

A Profusion Of Roses

Marcus Steinour





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A PROFUSION OF ROSES

A Play in One Act

By Marcus Steinour

CAST

Anna - Old and fading, her death is near, but she is strong-willed and demanding now. Contemptuous of others, expecting special treatment.

Vivian - Her sister. She was eight years older than Anna, and lived with her. Died a few years before the play opens.

The Daughter - Devoted and caring, she has a very simple and honest personality with no pretense, no ambitions, except to find forgiveness. She has long ago given up any hopes for a life and happiness of her own.

(NOTE: The confusion over Vivian is intentional, to be discovered as the play progresses.)

SCENE - Somewhere in the nebulous South. A room in a small cottage overlooking a rose garden.

TIME - Anytime

SETTING - A nearly bare stage. Center Stage a chair, and a suggestion of a window at either side.

AT RISE:

(Anna is sitting on the chair and Vivian is standing over her, combing and brushing her hair. Anna makes little gestures of annoyance and then cries out.)

Anna: Stop it! Stop it this minute. Leave my hair alone. It's perfectly fine as it is.

(Anna makes little gestures of annoyance and then cries out, looking hurt, stops, but then brushes at Anna's dress with her hands.)

You've been at me all day, never a moment's rest. I'm going to bed and there's no reason to fix me up like I'm going to a ball. There hasn't been a ball in this town since Colonel Prescott. Keep your hands off my dress.

(Anna pinches her. Vivian backs away, then comes forward again)

Did you lay out my nightgown and my pills?

(Vivian turns to move away)

Vivian: Yes.

Anna: And a glass of water? Have you put a glass of water near my bed?

(Vivian stops to think, then nods her head.)

Vivian: Yes.

(Anna takes up a mirror and looks at herself)

Anna: Yes, I should think that was enough. Too much... *(looking)* Except that you've missed that little curl, that cowlick I've always suffered with all my life. You never seem to get that right, Vivian, no matter how much I tell you about it. How can I go to Colonel Prescott's ball with a cowlick?

(Vivian reaches forward to stroke down Anna's hair, but Anna waves her away.)

I'll do it myself. Perhaps then it will be done right. *(she stops and looks about, as though looking outside)*

What a warm day. I like to remember days like this with Daddy back home. You remember how it was? Out at the old house, the old remnants of the good days? I wonder if that old place is still there. That big old house with its great pillars. I doubt it was taken care of properly after we moved away. Yes, why is it I always think of the old memories on days like this? I'm an old woman and I'm dying. Say something. You never talk anymore.

Vivian: I will, Anna, if you'll let me...

Anna: Lord, how you've changed. What is it that's come over you anyhow? I imagine you find contentment here taking care of me for our last years together. You must... (*as she reflects*) You'll be lost when I'm gone. I know you will. I would be if I were alone. But you were always the strong one, and the loud one. What is it that happened that you changed so much? What will you do when I'm gone, Vivian? Tell me.

Vivian: I don't know. I'll still have my roses.

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