

The Prize

Arthur Keyser





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ArtAge Publications

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THE PRIZE

by

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FREEVIEW

CAST

ROGER BRANTLEY: A man in his mid-seventies.

FRANCES GAFFNEY: A woman in her early seventies.

PHOEBE ROSEN: A woman in her early seventies.

Place

A retirement community apartment.

Time

The present. Mid-afternoon.

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Setting: Lights come up on a comparable living/dining room area.

At Rise: ROGER is sitting on a comfortable chair, reading a book. There is a knock on the front door. ROGER walks to the door, opens it and FRANCES and PHOEBE are standing there. PHOEBE is carrying a small briefcase.

ROGER: May I help you?

FRANCES: Good afternoon. I'm Frances Gaffney and this is Phoebe Rosen. We're here to welcome you to your new home at Golden Acres Condos.

ROGER: That's very kind of you. I'm Roger Brantley.

PHOEBE: We know. The office sent us a note. If you're not busy, may we come in?

ROGER: Of course. I was just reading. I usually read in the afternoon.

FRANCES: Did you hear that, Phoebe? Doesn't nap in the afternoon. Mark it down on your list.

PHOEBE: Remind me when I get out my writing pad.

ROGER: Is there something wrong with that?

FRANCES: Most men in Golden Acres take a four-hour nap every afternoon.

PHOEBE: The last new man who moved in sleeps almost all day. He only wakes up for meals.

FRANCES: You get a grade A for sleeping habits.

ROGER: I'm being graded?

FRANCES: If you'll let us come in, we'll explain.

ROGER: Oh...excuse me. Please come in.

(Frances and Phoebe walk in and Roger closes the door behind them. Frances points to a small dining table around which are four chairs.)

FRANCES: May we sit at the table, Mr. Brantley?

ROGER: It's Roger. And please...sit down.

(Frances and Phoebe sit. Phoebe opens her briefcase, removes several forms, a writing pad and a ballpoint pen. She places them on the table. Roger remains standing.)

FRANCES: It will be much easier if you sit down with us.

ROGER: Is something wrong?

FRANCES: Not at all. We're collecting information for our data bank.

ROGER: Is whether I nap in the afternoon information for your data bank?

PHOEBE: It goes into your profile.

ROGER: Why do you want my profile?

FRANCES: I'm the joint chairperson of the Social Resources Conservation and Utilization Committee.

ROGER: That sounds very impressive.

PHOEBE: I'm the other joint chairperson.

ROGER: And you're both here to greet me? I feel very honored.

PHOEBE: That's not the only reason we're here.

ROGER: Why else?

PHOEBE: How old are you?

ROGER: Seventy-six.

FRANCES: You're perfect.

ROGER: For what?

PHOEBE: It's complicated.

ROGER: Maybe I should sit down.

(ROGER sits at the table.)

FRANCES: How would you like to contribute to the happiness of our community?

ROGER: Are you asking for money?

PHOEBE: Heavens, no. We want you to give of yourself.

ROGER: Like volunteering?

PHOEBE: Something like that.

ROGER: I've never done any volunteering. Too busy working before I retired.

FRANCES: This is a little different. It just takes some explaining.

ROGER: That would help.

FRANCES: I moved here nine years ago. Just after I turned sixty-two. It didn't take long to find out there was a serious problem. There was only one man for every seven women. The women were fighting over the few available men. Believe me, it was very ugly.

ROGER: I guess some of the men liked that.

FRANCES: Men don't know what they like.

PHOEBE: It takes a woman to tell a man what he likes.

ROGER: I'm not sure I agree with that.

FRANCES: Mark that down, Phoebe. Roger may be hard to handle.

ROGER: You've decided that already? You just met me.

PHOEBE: Frances isn't serious. She just likes to kid.

FRANCES: Thank you, Phoebe. I know our committee will be in good hands if I ever decide to retire.

ROGER: I don't mean to be rude, but will this take much longer? I'd like to get back to my book.

PHOEBE: Are you always so impatient? We're only trying to do a service for our community.

ROGER: I apologize. Please continue.

FRANCES: Back to where I was. Our community was like a war zone. You have no idea of the things our women would do to attract a new man.

ROGER: What would they do?

FRANCES: Don't ask. We don't like talking about it.

PHOEBE: Something had to be done...and we found a solution.

FRANCES: It was my idea.

PHOEBE: I actually had the idea before you suggested it.

FRANCES: Don't argue, Phoebe. We'll discuss it later.

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!