

Can I Put You On Hold?

Marcia Savin





ArtAge supplies books, plays, and materials to older performers around the world. Directors and actors have come to rely on our 30+ years of experience in the field to help them find useful materials and information that makes their productions stimulating, fun, and entertaining.

ArtAge's unique program has been featured in Wall Street Journal, LA Times, Chicago Tribune, American Theatre, Time Magazine, Modern Maturity, on CNN, NBC, and in many other media sources.

ArtAge is more than a catalog. We also supply information, news, and trends on our top-rated website, www.seniorthatre.com. We stay in touch with the field with our very popular e-newsletter, Senior Theatre Online. Our President, Bonnie Vorenberg, is asked to speak at conferences and present workshops that supplement her writing and consulting efforts. We're here to help you be successful in Senior Theatre!

We help older performers fulfill their theatrical dreams!

ArtAge Publications
Bonnie L. Vorenberg, President
PO Box 19955
Portland OR 97280
503-246-3000 or 800-858-4998
bonniev@seniorthatre.com
www.seniorthatre.com

NOTICE

Copyright: This play is fully protected under the Copyright Laws of the United States of America, Canada, and all other countries of the Universal Copyright Convention.

The laws are specific regarding the piracy of copyrighted materials. Sharing the material with other organizations or persons is prohibited. Unlawful use of a playwright's work deprives the creator of his or her rightful income.

Cast Copies: Performance cast copies are required for each actor, director, stage manager, lighting and sound crew leader.

Changes to Script: Plays must be performed as written. Any alterations, additions, or deletions to the text must be approved.

Permission to Film: Rights to produce, film, or record, in whole or in part, in any medium or in any language, by any group amateur or professional, are fully reserved.

Royalty: *Royalties are due when you perform the play for any audience, paying or non-paying, professional or amateur. This includes readings, cuttings, scenes, and excerpts.*

The royalty for amateur productions of this show is posted online. It is payable two weeks prior to your production. Contact us for professional rates or other questions. Royalty fees are subject to change.

Insert the following paragraph in your programs:

Performed with special permission from ArtAge Publications' Senior Theatre Resource Center at 800-858-4998, www.seniorthatre.com.

Copyright 2011

CAN I PUT YOU ON HOLD?

by Marcia Savin

CAST

AGNES: A woman on a cordless phone with call waiting.

MARILYN: Agnes' old friend. She uses a cell phone.

CAROL: Agnes' friend. She uses a cordless phone.

DEBBIE: Agnes' not-so-dear older sister. She uses a cordless phone.

ED: A car repairman. He uses a cell phone.

RONALD: a gray-haired man. He uses a cell phone.

If a second male is not available, the actor playing Ed can also play Ronald. Ed wears a baseball cap, stained shirt, jeans and glasses. Ronald wears casual summer jacket, and traveling pants. Alternately, the car repair person can be a woman named Edna, same dress as for Ed. Glasses optional. Change pronouns to match gender. The other women wear casual clothes. Marilyn wears loose top and pants, not special sports training clothes. Comfortable flats, not sneakers.

PROPS - Chair for Agnes, small address book in Agnes' pocket, small end table with wine bottle and several wine glasses. Cordless or cell phones for everyone. Agnes has both phones. Luggage on wheels and overnight case for Ronald or just an overnight case.

When AGNES speaks on the phone to another character, that person enters with phone and stands several feet away from her. As each caller enters, they take positions that eventually form a circle a few feet away from AGNES and from each other. When on Hold, they move around in their own little sphere but do not enter another character's space. A wine bottle and several glasses sit on a small table in MARILYN's space. The characters can't see each other.

The reason for several wine glasses, rather than one, is to avoid the idea that MARILYN is a lush. If available, add a small vase with artificial flowers.

Time

Early fall.

Setting: Bare stage. We must imagine Agnes and everyone except Ed calling from home. Ed is at auto shop.

At Rise: Agnes sits Stage Center with her cordless phone.

ArtAge Senior Theatre Resource Center, 800-858-4998, www.seniortheatre.com

Note: All dialogue is spoken into a phone, except when indicated that a character speaks to her/himself.

(AGNES punches numbers on phone. MARILYN enters Stage Right, with ringing phone. Answers it.)

MARILYN: Hel-lo!

AGNES: Hi, it's Agnes.

MARILYN: I was just about to call you. We just got back yesterday.

AGNES: Marilyn, I want to hear *all* about your trip. I'm stuck here waiting to hear from the auto shop. My brakes are getting fixed. So...how was it?

MARILYN: Agnes, beyond fabulous. We had a little problem in Rome with our hotel reservation but...

AGNES: Marilyn, I have another call. Can you hold? I'll be right back.

MARILYN: Sure.

(AGNES puts MARILYN on Hold and takes second call. MARILYN smiles in anticipation of describing trip. CAROL enters, Stage Left, with phone, upset.)

AGNES: Hello?

CAROL: Agnes, I'm frantic.

AGNES: Oh, Carol, I'm sorry. What happened?

(MARILYN starts to practice Tai Chi. She's a beginner. While AGNES and CAROL talk, MARILYN gets into the Forward Stance: Places right foot in front of her, front knee bent and checks that feet are hip-width apart. Holds phone to ear in left hand; her right arm is chest level and curved away from body, as if holding a beach ball.)

CAROL: *(wails)* I can't find my Slippers.

AGNES: *(puzzled)* Have you looked under the bed?

CAROL: My new cat! I named him Slippers because of his paws.

AGNES: Oh! Carol, I'm sure you'll find her but...

CAROL: Him! And I've looked everywhere, Agnes. Including under the bed. I know he's frightened.

AGNES: He'll pop up. Carol, I've got Marilyn on the other line. Can I put you on Hold?

CAROL: (*frustrated*) Okay.

(AGNES connects to MARILYN. While they talk, CAROL bends down, miming calling "Slippers" and "Here, kitty!" holding phone to ear.)

AGNES: It was Carol. She's lost her new cat. Where were we?

MARILYN: Rome. (*smiles*) I wish. It was a dream, Agnes. Except for all the tourists. You couldn't get a table. Tom said — but never mind. I've been dying to tell you what happened in Venice.

AGNES: (*sighs*) Venice. I've always wanted to see it.

MARILYN: It's magical. But overrun with tourists. Agnes, you won't believe who I ran into, right on the Piazza San Marco!

AGNES: Someone I know?

MARILYN: Yes, indeed. Tom didn't recognize him but my husband has been known not to recognize me in a crowd. And, Agnes, this old friend asked about you!

AGNES: (*eager to hear*) She did?

MARILYN: (*dramatically*) He. And he specifically asked about you.

(CAROL, annoyed, pushes 'Off' and punches in number again)

AGNES: Really? Darn, I've got a call coming in. Marilyn, can you hold again?

MARILYN: *(less enthusiastic this time)* Uh-huh.

AGNES: It's probably Carol. I'll get rid of her in a sec!

(AGNES connects with CAROL)

CAROL: I was holding and holding.

(MARILYN pours herself a glass of wine, takes a sip, gets into the Forward Stance, holding wine glass in right hand and phone in left hand, to her ear.)

AGNES: I'm so sorry.

CAROL: What if Slippers ran away?

AGNES: Cats hide, Carol. But I have Marilyn on the other line. She just came back from Europe.

CAROL: *(glum)* Say hello for me.

AGNES: I'll call you right back!

(AGNES connects with MARILYN. CAROL, annoyed, presses 'Off,' puts phone down, mimes calling cat.)

AGNES: I'm here.

MARILYN: You ready?

AGNES: Absolutely.

MARILYN: It always happens, doesn't it? Someone you haven't seen in ages, you run into, smack in the Piazza San Marco, with all those pigeons.

AGNES: And he asked about me? *(looks with annoyance at phone...another call.)* Marilyn, I've got a call. It must be Carol again.

MARILYN: *(growing weary)* I've got to leave for Tai Chi in a few minutes.

AGNES: One sec, I promise! *(takes call)*

(During following conversation, CAROL looks under furniture, mouthing "Here, Slippers!" MARILYN takes a bigger sip of wine and gets back to the Forward Stance, trying to balance wine glass at same time. She can't remember if it's her left or right arm that curves in front of her. Attempts both. DEBBIE enters Upper Stage Right, on phone, distraught)

AGNES: Hello?

DEBBIE: Aggie, it's Eric!

AGNES: *(alarmed)* Is he all right, Deb? What happened?

DEBBIE: His girlfriend left him.

AGNES: The new one? I'm sorry. How's he taking it?

DEBBIE: Badly.

AGNES: Deb, I've got Marilyn on the other line. She just returned from Europe and the most amazing thing happened.

DEBBIE: *(angry)* Agnes, this is your only nephew I'm talking about! He's completely devastated.

AGNES: But isn't this the third time this year?

DEBBIE: You think it gets easier?

(MARILYN makes angry face at phone, sips more wine. Her balance is not improving.)

AGNES: No, but let me put you on Hold.

DEBBIE: Putting someone on Hold is rude, Aggie. I don't have Call Waiting.

AGNES: *(dryly)* You've mentioned that.

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!