

DOUBLE OCCUPANCY

by **Tony Schwartz & Marylou Ambrose**



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Hawley, PA 18428**

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DOUBLE OCCUPANCY was first presented by Tonylou Productions at Ehrhardt's Waterfront Banquet Center, Tafton, PA, opening on April 12, 2011. It was directed by Tony Schwartz. The cast was as follows:

STANLEY COHEN.....	Tony Schwartz
HELEN COOPER.....	Marylou Ambrose
CARMELITA.....	Kelly Anne Walsh
FATHER MIKE.....	Greg Koren
OFFICER DOOLEY.....	Maine Barletta

DOUBLE OCCUPANCY was subsequently produced by Tonylou Productions at Lakeville Community Hall, Lakeville, PA, opening on May 7, 2011. The cast was the same, except Officer Dooley was played by Jerry Marino.

CHARACTERS:

STANLEY COHEN (mid 70s)
 HELEN COOPER (mid 70s)
 CARMELITA (30-40)
 FATHER MIKE (35-55)
 OFFICER DOOLEY (any age)

SETTING:

A motel room. Early November.

DOUBLE OCCUPANCY

ACT I

The setting is a motel room. Not the best, but not the worst. A double bed is Center Stage. A nightstand with drawers is at left of bed. A lamp, alarm clock, telephone, and pill bottle are on top of nightstand. A Bible is in one drawer. A dresser is at Stage Left with two suitcases on top. A small table and two chairs are at Stage Right. On top of the table is a newspaper and Helen's eyeglasses. Helen's bathrobe is over the back of the chair nearest Center Stage and her slippers are on the floor near the chair. The front door is Stage Right, the bathroom door is Stage Left.

When the curtain rises, there is quiet for a moment. Then two arms stretch up from under the covers. They belong to Stanley Cohen, a gruff-on-the-outside, soft-on-the-inside man with a slight Jewish accent. He slowly sits up in the bed, dressed in pajamas, wincing as if stiff. He slowly gets out of bed, attempts to stretch, does a few poorly executed exercises, then bends over to touch his toes, but can't get back up right away. He finally does. A beat. Suddenly, his eyes open wide and he snaps his fingers as if remembering something. He hobbles into the bathroom.

Another pair of arms stretch up from the bed. They belong to Helen Cooper, attractive and down-to-earth. She slowly sits up in bed, dressed in pajamas or nightgown, wincing as if stiff. She slowly gets out of bed, attempts to stretch, does a few poorly executed exercises, then bends over to touch her toes, but can't get back up right away. She finally does. A beat. Suddenly, her eyes open wide and she snaps her fingers as if remembering something. She starts toward the bathroom just as Stanley emerges. He's put on his eyeglasses in the bathroom. They spot each other, look flustered, and then immediately stand up straight as if nothing is wrong. Stanley has a tube of BenGay in his hand and quickly hides it behind his back.

HELEN: *(lovingly)* Good morning, Stanley.

STANLEY: *(lovingly)* Good morning, Helen.

HELEN: You're up early. After . . . last night . . . I thought you'd have trouble getting up this morning.

STANLEY: I'm up early every morning.

HELEN: Yes, but after last night . . . I thought you'd have trouble *waking* up this morning.

STANLEY Well, like I always tell you, Helen, fit as a fiddle. *(pats his belly)*

HELEN: Good. I worried for nothing. *(Helen moves to foot of the bed and Stanley follows.)*

STANLEY: Yeah, actually, I was worried about you.

HELEN: Me?

STANLEY: Yeah, I figured it would take a while. I mean, after last night, you must be exhausted.

HELEN: Me? Exhausted? Why, I'm in the best shape of my life.

STANLEY: I don't know about on the inside, but on the outside, I think you have the best shape, too.

HELEN: *(blushes)* Oh, Stanley. *(She swings her arm to "swoosh" him away, but twists her back in the process.)*

HELEN: *(grabbing her back in pain)* Oh my God . . .

STANLEY: Helen, are you all riiiiiiigt?! *Stanley reaches out to help her and then twists his own back. He grabs his back, revealing the BenGay in his hand.*

HELEN: Stanley! Is that BenGay in your hand?

STANLEY: No! Toothpaste!

HELEN

I saw the label. *(grabs tube away from him)* Since when does Ben Gay make toothpaste?

STANLEY: It's for sore gums.

HELEN

Yeah, right.

STANLEY: All right, so I'm not in the shape I thought I was in. *(He sits on the foot of the bed. Helen puts BenGay on nightstand and then joins him.)*

HELEN: *(laughs)* I guess I'm not either. *(looks at him lovingly)* But aches and pains or not, I have no regrets.

STANLEY: *(looks at her lovingly)* Neither do I. Still, just because my prescription says it can last up to four hours, doesn't mean we have to keep going for four hours!

HELEN: Oh Stanley, it wasn't four hours.

STANLEY: Maybe not, but this morning it feels like it was. But, aches and pains or not, I have no regrets either. It was wonderful. *You* were wonderful.

HELEN: You were, too. But I admit, I *am* a little worn out. It's been a long time since, uh . . .

STANLEY: *(He notices she's a bit embarrassed and interrupts her.)* A long time for me, too, Helen. And it wore me out, too. When I finally closed my eyes, I slept like a rock.

HELEN: Me, too. I feel like I've slept for days, not just a few hours.

STANLEY: Yes, it certainly is one way of getting a good night's rest. I highly recommend it.
(*Walks slowly, hand on his back, to table at Stage Right. Sits at chair nearest wall.*)

HELEN: (*follows Stanley, walking same way*). You know, we've been dating now, for what? Three months? I'm surprised we waited this long until we . . . you know. (*motions toward bed*)

During next few lines, Helen puts on her bathrobe, then sits and puts on her slippers. She also put on her eyeglasses, which are on the table.

STANLEY: It's more like 4 1/2 months, Helen. Not that I've been counting the days or anything. But it was worth the wait.

HELEN: I agree, although I have to admit, at first it was a bit awkward.

STANLEY: I know, I know. I think it helped that we were someplace other than our own homes.

HELEN: You mean, like, neutral territory?

STANLEY: Exactly. Waiting until we went on this bus trip together with the travel group from our retirement village was a good idea.

HELEN: Oh, I agree.

STANLEY: Just getting away from that retirement village was a good idea.

HELEN: Why? What's wrong with our retirement village?

STANLEY: (*looks away from her*) Nothing. HELEN

HELEN: Stanley -- look at me. (*tries to turn his head*) If there's something wrong, I want to know about it.

STANLEY: (*gets up and walks to Center Stage*) No, forget I said anything.

HELEN: (*follows him*) Stanley . . .

STANLEY: It's nothing, really.

HELEN: Stanley, come on, tell me what's wrong.

STANLEY: It would be easier to tell you what's *right*. I just don't think I'll ever get used to this retirement village life.

HELEN: All of a sudden you don't like our village? That's news to me.

STANLEY: No, not all of a sudden. I never liked it. I just never said so. The truth is, the only thing I *do* like about the retirement village is the fact that I have you there. But you're in your own home, and I'm in mine, and when I'm alone, I don't like it. Not being alone, although that can get to you sometimes. No, it's the feeling that even though I am alone, I'm not alone.

HELEN: Stanley, you're talking in riddles. I don't get it.

STANLEY: (*paces as he speaks*) There's always someone watching every move I make to be sure I don't break any of the rules. Don't park in the street, my garbage cans have to be a certain color, no lawn ornaments -- you want me to go on?

HELEN: They're the rules, Stanley. They've got to have rules. They're for our own good, for the good of the community.

STANLEY: Ah, phooey! All my life I had my own home, my own yard, and did pretty much what I wanted with it. I can't do that now. Some days I feel like I'm living in a prison.

HELEN: A prison?

STANLEY: Yeah, a prison. Especially with the security patrol driving past my house every 30 minutes.

HELEN: (*grabs his arm to stop his pacing*) They're there for our protection, Stanley. What's wrong with that?

STANLEY: There's a fine line between protection and invasion of privacy. I was living out in the country, where my nearest neighbor was a mile away. Close enough to visit, far enough away to have some privacy. Now I look out my window and my neighbor looks back through his window and waves. It's just not for me.

HELEN: Oh come on, Stanley. We're safe, in a gated community, with our own security force, a club house, swimming pool, tennis courts, and gym. And the clubs and groups that meet there give people plenty to do. Look at us here. We're with the travel group on a wonderful four-day trip together.

STANLEY: (*lovingly, yet blushing a bit*) A wonderful trip, where we spent our first night together. (*sits on foot of bed*)

HELEN: (*sits next to Stanley*) Yes, and we're on this wonderful trip together because we met in that retirement village you keep complaining about. Come on, Stanley. What's really so terrible about it?

STANLEY: Well, for one thing, the name.

HELEN: What's wrong with the name?

STANLEY: Peaceful Acres?

HELEN: Sounds like a fine name.

STANLEY: Sounds like a cemetery.

HELEN: Oh, it does not.

STANLEY: Oh no? When my daughter, Stephanie, called me and said she and her husband -- the rabbi -- wanted me to buy a lot at Peaceful Acres, I thought my doctor told her something he hadn't told me. I ran right to his office and demanded to know how long I had left! My doctor assured me that wasn't the case.

HELEN: Just like you said, fit as a fiddle! (*pats Stanley's belly*)

STANLEY: Right. Only, this morning (*grabs his back*) perhaps a fiddle with a few broken strings.

HELEN: Then why did you sell your house and buy at Peaceful Acres?

STANLEY: To keep the peace, no pun intended.

HELEN: What do you mean, "keep the peace?"

STANLEY: (*gets up, resumes pacing*) When Margie died, suddenly Stephanie and her husband -- the rabbi -- felt they had to "take care of me." They meant well, but they were pains in the ass.

HELEN: Oh, Stanley . . .

STANLEY: Well, they were. Always hovering over me, stopping by every day to see if I was all right, making sure there was food in the fridge, that I was doing the laundry . . .

HELEN: They were just worried about you. You should be glad they were watching out for you.

STANLEY: I know, I know. That's why I went along with it. But they drive me nuts. Even after I moved to Peaceful Acres, you know, where I'm safe and protected, they constantly came over to check on me.

HELEN: (*gets up and goes to him*) Well, you should say something to them, try to put an end to it.

STANLEY: I did, once. Sort of. One time, I saw them pulling up to the house, so I shut off all the lights, turned off the TV, and sat in the dark hoping they'd think I wasn't home and go away.

HELEN That's what I do when I see those people with the religious pamphlets coming up the walk.

STANLEY: Exactly! Well, that's what I did when I saw Stephanie coming up the walk.

HELEN: That wasn't very nice.

STANLEY: Didn't work, either. My daughter used her own key and came barging in expecting to find me passed out on the floor. When she saw I was okay, she figured out I was pretending not to be home. It was embarrassing.

HELEN: Embarrassing because you got caught?

STANLEY: No, embarrassing because I was sitting there in my boxer shorts. I forgot she had a key.

HELEN (*laughs*) I'll bet she was embarrassed, too.

STANLEY: (*laughs*) Not as much as the rabbi was!

HELEN: Oh come on, Stanley, Peaceful Acres isn't so bad. Have you really given it a chance?

STANLEY: I miss the things I used to do. I miss the walks in the woods, the fishing at the lake up the road.

HELEN: Peaceful Acres has a lake. Don't you go fishing there?

STANLEY: Helen, that's not a lake. That's not even a pond. It's a puddle.

HELEN: I see other people fishing there.

STANLEY: Mostly grandkids visiting for the weekend.

HELEN: Stanley, have you ever given it a try?

STANLEY: I went there once. I cast my line out and it went clear to the other side. Any further and I would've hooked Harriet Taylor's bra hanging on her clothes line.

HELEN: (*laughs*) Try explaining that to the Peaceful Acres Security Patrol!

STANLEY: I know. I'd be arrested for stealing women's underwear from their clothes lines.

HELEN: A clothesline kleptomaniac! You can get 5 to 10 years for something like that.

STANLEY: It's funny, but it's not funny. I want to go back to being "me" again, not someone my daughter and her husband – the rabbi – want me to be.

HELEN: Give it some time, Stanley. I mean, really give it some time.

STANLEY: I have given it time.

HELEN: I know you've been there over year now, but let's be honest, you pretty much keep to yourself. You don't socialize much.

STANLEY: I'm a busy man.

HELEN: You're retired!

STANLEY: That doesn't mean I sit around watching TV all day.

HELEN: "What Not to Wear" . . . ?

STANLEY: Who told you I watch that?

HELEN: No one. *I* watch that. You watch "What Not to Wear"?

STANLEY: Just once. Forget about TV. I socialize.

HELEN: You do not. If my car hadn't stalled at the entrance gate with you behind me, and you hadn't helped me out, we probably never would've met.

STANLEY: I know. At first I was going to lean on my horn and yell obscenities, but when you got out of your car and I saw what a hottie you were, I couldn't resist helping you. Then, when you told me you were a hooker . . . (*puts his arm around her*)

HELEN: Stanley!

STANLEY: And not just any hooker, but a *happy* hooker!

HELEN: Stanley!

STANLEY: Nice to know you enjoy your work.

HELEN: You know darn well the Happy Hookers is my knitting club. Stop teasing me.

STANLEY: Great cover. The Rent-A-Cops will never see through that smoke screen.

HELEN: (*swats him*) Stop teasing me.

STANLEY: Hey, there's a great advertisement for our gated community. "Peaceful Acres, Home for Retired Happy Hookers."

HELEN: You're avoiding the subject, Stanley. We need to talk about all this some more. But right now, we'd better think about getting dressed. (*walks to her suitcase on Stage Left dresser and starts looking through it*)

STANLEY: Yeah, we wouldn't want to miss the bus and get stranded here . . . all alone.

HELEN: (*turns to him*) That does sound good, but can you imagine if it actually happened? We'd have to call someone to come and get us -- and explain why we're in the same room together.

STANLEY: Oh God, can you imagine calling Stephanie?

HELEN: (*goes up to him at Center Stage*) She doesn't approve of me as it is.

STANLEY: She wouldn't approve of any woman for me. It's not you, it's her. No one could replace her mother.

HELEN: I'm not trying to replace her mother.

STANLEY: (*puts his arms around her*) I know that, and you know that, and someday, Stephanie will know that.

HELEN: (*holds Stanley's face in her hands*) I hope so, because I don't plan on letting go of you. Not for your daughter, or her husband -- the rabbi.

STANLEY: Ha! Could you see her and her husband, Rabbi Jeffrey Finklestein, finding us here, shackled up and living in sin? It would be too much for them!

HELEN: (*laughs*) Stanley, stop!

STANLEY: (*laughs*) He'd have to tear his clothes and do that weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth thing, which is fitting, because he's a big crybaby.

HELEN: Oh, stop picking on him. He's not even here to defend himself.

STANLEY: Thank God.

HELEN: Come on, we'd better get dressed and get ready to go.

STANLEY: (*heads into bathroom*) Okay, just give me five minutes in the bathroom, and then you can have it for the next hour.

Helen gives him a phony annoyed look and goes back to looking through her suitcase.

STANLEY: (*yelling from bathroom*) What time are we supposed to meet the group for breakfast in the dining room?

HELEN (*loud voice*) 8:15.

STANLEY: And what time is the bus leaving?

HELEN: 9:00.

STANLEY: And what time is it now?

HELEN: (*glances at clock on nightstand*) 9:15. (*Does a double take with a look of horror on her face.*) Stanley runs out of the bathroom with shaving cream on his face.

Sound effect: Bus is heard driving away.

STANLEY: What time is it?!

HELEN: Ooooooh noooooo!

Both run to Downstage Center and part "curtains" as if looking out the window.

STANLEY: There goes our bus!

HELEN: Without us!

STANLEY & HELEN: (*clutch hands and stare at each other*) Oh . . . my . . . God!

STANLEY: How did this happen?

HELEN: We overslept! We wore ourselves out last night with your Viagra overdose, and we overslept! I thought you set the alarm clock!

STANLEY: I did! I set it for 7:30.

HELEN: (*runs to check alarm clock on nightstand*) Oh, Stanley, you set it for 7:30 *p.m.*, not *a.m.*!

STANLEY: What are we going to do?

HELEN: I don't know. This is terrible. We certainly can't call your daughter.

STANLEY: No! I'd rather stay here forever. Wait! Why are we worrying? They'll get a few miles and realize we're not on the bus.

HELEN: If they that worried, they would've counted heads before they left.

STANLEY: Well, sooner or later our group leader is going to have to realize we're not there!

(Note: Name of audience member can be inserted as “group leader” and used whenever the subject comes up. For example, “Well, sooner or later our group leader, Mary Smith, is going to have to realize we’re not there.)

HELEN: Don't count on it. They're on their way to the casino. All *(insert name of audience member)* is thinking about is getting to that Wheel of Fortune machine before anyone else. Oh, Stanley, what are we going to do?

STANLEY: Okay, okay, lets not panic. Think! Hey, we could meet the bus at the casino.

HELEN: What are we going to do, call a cab? It's a whole day's drive. The bus will be 300 miles from here before we catch up to them. That's a hell of a cab fare!

STANLEY: No -- we could rent a car! We could take turns driving. Hell, we might even beat them to the casino!

HELEN: *(goes up to him)* Oh, Stanley, do you think we could?

STANLEY: Why not? We need a phone book. Look around for a phone book.

They begin searching the room for a phone book. Stanley checks the night stand and pulls out the Bible.

HELEN: *(still searching)* Any luck?

STANLEY: No, just the Gideon Bible. I doubt if Avis or Hertz are listed in there.

HELEN: Well, see if Gideon's phone number is in there. Maybe we can call him.

STANLEY: Hey, why are we looking for the phone book? I'll just call the front desk and ask them for assistance.

HELEN: Good idea!

Suddenly, the front door opens and in barges Carmelita, the chambermaid, carrying towels and a feather duster. She has an odd-sounding Hispanic accent and bustles about, not actually cleaning, and being careful not to make eye contact with either Stanley or Helen.

CARMELITA: *(dusting with feather duster)* Buenos Dias! I am from housekeeping. I will just be uno momento. *(She has a camera hidden between the towels and is taking random pictures of the room. Stanley and Helen don't notice.)*

STANLEY: You can't just come barging in here! Shouldn't you knock first?

CARMELITA: Sorry, Senior, I . . . uh . . . thought you had left already. *(continues snooping)*

HELEN:
You still should've knocked. We could've been undressing.

CARMELITA: Sorry, Senora.

HELEN: Senorita.

CARMELITA: Noooooo, when married, is Senora.

HELEN: *(without thinking)* We're not married. *(gasps, realizing what she said and claps hand over her own mouth)*

CARMELITA: Ohhhhhhhhh, *(more to self)* a little hanky panky . . .

STANLEY: *(proudly)* A lot of hanky panky. Four hours worth, to be exact.

HELEN: Stanley!

STANLEY: She's a Happy Hooker.

HELEN: Will you shut up!

CARMELITA: *(shocked, wide-eyed)* Ay caramba! Here's your towels. I guess you could use some fresh linen, too! *(puts towels on bed)*

STANLEY: And a phone book.

HELEN: We need some information.

CARMELITA: *(more to self)* Already too much information for me. Adios!!
(rushes out door)

HELEN: She was a strange one.

STANLEY: Maybe I *am* better off staying in Peaceful Acres. There's too many nuts out here!

HELEN: I hope she understood about the phone book.

STANLEY: Forget the phone book. I'll call information on the phone. *(picks up phone on nightstand)*

Helen sits at foot of bed.

STANLEY: *(dials 0, waits a beat)* Hello, front desk? I need information . . . No, not from you, from information . . . No, no, you don't understand . . . Yes, I'm sure you *are* working hard at learning English. Okay, maybe you can help me. I need to rent a car . . . No, I don't want to rent

your car, I need to talk to a car rental place . . . I know you're not a car rental. That's why I need information . . . No! Not information from you! Connect me to information – 411. 4 . . . 1 . . . 1. . . What?! (stares at receiver, then hangs up)

HELEN: What's the matter?

STANLEY: He said if I knew the number, why didn't I dial it myself? Then he hung up on me! This place is full of nut cases!

HELEN: All right, all right, just calm down and dial 411. The sooner we get out of here, the better.

STANLEY: Right. *(He dials 411, listens for a second, then looks frustrated and turns to Helen.)* It's not ringing.

HELEN: It's busy?

STANLEY: No, it's not doing anything. It's dead. There must be something wrong with the phone now.

HELEN: Try calling the desk again. See if you can get through to the guy you just talked to.

STANLEY: I'm not sure I want to.

HELEN: Stanley, we have to get out of here. Call the front desk and see if the phone gets through to them.

STANLEY: All right. *(He dials 0.)* Hello. There's something wrong with my phone. . . . I know it appears to be working now, but when I tried to dial information a few minutes ago, I got nothing. No ring, no busy signal, nothing No, I dialed 411. Nothing happened What do you mean I have to dial a 9 first? That would be 911. That's for emergencies, not information . . . What? Dial a 9, then 411? 9411?

HELEN: He's right. I remember having to do that somewhere else.

STANLEY: *(into phone)* Thanks. Okay, I'll try 9411. *(He hangs up, then picks up phone to dial 9411. when police sirens go off outside.)*

Sound effect: Police sirens go off outside.

STANLEY: *(to Helen)* What's that?

HELEN: Sounds like some kind of emergency right outside our window. *(Stanley and Helen go Downstage Center, pull "curtains" aside, and "look out window.")*

STANLEY: There's all kinds of police vehicles across the street.

HELEN: They're surrounding the bank! Do you think there's been a robbery?

STANLEY: Something is certainly going on, and it's not someone's cat stuck in a tree. We've got to get out of here. Pack up all your things. We'll walk to a diner and call a cab to take us to a car rental place. *(He goes to dresser, gets his suitcase, and carries it over to table at Stage Right.)*

HELEN: Good idea. Why didn't we think of that before?

STANLEY: I don't know. That's not important. Start packing and let's get out of here before World War III explodes out there. *(Helen heads to her suitcase on dresser and notices a prescription bottle on the nightstand.)*

HELEN: Stanley!

STANLEY: What!

HELEN: Aren't you forgetting something? Your Viagra! *(shakes bottle)*

STANLEY: *(They meet at Center Stage)* Helen, last night was wonderful, but we really don't have time for that now.

HELEN: No, silly, I meant don't forget to pack it. *(lovingly)* I assume you'll need it again before this trip is over.

STANLEY: I certainly hope so. Besides, I guess it could be dangerous leaving this stuff laying around here on the nightstand.

HELEN: Dangerous? How?

STANLEY: Well, think about it. The next guy sleeping in this room could get up in the middle of the night with a headache, see the bottle, and mistake it for aspirin. It could be disastrous if he accidentally took two or three of these at one time.

HELEN: You mean it could kill him?

STANLEY: I don't know about that, but he would certainly wake up inside a tent! *(Stanley goes to bed and pulls up the bedspread with one hand to make a tent as he says this.)*

HELEN: *(playfully slaps his hand)* Oh Stanley, quit kidding around. We have to get out of here. *Before they can resume packing, a voice is heard from outside. It's a police officer talking in a bullhorn.*

Sound effect (voice over): Attention, attention, this is the police!

HELEN: *(puts Viagra back on nightstand and runs to Stanley and wraps her arms around him in a panic)* Stanley! They found out we're not married!

STANLEY: Shhhh . . . listen! (*Whenever the police talk, Stanley & Helen cup their ears to listen.*)

Sound effect (voice over, as if spoken into a bullhorn): There has been a robbery at the First National Bank. The suspect has escaped and is hiding somewhere in the neighborhood.

HELEN: Oh my God, do you think he's armed? (*Voice Over should occur quickly.*)

Sound effect (voice over): Suspect may be armed and should be considered extremely dangerous.

STANLEY: There's your answer.

HELEN: What should we do now? (*Voice Over should occur quickly.*)

Sound effect (voice over): Here's what you should do now: Remain indoors. Lock all doors and windows. Stay where you are until we notify you it is safe to come out. Stay alert for further announcements. And don't forget, tickets are still available for the Policeman's Ball. That is all.

HELEN

Oh Stanley, now what? We're never going to get out of here!

STANLEY: Remain calm, Helen. We'd better do as the police say. It's better to just stay put and live to tell the story.

HELEN: Stanley, I'm scared.

STANLEY: Don't be. I'm sure that bank robber is miles away from here by now.

HELEN: Do you really think so?

STANLEY: Sure. He probably had a getaway car waiting for him right outside the bank. That's how it is in the movies anyway.

HELEN: This isn't a movie, Stanley, it's the real thing. Funny though, in your arms, I'm not quite as scared as I was a minute ago.

STANLEY: There's nothing to worry about, Helen. Look at it this way -- we'll certainly have stories to tell our grand kids.

HELEN: And being stranded here in the middle of a bank robbery is certainly more exciting than being on the bus and playing (*insert name of audience member*) bingo game.
(*They both laugh.*)

STANLEY: Still, we better do what the police said and lock the door. *(Suddenly, the front door knob begins to turn, and the door shakes as if someone is trying to force it open.)*

HELEN: Stanley, someone is trying the door!

STANLEY: It's probably that nutty maid. I think. I hope.

HELEN: I'm scared!

STANLEY: Be brave, Helen. And prepare to defend yourself. *(He grabs his suitcase from the nearby table and holds it like a weapon. Helen runs to the dresser and comes back with her suitcase. They take positions on either side of the door, ready to swing the suitcases at the intruder.)*

HELEN: Oh Stanley!

STANLEY: Shhh! We need the element of surprise! *(They watch in suspense as the door opens and a man slowly backs in, not revealing his face or the front of his body. He's wearing a black suit. As he gets in, he closes the door. This is Father Mike.)*

STANLEY: Now, Helen! Swing! *(As they raise their suitcases to swing, the intruder spins around and pins himself against the door, terrified.)*

ALL THREE: Aaaaaaaaahhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!!!!

Stanley and Helen stop in mid-swing when they see the intruder is wearing a priest's collar and holding a Bible.

HELEN: A priest?

FATHER MIKE: Don't hit me! I'm a priest! My name is Father Mike!

STANLEY: They're collecting the offering door to door now? Priest or no priest, what are you doing barging in our room like this?

FATHER MIKE: Uh . . . your room? I, uh . . . I am *so* sorry. I thought this was my room. What room is this? *(Father Mike begins to relax a bit, but when Stanley raises his suitcase again, Father Mike pins himself against the door again.)*

HELEN: This is room 112.

FATHER MIKE

Oh my goodness, I am *so* sorry. I'm in room 212. I'm on the wrong floor. In a panic, I didn't realize, and when I tried your door and it was unlocked, I just came in. I *am* sorry.

STANLEY: Why were you in a panic?

FATHER MIKE: Well . . . when I heard that police announcement about an armed and dangerous bank robber on the loose in the neighborhood, I got nervous and hurried back to my room to lock myself in.

HELEN: Stanley, put the suitcase down. Relax, Father. *(Father Mike relaxes against the door.)*

STANLEY: *(raising suitcase slightly, still a bit cautious)* Don't relax too much. *(Father Mike freezes against the door again.)*

HELEN: Stanley! It's okay, Father. Relax. *(He does, but stays against the door.)* I'm Helen Cooper. *(extends her hand)* Catholic! *(Suddenly overcome with guilt, she falls to her knees, crossing herself).* Although forgive me, Father, I haven't been to church in quite a while. It's been at least . . .

STANLEY: *(grabbing her arm and helping her up)* Helen! This is a hotel room, not a confessional!

HELEN: Sorry, I get in front of a priest and I just start confessing.

STANLEY: Good thing I stopped you before you got to last night.

FATHER MIKE: Why, what happened last night?

STANLEY: Never mind. My name is Stanley Cohen. Jewish. Don't go to church, don't plan on going to church. Thanks for dropping by, Father. Good luck with Bingo Night. The elevator is down the hall. Have a nice day.

While Stanley talks, Helen returns her suitcase to the top of the dresser.

FATHER MIKE: I'm not going out in that hall!

STANLEY: I'm afraid you have to. You can't get to the elevator through our bathroom. Now, if you don't mind . . . *(Stanley motions to door.)*

FATHER MIKE: I'm not going out there again! There's an armed and dangerous bank robber out there somewhere. He may be in this building! *(to Helen)* If you don't mind, Mrs. Cooper, I'll just stay here until the police say it's okay to leave.

All three cup their ears and listen to the following voice over.

Sound effect (voice over): Attention, attention, this is the police. Again we advise all residents in the neighborhood to stay indoors. The suspected bank robber has not been apprehended yet. He may be armed and dangerous and is believed to still be hiding in the vicinity. Remain inside with all doors and windows locked until further notice. That is all.

HELEN: Stanley, we can't send him out in the hall again if the police say it's dangerous. (*motions to table*) Sit down, Father. Make yourself at home.

Father Mike sits in chair closest to wall, and Helen sits in other chair.

FATHER MIKE: Thank you, Mrs. Cooper. Thank you, Mr. Cooper.

STANLEY: No, not Cooper, Cohen. Stanley Cohen.

FATHER MIKE: (*to Helen*) Oh, I'm sorry, I thought you said your name was Cooper.

STANLEY: She is. She's Cooper. I'm Cohen.

FATHER MIKE: (*light dawns*) Ohhhhhhhh, I just assumed you two were . . . I mean, when I saw the suitcases that you obviously were . . . I mean . . .

HELEN: (*In a panic, she picks up newspaper on table and holds it between her and priest, like a wall in a confessional. Then she crosses herself and says following lines.*) Forgive me Father, for I have sinned. It's been at least five years since my last confession. (*to self*) At least five years . . .

STANLEY: Helen, knock it off! You don't owe him any confession for last night!

FATHER MIKE: Yes, please, Mrs. Cooper. This isn't the time or the place. I'm not here to judge. I'm just looking for a place to hide.

HELEN: (*puts down the paper*) Hide from what?

FATHER MIKE: The armed and dangerous bank robber! Remember?

STANLEY: All right, Father, you can stay. But just until the police say it's safe to go out. In the meantime, no judging anyone, and no attempted conversions. That's all my Stephanie and her husband -- the Rabbi -- would have to hear, that I converted.

FATHER MIKE: Fair enough. And thank you, the both of you.

HELEN: Well, since we're all going to be here awhile, might as well get to know each other. Where is your church, Father?

FATHER MIKE: Oh, just a few blocks from here.

STANLEY: If you live around here, then why are you staying in a hotel?

FATHER MIKE: Oh, uh, well . . . there was a flood in the rectory. Yeah, a pipe burst, and it's going to take a few days to repair the plumbing and take care of the water damage. So, uh, the insurance company put me up here until I can go back home.

HELEN: Oh, that's too bad.

STANLEY: You'd think God would make your churches immune to such disasters.

FATHER MIKE: Yes, He certainly works in mysterious ways. What about you two? What brings you to our town?

STANLEY: An evil group leader.

HELEN: Stanley! We're here with our travel group. Stanley and I live in a retirement village.

STANLEY: Yeah, Peaceful Acres.

FATHER MIKE: Sounds like a cemetery.

STANLEY: Thank you, Father.

HELEN: Well, it's not a cemetery. It's a wonderful retirement village that Stanley has yet to take advantage of. There's a travel group there, and we're with them on a motorcoach trip.

STANLEY: We *were* with them on a motorcoach trip. They have since moved on without us, leaving us stranded here in the middle of a bank robbery.

FATHER MIKE: Heavens, how did that happen?

STANLEY: Well, I had taken my prescription, and we . . .

HELEN: (*interrupts him*) It's a long story, Father. Let's just say we were exhausted from our trip and overslept.

FATHER MIKE: Uh, I think I'm beginning to see . . .

STANLEY: See what?

HELEN: (*makes the sign of the cross*) Forgive me Father, for I have sinned . . .

STANLEY: Helen, stop it!

FATHER MIKE: (*to Helen*) Look my child, I . . .

STANLEY: She's not a child. Neither of us are children. And if you think I'm going to stand here and listen to you judge us . . .

During the following Voice Over, all three cup their hands over their ears to listen.

Sound effect (voice over): Attention, attention all residents of the neighborhood, this is the police. Bank robbery suspect is still at large. Remain indoors until further notice. Policeman's Ball tickets are now half price. That is all.

STANLEY: (*leans in to Father Mike*) Remember what I said earlier, Father. One judgment and it's out in the hallway for you. Got it?

FATHER MIKE: (*nods in agreement*) Amen, Brother.

STANLEY: I'm not your brother.

FATHER MIKE: Riiiiight.

STANLEY: You two can discuss the Pope or something. I'm going into the bathroom and get dressed. (*Stanley returns his suitcase to dresser top and then exits to bathroom.*)

FATHER MIKE: He seems a bit rough around the edges.

HELEN: Not really, Father. Deep down, he's a sweet loving, caring person. It's just that this whole day, which started out so perfect, has gone rapidly downhill.

FATHER MIKE: You mean, missing your bus?

HELEN: Yes.

FATHER MIKE: And this whole bank robbery business, not being allowed to leave, being stuck here with me?

HELEN: Yes. NO! I mean, yes to everything except being stuck here with you.

FATHER MIKE: I really am sorry to impose.

HELEN: Please, Father, it's okay. A simple mistake, that's all. And we certainly can't send you out in the midst of danger. Besides, I feel a bit safer having someone with a direct connection to God right here in the room.

FATHER MIKE: We have a fine police department. I'm sure they'll resolve this in no time and we can all be on our way.

HELEN: I hope so. Because if anything else goes wrong, I'm afraid I'll never get Stanley to go on another motorcoach trip.

FATHER MIKE: Since we have some time, why don't you tell me about yourself?

HELEN: Oh, there's not much to tell.

FATHER MIKE: Sure there is. Everyone has a story to tell -- career, marital status, children, grandchildren. I hear it all at the church. Come on, how about you? Any children?

HELEN: Well, yes, two. I have a son in Texas, and a daughter in California. Both are married.

FATHER MIKE: Wow, your family is pretty spread out.

HELEN: I'm afraid so. After college they both went out to seek their fame and fortune. Career choices took them to distant adventures and far away from home.

FATHER MIKE: Sounds like you don't see them much.

HELEN: Oh, holidays sometimes bring us together. But to tell you the truth, most of our "visiting" is done by computer these days. You know, email, online photo albums, web cams.

FATHER MIKE: *(philosophically)* As wonderful as technology is in keeping us all connected, at the same time, it's driven us apart.

HELEN: *(in agreement)* You can't hug grandchildren through a computer screen.

FATHER MIKE: I understand.

HELEN: When my husband died, I didn't want to be all alone. So I sold our house and built a new one in Peaceful Acres. Now I have friends close by, and groups to belong to, like this travel group. Oh, and of course, I'm a Happy Hooker.

Stanley walks out of the bathroom and catches the end of the previous line.

STANLEY: Now you know why we overslept.

HELEN: Stanley!

STANLEY: Just need my toothbrush. *(gets it from his suitcase, along with a pair of socks, which he puts on the bed)* Sorry for the interruption. Helen, continue confessing your life of sin and lust. *(Stanley exits to bathroom holding toothbrush.)*

FATHER MIKE: Mrs. Cooper, I . . .

HELEN: Don't listen to Stanley, Father. The Happy Hookers is my knitting club.

FATHER MIKE: *(laughs)* Oh, do you knit? My mother was quite the knitter. My brother and I used to sword fight with her knitting needles.

HELEN: Well, at Peaceful Acres we have a knitting club, The Happy Hookers. I was the president, but I recently stepped down to have more time to travel, and to be with Stanley.

FATHER MIKE: Ah yes, Stanley.

HELEN: Don't judge him too quickly, Father. As I said, it hasn't been a good day. He's a good man. Kind, sweet, polite . . .

STANLEY: (*yells from inside bathroom*) Helen, where the hell are my socks?

FATHER MIKE
I see what you mean.

HELEN: (*laughs*) Oh, he is, Father, he really is. (*calls to Stanley*) They're out here on the bed where you left them. I'll bring them in. (*to Father Mike*) Excuse me Father. (*grabs socks from bed and takes them into bathroom*)

Father Mike walks to Downstage Center and mimes pulling back the drapes and looking out the window.

Helen comes out of the bathroom. She notices Father Mike's Bible on the table and walks behind him to pick it up. Then she walks up to him at Center Stage.

HELEN: This is a very nice Bible, Father.

FATHER MIKE: (*nervous*) Yes, I'll take that, please.

HELEN: It's very heavy.

FATHER MIKE: (*even more nervous*) Yes, it is. It's a family heirloom. I'll take it now, please.

HELEN: Does it have pictures? I've just love looking through Bibles with family pictures in them. *Helen opens Bible and gets a shocked look on her face. She reaches in and takes out a gun from the hollowed-out pages. She holds up the gun with two fingers, dangling it as if it's dirty. She's speechless.*

MIKE: (*No more Mr. Nice Guy, he speaks in an entirely different voice from the priest.*) I'll take that Helen. (*He takes it from her.*) Thank you.

HELEN: You're not a priest . . . you're the . . .

MIKE: Yes, I am. (*threateningly*) Now, get over there and sit on the edge of the bed. And not a peep out of you, or else.
Helen does as he says. Father Mike sits at the table in the chair nearest the bed. He keeps the gun pointed at Helen.

Stanley comes out of the bathroom, all dressed. He sees the gun.

STANLEY: What's this?!

MIKE: Shut up and sit down!

STANLEY: I heard you guys were pushy, but this is ridiculous!

MIKE: Siddown!

HELEN: Stanley, just do as he says!

STANLEY: All right, all right, I'll do it. But my son-in-law isn't going to be happy. *(He sits at the table, then raises the newspaper as a divider and makes the sign of the cross.)* Forgive me Father for I have sinned. It's been . . . well, I've never *been* to confession.

MIKE: *(rolls eyes)* Oy vey!

Lights Out – End of Act 1

ACT 2

Act 2 begins where Act 1 left off. All actors are in the same positions.

STANLEY: Oy vey? Shouldn't that be my line?

MIKE: Shut up and sit down!

HELEN: Do what he says, Stanley.

STANLEY: I will not . . . *(Father Mike points gun at Stanley)* . . . even give it another thought. *(Stanley sits down.)*

FATHER MIKE: Now, everyone just does what they're told, and no one gets hurt. Got it? *(Stanley and Helen both nod.)*

MIKE: Good. Now, let's see what's going on outside. *(He walks Downstage Center, moves imaginary curtain and looks out.)*

Sound effect (voice over): Attention, attention, all residents remain inside. Armed bank robber is still on the loose. Tickets for Policeman's Ball are now buy one get one free. That is all.

MIKE: Buy one get one free, that's a hell of a deal.

STANLEY: Yeah, I'm sure they'd love to have you.

MIKE: What am I saying? Jeez, there must be a million cops out there. This just ain't my day.

The following lines should be said quickly, with Mike reacting like he can't believe what he's hearing:

HELEN: Put yourself in our shoes. We overslept . . .

STANLEY: Needed BenGay . . .

HELEN: Missed the bus . . .

STANLEY: Had a crazy maid storm in here . . .

HELEN: She was a strange one . . .

STANLEY: Had trouble with the phone . . .

HELEN: Discovered a bank robbery outside . . .

STANLEY: Had the vicious criminal barge in on us . . .

HELEN: Holding us hostage . . .

MIKE: Shut up!!

STANLEY & HELEN: And we were told to shut up!

MIKE: *(stands between them)* I'm warning you two. I don't want to hurt you, but if give me any trouble, I'll . . . *(waves the gun)*

HELEN: *(panicky)* No, no, no, no. We won't give you any trouble, we promise. Right, Stanley?

Stanley glares at Mike, and Mike points the gun at him.

HELEN: *Right, Stanley?!*

STANLEY: I may be a bit hard headed, but I'm not stupid.

HELEN: No one said you were stupid, Stanley.

STANLEY: You're darn right I'm not stupid.

HELEN: Okay, you're not stupid.

As Helen and Stanley argue, Mike looks from one to the other with frustration and disbelief on his face.

STANLEY: Just stupid enough to go on this senior trip.

HELEN: This trip is not stupid.

STANLEY: Yes it is.

HELEN: (*snippy*) It wasn't stupid last night.

STANLEY: That was different. I should never have gotten involved with this group.

HELEN: (*hurt*) Are you saying you shouldn't have gotten involved with *me*, either?

STANLEY: No, no, no! I'm glad I got involved with you! I'm just sorry I got involved with this group. I never should have trusted (*insert name of audience member*).

HELEN: (*Insert name of audience member*) is a wonderful group leader.

Utterly frustrated, Mike scratches his head with the barrel of his gun.

HELEN: (*to Mike*) You really shouldn't scratch your head with the gun, Father. It could blow your brains out.

STANLEY: He's not a priest!! And the brains are questionable.

HELEN: (*still mad*) Well, sorry, he looks like a priest.

FATHER MIKE: (*shouts*) Will you two shut up!

Helen and Stanley cower.

MIKE: Now look, I've had about all I'm going to take from you two. If you don't . . .

There is a knock on the door. Helen takes a deep breath and opens her mouth wide, about to shout for help. Mike quickly points the gun at her.

FATHER MIKE: Don't even think about it. Were you expecting anyone?

HELEN: No.

STANLEY: Yes! My son . . . the CIA agent. He's probably out there with reinforcements. You may as well surrender. Give me the gun.

HELEN: (*goes up to Mike*) Oh Father, he's teasing. He doesn't even have a son. He has a daughter.

STANLEY: Helen!

HELEN: I keep forgetting he's not a priest! Damn!

MIKE: Watch your mouth!

HELEN: (*falls to her knees and crosses herself*) Forgive me, Father for I have . . .

STANLEY: Helen!

HELEN: Damn!!

Another knock at the door.

MIKE: (*to Stanley*) Who is it?

STANLEY: How the hell do I know? These aren't X-ray glasses, Pal.

Another knock, louder this time.

HELEN: I don't think they're going away.

MIKE: All right, ax who it is.

HELEN: (*goes to door*) Who is it?

Carmelita answers.

CARMELITA: It is I, Carmelita the maid. I have your fresh linen.

MIKE: Tell her to come back later.

HELEN: Can you come back later?

CARMELITA: Sorry Senorita, my boss say I must take care of this now. Please open the door.

HELEN: Just a minute. (*to Mike*) What should I do?

MIKE: Okay, I'm going to down and hold my gun under the table, so no funny business. Everyone just act normal -- whatever "normal" means for you two. As far as she's concerned, I'm your priest.

STANLEY: I'm Jewish.

FATHER MIKE: Her priest! (*pointing at Helen*) Now shut up and open the door.

Another knock.

HELEN: I'm coming, I'm coming! (*Helen opens the door and in comes Carmelita with fresh linen. A camera is hidden in the linen.*)

CARMELITA: Buenos dias again, Senorita, I have the fresh linens you asked for. (*She walks across the room.*)

HELEN: I didn't ask for them. But that's okay, just put them down and you can go.

CARMELITA: (*on Stage Left side of bed, fluffs pillows, tries to look busy*) No, no, Senorita. I tidy up for you a bit. Fluff the pillows. No rush . . .

She begins taking pictures with the camera hidden in the linen. She still hasn't noticed Mike sitting at the table.

HELEN: Yes, there is a rush. We're very busy. Come back later.

CARMELITA: I like to talk. Is good to make new friends, I think. (*She finally notices Mike*) Ay Caramba! Padre! What are you doing here?

STANLEY: Never mind the Padre. Just leave. Now.

HELEN: Please.

MIKE: Yeah, I think it might be a good idea for you to leave now.

CARMELITA: (*wide-eyed, very suspicious*) But why? What's the rush? Tell me, Padre, what brings you to their motel room?

STANLEY: I don't think that's any of your business. Since when does a chamber maid question the guests?

HELEN: Now is not the time, Stanley. Look, Carmelita, we need our privacy right now. So if you could leave us alone . . .

CARMELITA: So, Padre, is nice to meet you. What brings you to the neighborhood?

MIKE: Uh, I'm here to counsel these two.

CARMELITA: Counsel?

MIKE: Uh, yeah. (*looks at Stanley and Helen with a smirk on his face*) This is the "Sins of Pre-Marital Sex" session.
Stanley and Helen look at each other wide-eyed with embarrassment.

CARMELITA: Pre-marital sex?!

MIKE: Yes, I'm here to counsel them for marriage.

STANLEY & HELEN: Yes, marriage.

CARMELITA: Marriage?! *(She walks up to Stanley, enraged. As she approaches him, she takes off her wig, glasses, and other parts of her disguise and throws them on the bed. She also drops the phony accent.)*

CARMELITA: You're going to marry this woman? A Catholic? Are you nuts?

STANLEY: Stephanie?

HELEN: Stephanie?

MIKE: *(Leaps out of chair, but keeps gun hidden.)* Stephanie? Wait, who the hell is Stephanie?

STANLEY & HELEN: My/his daughter!

MIKE: *(Sinks back into chair, putting his head in his hands.)* Ay Caramba! I don't believe this.

STEPHANIE: You don't believe this? Wait until my husband -- the Rabbi -- hears about this! I need to take pictures. My husband is going to flip out! *(Carmelita starts snapping pictures of Mike.)*

MIKE: *(stands and holds up the gun in full view.)* Here, you'll want to get a good close-up of the gun.

STEPHANIE: Oh yeah, I'll need a good shot of that, too. Can you turn it a little to the . . . a gun?!

MIKE: I'll take the camera. You just made a big mistake, sister.

STANLEY: A priest and a sister. I guess that makes you the Mother Superior, Helen.

MIKE: Shut up! All right. *(points to Stanley)* You, sit down at the table with me. *(Stanley sits.) (points to Helen & Stephanie)* You two, sit down on the bed. *(They sit.)* Now, everybody relax. As long as there's no trouble from any of you, no one gets hurt -- got it?

They all nod.

MIKE: Good. So, it looks like the cops ain't going nowhere for awhile. We might as well get acquainted. *(sits down again)*

STEPHANIE: Do I have to sit next to her?

STANLEY: Stephanie, what are you doing here?

STEPHANIE: Following you. Making sure you didn't make any big mistakes. And it looks like I got here just in time!

HELEN: What are you talking about?

STEPHANIE: I'm talking about you, that's what I'm talking about. Daddy, I cannot stand by any longer and watch you throw away the rest of your life with this, this . . . floozy!

STANLEY: Now watch it, you're going to far.

STEPHANIE: I'm just getting started. Floozy is being kind.

HELEN: (*points finger*) Now just a minute . . .

STEPHANIE: Don't point your finger at me, jailbird.

MIKE: This is getting good.

STANLEY: Jailbird? What are you talking about?

STEPHANIE: (*Stands and walks Stage Left.*) Daddy, didn't you see the front page of the Peaceful Acres monthly newsletter?

STANLEY: Yeah, I saw it.

STEPHANIE: Didn't you see Helen's picture on the front page?

STANLEY: Yeah, I saw it.

HELEN: That was a great picture. I had it blown up, and it's hanging in my den.

STEPHANIE: I don't believe what I'm hearing! If my husband -- the Rabbi -- were here, he'd hit the ceiling!

MIKE: What picture?

STEPHANIE: (*crosses herself*) Oh forgive them, Father, for they have sinned . . . What am I saying?

STANLEY: Stephanie, you don't understand.

STEPHANIE: Oh, understand, all right. A lonely old man being taken advantage of by a . . .

HELEN: A what?

STEPHANIE: Hooker! A senior hooker! I have the proof right here, right here on the front page of the Peaceful Acres newsletter. *(She takes a newspaper from between the towels and holds it up.)*

STEPHANIE: Here, right here, front page. Look at this headline: Happy Hooker Arrested.” And below it a photo of Helen, the Happy Hooker, in handcuffs being taken away by the security patrol -- with a big smile on her face!

Mike gets up from table and goes to Stage Left to look at paper. He stays Stage Left and leans against the dresser.

HELEN: It wasn't for long. All the Happy Hookers in Peaceful Acres paid my bail and I was out in no time.

STEPHANIE: *All* the Happy Hookers?

STANLEY: Oh yeah, this retirement village you forced me to move into is filled with retired prostitutes. Every Saturday in the summer, they lie naked on the lawn and have a yard sale.

HELEN: Stanley . . .

MIKE: *(shaking head in disbelief)* It's like watching a sit-com.

STEPHANIE: *(to Helen)* Well, what do you have to say for yourself?

HELEN
Stephanie, you didn't read the article.

STEPHANIE: I saw enough.

HELEN: No you didn't. If you had read further, you would've seen was a fundraiser. It was one of those fundraisers where you pretend to be arrested and your friends have to bail you out. All the money goes to charity.

STANLEY: I gave a hundred bucks.

MIKE: Very generous of you.

STANLEY: Thank you.

HELEN: As for the Happy Hookers, they're not prostitutes, they're my knitting club.

STEPHANIE: A knitting club?

MIKE: That's right, a knitting club.

STEPHANIE: You stay out of this.

MIKE: Sorry. Wait . . . what am I apologizing for? I have the gun!

STANLEY: Do you understand now, Steph?

STEPHANIE: *(goes up to table, Stage Right, and talks to Stanley)* About the hooker thing? Yes. About this relationship of yours? No!

STANLEY: There's nothing to understand. I like Helen, Helen likes me. We enjoy each other's company. The end. It's our business, not yours or anyone else's.

STEPHANIE: Enjoying each others' company is one thing. Shacking up together is another. And at your age!

HELEN: *(gets up and goes to her)* Our age? To tell you the truth, Stephanie, I'm tired of young people judging us just because of our age. Age has nothing to do with it.

STEPHANIE: Age has everything to do with it!

STANLEY: *(gets up and goes to her)* Steph, just because you get older doesn't mean you change. Sure, maybe you move a little slower. Sure, maybe you wake up with a few aches and pains. *(Stanley and Helen smile at each other.)* But everything else is the same.

HELEN: The same feelings, the same wants and desires, the same emotions; they're still there. Maybe listed in a slightly different order according to priority, but they're still there. *(returns to bed and sits)*

Mike begins to get teary-eyed.

STANLEY: The only real change, Steph, is the number of candles on your birthday cake, that's all.

STEPHANIE: What would Mom say?

MIKE: Yeah, what would Mom say?

They all glance at Mike.

STANLEY: She'd say, "enjoy the rest of your life, Stanley. Be happy."

STEPHANIE: With her? *(points at Helen)*

STANLEY: It's not just about "her." It's about life. And being happy the rest of your life. If that means finding someone to share that life with, so be it. *(sits at table)*

STEPHANIE: But you have me and Jeffrey.

STANLEY: I need more.

STEPHANIE: How do you know she's not just after your money?

HELEN: I resent that!

MIKE: Yeah, that was a low blow.

STANLEY: Oh yeah, Helen can live a life of luxury off of my monthly social security check. What money?

HELEN: I don't need his money. I'm doing just fine, thank you.

STEPHANIE: Then why did you go chasing after my father?

HELEN: He chased me!

STANLEY: What can I say? I'm a sucker for a hooker in a stalled vehicle.

HELEN: Stanley . . .

STANLEY: Stephanie, lets be honest. This isn't about me.

STEPHANIE: Of course it is. I'm trying to protect you. Obviously, you can't protect yourself.

STANLEY: No Steph, this is about you, not me. This is all about you not being able to see me with anyone besides your mother.

MIKE: *(walks over to her, puts arm around her and gestures with gun while talking)* He's right, Stephanie. It's these inner feelings that are driving you to become a wedge between your father and Helen. You may not even realize it; it may be subconscious. But that's your true motivation. You're not really trying to save your father from some gold digger or retired hooker, you're trying to keep your father from moving on with his life, to preserve your own memories of a time past, not realizing there is a future yet ahead for him.

HELEN: *(to Mike)* Well said. Thank you.

STANLEY: And where does a hardened criminal like yourself learn all that?

MIKE: From my prison psychiatrist. *(walks back to Stage Left)*

STANLEY: Prison? The plot thickens.

STEPHANIE: But he's right. I've been a fool. For as long as I can remember, Dad, it's been the three of us. You, me and Mom. I look at old photographs, home movies, my scrap books and things I've saved over the years. All those memories come flooding back.

STANLEY: (*gets up and puts arm around her*) There's nothing wrong with that, Steph. It's good to remember the past. But you can't live there.

STEPHANIE: But we were so close, the three of us. And Mom and I were more than mother and daughter -- we were best friends. We did so much together. Hung out, shopped, went to the movies. And what about the holidays? She and I would plan it all, make all the food, bake the desserts. It wasn't work, it was fun. Thanksgiving is coming up in a couple of weeks, and all I think about is how we used to . . . oh Dad, I miss her so much. (*Stephanie starts sobbing.*)

STANLEY: So do I, Steph, so do I. But life goes on. And I believe we're meant to share it with someone else if we choose to. Some choose not to, and for them, that works. And good for them. As long as they're content, fine. For others, like me, I want more. I'm not trying to erase the memory of your mother, Steph. I'll always have that, and no one can take that away from me. But while keeping those memories close to my heart, it's time for me to move forward with my life and create a few new memories, with someone else I really care about.

HELEN: (*gets up and goes to Stephanie*) Stephanie, your father's right. I feel the same way. You forget I had a husband that I loved very much, too. And still do. Nothing, not even your father, can take that away from me. But I still have some years ahead of me, and I want to share those years with someone. I'm not trying to replace your mother, or erase her memory. I'm just trying to . . . (*sits back on bed*)

STEPHANIE: I know, I know. And . . . I'm sorry. I'm sorry for what I've put you through, both of you. Not just today, but ever since you met. I get it, now. It's not easy, and it's going to take some getting used to. But I understand. I'm just going to need some time. Fair enough?

STANLEY & HELEN: Fair enough.

MIKE: Yeah, that's what my prison psychiatrist always said. You gotta give it time.

STANLEY: Gee, how can we ever repay you for all your help?

MIKE: No need to get smart, Pops.

HELEN: So, why were you in prison?

MIKE: That's none of your business.

STEPHANIE: (*sits on bed next to Helen*) Oh come on, we're here pouring our hearts out to you. It's your turn.

MIKE: I guess it doesn't matter what I say to you now.

HELEN: What does that mean?

MIKE: Never mind. All right. You want the story? Here it is.

STANLEY: I'm all ears.

MIKE: Well, I had a nice little business going.

HELEN: You had a business?

MIKE: Depends on who you ask. I considered it a business. The cops didn't.

STEPHANIE: What kind of business?

MIKE: Well, I would visit area auto repair shops, auto body shops, pretty much any kind of shop that had lots of tools.

STANLEY: So far, I fail to see the crime in that.

MIKE: I usually visited them at night, after they were closed.

HELEN: Now I'm starting to get the picture.

MIKE: I would relieve them of their tools. Then I would sell them on the Internet. I had a nice little online store on eBay.

STEPHANIE: eBay?

MIKE: Yeah, "Mechanic Mike's Used Tool Emporium." I was doing really well. Huge profits, no overhead.

STANLEY: Oh brother. I've been to that eBay store. I bought a set of jumper cables from you!

HELEN: Not the ones you gave me for the trunk of my car?

STANLEY: The same.

STEPHANIE: Dad, you bought stolen goods off the internet?

STANLEY: How was I supposed to know it was stolen goods?

HELEN: Not so loud! The police are outside somewhere.

STANLEY: Look around you, Helen. Stolen jumper cables are the least of our problems at the moment. So obviously, you're out of business. What happened?

MIKE: My inventory was getting a bit low, so it was time to "restock" the shelves.

STANLEY: Yeah . . .

MIKE: So one night, around midnight, I paid a little visit to this auto body shop. I climbed up on a dumpster just outside the window, broke the glass, and dropped myself down into the garage.
(acts it out as he tells it)

HELEN: *(stands)* That wasn't very smart. You could have cut yourself.

STANLEY: Helen!

Helen: *(sits back down)* Sorry.

MIKE: So, I start looking around the joint and I find the tool boxes, loaded with good stuff. I start stuffing my pillow cases with the tools, when suddenly, I hear a low growl behind me.

STEPHANIE: A growl?

MIKE: Yeah, dogs! Two German Shepherds staring at me, teeth showing, growling.

HELEN: They had you trapped!

MIKE: Yup. The office was right there. *(continues acting it out)* I slowly start walking backward towards the office door. They slowly follow me, still growling, teeth showing, drooling, ready to attack at any second. I made it to the office door. I put one foot inside the office. I put my other foot inside the office. They realized what was going on, and they leaped at me! I managed to close the door just in time!

STANLEY: Lucky you.

MIKE: only it wasn't over. They both started clawing at the door. One of those flimsy hollow doors. Within a half hour, one paw broke through. It wouldn't be long before they got all the way through, and I've have no place to run. I had no choice!

STEPHANIE: What do you mean, you had no choice?

MIKE: I called 911.

STANLEY: What? You called 911?

MIKE: I had no choice!

STANLEY: So let me get this straight. The burglar had to call 911 to be rescued from his own burglary attempt? Ha, ha, ha! What an idiot! (*Stanley cracks up, and the women start laughing, too.*)

MIKE: Just remember, the idiot is the one holding the gun!

Instantly, they all stop laughing.

MIKE: That's better.

HELEN: So what happened after that?

MIKE: At first, they didn't believe me. They thought it was a prank. I finally held the phone close to the door, and when they heard the dogs viciously attacking, they decided to come investigate. Just in the nick of time, too.

HELEN: And so, you went to prison.

MIKE: Yeah.

STEPHANIE: How long?

MIKE: I got three to seven years, paroled in four for good behavior. I just got out about a month ago.

HELEN: Your good behavior didn't last very long.

MIKE: I had to make a living.

STANLEY: And a real job never crossed your mind?

MIKE: I chose a career in bank robbery.

STEPHANIE: Great choice. It looks like that career is over, too.

MIKE: Why? I admit, things didn't go as planned on my first attempt. But you learn from your mistakes. Next time will go better.

STANLEY: That's if you don't get caught.

MIKE: (*walks Stage Right*) I won't get caught. I had a ski mask on and a scarf covering my white collar. No one at the bank knows what I really look like, and they'll never suspect a priest did it. They'll eventually give up looking around here, and I'll be on my way.

HELEN: And we can catch up with our group.

STEPHANIE: And I can get back to my husband.

STANLEY: The Rabbi.

MIKE: Uh . . . afraid not.

STEPHANIE: What do you mean?

MIKE: No one out there knows what I look like, but you three do.

STANLEY: What are you getting at?

MIKE: Sorry. I was just getting to like you folks, too. But you can identify me.

Helen, Stanley, and Stephanie look scared and panicky.

HELEN: Stanley!

STEPHANIE: We won't tell anyone, we promise!

MIKE: I can't take that chance. I'm done with prison cells, prison food, and prison psychiatrists. Sorry, sister.

STANLEY: She's not your sister, and he's not killing anyone. He would have done it by now.

MIKE: The only reason you're still breathing, pops, is because I might need you yet.

HELEN: For what?

MIKE: Human shields, in case I have to shoot my way out of here. You three will be good protection.

HELEN: Oh Stanley, I can't believe this is happening! And all because of a wrong alarm clock!

STANLEY: And a bottle of Viagra.

STEPHANIE: Viagra?

STANLEY & HELEN: Never mind.

MIKE: All right, look, enough of this. You two ladies, stay on the bed. You (*points to Stanley*), stay at the table with me. Now we're all just going to wait this out together. (*He sits and puts feet on table.*) Now, let's all calm down and relax.

HELEN: And maybe you'll change your mind?

MIKE: No, I just want to relax.

STANLEY: Yeah, relax, Helen. He's not going to shoot us. Not right now.

FATHER MIKE: Oh yeah? Why not?

STANLEY: Because you fire that gun and the police out there will hear it. They'll come running. You'll be trapped, with no human shields to protect you anymore.

MIKE: (*considers what Stanley said*) You're right. But that doesn't mean I won't shoot if I have to. So no funny business. Just do what you're told.

HELEN: And you won't kill us?

FATHER MIKE: I didn't say that. I just have to wait for the police to leave, that's all.

Stanley gets up and starts walking Stage Left.

MIKE: Where do you think you're going?

STANLEY: To the bathroom.

MIKE: Sit down!

STANLEY: Look Pal, I got to go to the bathroom. It sounds like you're going to shoot me sooner or later, so if you want to shoot me now, go ahead. But I'm not going to sit here and hold it any longer. Besides, it's a bathroom. No windows, no way out. Where am I going to go? Who am I going to call out to?

MIKE: All right, all right. But hurry up.

Stanley starts for the bathroom, then turns around and goes back to the table and grabs the newspaper. He tucks it under his arm and heads for the bathroom again. Mike's eyes widen in disbelief.

MIKE: I thought I told you to make this fast?

STANLEY: (*smirks*) Shoot me.

Stanley goes into the bathroom.

MIKE: (*to Helen*) How do you put up with him?

HELEN: It's not always easy.

STEPHANIE: Tell me about it. (*a pause*) So, let me ask you something, Mr. Burglar . . .

MIKE: It's Mike.

STEPHANIE: Okay . . . Mike. If you robbed the bank, where's the money?

MIKE: None of your business.

HELEN: What does it matter, if we're never getting out of here?

MIKE: Okay, you're right. Who you going to tell? I had the bank tellers fill up a pillow case with cash. Then I had everyone lie down on the floor and count to 100. I didn't know they'd already tripped the silent alarm. As I was leaving, I heard the police sirens, so I threw the pillow case full of money into the dumpster next to the motel here and calmly watched the police arrive. All they saw was a priest. Then I came in here to hide out. After the police are gone, all I have to do is go out and get the money from the dumpster. That's after I take care of yooz three, of course.

Sound effect: A large truck is heard approaching, and then the back-up beeper is heard. It sounds like it's outside the window.

MIKE: What's that? Oh no, it can't be! *(While holding the gun on Helen & Stephanie, he runs Upstage Center to look out imaginary window.)*

MIKE: Oh, no! Oh no! It's the garbage truck! They're emptying the dumpster into the truck! With my money!

STEPHANIE: *(laughs)* What a loser!

MIKE: Shut up! I got to get out there. I got to stop them. *(He starts for the door.)* Wait! I can't leave you three here. *(He points the gun at the women.)* Sorry, ladies.

HELEN: Wait -- the police will hear!

Sound effect: Truck is heard pulling away.

MIKE: They won't hear the gun over the sound of the truck. Sorry . . . *(He points the gun at the women, then there's a knock at the door.)*

MIKE: I don't believe this.

OFFICER DOOLEY: *(from outside)* Hello? This is the police. Open up. We need to search your room.

MIKE: One peep out of you two and I'll shoot you all. *(to Helen)* Tell him you'll be right there.

HELEN: *(talking through door)* Just a minute. We're not decent. *(to Mike)* Now what?

MIKE: Here's the deal, ladies. I'm going into the bathroom with Stanley. Any sign of that cop and Stanley gets whacked, got it? I mean it. So no funny business. Just get rid of that cop.

OFFICER DOOLEY: *(knocks again)* I need you to open the door, Ma'am.

STANLEY: *(starts to come out of the bathroom)* What's going on?

MIKE: *(points gun at him)* Shut up and get back in the bathroom. Now!

Stanley goes back into the bathroom. Father Mike follows and gets halfway through the bathroom door.

MIKE: Oh my God! Didn't you use the spray? Turn the fan on! *(looks heavenward)* Why can't things go right, just once? *(talks into bathroom)* All right, we're getting in the shower together, behind the curtain. *(to women)* Answer that door, and no funny business! *(He disappears into the bathroom.)*

OFFICER DOOLEY: *(knocks again)* I need you to open this door now, Ma'am, or I'm afraid I'll have to break it down.

Helen opens the door and policeman enters.

HELEN: Uh, good morning, Officer. What seems to be the problem?

OFFICER DOOLEY: I'm Officer Dooley, Ma'am. We're conducting a search for the man who held up the bank across the street.

HELEN: *(feigns surprise)* Why, a bank robbery? *(looks at Stephanie)* We had no idea.

STEPHANIE: No, no . . . we must have slept right through it.

OFFICER DOOLEY: Well, I still have to search your room. *(starts to search)*

Stephanie looks like she's just had a great idea. While Helen continues to talk, Stephanie walks behind the officer, trying to lift his nightstick off his belt.

HELEN: Well, I can assure you, there's no one here but us, Officer.

OFFICER DOOLEY: Yeah, I guess I can see that. There's no place to hide. *(checks under bed)* There's no one under here. I guess you're okay.

HELEN: Yes, but thank you for your concern, Officer.

Stephanie has been attempting to get the nightstick, but hasn't had any luck.

OFFICER DOOLEY: Well, good day, ladies.

Helen opens the door for him. He starts to leave, but then stops and turns.

OFFICER DODOLEY: Actually, I should check the bathroom. You never know. (*heads toward Center Stage*)

HELEN: Oh, uh, there's no one in there . . .

A noise is heard from the bathroom.

HELEN . . . except my mother.

OFFICER DOOLEY: Your mother?

HELEN: That's right, Officer. My 95-year-old mother is in there . . .

OFFICER DOOLEY: I better check on her. (*heads toward bathroom*)

HELEN: . . . naked.

OFFICER DOOLEY: (*stops short*) Naked?

The women nod "yes."

OFFICER DOOLEY: Well, maybe I'll just holler in and check on her. (*goes to bathroom door and leans in a bit without actually looking in*) Is everything all right in there, Ma'am?

MIKE: (*trying to sound like a woman*) Yeh-es.

OFFICER DOOLEY: Okay, Ma'am. Sorry for the intrusion. (*He heads back toward Helen and Stephanie, who are still standing near the front door. He's holding his nose.*) (*to women*) You might want to tell her to turn the fan on in there.

HELEN: Yes, well thank you for all your concern, Officer. And good luck with your search.

OFFICER DOOLEY: Right. Say, can I interest you ladies in some tickets to the Policeman's Ball?

HELEN: (*sadly*) I'm afraid we won't be around for that.

OFFICER DOOLEY: Too bad. Well, good day, ladies. (*As he exits, Stephanie finally succeeds in lifting the nightstick from his belt.*)

STEPHANIE: (*loud stage whisper, showing the nightstick to Helen*) Look! I got us a weapon!

Stanley comes out of the bathroom with his hands up. Mike walks behind him with the gun.

MIKE: Well done, ladies. You played it smart. Well done.

Sound effect (voice over): Attention, attention, this is the police. We've concluded our search of the area. The bank robber is not in the vicinity. It is now safe to come out of your homes and businesses. Sorry for the inconvenience. See you all at the Policeman's Ball. That is all.

MIKE: Well, well, well, things are looking up. Soon they'll be gone. They'll start searching some other neighborhood. I can walk right out of here and no one will ever know I was here. That is, after I take care of yooz three. Heh, heh, heh . . .

STANLEY: No! I won't let you! Not without a fight!

Stanley lunges at Mike. They both have their hands on the gun. They're going round and round, each trying to gain control of the gun. While this is going on, Stephanie lifts the nightstick and attempts to hit Mike in the head. She's having trouble because they're not still. She swings a couple of times and misses. She finally connects the nightstick with a head, only it's Stanley's. Stanley lets go of the gun and stands there with a baffled look on his face, then staggers towards the bed.

STANLEY: Good night, Helen. *(He falls backwards, unconscious on the bed.)*

HELEN: Oh, Stanley!

STEPHANIE: Daddy! I'm sorry!

MIKE: *(laughs hysterically)* What a bunch of idiots!
Mike puts his hands on his legs, bent over in laughter. This causes the gun to go off, shooting him in the foot. He goes from laughing to yelling in pain.

MIKE: My foot! My foot! I shot myself in the foot!

HELEN: Now who's the idiot? *(She grabs the nightstick from Stephanie and bonks Mike over the head again.)*

Mike stops jumping up and down, grabs his head, staggers, and then gets the same baffled look as Stanley. Stephanie grabs a chair from the table and moves it around behind Mike as he staggers, trying to catch him when he finally falls.

MIKE: Good night, Helen. *(He collapses in the chair, out cold.)*

HELEN: What have I done? Oh my God, what have I done? I've killed him. I've killed him!
(She drops to her knees and makes the sign of the cross.) Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned. I just killed you!

STEPHANIE: *(checks Mike's pulse)* Helen, stop, you didn't kill him. He's just out cold. But he could come to again any second.

HELEN: *(gets up)* I'll get the gun! *(She attempts twice to pull the gun out of Mike's hand, but it won't budge. Finally, she grabs the billy club from the table and bonks him over the head again. He lets go of the gun, and she puts it and the club on the table.)*

HELEN: Now what should we do?

STEPHANIE: We need to tie him up!

HELEN: Of course! Just like they do in the movies!

STEPHANIE: Okay, give me some rope.

HELEN: *(frustrated)* I don't have rope -- I'm on vacation!

STEPHANIE: Well, what *do* you have to tie him up with?

HELEN: In my suitcase!

They run to Helen's suitcase on the dresser. Helen opens it, rummages around, and takes out two pair of pantyhose.

HELEN: I've got these!

STEPHANIE: *(looks at pantyhose)* Even if we tie them together I don't think they'll be long enough.

Helen returns pantyhose to suitcase and they both start rummaging around.

STEPHANIE: Wait! *(They both keep their hands in the suitcase so audience doesn't see what they're doing.)* I'll tie one stocking to this end, and you tie the other stocking onto the other end. *(They act as if they're rigging something up in the suitcase. After a few seconds, they lift what they've been making out of the suitcase.)*

STEPHANIE: Perfect!

HELEN: Do you think it'll work?

STEPHANIE: It has to!

Stephanie walks Stage Right first, and then Helen. They stretch out their creation so the audience can see. It's a "rope" made by tying a pair of pantyhose to each end of a bra.

STEPHANIE: Come on, before he wakes up!

They run to Mike and stretch the bra across his chest. Then they put his hands behind his back and tie them with the pantyhose.

HELEN: We did it!

STEPHANIE

Yes we did!

MIKE: *(He starts to come to. He's groggy at first; then he starts getting agitated.)* Where am I? What a headache -- like a hangover without the booze. *(realizes he's tied)* Say, what is this? How'd I end up like this? *(to women)* When I get loose. I'm gonna murder both of you, I'm gonna . . . *(As he struggles to get untied, he looks down and sees the bra.)* I'm wearing a bra! *(passes out again)*

Stanley comes to.

STANLEY: *(sits up slowly)* Ohhhhhh . . . where am I?

Helen and Stephanie go to Stanley and sit on either side of him on bed.

HELEN: You're right here with us, Stanley. Everything is going to be all right.

STEPHANIE: Oh Daddy, I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry . . .

Helen cuts Stephanie short.

HELEN: *(lightbulb!)* . . . sorry you tripped over my suitcase!

STANLEY: What?

HELEN: *(lays it on thick)* Oh Stanley, you were so brave, wrestling that gun away from the bank robber, clobbering him over the head with it and knocking him out.

STANLEY: I did?

STEPHANIE: He did?

HELEN: Yes, he did.

STANLEY: Then why does my head feel like it was run over by a bulldozer?

HELEN: *(thinks quick)* Well . . . after you subdued the vicious criminal, you . . . stepped backwards and tripped over my suitcase, which I foolishly left in the middle of the floor. And then . . . you fell and banged your head on the nightstand.

STANLEY: I did?

STEPHANIE: He did?

HELEN: Yes, he did. But you were only out for a few seconds. *(hugs him)* Oh, Stanley! You're my knight in shining armor!

STANLEY: I am?

STEPHANIE: He is?

HELEN: *(firmly, winking at Stephanie)* Yes, he is.

STANLEY: *(proudly)* Yeah, I guess I am. *(He winces, remembering his head. Then he notices Mike.)* How did he get like that?

HELEN: Well, once you were knocked out, Stephanie and I sprung into action ourselves and tied him up with a few things I had lying around.

There's a knock at the door.

STANLEY: It never ends. This place is like Grand Central Station.

Helen answers the door. It's Officer Dooley.

HELEN: Why Officer Dooley, come in.

OFFICER DOOLEY: We heard a shot. Is everything okay?

STEPHANIE: *(goes over to him)* It is now, Officer.

STANLEY: *(stays on bed and points to Mike)* We have a little present for you, Officer.

Officer Dooley goes over to Mike, looks at him, looks at the bra, and looks over at the bathroom. He can't believe his eyes.

OFFICER DOOLEY: *(to Helen)* This is your mother?

HELEN: What? No! It's the bank robber! The man you've been searching for! *(proudly)* We captured him for you.

Mike starts to come to.

MIKE: Where am I? *(He looks down at the bra again, looks around the room at Helen, Stanley and Stephanie, and then notices Officer Dooley. He starts pleading with the officer.)* Get me out of here! *Please* get me out of here! This place is a nuthouse! They're all crazy, all three of them. I'll confess. I robbed the bank. There, now take me back to prison. I want to go back there. I like

the food. I like my cell. I want to see my psychiatrist again. I want to look at the little inkblots and guess what they are. Just please, take me away!

OFFICER DOOLEY: Don't worry, mister, that's exactly where you're going. (*Officer gets Mike up from chair and escorts him towards door. Mike is still babbling.*)

MIKE: Just don't let them hurt me no more, okay?

OFFICER DOOLEY: Oh, I promise you, you'll never see them again. (*pushes Mike through the door*) Take him away, guys! (*turns back to Helen, Stephanie, and Stanley*) Thanks for all your help, folks. Of course, you'll have to come down to the station and make a statement. And don't forget about the Policeman's Ball. Here's some free tickets. (*takes tickets out of his pocket and hands them to Helen*)

He starts to exit. Stephanie spots the nightstick on the table and grabs it.

STEPHANIE: (*stops Officer*) Oh officer, you dropped this.

POLICEMAN: I did? Now how did that happen?

STEPHANIE: I don't know, Officer. You really should be more careful.

OFFICER DOOLEY: Yeah, well, thanks again. (*He leaves. Everyone collapses on the bed in relief.*)

STANLEY: What a day.

STEPHANIE: You're telling me.

HELEN: No one on the bus is going to believe this.

STANLEY: We'll have the newspaper story to prove it all. You'll be on the cover again, Helen.

STEPHANIE: (*remembers*) What about your bus? How are you going to get back to your group? Do you want me to drive you?

STANLEY: No, thanks, Steph. We were going to rent a car just before all this happened, and I think I still want to stick to that plan. After we go to the police station to make a statement, we'll have a nice relaxing drive, just the two of us, no offense.

STEPHANIE: None taken. I really need to get back to Jeffrey anyway. (*to Stanley*) By the way, Thanksgiving is two weeks away. I expect you over for dinner as usual.

STANLEY: Well, thanks Steph, but uh . . .well, you see . . . Helen's kids are spread out all over the country. She's all alone. So, I was thinking about taking her over to (*insert name of local restaurant*) for their Thanksgiving buffet. We'll have other Thanksgiving dinners. This year, I

think this is the right thing to do. But can I stop over in the evening for a piece of pumpkin pie and a cup of coffee?

HELEN (*feels guilty*) No, it is not okay. You belong with your family on Thanksgiving. I'll be fine. (*sniffles*) I'll just pull out a Stouffer's frozen turkey dinner. Really, I'll be fine. It'll be a good day to catch up on my knitting. I haven't been . . .

STEPHANIE: (*change of heart*) Actually, Helen, I was kind of hoping that maybe . . . you'd come over early and, uh, help me with all the food. It's a lot of work and . . . it would be a good opportunity to . . . get to know each other a little better. What do you say?

HELEN: (*teary eyed*) Do . . . do you really mean it?

STEPHANIE: Please?

HELEN: I'd love to! (*they hug*) And thank you, Stephanie.

STEPHANIE: No, thank you, for being there for my father. (*loud stage whisper*) And keeping an eye on him.

STANLEY: I heard that. Keep both eyes on me, Helen, at all times.

HELEN: Don't worry!

STEPHANIE: Well, I'd better be going. See you both in two weeks!

Helen & Stanley stand. They exchange more hugs and kisses.

STANLEY & HELEN: Bye, Steph.

HELEN: And thanks again. (*Final waves, and Stephanie exits.*)

Stanley and Helen sit at the foot of the bed again.

STANLEY: What a day!

HELEN: You're telling me. If I hadn't lived it, I wouldn't believe it!

STANLEY: Well, I guess I better try to get through to that guy at the front desk again and see about getting us a rental car.

HELEN: Stanley, it's getting awful late in the day. Maybe we should wait till tomorrow.

STANLEY: Tomorrow? Helen, that's going to put us so far behind the group, we'll never catch up with them. And you know how our group leader (*insert audience member's name*) gets. She's going to be real cranky when she. . . .

As Stanley ad libs, Helen gets up, walks to the nightstand, and grabs the bottle of Viagra. She walks over to Stanley, waving the bottle.

HELEN: Good for up to four hours, Stanley . . . *(sits next to him on bed)*

STANLEY: *(looks delighted)* What's the hurry? There'll be other trips. *(They both giggle. They embrace, almost kiss, and then grab their sides and say "ow" like they twisted something.*

STANLEY: Helen, was the Ben Gay over there, too?

HELEN: Oh Stanley . . .

They laugh and fall back on the bed together.

Lights out -- The End

Property List

Alarm clock
Telephone
Pill bottle
Tube of BenGay
Phone book
Two suitcases
Toothpaste
Man's socks
Saving cream
Two pair pantyhose
Bra with pantyhose tied on each side

Folded newspaper
Hollowed out Bible with gun inside
Stack of towels
Camera
Feather duster
Billy club

SOUND EFFECTS

Bus driving away
Police siren
Several police voice overs (as if spoken into a bullhorn)
Garbage truck approaching, backing up (beeper), and pulling away

COSTUMES

Stanley:

Pajamas or T-shirt and boxers (suggestion: T-shirt with funny saying and/or boxers with Superman logo)
Dress pants and shirt, socks, no shoes
Eyeglasses

Helen:

Pretty nightgown and robe or pajamas and robe
Slippers
Eyeglasses

Stephanie:

Maid's uniform
Bobby socks & sneakers
Dark, ill-fitting wig
Odd-looking eyeglasses

Father Mike:

Dark shirt & pants
Priest's collar

Officer Dooley:

Cop's uniform with billy club in belt

