House of Tomorrow

Susan Shear



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THE HOUSE OF TOMORROW

by Susan Shear

CAST

3 M, 4 W, flexible. Actors can play several roles. This play also works for a larger or smaller cast. Many scenes can be played by all female characters.

ACTS and SCENES in this play can stand alone and are customizable for your production. You may choose to include one act, both acts, or a selection of individual scenes at your discretion.

LIST OF SCENES

ACT ONE

1. The House of Tomorrow	Full Cast
2. It's Time 1	Pam, Rick
3. Fast and Friendly	Clarice, Charlie, Mrs. Clark, Angel
4. It's Time 2	Pam, Bonnie
5. Technically Speaking	Marion, Barbara, Jenny
6. Freedom Road 1	Sid, Marge, Mike, Harriet Herman,
7. Freedom Road 2	Sid, Nate, Marge
8. High Horse	Dennis, Grace
9. Freedom Road 3	Sid, Mike, Harriet Herman
10. It's Time 3	Pam, Rick
11. It's Time 4	Rick, Gene
12. Go for It	George, Dwayne, Jill, Velma

ACT TWO

1. Dollars and Sense	Tanya, Essie, Lydia, Francie
2. Mortified	Waitress, Actor 1, Actor 2, Carolyn, Art
3. It's Time 5	Rick, Gene
4. Searching	Ray, Rebecca, Misty
5. It's Time 6	Pam, Rick, Bonnie
6. Movin' On	Henry, Wilma
7. Minding Mom	Sylvia, Kass, Geoff, Linda, Jeremy, Sandy
8. Whizzing	Actor 1, Actor 3
9. It's Time 7	Pam, Rick
10. The House of Tomorrow	Full Cast

SCENE NOTES

It's Time: Versions are throughout the play, with characters Pam and Rick, seniors who are looking for new love. Both are widowed and anxious about dating and their aging looks. Bonnie and Gene are their friends and are the same age.

Fast and Friendly: Clarice is a retired senior, single, energetic and feisty. She's a *nobody-messes-with-me* kind of gal. Charlie (any age, can be played by male or female) should have a foreign accent and should sound like a programmed machine. Mrs. Clark, a quintessential corporate droll, and the Angel can be any age.

Technically Speaking: Marion is an elderly senior who plays on her neediness and tosses guilt like a discus thrower. Her daughter, Barbara, is a likeable and caring senior. Jenny, the granddaughter, is youthful and savvy, and can be any age over 50.

Freedom Road: Sid is a senior widower who loves being active. His children, Mike and Marge, can be in their 40's, 50's, or even 60's, busy but overly involved in their father's life. Mike may be played by a female as a sister, if desired. Mrs. Herman is a curmudgeonly, fussy, and humorless senior.

High Horse: Dennis and Grace are both over 50. Dennis is a down-to-earth blue-collar worker and may be played by a female as a sister. Grace has been divorced several times, with kids.

Go for It: George is a senior, tired, and worn down by years of boring work. The others can be any age but are clearly corporate worker bees. Dwayne could be played by a female, or even eliminated.

Dollars and Sense: Lydia is elderly and old fashioned, dressing frugally and simply, with a Brooklyn accent, if possible. Francie is a youthful looking senior (or tries to be) and dresses in fashionable, expensive clothes. Essie and Tanya are any age. Essie dresses simply and has a typical beauty parlor, while Tanya is hip and works in a salon/spa.

Mortified: Art and Carolyn are seniors who care about their appearance and want to look good. Carolyn especially tries to impress. The Waitress, who can be any age, has a wry sense of humor. The man and woman can be any age and are snooty and sophisticated.

Searching: Misty is over 40, an unconventional, creative 'hippie' type. Rebecca, senior, is a practical type. Ray, senior, is a '*Father Knows Best'* type.

Moving On: Wilma and Henry are youthful and spunky seniors. There's still a spark of romance in their marriage although they don't see it at the moment.

Minding Mom: Sylvia is very elderly, conservative, hard of hearing, and somewhat cranky. Kass is a senior retired schoolteacher type. Geoff, her husband, is a retired bureaucrat. Jeremy, in his 50's or 60's, is flashy and lives a high lifestyle. His wife, Linda, about the same age, likes her money more than Jeremy's family. Sandy is gay but tries to hide it from Sylvia.

Whizzing: Actor 1 is an older man who shows his age by his slow peeing. Actor 3 is more youthful and pees like a waterfall. Sound effects are very effective in this scene.

ACT ONE
Scene 1: House of Tomorrow

Setting: *A generic living space with simple bar stools, benches, tables and chairs, and a coat rack which will moved as needed in individual scenes.*

At Rise: *ACTOR 1 enters, followed by ACTOR 2, ACTOR 3, ACTOR 4, ACTOR 5, ACTOR 6, ACTOR 7.*

ACTOR 1: The other day my grandson called to say he needed to write a school report about people of different ages. He wanted to know…

ACTOR 2: What it felt like at *my* age. I don't know, I said sometimes like an old house, past its prime…

ACTOR 3: Sitting on a foundation a bit cracked from life's stresses…

ACTOR 4: A house with walls of creases and lines, curled and coiled…

ACTOR 5: Plumbing that's rusty but thankfully still working…

ACTOR 6: The old house frame, a little bent out of shape, a few stiff joints, shingles worn thin and weathered. Minutes and days, weeks and years tucked away ever so neatly...

ACTOR 1: And while on a stormy night, the old house shudders and creaks, shaking from winds of woe and wet from tears of trauma…

ACTOR 4: Faded but fond memories still hang on, filling empty spaces and corridors of time…

ACTOR 3: With all its wear and tear, the old house has its own history to pass on and the old house perseveres. In the twilight hours, mirrors stand tall allowing for self-reflection at last…

ACTOR 6: But, I told my grandson, the old house can be remodeled, rejuvenated; each room filled with new experiences that surprise and delight. The old house is what you make of it, what strength you take from deep within the walls of yesterday and what passions you pursue in your tomorrows…

ACTOR 7: It can be vibrant and full of life if you keep your doors and windows wide open and welcoming…

ACTOR 1: I said to my grandson...the old house is not old unless you think of it that way. The old house has a future, it can become...A House of Tomorrow. (*they exit)*

ACT ONE
Scene 2: It's Time 1

At Rise: *PAM enters and crosses to an imaginary mirror at Down Center. She makes faces in the mirror, fluffs her hairs, looks at her arms, legs etc. She sighs in disgust and exits. RICK enters, crosses to the 'mirror,' tries to pull in his stomach, checks his teeth, runs his hands through his hair etc. He exits in disgust.*

ACT ONE
Scene 3: Fast and Friendly

Setting: *CLARICE's apartment.*

At Rise: *CLARICE enters her apartment, takes off her coat, and sees that she has a phone message.*

CLARICE: Oh no, I hope they aren't canceling dinner. *(she picks up a pad of paper and a pen nearby and presses play)*

MESSAGE: (*voiceover*) This is Fast and Friendly Medicare Mail Order Pharmacy calling with an important message for Mrs. Clarice Fletcher. You have a prescription refill ready. Just give us a call and we'll help you out right away. 1-888 887-8777. Give our agent this code: FFZH so we can expedite your call. Thanks for using your Fast and Friendly Medicare Mail Order Pharmacy. Goodbye.

CLARICE: *(CLARICE writes the phone number & code on the pad)* It must be my Zoloft. *(she goes to the phone and calls the number, puts the phone on speaker)*

MESSAGE: (*voiceover*) This is Fast and Friendly Medicare Mail Order Pharmacy. Please listen carefully as our menu has recently changed. Say or enter 5249 if you're a customer.

CLARICE: 5249...yes. Good.

MESSAGE: Thanks for calling Fast and Friendly Medicare Mail Order Pharmacy. Please enter 5249 if you're a customer.

CLARICE: I did that already but okay…5249 one more time!!!

MESSAGE: Your call is very important to us but our Fast and Friendly agents are currently helping other customers at this time but we'll be with you shortly. *(music plays. CLARICE puts the phone on speaker and takes off her coat etc. She walks around, waiting)*

MESSAGE: In order to serve you better, please tell us your phone number starting with the area code.

CLARICE: My phone, yes, 444-234-5679.

MESSAGE: I'm sorry. I didn't get that. Please tell us your phone number.

CLARICE: (*louder*) 444-234-5679.

MESSAGE: That's 444-234-5677.

CLARICE: (*yelling*) No! 444-234-567-nine!!

MESSAGE: Sorry, I'm still not getting it. Please enter—

CLARICE: *(yelling)* I want to speak to a real person. A real live person.

MESSAGE: Hold please. *(music returns)*

CHARLIE: (*offstage*) This is Charlie, your Fast and Friendly agent here. Can I be of assistance?

CLARICE: Oh good, a real person. This is Clarice Fletcher and I'm calling to refill my prescription and, oh yes, there's a code I'm supposed to give you to speed up the process. Here it is, FFZH.

CHARLIE: Hmmm. Let me see. Where did you get that code from?

CLARICE: From the recorded message your company left today on my phone.

CHARLIE: Hmm. I see. Hold please. *(music again. CLARICE paces)* I'm back. I don't know anything about a code. Can you please spell your last name for me?

CLARICE: Yes of course. F-l-e-t-c-h-e-r. Fletcher.

CHARLIE: Got it.

CLARICE: Good. You see I'm in a bit of a hurry here so if you could—

CHARLIE: Of course. Now Mrs. Letcher, can you give me your phone number?

CLARICE: Not Letcher, Fletcher!

CHARLIE: Can you spell it please?

CLARICE: F as in Frustrated; L as in Lousy; E as in Evil; T as in Ticked Off; C as in Cranky—

CHARLIE: Great. I have it now. Let me see...hmmm...uh huh.

CLARICE: Look I've got company coming for dinner and I just want to order the refill. I gave you the code which is supposed to--

CHARLIE: Ah, the code. Let's try the code again. Please hurry as I have my break coming up—

CLARICE: (*she reads from the note pad)* FFZH.

CHARLIE: FFZ8

CLARICE: *(yelling)* Not 8, H as in Hell.

CHARLIE: We seem to be having a bit of a communication problem. Hold Mrs. Letcher. *(he's gone and music returns)*

CLARICE: Hello…hello?

CHARLIE: I'm back, Mrs. Fletcher. I see what the problem was. It's Fletcher not Letcher. I have it now. You must have an accent because I couldn't understand you.

CLARICE: Right. So we're finished?

CHARLIE: I certainly hope so. Hmmm? Oh my!!!

CLARICE: What? Now what?

CHARLIE: There is one little problem. It seems we delivered this prescription to you two weeks ago so you can't get it now because it's too soon. Medicare won't cover it. It seems I've missed my break for nothing. You really should not have contacted us—

CLARICE: No…no. I never received it. I never even ordered it. There must be some mistake.

CHARLIE: The computer says that we sent it out so there's nothing I can do. Now I have to—

CLARICE: What's your name?

CHARLIE: Charlie.

CLARICE: Look, Charlie, I did not receive it two weeks ago. Check your records again. This is ridiculous. What kind of a jackass, inefficient, disorganized company—

CHARLIE: Hold please. *(music plays)*

MRS. CLARK: (*offstage*) Hello Mrs. Letcher. This is Mrs. Clark, a Fast and Friendly supervisor. What seems to be the problem here?

CLARICE: I've been on the phone with your, whatshisname…Charlie, forever. Can we just take care of this refill so—

MRS. CLARK: My, my, Mrs. Letcher. We are a bit anxious today, aren't we? I can see why we need that Zoloft. Just take a deep breath and let's start from the beginning. Can you tell me—

CLARICE: Are you kidding me? From the beginning? Look I want to speak to someone so I can…hello? hello? *(dial tone)* Heaven help me. Heaven help me. *(CLARICE puts her head on the table.)*

ANGEL: *(enters carrying a bell)* You've reached Heaven, the Office of the Angels. We're not here at the moment, so please leave a message after the bell and we'll get right back to you. Got to fly, have a heavenly day. (*ANGEL exits)*

CLARICE: *(CLARICE stands, opens the bottle of Zoloft, empties all the pills in her hand, swallows them and walks out as in a daze)*

ACT ONE
Scene 4: It's Time 2

Setting: *PAM's living room. There is an imaginary mirror Down Center.*

At Rise: *PAM and BONNIE enter outfitted for a day of shopping.*

PAM: I'll just be a minute, Bonnie. *(PAM exits and yells from offstage).* I can't believe I almost left without my wallet. I'm so absent minded these days.

BONNIE: No problem. We've got all day to shop. *(PAM re-renters with her wallet)* Is it the online dating thing that's got you frazzled? You're not yourself.

PAM: Maybe. It's just, uh…I don't know if I'm ready.

BONNIE: Any responses?

PAM: A few. Wow, one guy compared himself to a car.

BONNIE: A car?

PAM: Oh yeah. He's a refurbished model in fairly good condition with a hot interior and his gears are still cranking! Of course, his photo looked like he'd been in a few wrecks along the way. *(beat)* I don't know about this online dating.

BONNIE: Wasn't it your Ruthie who talked you into it?

PAM: She said it was time.

BONNIE: Look, Pam, give it a chance. They can't all be Edsels. And Ruthie's probably right. It *is* time. Come on, let's lighten up that wallet of yours! (*they exit)*

ACT ONE

Scene 5: Technically Speaking

Setting: *MARION's living room.*

At Rise: *BARBARA, MARION's daughter, enters followed by JENNY, BARBARA's granddaughter. They move a few furniture pieces around. JENNY looks at her watch)*

JENNY: All done! Jesus, it's getting late. I've really got to get going and I thought you needed to help Dad? Weren't you here nearly every day this week?

BARBARA: Yes, but you know your grandmother. *(BARBARA yells offstage)*
Ma...we'll be going then. *(MARION enters with a crossword puzzle book and a pen)*

MARION: What'd you say, Barbie?

BARBARA: We're going. Thanks for breakfast and lunch. I think we got a lot done in the basement and we re-arranged the furniture up here like you wanted.

MARION: You leaving so soon? What do you have to do that's so important?

BARBARA: We have stuff to do, you know. Jack wants me to help with the taxes and Jen has--

MARION: When were you here last, Barbie? I can't even remember? I know it wasn't Monday because I had a dentist appointment. Henrietta took me.

BARBARA: I was here on, Wednesday and Friday but *(she looks at JENNY)*
I guess we can stay a little longer. Jen?

JENNY: Sure, Mom, but just a few minutes. I really need to get going. *(JENNY rolls her eyes but sits and takes out her iPAD. BARBARA sits next to MARION, who starts working on her crossword puzzle book)*

MARION: What was the name of that funny boy on *Our Gang?* You know, uh, the one with the squeaky voice. Six letters...hmm. (*Phone rings very loudly. Barbara and Jenny react but MARION calmly goes to the phone and answers)* Hello. HELLO? Anyone there? Hello? Yes, I can barely hear you. Who is it? What? Hello? *(she hangs up)* This darn phone. The minute I pick it up there's all this crackling noise so I can't hear who's there; happens all the time.

BARBARA: I thought you liked this phone! Remember we hooked up the other phone but you said it didn't work right? So now you don't like this one either?

JENNY: Grandma, could it be your hearing aids?

MARION: Huh?

BARBARA: Your hearing aids?

MARION: What?

JENNY: *(loudly)* Your hearing aids, grandma?

MARION: No, it could not! It's the new-fangled phone I tell you. The phone. I'm not even wearing my hearing aids.

BARBARA: All right. I'll re-connect the other phone. Where is it? In the hall closet? *(she exits)*

MARION: The third shelf from the bottom. The one with Dad's old radio. See it? Henrietta's daughter knows where everything is in her mother's house because she's there every day. *(BARBARA re-enters with the phone and starts to set it up)*

BARBARA: Okay, let me unplug this one and set it up. Jen, give me a hand, will you sweetie? Hopefully it will work this time and you'll be good to go. But, maybe putting in your hearing aids would help? *(JENNY and BARBARA install the new phone)*

MARION: Huh?

BARBARA: Never mind. Okay...let's see. All done.

JENNY: Great. Time to go. We'll see you soon, Grandma. *(JEN starts to rise when MARION goes to the phone and looks it over)*

MARION: So many buttons. I don't remember there being so many buttons. Hmm, I can't remember how to work this one. Can one of you show me what to do?

BARBARA: Ma, it's not very different from the other one that you had. Remember how much time we spent going over and over all the directions? *(MARION looks helplessly at her. BARBARA crosses to phone and JEN sits/types on her phone)* Okay, let's see. You sit yourself there and I'll go over it all again. *(BARBARA holds up the receiver)* This button is for call waiting and this...

MARION: Call waiting? What's that again?

BARBARA: It's when someone clicks in and you want to catch that call while you put the other call on hold. See you push this here. It says 'Flash.'

MARION: Uh huh. Yes. Why do they call it 'Flash' if they mean--

BARBARA: Call waiting. Yes well, I don't know, just try to remember 'Flash.' Now here's the volume...and it seems you like it very loud, so this is how you set this—

MARION: So that's on the side but there are 3 buttons here. How will I know which to use?

BARBARA: Ma, it's this one with the sound icon here. See?

MARION: I-what?

BARBARA: A picture, see the little...uh...sound thingy?

MARION: I'll be needing my other glasses for that. Just a sec. *(MARION exits and returns with other glasses which she puts on)* Now let's see that little 'I-thingy' again. Uh huh. Yes. That picture makes more sense than…'Flush.'

BARBARA: Flash! Well, would you want to put it on speaker at any time? If so, here's the speaker button—

MARION: Speaker? Why would I be wanting that?

BARBARA: It's so anyone in the room can hear.

MARION: Barbie, I'm here by myself most of the time unless Henrietta stops by. Of course, she wouldn't be interested in my calls. You know Henrietta, don't you? And her daughter, Tessie? I get to see Tessie a lot because she visits her mom every day!

BARBARA: Maybe Tessie doesn't have a frickin' life.

MARION: What?

BARBARA: Nothing. I think that should do it. Jenny, let's go. *(BARBARA starts to get up. JEN rises)*

MARION: Barbie, I'm thinking we should write it all down. I'll never remember all this after you leave and you'll probably not be back to visit for quite a while. Now where is my pad of paper?

JENNY: I think I'll get something to drink, something strong...like arsenic! (*JEN exits. BARBARA finds pen and paper)*

BARBARA: So, let's see. Didn't we write this down already, last time? *(MARION looks confused)* But what the heck, one more time! I'll draw a picture of a phone here, see. And here's the talk button and—

MARION: You never mentioned a *talk* button before. Where is that?

BARBARA: *(loudly)* Here Mom! The green one and it's what you push when the phone rings and you want to talk if the good Lord is lookin' after us and there's no crackling.

MARION: And look, here's the *off* button. Hot diggity! It's not so hard, is it? *(BARBARA finishes the drawing and gives the pad of paper to MARION. MARION fiddles with the notes and the phone. BARBARA rises, hugs MARION, starts to exit then yells to JEN who is still offstage)*

BARBARA: Oh I nearly forgot. Jen! *(JENNY enters with a glass and a bottle of liquor)*

JENNY: Yeah? Ready?

BARBARA: Sorry sweetheart, before we go, I meant to ask you a little something about my smart phone. Could you take a look? *(BARBARA pulls out her cell phone)*
I updated some apps and now something is really screwed up. I can't find any of my contacts, and I just—

JENNY: Mom, we've been through this before. But...okay...sure. Like, if you want to get into your contacts you go here, swipe this, type this code here, go into Preferences, choose this, then go to utilities, move this to here, download this and then, click this. All set! Can we go now?

BARBARA: I'm sorry, sweetie, I didn't quite get all that. I think I better write it down. Hang on a minute. I'll get some paper in the kitchen. *(BARBARA exits)*

JENNY: Mom, wait. I'll come in there and we can go over it all again! Bye, Grandma. *(JENNY kisses MARION, as the phone rings very loudly. JENNY rolls her eyes and exits. MARION answers the phone)*

MARION: Hello? Hang on a minute. You see, I'm here by myself. I have to get my notes…don't go away. Uh, yes, oh I hear a click, and I think I'm supposed to push a button but I don't know which one. You see I haven't had time to go over all...hello? Hello? (*dial tone. MARION hangs up, yells)* Barbie. You still here? Could you find that old phone, the one we used a while back? I think it was harvest gold. *(MARION exits)*

ACT ONE
Scene 6: Freedom Road 1

Setting*: SID's living room*

At Rise*: SID enters. There is a ballgame playing low on TV. SID's son, MIKE, and SID's daughter, MARGE, are on cell phones outside talking to each other.*

MIKE: I said I'd do it, Marge, and I will. But I don't see you here giving me any support. Shit! He's not going to like this. And why is it always me?

MARGE: Always you? Always you? That's a laugh!

MIKE: Fine. Okay. Fine! *(MIKE opens the front door and enters SID's apartment)*
Pop, turn that TV down. You're gonna get old Mrs. Herman after you again.

MRS. HERMAN: (*offstage yelling*) What's all that racket down there?

MIKE: Pop!!

SID: Hey Mikey. I wasn't expectin' you today. You're lucky I was in. Just got back from softball and lunch with the guys at the deli. Take a load off and watch the finals with me.

MIKE: Pop, thanks but I don't have time. Can you turn that thing off for a minute? I've really got to—

SID: Okay, okay. I'll put it on pause; it's recording on my DVD. *(SID puts the TV on pause. Sound out)*

MIKE: DVR.

SID: Yeah, whatever--one of those 'D' things. *(doorbell rings. SID crosses to the door)* Jeez. That'll be Mrs. Herman, our super duper Super.

MIKE: I told you to turn that down. (*SID opens the door)*

SID: Ah, Mrs. Herman. How lovely to see you. To what do I owe this surprise?

MRS. HERMAN: Mr. Frankel!

SID: Sid. Why don't you call me Sid and I'll call you—

MRS. HERMAN: Mrs. Herman. Now, Mr. Frankel, I hate to have to come down here again but the other residents are kvetching about the noise and it's my job to make sure that—

SID: Mrs. Herman. I am so sorry. What you heard before was...was...just my son, Mikey here...listening to some rock music. It won't happen again, will it Mikey?

MIKE: Uh...no...I'll be good! You can trust me...us...it will be very quiet down here.

MRS. HERMAN: Alright then. Have a nice quiet day. (*she exits)*

SID: Sorry, Mikey. What a pest. Look, how about a beer?

MIKE: Pop, no thanks. I...look...can we sit for a minute? *(They sit. It's silent for several seconds)*

SID: We've sure made Mrs. Herman happy.

MIKE: I think I'll take you up on that beer after all. *(SID exits. MIKE paces. SID re-enters with 2 beers)* Pop, you see, Margie and I have been talking and—

SID: Good. That's good cuz sometimes you and your sister don't talk for weeks. Makes me sad, would've made your mother sad.

MIKE: So, what it is, what we think is, that you...shouldn't be...driving anymore! *(SID stares at him in disbelief, stands)*

SID: Me not drive? There's not a damn thing wrong with my driving. Did your sister put you up to this? I'm not giving up driving, not on your life, no way in hell. End of discussion! *(beat)* Don't you have somewhere you need to go? Or do you think I need a baby sitter now?

MIKE: Pop, look Marge and I love you. We don't want anything bad to happen to you. You've had two accidents in a year and that ticket last month. Remember what the cop said about driving at your age?

SID: I was driving before that cop was even on training wheels. I should sit home all day? Is that it? Is that it?

MIKE: We'll take you wherever you want to go, Marge and I.

SID: I can take myself where I want to go. I don't need my kids schlepping me around. *(SID takes his car keys from his pocket and clutches them and holds them up*) Tell your smarty pants sister I said no!

MIKE: Sure, okay for now. We'll talk about this another time. Sorry Pop. *(MIKE's cell rings)* I'm on my way. Yeah it took longer than I thought…talk to you soon. Just think about it. *(MIKE exits)*

SID: (*yelling out the door)* Think about it? I'll tell you what I'm thinking about. I'm thinking about how you want to take my freedom away from me. *(MARGE enters)*

MARGE: Hey, Dad.

SID: Ah, my daughter, the traitor.

MARGE: What'd you say?

SID: Nuttin'.

MARGE: Just thought I'd come see how, to say hi. Did, uh, Mike drop by?

SID: Mikey, yeah he was here.

MARGE: Did you talk?

SID: Oh, sure we talked. You'll be happy to know it's all settled.

MARGE: Great. I'm pleased. It's for the best. Wasn't that terrible about Mrs. Fisher?

SID: Huh?

MARGE: The accident left her in such a mess and the man in the other car…well, they don't know. Imagine if her grandkids had been with her. If only she'd been sensible and responsible like you.

SID: Yeah.

MARGE: So just call if you need a ride anywhere. *(phone beeps)* Jeez, I nearly forgot, I've got a meeting. Gotta dash. Love you. *(she kisses him and starts to exit)* Dad, I'm so proud of you! Remember, I'm just a call away! *(MARGE exits. SID takes out his keys, throws them in trash and exits)*

ACT ONE
Scene 7: Freedom Road 2

Setting*: SID's living room.*

At Rise*: SID enters, talking on his cell phone.*

SID: Hey Margie, I was wondering if you could—

MARGE: (*offstage*) Hi, Dad. I can't really talk because I've got to get Jake to the orthodontist, run to the grocery, pick up the dog from the vet, and bring cupcakes to Maya's class. In between, I've...I'm sorry, Dad, you need something?

SID: Me? No, not a thing. Just wanted to say hi. Bye.

MARGE: Right. Bye, Dad.

SID: Right. *(SID hangs up and calls MIKE)* Hello, Mikey, do ya have time to give me a lift over to the softball game, Mike...Mikey?

MIKE: *(voiceover)* You've reached Mike Frankle. I'm available but can't find the damn phone. Please leave a message and I'll call you back as soon as I find it.

SID: Very cute! Aren't you ever home? *(phone beeps)* Mikey, it's Pop. Could you give me a call cuz I haven't been able to reach you lately. Left a few other messages. (*SID hangs up, then picks up his iPAD)* Let's see, www.westcountybus.com. Umm. These damn schedules are always so confusing, but what the hell? This site is down for repair? Crap!! *(SID picks up his cell phone and calls his friend NATE)*

SID: Nate, buddy. How's it going?

NATE: (*offstage*) Didn't ya hear? I tripped and sprained my ankle playing pickleball. The doc says I can't put any weight on it for four weeks. No driving either. I thought you knew. Going to the game today?

SID: The game? I don't know. Probably not. I'll give you a call tomorrow to see how you're doing. Take care of that foot, buddy. *(he hangs up)* Shit! *(SID exits)*

ACT ONE
Scene 8: High Horse

Setting*: GRACE and DENNIS's mother's apartment.*

At Rise*: GRACE and DENNIS enter. GRACE carries a box she places on a table, then sorts through the box. DENNIS carries a dress wrapped in cellophane, from the cleaner.*

DENNIS: Stopped by the cleaners. Very nice folks there. They remember Mom and wouldn't charge us when they heard. *(GRACE looks at what's in the cellophane; it's a bright colored dress)*

GRACE: Are you sure this was Mom's? It's not her style at all.

DENNIS: The guy said it was Mom's and her name's on the ticket. You want it?

GRACE: I don't know. Sure. Maybe one of my girls will want it for a costume party. *(GRACE lays the clothes over a chair and continues to sort through the box she brought in)* I think this is the last box from Mom's bedroom.

DENNIS: I better get a box for the things to go to the thrift store. The truck comes tomorrow. *(DENNIS exits. GRACE holds up a photo. DENNIS comes in with a box marked 'Charity')*
GRACE: Denny, the four of us, Christmas 1959. Look how young Mom and Dad are—

DENNIS: He's got his arm wrapped around her, that smile on her face. *(He glances at it and exits with the charity box. GRACE talks aloud to herself)* Jeez, Mom has receipts mixed with Grandma's recipes, news clippings, church choir music, and lots of photos. (*she picks up several photos, then she yells)*

GRACE: Den…Dennis!

DENNIS: *(enters holding a broom)* What?

GRACE: Look at this. This photo? You know who it is?

DENNIS: *(DENNIS crosses to look at the photo GRACE holds)* No. What's the big deal?

GRACE: This guy is in a lot of pictures with Mom, that's the big deal. Here they are all dressed up by a car. And look at this one...she's wearing...oh my God...it's the dress from the cleaners! They're dancing!

DENNIS: (*looks at the photos she hands him)* Leave it alone, Grace. It doesn't matter.

GRACE: It sure as hell matters. I thought she told me everything.

DENNIS: Do you tell your kids...*everything*? *(DENNIS sweeps the floor as GRACE looks frantically through the box. She holds up the back of a photo)* It says "Stan, Summer 2009."

DENNIS: So?

GRACE: Where could she have met this guy?

DENNIS: Remember Mom went to that Parkinson's support group for spouses?

GRACE: Our Dad was suffering while his wife, our mother, was whirling about with some Stan guy. Jesus! Pretending to be someone she wasn't. Of all people!

DENNIS: Of all people? What are we talking about here, Grace?

GRACE: All that lecturing, berating me about how I needed to be a good wife—

DENNIS: Mom *was* a good wife to Dad for 43 years, took care of him even when he could barely walk or talk anymore. That's the mother I knew. That's the mother I'm going to remember. If this Stan gave Mom some joy, whatever it was, during those miserable years, then it's fucking fine with me. The rest, Grace, is up to you! *(DENNIS storms out. GRACE takes the dress from under the cellophane and holds it for a few seconds. She throws it in the charity box and exits. Then she returns, picks up the dress again, holds it to her at the imaginary mirror, cries silently, and exits with the dress held tight)*

ACT ONE
Scene 9: Freedom Road 3

Setting*: SID's living room*

At Rise*: SID enters, cleaning up the apartment singing a 60's song about cars. The room is much tidier than before. MIKE knocks on the door.*

MIKE: Pop, Pop, what's all the singing about? You're gonna rile up old Mrs. Herman.

SID: Mikey, hey.

MIKE: Looks different in here.

SID: To what do I owe this unexpected visit, my son?

MIKE: Uh, I was in the neighborhood and thought I'd come by. Sorry I haven't been over lately; I had two business trips back to back and then last week the car was in the shop and I had a hell of a time finding a ride to work. Now there's something else wrong with the brakes and—

SID: I understand. *(MRS. HERMAN enters in a sexy robe)* Uh, Mike, you remember Harriet, Mrs. Herman.

MRS HERMAN: Mike, nice to see you again. It's been a while!!

MIKE: Hey...yeah...right.

MRS HERMAN: Your dad and I just finished our breakfast so now we're going out shopping.

SID: In Harriet's '67 Mustang! *(SID hugs MRS. HERMAN, then they start to exit)* Oh Mikey, give us a call if you need a ride. It's a real bummer not having wheels. *(SID and HARRIET exit, singing the song, leaving MIKE standing there. He exits)*

ACT ONE
Scene 10: It's Time 3

Setting*: RICK's living room*

At Rise*: RICK enters with weights, and looks in the imaginary mirror Down Center. He has trouble using the weights, drops one on his toe, then hollers in agony as he hobbles out. PAM enters in a robe with a blond wig and a few dresses on her arm. She goes to the imaginary mirror, parades around, runs off stage and returns in a 'sexy' dress holding very high heel shoes which she puts on. Finally, she takes selfie phone photos of herself while she tries to remain stable in her high heels. She exits, nearly tripping)*

ACT ONE
Scene 11: It's Time 4

Setting*: GENE's living room*

At Rise*: GENE enters and crosses to the exterior door.*

GENE: Coming. Hey Rick, I'm just about ready. (*GENE crosses to imaginary mirror at Down Center, puts on his jacket)*

RICK: Did I tell you about that woman who posted on the dating site last week?

GENE: Which one? The redhead who likes to play paint ball and go roller skating?

RICK: No this one's a blond. She says she likes movies, theatre, long walks, and Greek food.

GENE: Voila!! A match made in heaven. What's she look like?

RICK: I don't know. The photo was a little blurry so I couldn't really see much except for that blond hair.

GENE: Too bad. Well, let's hit that trail before it gets dark. *(they exit)*

ACT ONE
Scene 12: Go for It

Setting*: GEORGE's office.*

At Rise*: GEORGE enters his office carrying a cardboard box. He loads it with items from his desk. VELMA enters, followed by JILL and DWAYNE, co-workers wearing paper 'retirement' hats*)

VELMA: Ah, the man of the hour! You didn't think you could sneak out of here without a sendoff, did you George? *(VELMA puts a hat on GEORGE)* Here you go George, for your special day.

JILL: Now on to the business of the day. As the head of Unit 6 here at Graybridge Accounting, I want to say that you, George McDermott, have been an exemplary and dedicated employee for these past 32 years. It's hard to imagine how we'll replace such a dedicated employee. We always knew you loved working here...a real numbers man, you are. Now a little memento from the company to remind you of all your years at Graybridge. And George, here's a clue... it's got numbers on it!! What could be more perfect? *(JILL hands him a package. They applaud. GEORGE opens it)*

VELMA: A speech, George?

GEORGE: I'm not good at...you know, this kind of thing but...thanks. I had no idea...a watch. Wow, and it's a...*Timex. (everyone applauds)*

DWAYNE: So, George, whatcha gonna do now?

GEORGE: I don't know. I--

JILL: Well, back to work everyone. Busy day. Our department meeting starts in 5 and 1/2 minutes. Take care, George, and stay in touch. *(They all shake GEORGE's hand and exit)*

GEORGE: Hmm. Now if I could just rewind that scene. *(GEORGE snaps his fingers and his colleagues enter in slow motion and freeze. He walks around talking to them)* Christ! You all have no idea. None. At first it was just gonna be for a year, save some money, go to Art School. Then Sarah, our first; Dougie, two years later. Helping Rita's mom pay for the old folk's home. That wasn't cheap. So, I'd stay another year at Graybridge, just one more...and one more after that. Maybe night school, I said...but "not this year," Rita said. Jamie, our third, came that year...along with a larger house, bigger mortgage. Finally, a nice promotion and raise. Art school seemed closer. I even printed out an application. "Art school," Rita said. "How can you make a living in Art...at your age?" Sarah's in L.A, works in animation. Dougie's an architect, and Jamie's a doctor. They say, "Dad...it's not too late. Go for it!" *(GEORGE snaps his fingers. The colleagues exit as before in slow motion. He looks around the room, picks up the box, starts to exit, turns back, dumps everything in the trash, then the watch and his name badge...and exits whistling)*

ACT TWO
Scene 1: Dollars and Sense

Setting*: Two different beauty salons in two different cities.*

At Rise*: TANYA and ESSIE enter their respective shops. LYDIA enters and sits in ESSIE's shop as FRANCIE enters and sits in TANYA's shop, each facing an imaginary mirror Down Left and Right. ESSIE styles LYDIA's hair while TANYA works on FRANCIE.*

LYDIA: So, did I tell you my Francie came into town last weekend? Just Francie without the family. It was a real girl's weekend. Harry was fishing so we had the house to ourselves.

ESSIE: I'd love to meet Francie. You've told me so much about her.

FRANCIE: So, last weekend I fly into Brooklyn and take a cab to my mom's. No sooner do I get in the house, she asks me why I'd taken a cab instead of the shuttle which would have saved me $12.50.

LYDIA: $12.50 is what she would have saved if she'd come by a shuttle. Instead it cost her $35.23. Can you imagine?

FRANCIE: I say, "Ma, it's no big deal."

LYDIA: She says, "It's no big deal."

TANYA: What'd your mom think about your new hair style?

FRANCIE: Right away she asks about it...well not the style itself but what I paid for the cut.

LYDIA: And her new haircut. Do you know she pays $75? Thank goodness you're not that expensive, Essie. Honey, those curlers are a little tight there in the back...yes, there. Uh huh.

ESSIE: Sorry, Hon. That better?

LYDIA: Yes, thanks. Where were we? Oh yes, so you should see my Francie's wardrobe. Nothing but the best. I didn't ask, of course, but I think she buys most of her clothes at a fancy boutique.

ESSIE: Uh huh.

LYDIA: I think you can look well-dressed if you pay attention to sales and shop wisely. My cousin's girl gets all her clothes at the SaveMart store near her house. She looks very nice if you ask me.

TANYA: Francie, what about some of those new glitter strands? They really spice things up.

FRANCIE: Absolutely. Now, back to my wild weekend. I tell Mom I want to treat her to a nice dinner downtown.

LYDIA: Chez Jeans. (*Shay Jeans*). I thought it was a clothing store when I first heard about it. Ever been there?

ESSIE: No but I hear it has really fabulous French cuisine. Francie took you there?

LYDIA: She wanted to but I said no. Do you know they have entrees there without soup or salad and no Early Bird.

FRANCIE: Early Bird is what she wants so we start out at 3:30 for Fancy Franks. We're on the bus a few minutes when suddenly she stands, heads for the doors. I say, Ma, what's going on?

LYDIA: Coupons! I can't believe I forgot the coupons. 15%--

FRANCIE: 15% off the bill! I'm not kidding. We get off the bus, walk home, get the frickin' coupons. Back on the bus…but luckily we make it just in time for the Early Bird and Fancy Frank's Friday Fish Fry. Mom orders fried catfish, fries, cole slaw, hush puppies, and tapioca pudding. I have the same because in order to use this particular coupons the meals have to be exactly the same. So…Mom saves--

LYDIA: $6.56, Francie, $6.56!

FRANCIE: Of course, we don't finish all our dinner because Frank is generous. We drag home four little white boxes of Fancy Frank's delights.

TANYA: Oh Jeez. That's a riot! Okay Francie. I think we're finished. Take a look.

FRANCIE: Great. Just right. Now...don't forget to schedule my other appointments: waxing, eyebrows, pedicure, manicure, makeup, facial. *(TANYA gets a paper and pen or an iPAD)*

ESSIE: All done, hon. You need to process now. So, when did Francie leave?

LYDIA: On Sunday. She took the shuttle back to the airport. I had—

FRANCE: Coupon...yes indeedy! I used her coupon on a shuttle that made nine stops. Ah, this was the best. Ma said I should take Fancy Frank's leftovers.

LYDIA: Leftovers. There's no need to spend money at the airport where it's so expensive.

TANYA: But all in all?

FRANCIE: All in all, it was a great visit.

LYDIA: So, my Francie is gone now and I miss her already. I'm saving up to go visit her at Christmas.

LYDIA: My Francie. I love her so.
FRANCIE: Mom. I love her so.

(they all exit)

ACT TWO
Scene 2: Mortified

Setting*: An upscale restaurant.*

At Rise*: CAROLYN and ART, husband and wife, enter the restaurant. They sit at a table Down Right. Another man and woman enter and sit at a table Up Left.*

ART: This is going to be such a special evening, Carolyn. Just you and me. *(ART reaches for CAROLYN's hand while she looks around the room)*

CAROLYN: Yes it will be...oh...look who's over there. *(ART turns to look)* It's the...you know...the woman from the Museum fundraiser event in May. I spent such a long time talking to her that night. She's in charge of all the committees.

ART: So?

CAROLYN: So, you know that being on the *Asian Artifacts Committee* is something I've wanted for so long. It's very competitive. She doesn't choose just anyone.

ART: What's her name?

CAROLYN: It's...uh...it's—

ART: Carolyn, you're over-committed as it is. *(ART tries to hold her hand. CAROLYN lets go quickly and takes her glasses from her purse to get a better look at the woman)*

CAROLYN: She's very well known all over town. Her name is—

ART: Let's order a drink and toast to our special day 47 years ago!

CAROLYN: Of course. Yes. What if she sees me? She'll stop to talk and I won't be able to introduce you! Why can't I remember her name?

ART: Last week I forgot the name of our neighbor down on Whatchamacallit street, you know, Whatshisname. It happens. (*THE WAITRESS enters and crosses to ART and CAROLYN's table)*

WAITRESS: Good evening. How are you both tonight?

ART: Splendid! We're here tonight to celebrate...

CAROLYN: *(intently thinking)* Gone! I almost had it!

WAITRESS: Gone? Did you lose something? *(THE WAITRESS and ART look around under the table)*

CAROLYN: No...no...it's just...there's this woman over there. I know her, not that well actually but you know...I can't think of her name at the moment. I'm usually very good at—

ART: The waitress doesn't care about the woman you know. Now I think we'll start with an extra dry martini for each of us.

WAITRESS: Of course. And here's the chef's *special* entrees for the tonight. *(she hands them the menu, nods at ART and exits)*

ART: Darling, remember, you were wearing a hot pink sweater when—

CAROLYN: No I wasn't. I wore my beige suit and the teal blouse. Abbie and I went to the Museum together. That's it! I'll call Abbie. She'll know her name. *(she takes out her cell phone and dials)* No answer. Wouldn't you know it. *(she puts the phone back in her purse. THE WAITRESS enters with martinis and bread sticks and looks at CAROLYN as she's reciting the alphabet)*

CAROLYN: A, B, C, D, E...I think it's C...yes, C. It's the alphabet thing. You know...I'm trying to—

ART: Okay. We're ready to order now. I think I'll have the Beef Wellington prepared medium with a—

CAROLYN: That's it!! Stanton is her name.

ART: What?

CAROLYN: Wellington…that town we visited in New Zealand last year when we stayed at the Hotel Stanton!

ART: Thank God! Well, now where was I? *(ART looks at menu again)* Yes, a baked potato, and let's see about a salad—

CAROLYN: No, not Stanton...hmm...Canton, Danton...Fanton. The first name is more important. Let's see, A, B, C, D—

ART: A chopped salad...chopped like this...really chopped. *(ART pounds on his fist into his other hand)*

WAITRESS: Right. Sure. Coming right up. And for the madame? A for Albacore Tuna, B for Braised Brussel Sprouts...C for…

CAROLYN: (*gives a look of disdain as she reads menu*) Right. I'll have...Oh, I just had a splendid idea. Would it be possible...uh...what's your name, dear?

WAITRESS: Rosalind. It's an 'R' name.

CAROLYN: Rosalind, could you go to that table over there, yes, that one, and fill their water glasses or something and maybe you'll overhear her name.

WAITRESS: I've never been asked to surf tables but sure, why not?

CAROLYN: Thank you, Rona. *(THE WAITRESS gives her a look, then crosses to the upstage table)*

ART: Jesus! You're embarrassing me, Carolyn. What's the matter with you?

CAROLYN: Me? I'm just trying to find out her name. You're the one making a scene.

WAITRESS: *(she returns)* He's '*Honey'* and she's *'My sweet.'* Sorry!

CAROLYN: Hmm. Too bad!

WAITRESS: Now your order, madame? Perhaps our alphabet soup? Ha. Just kidding!

CAROLYN: Well, I'll just have what Art's having...dear.

WAITRESS: Right. I'll put your order in right away. (*THE WAITRESS exits)*

ART: Carolyn, remember Santoro's Pizza? I wonder if it's still there on the corner of Waterman and Page--

CAROLYN: Page. Her first name is something like that...but not Paige. Art, Rita and Marcie and even Arlene are all on that committee. *(THE WAITRESS enters and whispers to ART)*

ART: I'll be right back. Don't miss me too much! *(ART stands and follows THE WAITRESS upstage. They talk but we don't hear. The other woman and man rise and cross toward CAROLYN's table, slowing down but passing CAROLYN by as they exit. ART returns)*

CAROLYN: Art, she just walked by. Not a word. Not one single word.

ART: Fabulous. You worried for nothing, as usual. Now, sweetheart, let's just relax and have a nice anniversary dinner. *(ART is holding an anniversary card but CAROLYN isn't paying attention. She stands)*

CAROLYN: Let's go.

ART: Go? Where? Our evening just started and we haven't even had—

CAROLYN: She didn't even recognize me!!! It's...I'm so mortified. Oh Arthur! *(she exits. He leaves the card on the table and starts to follow her out. THE WAITRESS enters with a bouquet of roses behind her back)*

WAITRESS: Mr. Frasier...what about the flowers you ordered? They're just lovely.

ART: I guess I won't be needing them after all. Give them to someone *you* love. *(he exits, followed by THE WAITRESS)*

ACT TWO
Scene 3: It's Time 5

Setting*: GENE's living room.*

At Rise: *RICK and GENE enter. GENE holds his phone like a camera.*

GENE: Come on Rick, let me take a couple of shots for that online dating website. You've gotta put something up. *(RICK looks at the photos)*

RICK: Horrible. What kinda crummy camera you got there? I look shitty and old! Forget it, I'll find something. How about a picture from that fishing trip we took to Tennessee?

GENE: Rick, that was nine years ago when you still had lots of wavy hair!

RICK: Where is that picture? *(RICK pulls out his phone to scroll photos and they both exit talking)*

ACT TWO
Scene 4: Searching

Setting*: MISTY's basement apartment in her parents' house.*

At Rise*: MISTY enters with a journal and pen, and sits, headsets on, listening to music. Her mom, REBECCA, enters.*

REBECCA: Misty...Mist…(*louder*) Misty! My word, it's loud down here. Misty! *(MISTY finally hears her mother and turns down the music)* Where's my eggs?

MISTY: What?

REBECCA: Eggs? My eggs?

MISTY: Eggs. Oh, I made myself an omelet for dinner. What's the big deal?

REBECCA: You used them all up and I need them for a cake I'm baking for tomorrow's potluck at the Martin's. I need to bake tonight.

MISTY: Uh huh. *(she goes back to writing and turns up the music)*

REBECCA: What I am supposed to do now?

MISTY: I don't know, run out to the store and get some more, I guess.

REBECCA: Me? (*louder*) Me? You used all the eggs, you go out.

MISTY: I'm in the middle here. I'm focused on an idea and I don't want to lose my creative thoughts.

REBECCA: I'll tell you what I'm gonna lose...my mind. What is the matter with you and what are you doing with your life? Forty-two, no real job, no guy, nothing. Living, if you can call it that, in your parent's basement.

MISTY: I thought we were talking about eggs.

REBECCA: When are you going to get on with your life, find something—

MISTY: Please, not that again. *(starts to exit)*

REBECCA: Where are you going? I'm talking to you.

MISTY: You're talking *at* me. I'm going next door to borrow the damn eggs.

REBECCA: Look, Misty. Dad and I love you. You know that. But you've got to make something of your life, find something that's stable, practical.

MISTY: College just wasn't for me—

REBECCA: Or the job at the computer company, not that either? Or the acting classes or the Pilates training. You're 42. In a blink, you'll be 50.

MISTY: Do you have to keep repeating my age as if I'm used up? I don't want to rush and end up like you and Dad.

REBECCA: What does that mean exactly? Like me and Dad.

MISTY: I'm sorry. It's just that...your life was...is...so ordinary. It's not for me.

REBECCA: Your father worked for 46 years selling insurance that gave you everything you wanted and needed. And I kept this house running for all of us.

MISTY: That's the thing. I don't want to end up 20 years from now...like that. Mom, I'm still searching. Please don't take that away from me. *(MISTY hugs REBECCA and exits as her father, RAY, enters)*

RAY: Where's she going in such a hurry?

REBECCA: Ray, what kind of life did we have really? Were we just...I mean, did our lives matter at all?

RAY: What? Come here, Becky. You just need a hug.

REBECCA: No, I mean it. Did we do anything that really made a difference? In the beginning, we had grander plans that just got tucked away year after year while we were busy being...ordinary.

RAY: Beck, we worked hard, raised a family. That counts, doesn't it?

REBECCA: It counts sure. *(beat)* I wanted to do something *important*, to be remembered for something...you know. Now time's running out. Maybe Misty's the one who'll get it right.

RAY: And, if she does, it will be because of us and there's nothing ordinary about that! Come on, let's go see where she is. *(they exit)*

ACT TWO
Scene 5: It's Time 6

Setting*: PAM's apartment*

At Rise*: PAM enters, crosses to the imaginary mirror Down Center, and starts plucking her eyebrows when the phone rings. She answers.*

PAM: Hey, Bonnie...hi. Wait a sec, I'll put you on speaker.

BONNIE: *(offstage)* Am I interrupting?

PAM: No, I'm just plucking.

BONNIE: You're what??

PAM: Plucking...as in eyebrows.

BONNIE: Oh plucking. Whew! So, fill me in. I'm dying to know. Any new matches on Seniormates.com?

PAM: There was one post from a guy who says he likes reading, movies and plays, loves to hike and, oh get this; he loves Greek food! His favorite restaurant is *The MED* on Fremont.

BONNIE: Wow, that's your favorite too. This *MED* guy, what's he look like?

PAM: It's hard to say. His profile said he was 66 but the picture looked like he was younger with lots of wavy hair! OUCH! Crap. Where do all these little white hairs come from?

BONNIE: Alright, keep on plucking! I'll call you tomorrow. (*PAM hangs up, exits. RICK enters with his iPAD or phone)*

RICK: Let's see. www.repairyourhair.com. Hmm, wow. Three months for it to start growing. Can burn the scalp if your skin is sensitive, may cause nausea. Some people experience headaches. Ask your doctor if...Oh to hell with that! *(he looks at his hair in the imaginary mirror, then exits)*

END OF FREEREAD

You can tell from this FreeRead, that the show is quite wonderful! Order your copy to read the complete script.

WILMA: Oh, I thought it was much too lovely to use. I remember I was the envy of all the girls. *(she puts it in a box marked 'Toss' and looks through another box)* My Rose China! All those lovely Thanksgivings in the dining room on Granny's Chippendale set. She certainly wouldn't have given it to me if she'd have thought for one minute that—

HENRY: There's no room in the new house—

WILMA: House? House? This is a house. What we're moving into is a closet!

HENRY: Condo!

WILMA: A condo in River View Gardens that has no river, no garden, no view…except for the strip mall across the street.

HENRY: Wilma, you'll get used to it.

WILMA: Henry, you're right as usual. After all, what's to miss here? The Robinsons next door? Main Street, where everyone knows our name? The wallpaper in the guest bath I put up myself? Christy's window seat for her dolls? The tulip garden that's just now sprouting? Certainly not the bedroom curtains Mom made me the year before she died.

HENRY: Okay, fine but what about the old leaky roof or the noisy furnace?

WILMA: I trusted you.

HENRY: Aha! We're finally getting to the heart of it.

WILMA: What the hell do you know about heart except that you've broken mine? *(she starts to cry. HENRY searches a box and finds a gaudy old tissue container. He hands her a tissue)*

HENRY: I suppose you want to take this crappy thing too! *(he tosses it in the box marked 'Toss')*

WILMA: You handled the investments. You were the one who put so much of our money in risky stocks. You listened to Roger—

HENRY: Roger is your sister's husband, the big shot investment broker. You're the one who said we had to use him or sister Sally would be upset. Remember?

WILMA: But still, you should have discussed it with me—

HENRY: Discussed it? Are you kidding? I tried to talk to you so many times, but you were always busy with the kids or grandkids or the house or—

WILMA: Well it's not as if you pay attention to those things. Someone has to with only so many hours in the—

HENRY: Remember 1995. I wanted to invest in Apple Computer when they fired Steve Jobs and the Apple stock tanked? You said it was too much of a gamble. But it took off and we'd have made a killing. So this time I got a little bolder and...no one could have predicted the market would go belly up like it did.

WILMA: You've forgotten. I told you the day before that I heard on *The View* that the market was in serious trouble. Remember...but no—

HENRY: Who'd have guessed those *wacky* women would know anything about—

WILMA: Yeah. Real wacky. I guess you showed them!! *(they move around the room angrily)*

HENRY: We're not getting anywhere this way. Can we just move on—

WILMA: And what about our bedroom set? It sure as hell won't fit in that teeny tiny space they call a master suite.

HENRY: Okay then. We'll split up the set and I'll sleep in the guest room.

WILMA: (s*he finds an old teddy bear in a box and shoves it at HENRY)* Good. Sleep with Christy's teddy! His ears got chewed off by Benjy so he won't hear your snoring symphony at night!!! *(WILMA storms out; he stands there holding the bear. She re-enters yelling)* And while we're at it—

HENRY: Now what?

WILMA: While we're on the subject of finances, what about this? (*she shoves a box of golf balls at him)*

HENRY: Golf balls?

WILMA: You paid $17.99 for this box of golf balls when I told you I had a coupon that would have saved us $3. You really don't know how to deal with money at all!!

HENRY: Fine, it's come to this, has it? *(HENRY digs in his pocket and throws three dollar bills on the floor as WILMA's phone rings. She answers*)

WILMA: Hello. Yes? Oh, Betty, I didn't recognize your voice. Sure, no, I'm fine, just busy with the move and all. As a matter of fact we're right in the middle of—

HENRY: An argument. Call her back.

WILMA: What? Oh, but so soon? I know but I'm so sorry. How about if we stop by later tonight? Sure. Okay see you soon. *(WILMA hangs up phone)* She's moving Frank into that new assisted living place. She can't afford to keep the house so she's getting a studio apartment nearby.

HENRY: Oh.

WILMA: Yes. (*silence. They sit on opposite sides of the room)*

HENRY: Willie, remember the first night in our apartment on Westover Court? I carried you over the threshold.

WILMA: The only furniture we had we bought with S and H Green stamps and no bedroom set yet so we slept on the floor—

HENRY: We didn't exactly *sleep* much, if I remember right? (*He crosses to her. She stands. They hug and HENRY tries to lift her then realizes his back won't take it)*

WILMA: What the hell are you doing?

HENRY: Just thought I'd practice for the new threshold.

WILMA: Come on, let's go upstairs and I'll give you a...massage. (*they walk out hand in hand as he limps)*

ACT TWO
Scene 7: Minding Mom

Setting: *After a family dinner. SYLVIA's living room. SYLVIA has two daughters, KASS who is married to GEOFF, and SANDY, who is single. Her son, JEREMY, is married to LINDA.*

At Rise: KASS enters, followed by her husband, GEOFF. JEREMY follows with his wife LINDA.

JEREMY: Everyone have enough to eat?

KASS: I think we're all stuffed to the brim! Jer, it was fabulous. You, little brother, are a hell of a cook.

JEREMY: Chef. Remember I studied at La Classique last year. (*SYLVIA enters. She is old and frail, uses a walker and is accompanied by her daughter SANDY)*

GEOFF: Did you like the dinner, Sylvia? You taught your Jeremy well. He makes a really mean Veal Scallopini, doesn't he?

SANDY: (*louder*) Mother, Geoff was asking if you enjoyed the veal.

SYLVIA: What? The meal, yes, very tasty.

GEOFF: Close enough.

KASS: How about some after-dinner drinks? I'll go see what she has left. *(she exits)*

SYLVIA: Where's my Kass going? Not leaving so soon, is she? I just love it when we're all together.

GEOFF: No, Sylvia, she's just going to get a cordial for us.

SYLVIA: I taught my Kassie to always be friendly.

SANDY: No, *cordial* as in an after-dinner drink, Ma. You know--

SYLVIA: Oh. Yes. (*she doesn't get it)*

JEREMY: Anyone know the score? Last I looked we were down by three. Game should have been over by now. (*KASS enters, passes around drinks)*

LINDA: Sylvia, how about one for you? Might do you some good and help you sleep.

SYLVIA: Were you talking to me, Linda? Why do you always mumble? I don't know how my Jeremy hears what you say. (*beat)* I just love it when we're all together.

SANDY: Are you wearing your hearing aids, Mom?

SYLVIA: Not tonight, Sandy. The left one pinches my ear.

LINDA: *(louder)* What I said was, do you want a drink?

SYLVIA: No thank you dear and no need to shout! My word. You know I don't drink anymore. Doctor uh...you know...doctor...what's his name, says it's not good for my uh...not good for my...you know....the stomach thing...can't think of the word now.

KASS: Digestion, Ma. How about a glass of warm milk? That should be good before bed.

SYLVIA: Yes, Kass. That's very sweet of you. *(beat)* I just love it when we're all together. Did I tell you my neighbor, Doris, moved away? (*KASS exits. SYLVIA starts to get up but is unstable. SANDY rushes to help)*

SANDY: What are you doing, Mom? Be careful, where are you--

SYLVIA: I think it's time for bed. You all stay and enjoy yourselves. *(she starts to exit with SANDY's help)*

SANDY: Mom, what about the milk?

SYLVIA: The what?

SANDY: (*yelling)* The milk. The warm milk Kass is getting.

SYLVIA: Uh huh. Good night all. (*she stops and looks around)* Where's Doris? *(SANDY and SYLVIA exit)*

LINDA: I sure don't like it when we're all together, I sure as hell don't!

KASS: (*KASS enters with warm milk)* Where's Ma?

JEREMY: Went off to bed...forgot about the milk! Still talking about her neighbor Doris. *(JEREMY notices SYLVIA's pill container)* And she forgot her bedtime pills again. (*yells and exits with the pills)* Mom, Ma!

KASS: Jesus!

LINDA: Look, she's 91. What do you all expect? Your mother needs more help. That's the bottom line.

GEOFF: What about getting her one of those alert button pendants? Remember how my dad loved that thing? Never went anywhere without it. (*JEREMY enters*)

KASS: Honey, I tried to get her one of those but she says it's a bother. Doesn't want anything to do with it! Thank goodness, she only got a few scratches when she tripped in the bathroom last week. (*SANDY enters)*

SANDY: Everyone looks so grim. Is the score that bad?

LINDA: Just talking about your mom.

KASS: I guess it's time to talk about what's next.

SANDY: Oh. That. (*JEREMY pours more drinks)*

KASS: I'd love to have Mom move in with me and Geoff… but our house is so small. Jer, you and Linda have such a roomy house with that lovely guest suite.

JEREMY: That's true but we both still work full time. She'd be alone so much and you know how much I travel. Mom would be home with, uh, Linda. You and Geoff are retired so it makes more sense for her to--

KASS: Right but just because we're not working, doesn't mean we aren't busy. And, remember we have three dogs which would be a disaster with Mom and her walker; not to mention the noise and the shedding with mom's allergies.

JEREMY: She'd hate being with me and Linda anyway. There's always *tension.*

LINDA: Tension? (*louder)* Tension. Are you blaming this on me? I've tried very hard to get along with your mother but it hasn't been easy. I can't remember a frickin' nice thing she's ever said to me. She talks to me like I'm a toddler.

JEREMY: Kass, she's closer to you and Sandy anyway; it's a mother-daughter thing, I guess.

KASS: Closer to us? Remember who got the bigger bedroom in the house on Maplewood?

SANDY: And who got to stay out WAY later than us, and not to mention--

KASS: And who NEVER had to do the dishes? Mom always--

SANDY: Remember the big deal she made about you being voted Prom King while she hassled me about not wanting to go to the Prom at all?

JEREMY: Yeah but I had to pay for my own tux while Mom paid for your theatre costumes.

SANDY: Sure, but that was--
GEOFF: You guys. We're not getting anywhere this way. What about the possibility of--

KASS: You all know that I do much more for Mom than the rest of you.

JEREMY: (*loud, angry)* I do plenty!! Who took her to the bank last month? Who handles her finances?

LINDA: What about Sandy? Maybe that would be the best place for her.

SANDY: Me? Really? She doesn't know anything about my life. Can you just imagine what Mom would say if she knew? What a pretty picture that is: Mom, me, and Teresa! So don't gang up on me.

KASS: Gang up? It's your turn to finally step up to the plate. You live out of town and hardly do anything for Mom.

SANDY: I'd have stayed here if I could. So don't act like damn martyrs—

KASS: Martyrs? You've got your nerve talking--

GEOFF: How about The Sunrise Villas where my dad lived those last years? It was a really nice--

KASS: Your dad had the money for that place, but Mom can't afford it, and neither can we, now that we're retired.

SANDY: Maybe someone else can foot the bill! *(they look at JEREMY)*

JEREMY: Hey, you guys think I'm made of money because I work in investments. We have a lot of family expenses you don't know anything about. Anyway, little sister, what the hell do you know about *family* expenses or *family* anything for that matter?

SANDY: Teresa and I are a family, you bigot. Maybe you inherited Mom's narrow-minded thinking!

KASS: Jer, what about your Mercedes and the country club, not to mention what you and Linda spend at all those gourmet restaurants, and--

LINDA: Jer, are you going to let her talk to us that way? It's no one's damn business how we spend our money. And remember that cruise you both took last year?
GEOFF: Let's all calm down and take a--

JEREMY: Calm down? The bottom line is I'm not getting stuck with Mom when the rest of you don't want her!!! *(SANDY turns to see SYLVIA in the doorway staring at them all)*

SANDY: Ma!!! (*everyone turns to SYLVIA. It's silent. SYLVIA turns and exits without saying a word)*

KASS: Oh God! *(they exit)*

ACT TWO
Scene 8: Whizzing

Setting*: A men's room.*

At Rise: *A man enters, crosses to the imaginary mirror Down Center, then goes to the urinal, unzips his pants and starts to pee. Another man, younger, enters, crosses to the mirror, goes to a second urinal and starts to pee. The older man pees for a long time while the younger one pees quickly, starts to leave, looks back at the older man with disdain or pity, exits. Older man eventually exits.*

ACT TWO
Scene 9: It's Time 7

Setting*: A laundromat.*

At Rise*: PAM enters with a basket of dried laundry which she folds at a table. RICK enters, carries a pillow case with dirty clothes. He sifts through his pockets for change.*

RICK: Uh...excuse me. I used up all my quarters on my first load. Never been to a Laundromat before...so I guess I didn't come prepared. Would you happen—

PAM: There's a machine out back. It'll give you change. It takes dollars.

RICK: Okay. Sure. Thanks. *(he exits and yells from offstage)* Damn...hey....what the…unbelievable! (*he re-enters)* What kind of crappy machine is that? It ate my dollars, just gobbled them right up.

PAM: Yeah, it does that sometimes. Hungry little sucker. Sure likes to eat its greens!

RICK: Uh, you wouldn't happen to have any quarters would you? I could...you know...pay you back somehow--

PAM: I don't know. I used a bunch myself. Let's see. *(she pours everything out of her purse. Finally, she finds 3 quarters)* Here, that's all I have.

RICK: Thanks, very much. I'll...uh...I...(*he exits with his laundry. She puts everything back in her purse and continues to fold. Then he re-enters with clean laundry to fold, again in a pillow case)* Until now my daughter was doing my laundry but she moved out of town last week. You come here often?

PAM: Just for a few weeks since my machine gave out. I'm waiting to get a new one when they go on sale. My Jerry used to do the washing, but I did the folding and putting away. We had a good system, Jerry and I.

RICK: I...uh...can I just...you...know....put my stuff right here....and—

PAM: Sure…yes...sorry. *(he starts to fold his clothes near hers. Now they're both self-conscious as they fold underwear, bras, torn shirts, nightgowns, pajamas etc.)*

RICK: Clara, that's my wife...was my wife...always bought my clothes for me... even my underwear. She didn't like boring so I never wore tightie whities. (*he holds up a funny pair of underwear)* Clara had a sense of humor all right. We did a lot of laughing. I went on a fishing trip one time. She didn't want me to go so to let me have it, sewed up my...you know...oh jeez. *(PAM tries to fold her underwear and bras without RICK seeing but in her haste, she knocks over all the clothes. They both clumsily put the clothes back on the table)*

PAM: Sorry...I don't know how that happened. Really...here let me—

RICK: It's fine, no problem, uh, this is yours I think...for sure this is yours...and these are mine...right. *(a bra of hers gets caught in a towel or his underwear. He tries to un-do the bra)* I used to be able to do this with one hand. Uh...You look a little familiar but we've never met, right? *(they finish sorting)*

PAM: No, no. I don't think so.

RICK: I'll check on my other load. *(RICK exits, then returns with damp clothes in his arms)* I guess 3 quarters wasn't enough.

PAM: Too bad. Nothing worse than clammy clothes. (*she starts to exit with her basket)*

RICK: Uh...you live close by?

PAM: Over in Meadowbrooke. They're Condos. Moved in last year. Jerry always told me that's what I should do if…and you?

RICK: Not far. I'm still in my house, it's been 3 years since...

(PAM starts to leave again)

RICK: I feel bad about the quarters—

PAM: No big deal. Consider it a gift from an experienced laundry lady.

RICK: Look, would you, I mean...would you like to grab a bite to eat? *The MED's* not too far, just over on Fremont? It's the least I can do.

PAM: *The MED*? Sure. What a coincidence because it's my....

RICK: Uh, I'll meet you outside. I...uh...don't go anywhere. I'll be right out.

(PAM exits. RICK picks up his cap, returns to the imaginary mirror, starts to put on the cap but decides he doesn't need to hide his hair, smiles confidently and exits, leaving the cap behind. He exits)

ACT TWO
Scene 10: House of Tomorrow

Setting: *A generic living space with simple bar stools, benches, tables and chairs, and a coat rack which will moved as needed in individual scenes.*

At Rise: *ACTOR 1 enters, followed by ACTOR 2, ACTOR 3, ACTOR 4, ACTOR 5, ACTOR 6, ACTOR 7.*

ACTOR 1: The other day my grandson called to say he needed to write a school report about people of different ages. He wanted to know…

ACTOR 2: What it felt like at *my* age. I don't know, I said sometimes like an old house, past its prime…

ACTOR 3: Sitting on a foundation a bit cracked from life's stresses…

ACTOR 4: A house with walls of creases and lines, curled and coiled…

ACTOR 5: Plumbing that's rusty but thankfully still working…

ACTOR 6: The old house frame, a little bent out of shape, a few stiff joints, shingles worn thin and weathered. Minutes and days, weeks and years tucked away ever so neatly...

ACTOR 1: And while on a stormy night, the old house shudders and creaks, shaking from winds of woe and wet from tears of trauma…

ACTOR 4: Faded but fond memories still hang on, filling empty spaces and corridors of time…

ACTOR 3: With all its wear and tear, the old house has its own history to pass on and the old house perseveres. In the twilight hours, mirrors stand tall allowing for self-reflection at last…

ACTOR 6: But, I told my grandson, the old house can be remodeled, rejuvenated; each room filled with new experiences that surprise and delight. The old house is what you make of it, what strength you take from deep within the walls of yesterday and what passions you pursue in your tomorrows…

ACTOR 7: It can be vibrant and full of life if you keep your doors and windows wide open and welcoming…

ACTOR 1: I said to my grandson...the old house is not old unless you think of it that way. The old house has a future, it can become...A House of Tomorrow. (*they exit)*

The End