

thigh exerciser between her knees and begins to use it.)

BEATRICE. But now listen y'all...remember...we are running out of time and we may have to launch into our plan at any minute. So...for now...just try to act normal...

(She looks at MAUDE, who is now goggle-eyed watching television and pumping the thigh exerciser with glee.)

...or at least as normal as possible.

(Dramatic soap opera music fades up. As before, BEATRICE, IMOGENE, and even SAM get pulled in to the drama of the show.)*

DRAMATIC FEMALE VOICE. I told you Carlton, I'm leaving.

DRAMATIC MALE VOICE. Alexia darling...after all these years...it can't end like this...you can't get on that airplane.

DRAMATIC FEMALE VOICE. It's over Carlton. It's over and I must go -

DRAMATIC MALE VOICE. Not until I say so...my beautiful darling -

(The music swells, indicating a passionate moment between the couple. Everyone watching reacts in different ways.)

DRAMATIC FEMALE VOICE. Oh...oh Carlton...I do still love you...I do -

DRAMATIC MALE VOICE. I'll never let you go -

DRAMATIC FEMALE VOICE. Oh Carlton -

DRAMATIC MALE VOICE. Oh Alexia -

(Everyone has become emotional...even SAM. BEATRICE snatches the remote from MAUDE, turns off the television, and throws the remote to the floor. SAM turns away to wipe his eyes.)

*A license to produce *Four Old Broads* does not include a performance license for any third-party or copyrighted music. Licensees should create an original composition or use music in the public domain. For further information, please see Music Use Note on page 3.

MAUDE. What did ya do that for?

BEATRICE. *(Wiping her eyes.)* I hope they both get on that damn plane and it crashes!

(PAT enters from stage left. She is in a foul mood. She braces herself on the doorway, breathing heavy. MAUDE's thigh exerciser cracks to the floor. PAT is followed closely by RUBY SUE, who is still reading her romance novel.)

MAUDE. *(Quietly.)* The rooster is in the hen house...I repeat...the rooster is in the hen house.

(The group launches into their pre-planned strategy. MAUDE picks up her funeral notebook and holds it in front of her face. SAM crosses to the game table and picks up a crossword puzzle book. BEATRICE begins to slide the coffee table back in place. IMOGENE stares off into space, pretending to have a memory-loss episode.)

PAT. There you are...I thought I would never find you. If I didn't know better...I would swear you were trying to hide from me.

(IMOGENE, BEATRICE, and MAUDE look at one another, confused and suspicious.)

BEATRICE. What? We've been in here all morning -

(RUBY SUE notices MAUDE and compliments her.)

RUBY SUE. Ms. Jenkins...is that you?

MAUDE. Yes -

RUBY SUE. Stand up and let me look at you.

(MAUDE, beaming, stands up and does a little modeling turn.)

You look fantastic...I love your hair...what did you do...are you -

(PAT is irritated and raises her voice.)

PAT. We do not have time for this crap...now listen up! I have now collected most of the residents' medications...except yours. All residents must turn over their medications by this evening. Cindy Lou will be collecting them by -

(RUBY SUE lowers her book.)

RUBY SUE. *(Indignant.)* Cindy Lou? Really?

PAT. Uh...Bonnie Sue?

RUBY SUE. No...but you're getting warmer -

PAT. Um...uh...

RUBY SUE. It's Ruby Sue...R - U - B - Y - S - U - E...Ruby Sue...got it?

PAT. OK...yeah...anyway...medication will be collected -

(She notices SAM is ignoring her.)

Excuse me Mr. Smith, are you listening?

(SAM stares at the crossword book and pretends not to hear her.)

(Raising her voice.) Mr. Smith...MR. SMITH -

BEATRICE. *(Rising and speaking normally.)* Sam -

(SAM turns around.)

SAM. Oh sorry...I was trying to figure out this crossword. Hey...does anyone know the five-letter word for female dog? The third letter is T.

PAT. *(Fuming.)* We will also be having a meeting tomorrow for all the residents after that old lady pageant thing. We will need to account for the whereabouts of everyone in the building two nights ago...as it seems there has been a break-in.

(SAM, IMOGENE, BEATRICE, and MAUDE all get looks of concern and panic.)

BEATRICE. A break-in?

SAM. That is terrible news that I am hearing about right now...for the first time.

MAUDE. That is very disturbing and completely new information.

PAT. *(Knowing.)* Uh-huh...actually I think it's about time that I -

(Suddenly, IMOGENE rises from her chair as if in a trance. She has started "the plan.")

IMOGENE. *(Poorly overacting.)* Who am I? Where am I? I have absolutely no recognition of anything or anyone at this time.

MAUDE. *(Realizing it's her "line," she tries to remember her part. She crosses dramatically to IMOGENE.)* Um...yes...OK...uh...OH NO...I think Imogene is having one of her memory spells...what are we going to do?

(SAM crosses to IMOGENE and takes her hand to deliver his "line.")

SAM. Oh no Imogene...what's wrong...are you OK?

(PAT pulls out a walkie-talkie and begins to speak into it.)

PAT. I need a wheelchair in the day room right away...a wheelchair to the -

(She sees RUBY SUE.)

Oh...Betty Lou...I forgot you were here...please go and get a wheelchair and bring it here for Mrs. Phillips right away.

RUBY SUE. My name is -

(RUBY SUE scowls and then exits quickly up center.)

SAM. This is Imogene Fletcher...Fletcher...not Phillips.

(IMOGENE winks at SAM.)

PAT. Oh yes...well, don't worry...we will make sure that Mrs. Fletcher is attended to right away.

BEATRICE. Excuse me Pat...but you need to wipe your mouth -

(BEATRICE wipes her mouth.)

PAT. *(Raising her hand to her mouth.)* What...what's?