of those washcloths on your face, you'd have worn your nose off by now.

**Ricky:**

You won't let me do the laundry.

**Vicky:**

Remember the red shirt you washed with my underwear in hot water?

**Ricky:**

I personally like a pink tint in your bra and panties. How about this one? 'Takes Initiative'.

**Vicky:**

How can I take initiative? We're barely done and you're already thinking about the next time.

**Ricky:**

I can't help it. You're hot.

**Vicky:**

So hot that I can't meet your expectations?

**Ricky:**

Maybe this isn't working. I guess I should stop before I get to 'Creativity'.

**Vicky:**

Probably. And I won't bring up 'Group Work', oh, and here's a good one...'Customer Relations'.

**Ricky:**

This form also includes 'Technical Skills'. My guess is we can both get dinged for that.

**Vicky:**

Here's 'Punctuality'. Are you too early or am I too late?

**Ricky:**

Hey! All right. I admit that this might not have been my finest idea.

**Vicky:**

Ooh, wait...this says we should discuss 'Training Opportunities'. Can you send me to Vegas? I'm a good learner.

**Ricky:**

Please stop. I get it. This was a *supremely* bad idea.

**Vicky:**

(Puts her hand on his arm) I don't know. I suppose it wouldn't hurt if I showed 'A Willingness to Take on Additional Responsibilities'.

**Ricky:**

Thanks. I mean it. And I certainly can 'Identify Performance Expectations' and 'Provide Timely Feedback'.

**Vicky:**

You know what? I'm going to leave that pan in the sink and do something fun instead.

**Ricky:**

Ooh, that's my sexy girl.

**Vicky:**

Sexy? Even in this apron?

**Ricky:**

I vaguely recall you wearing nothing but that apron shortly after our wedding.

**Vicky:**

I remember it, too. I had canvas burns on my nipples for a week.

**Ricky:**

I believe that I have some ointment upstairs if things get out of hand.

**Vicky:**

Good thing I have rubber gloves.

*She puts the rubber gloves on the table. She stands and takes his hand and pulls him out of his chair. They embrace.*

**Ricky:**

Shall we go up and have a one-on-one meeting?

**Vicky:**

Ooh! It feels like someone is getting a raise.