

Starting Over

Arthur S. Keyser



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

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STARTING OVER

By Arthur S. Keyser

CAST

CYNTHIA: A woman in her mid-sixties. Solly's daughter.

SOLLY: A ninety-one year old man. Cynthia's father.

MAY: An eighty-nine year old woman.

Time

Mid-morning on a weekday in early summer.

Setting: A small park, located in a medium sized city. The park is surrounded on all four sides by upscale apartment buildings.

At Rise: MAY GAFFNEY, an obviously elderly woman, is seated on a bench in the park. She has a newspaper spread all over the bench. CYNTHIA, a well-dressed woman, pushing a wheelchair with SOLLY, an elderly man sitting in the chair, walks toward the bench where MAY is seated. The woman stops a few feet away and turns the wheelchair so that it is facing the same way as MAY's bench but slightly angled so that MAY and the elderly man would be able to speak to each other if they wished to do so.

CYNTHIA: Is this okay?

SOLLY: Why here?

CYNTHIA: It's shady.

SOLLY: It's too dark.

CYNTHIA: It's not too dark and the sun isn't good for you. We don't want you getting skin cancer.

SOLLY: I'm ninety-one and I've sat in the sun my whole life. I never got skin cancer.

CYNTHIA: You can still get it.

SOLLY: When I was young, a daughter never told a father what to do.

CYNTHIA: If Mom was still alive, she'd be saying the same thing.

SOLLY: If your mother was still alive, I wouldn't be living with you.

CYNTHIA: I don't have time to argue. I have to get to my office. Sarah knows to come down for you at one to take you back for lunch. If you need her sooner, call her. Do you have your cell phone?

SOLLY: Of course I have it. I never forget anything.

CYNTHIA: I know. You tell me that all the time. I have a taxi waiting for me at the apartment. I'll see you at dinner.

(CYNTHIA walks away, toward one of the apartment buildings facing the park)

MAY: Hey mister! Do you want me to push your chair into the sun?

SOLLY: Why? So I could get skin cancer?

MAY: You're ninety-one and you've sat in the sun all your life. You never got skin cancer.

SOLLY: Do you always listen to private conversations? It's bad manners.

MAY: Your wheelchair is so close I would have to wear earplugs not to hear you.

SOLLY: So next time, wear earplugs.

MAY: Look who's talking about bad manners. You're not very friendly.

SOLLY: I'm ninety-one. I don't have to be friendly anymore.

MAY: I'm eighty-nine. I'm friendly.

SOLLY: You have to be friendly. You're a woman. Women like to talk a lot. You won't have anybody to talk to if you're not friendly. (beat) When you're a man and you're ninety-one, you've talked enough.

MAY: So stop talking to me.

SOLLY: What are you reading?

MAY: I thought you didn't want to talk.

SOLLY: I wasn't talking. I was just asking a question.

MAY: The obituaries.

SOLLY: What did you say?

MAY: I said the obituaries.

SOLLY: I can't hear you.

MAY: Don't you wear hearing aids?

SOLLY: Why should I wear hearing aids? (*beat*) When I get older, I'll get hearing aids.

MAY: I can't talk any louder. I've always had a soft voice.

SOLLY: If you move some of those newspapers, I could sit next to you on the bench. Then I could hear you.

(*MAY stands up*)

MAY: I'll help you.

SOLLY: What do you think I am? A cripple?

(*SOLLY gets up out of the wheelchair and walks the few steps over to the bench. MAY sits there with her mouth open in amazement. SOLLY stands in front of the bench.*)

MAY: What happened? You can walk!

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!