

A CRICKET COUNTY OLD FOLKS CHRISTMAS

by Eddie McPherson



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A Cricket County Old Folks' Christmas

A comedy for Christmas
by Eddie McPherson

To Tommy McGee, who gave me the idea to write this play, and to his church, Agape Baptist, who faithfully performs the Cricket County plays year after year.

Also to my mom, who taught me to love unconditionally.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

CITY BUNCH

Oswald: Leader of the city bunch. There's a chance he may be tricked into marrying Brenda Mae.

Pete: Discovers a "miracle drug" and wants to cash in.

Petunia: May be the most level-headed of the city bunch, but still has her selfish moments.

Mimi: Keeps a journal and hopes to get it published.

COUNTRY BUNCH

Elkin Taylor: Leader of the Cricket County bunch. Level-headed.

Fester: Naïve, but wants to help his buddy Elmer with the ways of love.

Grandma Taylor: Visits the Prune Valley Home with a mission in mind.

Glenda Mae: Announces her engagement to Elmer Crick; Brenda Mae's twin sister.

Brenda Mae: Tricks Oswald into popping the question; Glenda Mae's twin sister.

Elmer Crick: Glenda Mae's love interest who can't seem to do anything right.

Nurse Peach: Head nurse at the Prune Valley Nursing Home.

PRUNE VALLEY RESIDENTS

Large speaking role

Ida Mae Crendle: A grumpy lady who is always in "pain."

Medium speaking roles

Sadie: A resident who is entering the later stages of Alzheimer's.

Harley: Sadie's ever-loving husband who visits her every day.

Small speaking roles

Delphia: Lives at the nursing home with her husband, Phil.

Phil: Delphia's husband.

Leon Weaver: A ninety-year-old man who enjoys the company of older women.

Elverna: Never wears her glasses, but can't see two feet in front of her.

Dot, Ramie, Fay, and Sarah: Residents who have a surprise for everyone.

Delivery Boy: Drops off a package at the Prune Valley Nursing Home.

Other residents: If desired; non-speaking.

PRODUCTION NOTES

“To give and not expect return,
that is what lies at the heart of love.”

– Oscar Wilde

Synopsis: Sadie, who lives at the Prune Valley Nursing Home, is nearing the later stages of Alzheimer’s. Grandma Taylor wants to do something useful with all the money she inherited from Uncle Zeke, so she decides to build an addition to her house, hire a full-time nurse, and move her good friend in with her so she can look after her. Miss Sadie’s husband doesn’t think that’s a good idea, however, but Grandma can’t figure out why.

Grandma asks Oswald and the City Bunch to meet her at the Prune Valley Nursing Home two days before Christmas in order to discuss the financial side of how to go about getting money to do such a task. While spending time at the nursing home, the City Bunch finds new ways to make a buck.

They discover a miracle pill the nurse gives a crabby patient that makes the pain in her back disappear in seconds and puts her in the best of moods. The pill is made from tree bark, mulberry root, beak of owl, etc. If the City Bunch can get their hands on this hillbilly recipe, they can patent the pill and make a fortune.

Meanwhile, Mimi is required to keep a journal by order of her therapist. He wants her to do this so she can try to discover why she seems to be endlessly selfish. But she has other plans with the journal, and that’s to publish it and get rich and famous.

Love is in the air. Glenda Mae finally says “OK” when her longtime boyfriend, Elmer Crick, asks if she will get hitched up with him, *but* she won’t marry him until he acts exactly the way she thinks he should.

Brenda Mae tricks Oswald into proposing to her. She tells him that if he will devote himself to her, he can have all the oil fields she inherited from Uncle Zeke. The City Bunch decides life with a hillbilly may be worth it as long as it means millions of dollars. All these scenarios point to the theme of the play, which (besides Christmas) is unconditional love. When Elkin is in charge of the devotions at the nursing home’s Christmas party, he speaks on

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Romans 5:8, “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Elkin explains that God’s love is unconditional. We didn’t have to clean up our act before Christ died for us. He sent his Son in the middle of our sin. Then Elkin asks everyone to give him an example of unconditional love around them. At that moment Harley wheels in Sadie, his wife of fifty years, and tends to her every need. Everyone realizes that they are witnessing the perfect example of unconditional love.

What a contrast to the earlier scenarios! Pete will make the miracle drug available to the public on one condition: That he becomes rich and famous for it. Oswald will give in and marry Brenda Mae on one condition: That she signs all the oil fields over to him. Mimi will keep her journal and help others on one condition: That the book is published and she can become a hero to millions who will buy her book. Glenda Mae will marry Elmer on one condition: That he does everything she wants him to do and never messes up. Elmer will marry Glenda Mae on one condition: That she never turns thirty and she keeps her hips down to a decent size.

But Harley takes care of his Alzheimer’s-stricken wife because he *loves her*. God sent his son into this sinful world for the same reason: because he loves us. No limits. No boundaries. No conditions.

PROPS: Can of potted meat, pamphlet, envelope, package of dried fruit, afghan, walker (or walking cane), journal, pen, oily rag, doll wrapped inside a blanket, a bag with a gift inside, spark plug, axe, red-and-green construction paper chain, bottle of “pills,” cups of water, bouquet of flowers, various Christmas tree decorations, string of popcorn, small notebook, pencil, small pillow, sprig of mistletoe tied to the end of a stick, fruit bowl with real or fake fruit including a Granny Smith apple, a wrapped package, Christmas garland, paper plates and cups, magazine with a fake cover saying *Bingo Quarterly*, cake (real or fake), battery-operated string of white Christmas lights in Christmas wrap, microphone on a stand (doesn’t have to work), piece of paper with “ingredients,” Bible, wheelchair, axe wrapped tightly with Christmas wrapping.

SET: The set is the recreational room of the Prune Valley Nursing Home. It's clearly an old building, but it has been well taken care of. Tables and both rocking and non-rocking chairs are set about. A kerosene lamp (or optional electric lamp) has been placed on one of the tables. An old TV sits somewhere Stage Left. You will also need a coat rack and a small Christmas tree. Rustic pictures hang on the walls. A large sign that reads "Prune Valley Nursing Home" hangs somewhere on the Upstage wall, as does a large picture of a deer head.

There are three doors: One Upstage Right that leads to the hallway and other rooms, one Upstage Left that leads to the parking lot, and another close to the Stage Left door that leads to the closet.

COSTUMES: The Country Bunch wear flannel shirts, blue jeans, cotton or gingham dresses, overalls, etc. The City Bunch characters wear preppy-type clothing. Oswald needs a watch. The residents may dress casually in overalls, cotton dresses, etc., or housecoats and such. Brenda Mae wears tube socks. Nurse Peach needs a uniform with an apron. Delivery Boy also needs a uniform and a cap. For the Christmas party, the residents spruce up a little more, but not much. Elmer wears a bowtie. Fester wears an ugly tie with his overalls, and he also wears a watch. The City Bunch need to make a slight costume upgrade for the Christmas party as well. Leon wears a Power Rangers costume (store-bought or homemade). Dot, Ramie, Fay, and Sarah each wear a sweater with a letter stuck to it: N, O, E, and L respectively.

ONE LAST NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT:

I recently snuck into the back of a theatre where a Cricket County play was being staged. I was pleased overall with the show; however, there was one thing that made me squirm in my seat. The play moved too slowly. I wanted the action to race along at breakneck speed with one line butting up against another. Remember, these plays are farces. The entrances and exits should be quick. Allow the actor to begin speaking as soon as he or she enters, not when he or she reaches Center Stage. You can't imagine how minutes can add up when short pauses between lines are taken or slow entrances occur or a trip across the stage is slow when it's supposed to be quick. Enjoy the silliness, and your audience won't even think about squirming the whole time your cast is on stage.

Scene 1

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(DELPHIA and her husband PHIL are sitting in rocking chairs side by side. They're staring at the TV, which isn't turned on.)

PHIL: This TV program is borin', Delphie. Change the channel.

DELPHIA: Ah told you, the set's been broke for weeks.

PHIL: Let's play bingo.

DELPHIA: Ain't nobody here to call the numbers. (*Referring to the empty can he's holding*) How was your potted meat?

PHIL: (*Holding up the can*) Highlight of my day.

DELPHIA: Pass the time readin' this. (*Hands him a pamphlet.*) That speaker left it last week.

PHIL: (*Reading the front of the pamphlet*) The Myths of Reincarnation. (*To DELPHIA*) I slept through that talk. (*Looking inside the pamphlet*) What exactly is reincarnation anyway?

DELPHIA: It's when you die and come back as somethin' completely different.

PHIL: So I could come back as a pig?

DELPHIA: You ain't listenin', are you? (*Hands him an envelope.*) Here, we got some mail.

PHIL: It's probably a bill.

DELPHIA: Nope — says right there on the envelope, "This ain't a bill."

PHIL: (*Takes it.*) In that case, let me see it. (*He rips into it, unfolds it, and reads the contents.*) That was the envelope. This is the bill.

DELPHIA: (*Laughs.*) They got you there, Phil. (*Laughs again.*)

PHIL: (*Wads it up.*) Dagnabbit!

DELPHIA: Oh, Phil, lighten up — it's almost Christmas. Why don't you take a nap?

PHIL: I ain't sleepy.

DELPHIA: If you close your eyes long enough ... (*She's interrupted by snoring. She speaks to herself*) ... you'll drift right off. (*She yawns and stretches, drops her head, and sleeps. OSWALD, PETE, MIMI, and PETUNIA enter. MIMI is eating dried fruit from a package.*)

OSWALD: (*Lively*) Here we are, and this is what they call the Commons Area.

MIMI: You got the "common" part right.

PETE: (*To MIMI*) It's a nursing home, Mimi — not the Taj Mahal.

OSWALD: In other words, it's their recreational area.

PETUNIA: (*Crossing to DELPHIA and PHIL*) Look — how cute! They're holding hands.

PHIL: (*Talking in his sleep*) Margaret? Come sit down beside me, Margaret.

- 1 PETUNIA: He's calling out her name, even in his sleep.
- 2 PHIL: *(Still sleeping)* You look pretty in that dress, Margaret.
- 3 *(OSWALD pulls them away from the rocking chairs.)*
- 4 OSWALD: Let's talk over here so we don't disturb them.
- 5 PETE: I thought Grandma Taylor was meeting us here.
- 6 OSWALD: *(Looking at his watch)* I think we're a little early.
- 7 MIMI: How am I supposed to get my journal writing done out
- 8 here?
- 9 PETUNIA: Since when do you keep a journal?
- 10 MIMI: It was my therapist's idea. I'm supposed to help people,
- 11 then record it in my journal. She said it would be a step
- 12 toward curing my — how did she put it? Persistent and
- 13 unending selfish tendencies. But I keep telling her I am not
- 14 selfish. *(PETUNIA is trying to take a piece of MIMI's dried fruit.*
- 15 *MIMI jerks the bag away.)* Mine! *(Back to the others)* What was
- 16 I saying?
- 17 OSWALD: There should be plenty of people you can help out
- 18 here.
- 19 MIMI: I know, but keeping a journal takes so much effort.
- 20 PETE: You know, Mimi, people pay money for published
- 21 diaries.
- 22 MIMI: What do you mean?
- 23 PETE: If it's interesting enough, you could publish it and make
- 24 money.
- 25 MIMI: Really?
- 26 PETUNIA: When the purpose of the journal was to help people,
- 27 you weren't interested. But if you can make money from it,
- 28 you're all for it.
- 29 MIMI: *(Pointing at PETUNIA)* Bingo!
- 30 PHIL: *(Waking up)* What? Who got bingo? I want to play!
- 31 DELPHIA: *(Also waking)* We ain't playin' bingo, we got company.
- 32 OSWALD: *(Rushing to them)* We're sorry. We didn't mean to wake
- 33 you.
- 34 DELPHIA: *(Standing slowly)* Howdy there, young people.
- 35 Welcome to Prune Valley Nursing Home. My name is
- 36 Delphia, and this is my ball and chain. His name is Phil.
- 37 PHIL: *(Holding up the can)* Want some potted meat?
- 38 OSWALD: No thank you.
- 39 PHIL: Good, 'cause I ate it all.
- 40 OSWALD: I'm Oswald. *(Turns and motions his family over.)* This is
- 41 Pete, Petunia, and Mimi. Everyone, this is Phil and
- 42 Delphia.
- 43 PETE: *(Bursts out in laughter.)* Phil and Delphia. That's priceless.
- 44 OSWALD: Pete, why are you being so rude?
- 45 PETE: Oh, come on. That's funny. His name is Phil, and her

- 1 name is Delphia. I mean, what are the chances? (*Laughs, but*
2 *no one else does.*)
- 3 OSWALD: (*Calmly*) Pete, would you like to sit down and
4 compose yourself?
- 5 PETE: But ... (*Embarrassed*) Sorry.
- 6 OSWALD: You'll have to excuse my brother. He doesn't get out
7 much.
- 8 DELPHIA: We understand. When you live in a nursing home,
9 you don't get to do much travelin'.
- 10 PHIL: Mostly we sleep.
- 11 PETUNIA: It was so cute how you were talking in your sleep
12 and calling out your wife's name. "Margaret, come sit
13 beside me! Margaret, you look pretty in that dress." That's
14 true love.
- 15 OSWALD: (*Embarrassed*) Petunia?
- 16 PETUNIA: Yes?
- 17 OSWALD: His wife's name is Delphia.
- 18 PETUNIA: Oh, dear. I'm so sor — I don't know what to — Can
19 you ever forgive —
- 20 OSWALD: Go sit beside Pete and don't talk. (*She does.*) Thank
21 you.
- 22 MIMI: (*To DELPHIA, as she straightens the afghan on her lap.*) Here,
23 let me help you so I can write it down in my journal.
- 24 IDA MAE: (*Bursting through the door with her walker, shouting to*
25 *someone Off-Stage.*) Well, the next time you stick a needle in
26 me, I'm gonna deck your halls!
- 27 PETUNIA: (*Jumps and places a hand to her chest.*) Oh dear! (*MIMI*
28 *jumps up from her seat, and all four stare at IDA MAE.*)
- 29 IDA MAE: What y'all lookin' at? Ain't you ever saw a
30 cantankerous old woman before?
- 31 DELPHIA: Law have mercy, it's Ida Mae! Come on, Phil. She's
32 in one of her moods!
- 33 PHIL: I'm right behind you. (*Takes a karate stance.*) I'm warnin'
34 ya, Ida Mae, I done learned me some judo.
- 35 IDA MAE: Get out of my way, or I'll knock a knot on your head
36 and dare it to rise.
- 37 PHIL: Hiii-yyyahhh!
- 38 IDA MAE: Git! (*DELPHIA and PHIL run out as IDA MAE moves*
39 *toward a chair.*) Nurse! Hurry up and get in here! I think it's
40 time! (*ALL rush to her.*)
- 41 PETUNIA: Are you all right?
- 42 PETE: Can we do something?
- 43 OSWALD: Maybe you should put your head between your
44 knees.
- 45 IDA MAE: (*Acting weak, she holds her hands up to the sky.*) This is it!

1 I can see the light!

2 PETE: I'll get the nurse! *(He runs out.)*

3 MIMI: Is there something I can do for you so I can write it down

4 in my journal?

5 IDA MAE: Swing open them pearly gates, Saint Peter — I'm

6 a-comin' in!

7 PETUNIA: *(Worried)* Oswald!

8 OSWALD: What? I'm not a doctor. *(PETE runs in, pulling NURSE*

9 *PEACH behind him.)*

10 PETE: Right here! I think she's on her way out. *(When NURSE*

11 *PEACH sees IDA MAE, her worried look vanishes.)*

12 PETUNIA: Thank goodness you're here.

13 IDA MAE: *(Looking up at NURSE PEACH and standing up straight at*

14 *her walker.)* Oh, it's you. Why couldn't they find a real

15 nurse?

16 NURSE PEACH: Ida Mae Crendle, why in sam hill are you

17 worryin' these nice people?

18 IDA MAE: I need my pain pill! My back's killin' me!

19 NURSE PEACH: It ain't time for your pills, so just simmer

20 down.

21 IDA MAE: Where you been, anyway?

22 NURSE PEACH: I was tendin' to some of the other residents,

23 Ida Mae.

24 IDA MAE: Well, if you take care of them the way you take care of

25 me, they're probably dead.

26 NURSE PEACH: *(To OSWALD)* Bless her heart — she's so contrary

27 that if you throwed her in the river, she'd float upstream.

28 MIMI: *(To IDA MAE)* What a naughty, conniving, underhanded

29 thing to do. *(Beat)* You're my kind of woman. Here's some

30 dried peaches. *(Sits and speaks as she writes in her journal.)*

31 Dear Journal, Today I helped to feed the elderly. *(She*

32 *continues to write quietly.)*

33 NURSE PEACH: *(To IDA MAE)* Do you want these nice city folks

34 to think we don't take care of you? Now, behave yourself

35 while I go check on Miz Maude across the hall.

36 IDA MAE: If you take care of her the way you take care of me...

37 NURSE PEACH: *(Joining her)* She's probably dead ... yeah, yeah.

38 *(She turns and winks at the CITY BUNCH and exits.)*

39 IDA MAE: I need them pills, you know.

40 OSWALD: Yes ma'am, we're sure you do.

41 GRANDMA: *(Off-Stage)* Yoo-hoo! *(Enters with BRENDA MAE and*

42 *GLEND MAE.)* Here y'all are. *(She's walking a little funny.)*

43 BRENDA MAE: Look, Glenda Mae, it's our cousins from the city.

44 *(She grabs one of OSWALD's arms.)* Merry Christmas, Cousin

45 Oswald.

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- 1 **GLENDAMAE:** Merry, merry Christmas, Cousin Oswald! (*Grabs*
2 *his other arm.*)
- 3 **PETE:** Hello, girls. Good to see you again.
- 4 **BRENDAMAE:** (*Disinterested, not looking at PETE*) Oh, howdy.
- 5 **GLENDAMAE:** (*The same*) Yeah. Oh, howdy.
- 6 **PETE:** (*Mocking*) Oh, howdy? Oh, howdy? Oswald gets the royal
7 treatment and I get "Oh, howdy"?
- 8 **GRANDMA:** Brenda Mae, Glenda Mae, y'all act like somebody.
- 9 **MIMI:** (*Looking up from her journal*) Glenda Mae?
- 10 **GLENDAMAE:** Yo?
- 11 **MIMI:** Look. (*She points to a kerosene lamp sitting on the table, then*
12 *turns to write in her journal.*) Dear Journal, I helped a poor
13 hillbilly see the light today. (*She continues to write silently.*)
- 14 **PETUNIA:** Grandma Taylor, are you OK? You're walking a
15 little funny.
- 16 **GRANDMA:** I'm wearin' a new corset, and it's killin' me. The
17 price we women pay to stay beautiful.
- 18 **BRENDAMAE:** (*Looking lovingly at OSWALD*) Sometimes I rub
19 hog lard on my face at night.
- 20 **GLENDAMAE:** And it makes her look so pretty ...
- 21 **BRENDAMAE:** Why, thank you, Glenda Mae.
- 22 **GLENDAMAE:** Until she wipes it off.
- 23 **BRENDAMAE:** Hey!
- 24 **OSWALD:** What's this little meeting about, Grandma Taylor?
25 You've gotten us curious.
- 26 **GRANDMA:** (*Struggling to walk to OSWALD*) Well, you see, it has
27 to do with money.
- 28 **MIMI:** (*Speaking quickly to her journal*) More later. (*She slams the*
29 *journal closed and joins the rest.*) Did someone say money?
- 30 **PETUNIA:** Grandma, I don't think I've ever seen you this
31 serious.
- 32 **GRANDMA:** Howdy, Ida Mae. How are you?
- 33 **IDAMAE:** I'm dyin' from pain.
- 34 **GRANDMA:** That's nice. (*Turns to the CITY BUNCH.*) The reason
35 I asked you up here was because ... (*She looks back at IDA*
36 *MAE, who is leaning in to listen to what she's saying.*) Ida Mae,
37 could you excuse us, please? This is family business.
- 38 **IDAMAE:** (*Heading for the door*) Fine! I know when I'm not
39 wanted. I'll just go die in the next room. Nurse! (*She exits*
40 *with her walker.*)
- 41 **OSWALD:** Grandma Taylor, you said this had to do with money.
42 As in *your* money?
- 43 **GRANDMA:** Yep. Well, you know how me and my family
44 inherited all that money from our dear, late Uncle Zeke
45 years ago?

- 1 PETE: Yes, ma'am. Diamond mines ...
- 2 OSWALD: Oil fields ...
- 3 PETUNIA and MIMI: *(Together)* And coal mines.
- 4 GRANDMA: Right. And all them there things are worth ...
- 5 ALL: *(Together)* Millions!
- 6 GRANDMA: Which makes me ...
- 7 OSWALD: Loaded! *(Embarrassed)* Sorry.
- 8 GRANDMA: I was goin' to say a blessed woman. But what good
- 9 is bein' "loaded," as you put it, if you can't share the money
- 10 with the folks you love the most? *(The CITY BUNCH's faces*
- 11 *light up.)*
- 12 NURSE PEACH: *(Sticks her head in.)* Imogene, I'm sorry to
- 13 interrupt your meetin', but could I see you a minute? It's
- 14 about Sadie.
- 15 GRANDMA: Sadie? Is she all right? I'm a-comin'! *(NURSE*
- 16 *PEACH exits as GRANDMA stands.)* I'll be right back if this
- 17 girdle don't kill me first. *(She exits walking funny.)*
- 18 PETE: *(Pulls the CITY BUNCH over a little so the TWINS can't hear.)*
- 19 Did you hear that? Oswald, I think it's finally about to
- 20 happen.
- 21 OSWALD: Could it be that we're getting some of that
- 22 inheritance money at last?
- 23 GLENDA MAE: *(Approaching)* What are y'all whisperin' about
- 24 over here, Cousin Oswald?
- 25 OSWALD: You don't have to pretend anymore, Glenda Mae. We
- 26 figured out the secret.
- 27 BRENDA MAE: You did? Drat! I wanted to be the one to tell you.
- 28 MIMI: Then it's true?
- 29 GLENDA MAE: It surely is. *(The CITY BUNCH join hands again*
- 30 *and smile their silly smiles.)* I'm a-gettin' hitched!
- 31 PETUNIA: *(Pause)* To what?
- 32 GLENDA MAE: Hitched, silly girl. I'm finally gettin' married up
- 33 with a feller.
- 34 OSWALD: That's your secret?
- 35 PETUNIA: Oh ... well, congratulations, Glenda Mae. But who
- 36 are you marrying?
- 37 GLENDA MAE: Elmer Crick.
- 38 BRENDA MAE: He's from the southern end of the county.
- 39 PETE: What does that mean?
- 40 GLENDA MAE: Put it like this: He won't hurt his back totin' his
- 41 brains.
- 42 BRENDA MAE: If dumb was dirt, he'd be 'bout a acre.
- 43 PETUNIA: Then why are you marrying him?
- 44 GLENDA MAE: 'Cause I can mold him into anything I want him
- 45 to be.

- 1 PETUNIA: Where did you two meet?
- 2 GLENDA MAE: Through the personal ads in *Frog Giggin*
3 magazine. (*ELMER enters wiping his hands on an oily rag.*)
- 4 ELMER: Glenda Mae, you remember how I painted my truck
5 camouflage?
- 6 GLENDA MAE: Yeah, Elmer.
- 7 ELMER: Now I can't find it. What am I goin' to do?
- 8 GLENDA MAE: Go stand in the shade. I'll be right there.
- 9 ELMER: OK. (*He turns and exits.*)
- 10 BRENDA MAE: Maybe we should go check on him.
- 11 GLENDA MAE: Don't worry. He'll be back.
- 12 OSWALD: How do you know?
- 13 GLENDA MAE: He just walked in the closet. (*ELMER enters*
14 *again, waves at everyone, then exits out the other door. Looking at*
15 *the CITY BUNCH*) And you thought we was jokin'.
16 (*GRANDMA enters with SADIE.*)
- 17 GRANDMA: Right this way, honey. I have some people I want
18 you to meet.
- 19 SADIE: OK.
- 20 GRANDMA: Ever'body, this is a very special friend of mine,
21 Sadie. Sadie, this is Oswald, Pete, Petunia, and Moo Moo.
- 22 MIMI: Mimi.
- 23 PETUNIA: It's very nice to meet you, Miss Sadie.
- 24 GRANDMA: Sadie has lived here for three years now.
- 25 SADIE: (*Looks at GRANDMA.*) They said I can go home tomorrow.
- 26 OSWALD: You're going home? That's great.
- 27 GRANDMA: Now, Sadie, don't forget, this is your home.
- 28 SADIE: No, that man said he's comin' to pick me up and take me
29 back home.
- 30 GRANDMA: (*Sweetly*) OK, honey, whatever you say. (*Helps her sit*
31 *in a rocking chair.*) Here, now sit right here and get some
32 rest. (*To BRENDA MAE and GLENDA MAE*) Girls? (*BRENDA*
33 *MAE and GLENDA MAE cross to SADIE, help her take a seat and*
34 *sit on either side of her. GRANDMA motions EVERYONE*
35 *Downstage as they huddle.*) Bless her heart, she's enterin' the
36 later stages of Alzheimer's.
- 37 PETUNIA: Oh, no.
- 38 OSWALD: I'm sorry to hear that.
- 39 MIMI: Does she have family?
- 40 GRANDMA: Oh yes, her husband is still alive. He visits her ever'
41 day like clockwork. They had one boy who served in the
42 military. I'm afraid he was killed in combat years ago.
- 43 PETE: Why can't Miss Sadie live at home?
- 44 GRANDMA: Because of her health problems. Her husband just
45 ain't able to take care of her the way she needs it.

- 1 PETUNIA: (*Looking at SADIE who is sitting and rocking slowly.*)
 2 She's so precious.
- 3 GRANDMA: The most precious soul the good Lord ever put on
 4 this earth. And that, my dear city slickers, is why I asked
 5 you out here. I need to know how to go about gettin' Sadie
 6 out of here for good.
- 7 OSWALD: You're wanting to move her out of the nursing home?
- 8 GRANDMA: I'm goin' to need lots of money to build a little
 9 cottage next to my place and hire a full-time nurse to stay
 10 with her twenty-four hours a day. Then I can keep an eye
 11 on her once and for all.
- 12 OSWALD: Of course we'll help you. You certainly have plenty of
 13 money to do all that.
- 14 GRANDMA: There's only one problem. When I mentioned it to
 15 her husband, he didn't seem to care much for the idea
 16 a-tall.
- 17 PETUNIA: I wonder why?
- 18 GRANDMA: All I know is he's real protective when it comes to
 19 Miss Sadie.
- 20 SADIE: (*Rocking slowly and looking up, singing softly*)
 21 What a friend we have in Jesus,
 22 All our sins and grief to bear.
 23 What a privilege to carry
 24 Everything to God in prayer.
- 25 GRANDMA: That's her favorite song.
- 26 SADIE: It's gettin' dark outside. Has anybody seen my baby?
- 27 GRANDMA: (*Approaching her*) Miss Sadie, your baby is back in
 28 your room, safe and sound.
- 29 SADIE: But he might be cryin'. I need to take him home.
- 30 GRANDMA: I tell you what — come with me, and we'll go check
 31 on your baby right now. Then it will be about time for your
 32 sweetheart to get here.
- 33 SADIE: (*Turns and looks at EVERYONE.*) My sweetheart's comin'.
- 34 PETUNIA: That's wonderful, Miss Sadie.
- 35 SADIE: (*Speaks to the CITY BUNCH.*) Do y'all want to come and
 36 see my baby?
- 37 GRANDMA: Of course they'll come, won't y'all? Come on,
 38 ever'body — we're goin' to go check on Sadie's little baby.
 39 (*GRANDMA starts to hum another verse of "What a Friend We*
 40 *Have in Jesus," joined by SADIE, then everyone as the TWINS help*
 41 *MISS SADIE stand, cross to the door, and exit.*)
- 42 MIMI: (*Starts to leave with the others but turns, sits quickly, and writes*
 43 *in her journal, speaking under the humming.*) Dear Journal, I
 44 just met the sweetest lady. She's ... she's just wonderful.
 45 More later. (*She closes the journal, kisses her fingers, and touches*

- 1 *the journal. She then joins the others as they exit. As soon as that*
 2 *door shuts, the other door flies open.)*
- 3 **ELMER:** *(Rushing in carrying a bag)* Glenda Mae, don't worry
 4 none, Fester helped me find my truck!
- 5 **FESTER:** *(Following ELMER, carrying an axe on his shoulder)* Yeah,
 6 he couldn't see it 'cause of all the trees.
- 7 **ELMER:** *(Looking around)* Ain't nobody in here.
- 8 **FESTER:** I have eyes, Elmer. Much obliged to ya for givin'
 9 Grandma a ride in your truck.
- 10 **ELMER:** How long do you think she'll be? I got to get home and
 11 wrap Glenda Mae's present.
- 12 **FESTER:** She said just long enough to visit a friend. She's been
 13 spendin' a lot of time here lately.
- 14 **ELMER:** My grandma spends all her time in the garden.
- 15 **FESTER:** Is that where she grows her vegetables?
- 16 **ELMER:** No, that's where we buried her.
- 17 **FESTER:** *(Referring to the bag ELMER is carrying)* You get all your
 18 Christmas shoppin' done?
- 19 **ELMER:** Yep — did all mine at the Tri-County Truck Stop.
 20 One-stop shoppin' for the whole family.
- 21 **FESTER:** And you got Glenda Mae's present?
- 22 **ELMER:** Yep. I wanted to show it to you. *(As ELMER takes a gift*
 23 *from the bag he's holding, FESTER holds up his axe.)*
- 24 **FESTER:** Speakin' of presents, I can finally retire this here axe
 25 to my collection.
- 26 **ELMER:** How come?
- 27 **FESTER:** 'Cause my boss down at the hardware store let it slip
 28 that he's gettin' me a new one for Christmas.
- 29 **ELMER:** He just come right out and told you?
- 30 **FESTER:** Yep. He says to me, he says, "Fester, this Christmas
 31 I'm givin' you the axe."
- 32 **ELMER:** That man is the salt of the earth.
- 33 **FESTER:** *(Bad Spanish accent)* Numero uno.
- 34 **ELMER:** Sure enough.
- 35 **FESTER:** Don't tell nobody I'm gettin' one. I want to surprise
 36 'em.
- 37 **ELMER:** My lips are soiled.
- 38 **FESTER:** What did you get her?
- 39 **ELMER:** *(Hands him the box.)* Here.
- 40 **FESTER:** *(He opens the box, reaches in, and pulls out a spark plug.)*
 41 Elmer, I think you grabbed the wrong box. This one's full
 42 of spark plugs.
- 43 **ELMER:** *(Big grin)* Right.
- 44 **FESTER:** But I thought this was Glenda Mae's —
- 45 **ELMER:** Present. You think she'll like it?

- 1 FESTER: (*As it sinks in*) Elmer Crick, you mean to tell me you got
 2 your soon-to-be wife a box full of spark plugs for
 3 Christmas?
- 4 ELMER: You're surprised, ain't ya? I can tell by the weird look
 5 on your face. You see, the spark plugs is a clue.
- 6 FESTER: Elmer, when it comes to women, you ain't got a clue.
- 7 ELMER: (*Offended*) Since when are you such a dog-fired expert
 8 on women?
- 9 FESTER: I have you know I go out with a different girl ever'
 10 week.
- 11 ELMER: Gollll-eeee, really?
- 12 FESTER: Yes sir. As a matter of fact, my last date was with the
 13 Gruber twins.
- 14 ELMER: Did you have fun?
- 15 FESTER: Well, yes and no. Now quit changin' the subject and
 16 tell me why the spark plugs was a clue.
- 17 ELMER: 'Cause you know how I'm fixin' up that old Chevy
 18 truck — the one I was under when I popped the question
 19 to Glenda Mae?
- 20 FESTER: Yeah.
- 21 ELMER: Well, she don't know it yet, but I'm fixin' that truck up
 22 for her and these spark plugs go in that truck. See what I
 23 mean? It's a clue. (*He wears a big, silly grin as he stares at*
 24 *FESTER.*) Ain't that romantic?
- 25 FESTER: Elmer, as a buddy, I think it's time somebody with lots
 26 of experience with women teaches you about the ways of
 27 love. (*Puts his arm around ELMER.*)
- 28 ELMER: Really? Is it somebody I know?
- 29 FESTER: It's me! I'm goin' to teach you! I swear, Elmer, you're
 30 slower than erosion.
- 31 ELMER: What do I do first?
- 32 FESTER: Take back them spark plugs and get her somethin' —
 33 (*Thinks for a moment.*) I'll give you a hint: Get her somethin'
 34 that comes on a string.
- 35 ELMER: On a string.
- 36 FESTER: That she can wear around her neck.
- 37 ELMER: Wear around her neck.
- 38 FESTER: Somethin' that sparkles. (*Holds both hands up and*
 39 *spreads his fingers apart to demonstrate "sparkles."*)
- 40 ELMER: Somethin' that sparkles. (*Repeats FESTER's hand*
 41 *movements.*)
- 42 FESTER: You know what I'm talkin' about?
- 43 ELMER: You ain't dealin' with some dumb hillbilly, Fester.
- 44 FESTER: Go get 'er, tiger! (*ELMER growls like a tiger and throws*
 45 *up his "claws."* Full of excitement, he exits to the closet,

1 *immediately runs back in, gives another loud growl, and exits out*
 2 *the right door. FESTER holds up his axe.) You know, Mr. Axe,*
 3 **Glenda Mae's a pretty lucky girl. Elmer's not a bad feller**
 4 **a-tall.**

5 **ELMER:** *(Sticking his head back in the door) Fester, come quick! I*
 6 **can't find my truck! (Disappears.)**

7 **FESTER:** **The first thing we got to do is either get that boy some**
 8 **smarts or paint his truck fire-engine red.** *(He exits quickly*
 9 *with his axe as the lights fade to a blackout.)*

10

11

Scene 2

12

13 *(ELKIN and NURSE PEACH are hanging a long construction*
 14 *paper chain of green and red links. ELKIN holds one end of the*
 15 *chain and NURSE PEACH the other. The plan is to hang it on the*
 16 *Upstage wall. However, it isn't quite long enough to reach from one*
 17 *corner to the other. ELKIN takes his end to his corner.)*

18 **NURSE PEACH:** **Wait a minute — my end won't reach.**

19 **ELKIN:** **That's funny. Mine reaches just fine.**

20 **NURSE PEACH:** **Come this way just a little.** *(He does.) There we*
 21 **go.**

22 **ELKIN:** **Wait a doggone minute — now my end won't reach.**

23 **NURSE PEACH:** **I think it needs more links.**

24 **ELKIN:** **OK. I'll get to work on it just as soon as I finish stringing**
 25 **popcorn for the Christmas tree.**

26 **NURSE PEACH:** **It sure is nice of you and your family to help us**
 27 **celebrate Christmas this year.**

28 **ELKIN:** **It's our pleasure. It was Grandma's idea. She really took**
 29 **a likin' to Miss Sadie and the idea of gettin' her out of here.**

30 **IDA MAE:** *(Off-Stage) Nurse! Where did you run off to?*

31 **NURSE PEACH:** *(Shouting) In here, Ida Mae!*

32 **IDA MAE:** *(Entering with her walker) So **this** is where you've been*
 33 **hidin'.**

34 **NURSE PEACH:** **Ida Mae, you're just in time to help us start**
 35 **decoratin' for the Christmas party tomorrow.**

36 **IDA MAE:** **How can I do anything when I can't get my arms no**
 37 **higher than this?** *(Raises arms to shoulder height. PETE and*
 38 *OSWALD enter.)*

39 **OSWALD:** **Hello, everyone.**

40 **ELKIN:** **Shhhh! I'd keep it down 'til after she's had her pain pill.**

41 **OSWALD:** **Sorry.** *(He and PETE stand and watch the action.)*

42 **NURSE PEACH:** *(Looking at her watch) Now that you mention it,*
 43 **it is time for your six-o'clock.**

44 **IDA MAE:** **If I die, I will never speak to you again as long as I**
 45 **live.**

- 1 NURSE PEACH: (*Takes a bottle of pills from her apron pocket, shakes*
 2 *out a pill, and pours a cup of water.*) **Here you go. And here's**
 3 **you some water.**
- 4 IDA MAE: (*Gulps down the pill and water and hands NURSE PEACH*
 5 *the cup.*) **It didn't work.**
- 6 NURSE PEACH: (*Shakes her head, grinning*) **You ain't gave it time.**
- 7 IDA MAE: (*As IDA MAE rattles off her following complaints, NURSE*
 8 *PEACH stands behind her holding up five fingers. As she looks at*
 9 *her watch, she silently counts down from five to one.*) **It's freezin'**
 10 **in here!** (*NURSE PEACH holds up four fingers.*) **Can't**
 11 **somebody build a fire?** (*NURSE PEACH holds up three*
 12 *fingers.*) **I want all that mistletoe took down — I ain't in the**
 13 **mood for smoochin'.** (*NURSE PEACH holds up two fingers.*)
 14 **Where's our supper?** (*NURSE PEACH holds up one finger.*) **I'm**
 15 **a-starvin'!** (*NURSE PEACH points at IDA MAE. IDA MAE*
 16 *suddenly stands up straight with a big smile.*) **I — I think that's**
 17 **the most beautiful Christmas tree I ever saw. Ain't it nice**
 18 **and cozy in here?! Where's the mistletoe? Who wants some**
 19 **sugar?** (*Leaving her walker behind, she crosses to ELKIN.*)
- 20 PETE: Miss Ida Mae, your walker.
- 21 IDA MAE: That old thing? Who needs it?
- 22 PETE: (*Approaching NURSE PEACH*) Wait a minute — are you
 23 telling me her pain is completely gone and she can move
 24 without her walker, all in a matter of five seconds from
 25 taking one pill?
- 26 IDA MAE: Oh, yes! It's my miracle pill!
- 27 PETE: Nurse Peach, what did you give her just now?
- 28 NURSE PEACH: It's somethin' our doctor come up with.
- 29 PETE: You mean it's not on the market?
- 30 IDA MAE: Look, I can dance! Somebody put me on a record.
- 31 PETE: Uh, Oswald, could I see you outside, please? (*He takes*
 32 *OSWALD's arm and drags him out. IDA MAE grabs ELKIN and*
 33 *dances around the stage with him as she sings merrily.*)
- 34 IDA MAE: Deck the halls with boughs of holly,
 35 Fa la la la la, la la la l-a-a-a.
- 36 EKLKIN: (*Over her singing*) You sure are feelin' chipper now,
 37 Miss Ida Mae!
- 38 IDA MAE: Oh, Mr. Taylor, I'm as happy as a tick on a fat dog!
 39 (*They continue to dance together as she sings.*)
- 40 NURSE PEACH: (*Smiling and shouting over the singing*) I guess I'll
 41 decorate all by my lonesome!
- 42 ELKIN: Sorry, Nurse Peach, but she won't let me go!
- 43 NURSE PEACH: That's all right! Enjoy it while it lasts!
- 44 IDA MAE: (*Singing*) Enjoy it while it lasts!
 45 Enjoy it while it lasts!

- 1 Deck the halls with boughs of holly,
2 And enjoy it while it lasts!
- 3 **HARLEY:** *(Enters carrying a bouquet of flowers.)* Knock, knock.
- 4 **NURSE PEACH:** Come on in, Harley!
- 5 **IDA MAE:** *(Leaves ELKIN and starts dancing with HARLEY.)*
6 Deck the halls with boughs of holly,
7 And come on in!
8 Come on in!
- 9 **NURSE PEACH:** *(Drops her decorations and moves to IDA MAE,*
10 *gently taking her arm.)* OK, Mary Poppins, that's enough
11 dancin'. Use some of that energy and hang them angels
12 yonder.
- 13 **IDA MAE:** I'd be tickled to. *(She dances to the Upstage wall and*
14 *starts decorating.)*
- 15 **HARLEY:** *(Looking around)* Oh, they ain't brought her in yet?
- 16 **NURSE PEACH:** Imogene Taylor is walkin' her down. Just
17 make yourself at home.
- 18 **HARLEY:** Ever'thing sure is lookin' Christmasey.
- 19 **NURSE PEACH:** *(Crossing to HARLEY)* I do declare. A whole
20 bouquet of flowers in the dead of winter.
- 21 **HARLEY:** They're for my little angel.
- 22 **IDA MAE:** Oh, you didn't have to do that for me. *(Laughs.)* I'm
23 just kiddin'. You didn't know I could be funny, did you?
- 24 **NURSE PEACH:** *(To HARLEY)* It's just that you usually bring her
25 a single flower.
- 26 **HARLEY:** Today's a special day. It's our fiftieth weddin'
27 anniversary.
- 28 **NURSE PEACH:** *(Throwing down her decorations)* Don't that just
29 dill my pickle?! Why in sam hill didn't you let us know? We
30 wouda baked a cake or somethin'.
- 31 **HARLEY:** Y'all got enough to do around here, what with it bein'
32 Christmas and ever'thing.
- 33 **NURSE PEACH:** I can't believe I didn't remember. I bet you'll be
34 glad to get Miss Sadie out of here and into the hands of a
35 nurse that's got a little sense about her.
- 36 **IDA MAE:** *(Quickly)* If y'all will excuse me, I think I'll go lay down
37 for a bit.
- 38 **ELKIN:** But I thought you was feelin' better, Miss Ida Mae.
- 39 **IDA MAE:** Maybe I'm sleepy. You got a problem with that?
- 40 **ELKIN:** No, ma'am. But after your nap, come on back and we'll
41 dance some more.
- 42 **IDA MAE:** Why would I want to dance with somebody who's got
43 two left feet? *(She grabs the walker and exits quickly, dragging*
44 *it behind her.)*
- 45 **ELKIN:** She sure did change her tune quick-like.

- 1 NURSE PEACH: She gets that way ever' time we talk about Miss
2 Sadie leavin'. Them two is real close.
- 3 HARLEY: Just between you and me, Miss Peach, I hope that
4 never happens.
- 5 NURSE PEACH: You hope what never happens?
- 6 HARLEY: My Sadie leavin' here. I hope it don't happen.
- 7 NURSE PEACH: (*Taken aback at this news*) What? You mean you
8 don't want ... ?
- 9 HARLEY: I just don't think gettin' Sadie out of here is such a
10 good idea, that's all.
- 11 NURSE PEACH: But ...
- 12 HARLEY: I know Imogene Taylor means well, but I'd just as
13 soon have my Sadie stay right here where she is. (*NURSE*
14 *PEACH looks back at ELKIN. They're both confused, but decide*
15 *not to press it.*)
- 16 ELKIN: (*To HARLEY*) By the way, congratulations on fifty years.
17 That's a long time to be together.
- 18 HARLEY: We met at a school dance when we was both
19 younguns.
- 20 NURSE PEACH: And y'all've been together ever' since.
- 21 HARLEY: (*Remembering*) She was the prettiest girl in school. And
22 I was so shy. But I finally got up my nerve to court her. We
23 was married, built our house, raised our boy. When he
24 passed away, we loved each other through it. We've always
25 planted gardens. Took walks pickin' blackberries.
26 Sometimes, back before she was diagnosed, our special
27 song would come on the radio and we would stop what we
28 was doin' and dance to it. Ain't that silly? The other day we
29 was in her room and the song came on the radio and I said,
30 "Do you remember this song?" (*Pauses.*) But she didn't ...
31 and that hurt. (*He snaps out of his fog.*) I'm sorry. Listen to me
32 ramblin' on.
- 33 GRANDMA: (*Entering with SADIE*) Looky who's here.
- 34 HARLEY: (*Approaches SADIE as though he were approaching his*
35 *beautiful girl for the first time.*) There she is.
- 36 GRANDMA: Look who's here to see you, Sadie.
- 37 SADIE: (*Looking at HARLEY, nodding politely*) Howdy.
- 38 HARLEY: Come on over here and have a seat, and you can rock
39 your baby.
- 40 SADIE: (*Looking at him strangely*) Do I know you?
- 41 GRANDMA: He comes to see you ever' day.
- 42 HARLEY: (*Holding up the bouquet*) I brought these for you. Happy
43 anniversary, sweetheart.
- 44 SADIE: Ain't them pretty? (*Looks at GRANDMA.*) Here you go.
45 These are for you.

- 1 GRANDMA: They're for you, honey. Your husband brought
2 them for you.
- 3 SADIE: (*Becomes confused, looking around*) Where is ever'body?
- 4 NURSE PEACH: Who are you lookin' for, Miss Sadie?
- 5 SADIE: Shouldn't they be here by now?
- 6 GRANDMA: Maybe they'll show up in a little bit.
- 7 NURSE PEACH: (*Points to the bouquet*) Did you get a good look at
8 the flowers? There's a rose and some daisies. See all the
9 colors?
- 10 SADIE: (*Paying no mind to the flowers, she looks around and wrings*
11 *her hands.*) I can't figure out what's takin' ever'body so long.
- 12 HARLEY: It's all right, sweetheart. Everything is all right.
- 13 NURSE PEACH: Imogene, why don't you help me put these in
14 some water?
- 15 GRANDMA: Be glad to. Miss Sadie, you just rest now. We'll be
16 back in a jiffy.
- 17 ELKIN: (*To NURSE PEACH*) I'll help you. (*They exit, leaving*
18 *HARLEY and SADIE alone.*)
- 19 HARLEY: (*Getting on one knee beside her rocker*) Can you believe it's
20 been fifty years since we walked down the aisle of that
21 little country church?
- 22 SADIE: There's so much to get done.
- 23 HARLEY: (*Taking her hand*) Do you remember that first dance we
24 had with each other? I would give anything if you could
25 remember.
- 26 SADIE: (*Looking around, confused*) If that boy don't get hisself in
27 here, I'll get a switch after him.
- 28 HARLEY: (*Calmly taking her hands*) Ever' boy at that school
29 wanted to dance with you.
- 30 SADIE: (*Looking down at the doll*) This ain't my baby. What
31 happened to my baby?
- 32 HARLEY: Sadie?
- 33 SADIE: (*Looks at him for the first time, studying his face.*) Who are
34 you?
- 35 HARLEY: (*This hurts him.*) Don't you know me?
- 36 SADIE: (*Pulls her hand away from him.*) You ain't supposed to be
37 here! Somebody take me to my mama's house. Where's that
38 man?
- 39 HARLEY: I'm right here, honey. I ain't goin' to let nothin' in this
40 world hurt you. (*SADIE starts to cry.*) Don't cry. Ever'thing's
41 goin' to be all right.
- 42 SADIE: (*Covers her face with her hands.*) I don't know where my
43 baby is.
- 44 HARLEY: (*Pulls her to him and rests her head on his shoulder.*) I ain't
45 goin' to let nothin' hurt you. Do you remember them times

19 (IDA MAE sits in her rocking chair. GLENDA MAE and BRENDA
20 MAE, ELKIN, PETE, OSWALD, MIMI, and PETUNIA stand and
21 sit about as GRANDMA tries to get comfortable in her chair,
22 repositioning herself one way, then another. MIMI writes in her
23 journal. BRENDA MAE is picking lint off OSWALD's shirt.
24 ELKIN hangs the string of popcorn on the tree.)

26 GRANDMA: It's this new girdle. It won't let me get comfortable
27 a-tall.

44 IDA MAE: This is as nice as I get when my appendages are on
45 the verge of explodin’.

- 1 GRANDMA: You had your appendix took out thirty years ago.
- 2 IDA MAE: They grew back. (*GRANDMA laughs.*) It ain't funny. I
- 3 get so sick and tired of them stickin' tubes in me, takin'
- 4 blood out of me, wantin' me to fill up cups.
- 5 MIMI: (*Without looking up from her journal*) Too much information.
- 6 IDA MAE: I've filled up so many cups, I feel like a soda fountain
- 7 in a drug store.
- 8 PETUNIA: (*Trying to be sweet*) Well, you look comfortable now.
- 9 IDA MAE: I'm OK as long as I'm in my rocker. 'Course, sittin' too
- 10 long causes my Polaroids to act up.
- 11 PETUNIA: (*Jumping up, changing the subject*) Oh, look at that
- 12 beautiful Christmas tree!
- 13 GRANDMA: Do somethin' nice for yourself. When I'm down in
- 14 the dumps, I go out and buy myself a new dress.
- 15 IDA MAE: (*Looking GRANDMA up and down*) So that's where you
- 16 got it.
- 17 ELKIN: (*From the tree*) And I just finished hangin' the last
- 18 ornament. (*To PETUNIA*) Word has probably got out that
- 19 I'm doin' the devotions at the Christmas party.
- 20 PETUNIA: No, I didn't know.
- 21 ELKIN: (*Disappointed*) Oh. Well, now that you know, you
- 22 probably want my autograph. (*Takes a small notebook and*
- 23 *pencil from his pocket and signs a page.*)
- 24 PETUNIA: (*Being nice*) Oh yes, of course. (*Takes it.*) Thank you.
- 25 ELKIN: (*This helped his ego.*) You are welcome. See y'all later. (*He*
- 26 *exits.*)
- 27 NURSE PEACH: (*Entering with a pill and a glass of water*) Guess
- 28 what it's time for, Ida Mae.
- 29 IDA MAE: It's sure enough about time!
- 30 MIMI: (*Jumps up and crosses to NURSE PEACH.*) Oh, let me give it
- 31 to her so I can write about it in my journal. (*EVERYONE*
- 32 *stares at her.*) I mean, help the crabby old woman feel better.
- 33 (*She hands the pill and water to IDA MAE, who gulps it right*
- 34 *down.*)
- 35 IDA MAE: Just make me sit here and wait and wait with my bad
- 36 back, ruptured appendages, and hurtin' Polaroids. This
- 37 pill ain't workin' a-tall.
- 38 NURSE PEACH: You got to give it time, Ida Mae. (*Looking at her*
- 39 *watch*) Five, four, three, two, one! (*Points at IDA MAE.*)
- 40 IDA MAE: (*Jumps out of her chair.*) Merry Christmas, ever'body!
- 41 (*Takes her pillow and crosses to MIMI.*) Here you go, sweet
- 42 thing. Sit on it! Imogene, you're lookin' so skinny these
- 43 days! I'm in the Christmas spirit! (*Singing*)
- 44 Good King What's-his-name look-ed out
- 45 On the feets of Stephen!

- 1 NURSE PEACH: (*Laughing*) We'll wait and sing at the Christmas
 2 party, Ida Mae.
- 3 PETE: (*Pulling OSWALD aside*) Oswald, did you see that? I'm
 4 telling you, it's some kind of miracle drug.
- 5 OSWALD: Maybe we should report it to the United States Food
 6 and Drug Administration.
- 7 PETE: What? And give up all that money this could bring us?
 8 And when I say us, I mean me.
- 9 OSWALD: I guess a lot of people could benefit from it.
- 10 PETE: (*Pointing to himself*) Yeah, and you're looking at the main
 11 one. I've got to find out what the ingredients are.
- 12 BRENDA MAE: (*Approaching and slipping her arm through*
 13 *OSWALD's*) Cousin Oswald, why don't you come right over
 14 here and shoot the breeze with me for a while? (*To GLENDA*
 15 *MAE*) Glenda Mae!
- 16 GLENDA MAE: Huh? Oh. (*She grabs a stick with a piece of string tied*
 17 *to the end of it, supporting a dangling sprig of mistletoe. She*
 18 *nonchalantly moves behind OSWALD and holds it over his head.*)
- 19 BRENDA MAE: Ain't old Christmas traditions wonderful,
 20 Cousin Oswald? (*She points up at the mistletoe over his head,*
 21 *closes her eyes, leans in, and puckers up.*)
- 22 OSWALD: Oh. (*BRENDA MAE remains in her position. OSWALD*
 23 *grabs an apple out of a bowl on the table, holds it up to her, and*
 24 *she kisses it. He puts it down quickly and looks innocent. She opens*
 25 *her eyes.*)
- 26 BRENDA MAE: Cousin Oswald, you taste just like a Granny
 27 Smith apple.
- 28 OSWALD: It's my Chapstick.
- 29 BRENDA MAE: Glenda Mae! Glenda Mae! Go fetch the
 30 preacher! I done been kissed under the mistletoe by a
 31 single feller.
- 32 GLENDA MAE: (*Hugs OSWALD.*) Congratulations, Cousin
 33 Oswald, you old rooster!
- 34 OSWALD: For what?
- 35 GLENDA MAE: Ever'body knows that when a single man —
 36 that's you — kisses a single girl — that's Brenda Mae —
 37 wearin' a (*looks quickly to see what BRENDA MAE is wearing*)
 38 gabardine dress and tube socks under the mistletoe, he has
 39 to marry up with her.
- 40 BRENDA MAE: It's the code of the hills! (*BRENDA MAE and*
 41 *GLENDA MAE hug as they jump up and down, squealing with*
 42 *glee.*)
- 43 PETUNIA: (*Approaching*) You can't trick someone into marryin'
 44 you. It isn't ethical.
- 45 GLENDA MAE: It may not be ethanol, but it's the code.

- 1 OSWALD: Grandma Taylor, tell her this is preposterous.
 2 GRANDMA: I can't tell her that.
 3 OSWALD: Why?
 4 GRANDMA: 'Cause I can't pronounce it.
 5 BRENDA MAE: After we're married, all that's his is mine, and
 6 all that's mine is his!
 7 GRANDMA: That ain't a bit fair to him, child. Them fields of
 8 yours is so full of oil, that land will never be clear enough
 9 to plant a decent crop in. (*PETE, PETUNIA, and MIMI look*
 10 *wide-eyed at the audience.*)
 11 PETE: (*Rushing to OSWALD*) Wait a minute, brother of mine.
 12 Let's think this through.
 13 MIMI: (*Jumping up and running to OSWALD*) After all, you're not
 14 getting any younger.
 15 PETUNIA: Getting married and settling down may be just what
 16 you need.
 17 OSWALD: Oil? As in oil they pump and give you lots of money
 18 for? (*OSWALD stands as he thinks this through for a second, then*
 19 *turns and heads for the door.*)
 20 BRENDA MAE: But where are you goin', future husband?
 21 OSWALD: For a walk. I've got some serious thinking to do. (*He*
 22 *exits.*)
 23 PETE: (*Turns to MIMI and PETUNIA*) Come on, let's go talk to him
 24 before he has time to think about it too much. (*MIMI, PETE,*
 25 *and PETUNIA run out.*)
 26 GRANDMA: Brenda Mae?
 27 BRENDA MAE: (*Worried*) Yes, ma'am?
 28 GRANDMA: There ain't no such thing as some code of the hills,
 29 and you know it.
 30 BRENDA MAE: I can't hear you, Grandma. We're busy plannin'
 31 our double ceremony. (*Turns to GLENDA MAE.*) I thought we
 32 could get Piggly Wiggly to cater the weddin'.
 33 GLENDA MAE: To save money, we can sweep up the rice at the
 34 weddin' and serve it at the reception.
 35 GRANDMA: Brenda Mae, he ain't even asked you yet!
 36 BRENDA MAE: Come on, Glenda Mae, let's talk out in the hall.
 37 It's a little loud in here. (*They exit, running.*)
 38 GRANDMA: Ida Mae, have you saw two more silly girls than
 39 them two?
 40 IDA MAE: They're excited, that's for sure.
 41 GRANDMA: (*Getting a funny look on her face*) Ida Mae, call the
 42 nurse.
 43 IDA MAE: Are you a-hurtin' somewhere?
 44 GRANDMA: No, I think I just popped my new girdle! (*Starts*
 45 *dancing around.*) Awwwww!

1 IDA MAE: I'm on my way! (*Rushes out.*)

2 GRANDMA: (*Dancing around the stage in pain*) Ohhhh. Iiiii-eeee!
3 Saint Peter, open up them gates! I'm on my way! Ohhhh!
4 (*Blackout.*)

5

6

Scene 4

7

8 (*FESTER's pacing the floor, looking at his watch. He wears an*
9 *ugly tie with overalls. After five seconds, ELMER enters carrying a*
10 *wrapped package and wearing a bow tie.*)

11 FESTER: (*Rushing to him*) It's about time, Elmer. Ever'body's
12 goin' to start gettin' here for the Christmas party any time
13 now.

14 ELMER: It wasn't easy to find a store open this close to
15 Christmas, but I got it.

16 FESTER: So you swapped them spark plugs?

17 ELMER: Right.

18 FESTER: For somethin' on a string?

19 ELMER: Right.

20 FESTER: That she can wear around her neck?

21 ELMER: Right.

22 FESTER: That sparkles?

23 ELMER: Right. (*Uses the "sparkles" hand movements.*)

24 FESTER: Attaboy, Elmer.

25 ELMER: I'm much obliged to you, Fester. (*Holding up the wrapped*
26 *package as BRENDA MAE and GLENDA MAE enter.*) But I still
27 can't understand why Glenda Mae would want somethin'
28 like —

29 BRENDA MAE: (*Interrupting*) Elmer Crick, where in sam hill
30 have you been? You was supposed to pick me up and bring
31 me to this here Christmas party. We had to walk in the
32 snow.

33 GLENDA MAE: I'm numb from my toes down.

34 FESTER: (*Arm around ELMER's shoulder*) He's real sorry, Glenda
35 Mae.

36 ELMER: I'm real sorry.

37 GLENDA MAE: Have you been off kissin' on some pretty girl?

38 ELMER: I don't want to kiss on pretty girls, I only want to kiss
39 on you.

40 FESTER: He's always thinkin' about you. A love song come on
41 the radio this mornin', and you come to his mind.

42 GLENDA MAE: Which one?

43 ELMER: "Her Teeth Was Stained, But Her Heart Was Pure."

44 FESTER: And this mornin', when he slopped that fat hog of his,
45 you suddenly popped into his head! (*Turns and secretly gives*

- 1 ELMER the "OK" sign.)
- 2 **GLENDA MAE:** Elmer, you're on probation. Do you understand
- 3 me?
- 4 **FESTER:** (*Leaning in, telling ELMER what to say*) Yes, dear.
- 5 **ELMER:** Yes, dear.
- 6 **FESTER:** (*Leaning in*) Whatever you say.
- 7 **ELMER:** Whatever you say.
- 8 **FESTER:** (*Leaning in*) I love you.
- 9 **ELMER:** (*To FESTER*) Ahhhh, I love you too, Fester.
- 10 **FESTER:** You love her!
- 11 **ELMER:** (*To GLENDA MAE*) I love you.
- 12 **GLENDA MAE:** Come over here and take my wrap. (*He crosses to*
- 13 *her and removes the Christmas garland from around her*
- 14 *shoulders and hangs it on the Christmas tree.*)
- 15 **BRENDA MAE:** Fester, have you heard the news? Me and
- 16 Cousin Oswald is gettin' hitched.
- 17 **FESTER:** To what?
- 18 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Slaps FESTER's shoulder.*) To each other!
- 19 **FESTER:** How did you trick him?
- 20 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Slaps his shoulder.*) I didn't trick him.
- 21 **FESTER:** Why would somebody so citified want you?
- 22 **BRENDA MAE:** (*Twirling the end of her hair around her finger*)
- 23 'Cause I'm a catch, that's why.
- 24 **FESTER:** Yeah, like a large-mouth bass. (*He quickly pulls ELMER*
- 25 *in front of him, causing BRENDA MAE to slap ELMER's*
- 26 *shoulder.*)
- 27 **ELMER:** (*Rubbing his arm*) Owwww.
- 28 **GLENDA MAE:** Don't just ever'body stand around. I told Nurse
- 29 Peach we'd help her put out the plates and cups. (*They begin*
- 30 *helping. PETE and OSWALD enter.*)
- 31 **PETE:** (*Holding up a bottle of pills*) I got it! I got it!
- 32 **OSWALD:** (*Takes the bottle for a closer look.*) Let me see. Are you
- 33 sure this is it?
- 34 **BRENDA MAE:** (*From across the room, to OSWALD*) Hellooooo,
- 35 sweet thang. (*She blows him a kiss. OSWALD "catches" it and*
- 36 *BRENDA MAE turns away.*)
- 37 **PETE:** I snuck the pill bottle when Nurse Peach wasn't looking.
- 38 I wanted to test them on my tennis elbow. I'll take one and
- 39 see if the pain goes away.
- 40 **OSWALD:** Hurry before someone sees you.
- 41 **PETE:** Here goes nothing. (*He pops a pill in his mouth and takes a*
- 42 *sip of water.*)
- 43 **OSWALD:** How do you feel?
- 44 **PETE:** (*Bending and extending his arm*) Five, four, three, two, one.
- 45 **OSWALD:** Well?

- 1 **PETE:** *(Wide-eyed)* It's gone! The pain has disappeared
 2 **completely.**
- 3 **OSWALD:** You're kidding.
- 4 **PETE:** *(Grabs OSWALD's shoulder and brings him close, so they're face*
 5 *to face)* Would I kid about something that's going to bring us
 6 **this much money?** *(They get so excited, they dance around,*
 7 *singing.)* We're in the money! We're in the money!
- 8 **GLENDA MAE:** What in sam hill y'all so excited about?
- 9 **OSWALD:** My dreams are coming true!
- 10 **BRENDA MAE:** Oh Oswald, I feel the same way! *(She runs to him*
 11 *and jumps in his arms or grabs him around the neck and hugs*
 12 *him.)* We're goin' to be so happy together! *(MIMI and*
 13 *PETUNIA run in and cross to OSWALD.)*
- 14 **PETUNIA:** Here he is!
- 15 **MIMI:** *(To OSWALD)* Well, are you going to marry her?
- 16 **BRENDA MAE:** Cousin Oswald, I forgot to tell you that I got all
 17 them oil fields you can have once we've been united in holy
 18 macaroni.
- 19 **OSWALD:** You mean you'd just *give* them to me?
- 20 **BRENDA MAE:** Shore. I won't have time to work the fields. I'll
 21 be too busy cookin' your meals and takin' care of Cousin
 22 **Oswald Junior.** *(The door swings open quickly and there stands*
 23 *IDA MAE, holding tightly to her walker.)*
- 24 **PETUNIA:** Well, look who's here. Good to see you again, Miss
 25 Ida Mae.
- 26 **IDA MAE:** Give me a minute — you'll change your mind!
- 27 **MIMI:** *(Rushes to IDA MAE.)* Here, let me get the door for you.
 28 *(MIMI shuts the door for her, then rushes over so she can write it*
 29 *in her journal.)*
- 30 **PETUNIA:** *(To IDA MAE)* Is your back hurting again?
- 31 **IDA MAE:** Don't talk to me! *(Enters the room slowly, using her*
 32 *walker.)* Nurse! *(She sits in her rocking chair as everyone watches*
 33 *her intently.)* What y'all lookin' at? Make me feel like a
 34 **animal in a zoo.**
- 35 **FESTER:** *(Sets out paper cups.)* You mean like a baboon?
- 36 **IDA MAE:** Don't talk to me! *(ALL are in their own areas, talking in*
 37 *pantomime about their respective subjects.)*
- 38 **NURSE PEACH:** *(Entering with LEON, ELVERNA, PHIL, DELPHIA,*
 39 *and other residents, if so desired. LEON wears a Power Rangers*
 40 *costume.)* Come on in, ever'body. Merry Christmas!
- 41 **LEON:** When are we playin' bingo?
- 42 **NURSE PEACH:** This ain't bingo night, Leon. It's a Christmas
 43 **party.**
- 44 **LEON:** We ain't playin' bingo?
- 45 **NURSE PEACH:** Not tonight.

- 1 LEON: Drat. I wore my lucky Power Rangers suit for nothin'.
 2 Maybe it will help me get lucky and find a chick.
- 3 NURSE PEACH: Ain't you a little old for such foolishness?
- 4 LEON: Old? I'd have you know I'm only ninety-eight. But bein'
 5 ninety-eight already puts me at a disadvantage.
- 6 NURSE PEACH: Why's that?
- 7 LEON: I like older women.
- 8 NURSE PEACH: Ever'body get comfortable. We'll be eatin' in
 9 just a little bit.
- 10 LEON: (*To GRANDMA*) You goin' to meet me under the mistletoe
 11 later, sweetheart?
- 12 GRANDMA: Get away from me, Leon Weaver.
- 13 LEON: Come on, give a old man somethin' to live for.
- 14 GRANDMA: I'll give you a slap in the face.
- 15 LEON: Now we're talkin'!
- 16 GRANDMA: Leon, next time you pass by my rockin' chair, jes'
 17 keep walkin'.
- 18 LEON: I'm just so dog-fired bored. All I do all day is sit in my
 19 room, staring out at the backyard.
- 20 NURSE PEACH: (*In a good-natured way*) Mr. Weaver, you sit
 21 yourself down and behave!
- 22 LEON: (*To NURSE PEACH*) Hey Peachy, have you saw my flock
 23 of crows outside my window?!
- 24 ELMER: Ain't it herd of crows?
- 25 LEON: 'Course I've heard 'em — I got a whole flock of 'em
 26 outside my window.
- 27 GRANDMA: Miss Peach, I heard you're expectin' a baby.
- 28 NURSE PEACH: Me and Henry just found out.
- 29 GRANDMA: Congratulations! You'll make a good mama. You
 30 better not overdo it tonight.
- 31 FESTER: What you goin' to call the baby, Ms. Peach?
- 32 NURSE PEACH: Well, if it's a boy, we're goin' to call him John.
 33 If it's a girl, we're goin' to name her after my mama.
- 34 ELMER: (*Believe it or not, he's serious.*) What's your mama's name,
 35 Miss Peach? Apple?
- 36 GRANDMA: (*Sarcastic*) No, Elmer. Her mama's name is Banana,
 37 and her daddy's name is Tangerine.
- 38 FESTER: (*To NURSE PEACH*) I didn't know your family was a
 39 bunch of fruits.
- 40 GRANDMA: (*To FESTER*) Well, if that's the way it works, your
 41 first name must be macadamia.
- 42 NURSE PEACH: Fester, don't drop the cups. That's all we have.
 43 (*She crosses to FESTER as they pantomime a conversation.*
 44 *ELKIN approaches PHIL and DELPHIA. DELPHIA is busy*
 45 *reading a copy of Bingo Quarterly.*)

- 1 ELKIN: Howdy! My name's Elkin Taylor. You probably heard
 2 I'm doin' the devotions tonight.
- 3 PHIL: I guess somebody has to.
- 4 DELPHIA: (*Still looking at her magazine*) Now, Phil. Be nice. At
 5 least pretend to be interested in what the borin' man's
 6 sayin'.
- 7 ELKIN: Where y'all from originally?
- 8 DELPHIA: (*Looks up from her magazine.*) What did he say?
- 9 PHIL: He asked us where we're from. (*To ELKIN*) We're from
 10 Skeeter Ridge.
- 11 ELKIN: I took a job in Skeeter Ridge for a few months one time.
- 12 DELPHIA: (*Looks up from her magazine.*) What did he say?
- 13 PHIL: He said he used to live in Skeeter Ridge.
- 14 ELKIN: I dated a girl from Skeeter Ridge. She was the worst
 15 kisser I ever met.
- 16 DELPHIA: What did he say?
- 17 PHIL: He said he used to know you.
- 18 ELVERNA: (*Speaking to a coat rack*) Hey, you. When are we goin'
 19 to open Christmas presents?
- 20 NURSE PEACH: Elverna, why ain't you wearin' your glasses?
- 21 ELVERNA: (*Turns and speaks to a large picture of a deer head.*) For
 22 the last time, I don't need glasses. I can see just fine. When
 23 did you get your nose done?
- 24 NURSE PEACH: (*Tapping her on the shoulder*) I'm right here.
- 25 ELVERNA: Oh. (*Turns to the picture.*) Sorry 'bout that, Imogene.
- 26 FESTER: Grandma, I didn't want to mention it, but you're
 27 lookin' a little wider in the hip area.
- 28 GRANDMA: Boy, do you want me to slap you into next week?
- 29 IDA MAE: She ain't wearin' her girdle, that's why.
- 30 GRANDMA: (*To IDA MAE*) You stay out of it.
- 31 IDA MAE: So you're gettin' a little fatter. So what?
- 32 ELVERNA: (*To PETUNIA*) Why, I think you look wonderful,
 33 Imogene.
- 34 GRANDMA: (*Taps ELVERNA on the shoulder.*) I'm right here.
- 35 ELVERNA: (*Turns to GRANDMA.*) How did this stuffed
 36 hippopotamus get in here?
- 37 NURSE PEACH: Elverna, your glasses.
- 38 ELVERNA: I don't need 'em!
- 39 LEON: (*Approaching ELVERNA*) Merry Christmas, ma'am.
 40 (*Waving his hand in front of her eyes*)
- 41 ELVERNA: Who are you?
- 42 LEON: I'm a Power Ranger.
- 43 ELVERNA: I recognize your voice, Leon.
- 44 LEON: (*Lowers his voice.*) I'm a Power Ranger.
- 45 ELVERNA: Too late.

- 1 LEON: Drats!
- 2 MIMI: Oswald, may we speak to you, please?
- 3 OSWALD: I'm not sure I want to.
- 4 PETUNIA: Just give us one good reason why you shouldn't
- 5 marry Brenda Mae.
- 6 OSWALD: I don't love her.
- 7 MIMI: Give us two good reasons.
- 8 PETUNIA: Oswald, it's time to face reality.
- 9 MIMI: There's not exactly a lot of girls knocking down your
- 10 door back home.
- 11 OSWALD: *(To PETUNIA)* That one hurt. *(Shrugs.)* Because it's
- 12 true. OK, you win. I'll marry ... *(Looks over at BRENDA MAE*
- 13 *on the other side of the stage)* her. *(BRENDA MAE blows him a*
- 14 *kiss and he catches it and waves back at her. He hands the kiss to*
- 15 *MIMI.)* Here, hold this, will you? *(Four lady residents — DOT,*
- 16 *RAMIE, FAY, and SARAH, each bearing a letter on her sweater —*
- 17 *enter.)*
- 18 DOT: Merry Christmas, ever'body!
- 19 NURSE PEACH: Dot, where y'all been? It's almost time to eat.
- 20 RAMIE: We got a surprise for ever'body.
- 21 FAY: Look what we done!
- 22 SARAH: OK, ladies! *(They stand side by side in backward order:*
- 23 *SARAH, FAY, RAMIE, and DOT, so the letters on their sweaters*
- 24 *spell out the name LEON.)*
- 25 DOT, RAMIE, FAY, and SARAH: *(Together)* Merry Christmas!
- 26 LEON: *(Crossing to them)* Ladies, I'm honored. I didn't know I had
- 27 a fan club.
- 28 DOT: What the dickens you talkin' about, Leon Weaver?
- 29 RAMIE: *(Looking at their letters)* Wait a minute — we got it all
- 30 wrong. *(The LADIES realize their mistake and rearrange*
- 31 *themselves in order — DOT, RAMIE, FAY, and SARAH — so they*
- 32 *spell out NOEL.)*
- 33 FAY: This is what we meant to spell.
- 34 SARAH: Merry Christmas, ever'body!
- 35 LEON: I knew it was too good to be true. *(EVERYONE mingles as*
- 36 *the attention shifts to GLENDA MAE and ELMER.)*
- 37 GLENDA MAE: *(Hinting)* So Elmer, have you been doin' any
- 38 Christmas shoppin' lately?
- 39 ELMER: I went today.
- 40 GLENDA MAE: You waited 'til the last minute to get my
- 41 present? *(Hands on her hips)* Elmer Crick, I'm havin' second
- 42 thoughts about gettin' hitched. You just ain't measurin' up
- 43 to my exasperations.
- 44 ELMER: But you promised.
- 45 GLENDA MAE: Ain't you ever heard the sayin' "It's a girl's

- 1 provocative to change her mind”?
- 2 **ELMER:** But you’re wearin’ the ring I gave you. You told me it
3 does somethin’ to you.
- 4 **GLENDA MAE:** It does. It turns my finger green. *(They continue*
5 *their conversation in pantomime as the focus switches to OSWALD*
6 *and PETE.)*
- 7 **PETE:** *(To OSWALD)* I’ve got to find out the ingredients of that
8 pill from Nurse Peach.
- 9 **OSWALD:** How will you do that?
- 10 **PETE:** Let me think. *(They continue their conversation in pantomime*
11 *as the focus switches to BRENDA MAE.)*
- 12 **BRENDA MAE:** Do you really think Cousin Oswald will put a
13 ring on my finger?
- 14 **PETUNIA:** Don’t worry. We’ll see to it.
- 15 **BRENDA MAE:** All I ever wanted was for a man to love me for
16 who I really am.
- 17 **NURSE PEACH:** *(As SADIE and HARLEY enter)* Look who’s here,
18 ever’body.
- 19 **GRANDMA:** Get yourself in here, Miss Sadie, and have you a
20 seat right over here by me.
- 21 **IDA MAE:** I’d have you know I’ve been savin’ her a seat beside
22 me.
- 23 **GRANDMA:** Well, all right — don’t pop your corset like I done
24 popped mine.
- 25 **HARLEY:** Merry Christmas, ever’body. *(ALL echo his holiday*
26 *greeting.)*
- 27 **NURSE PEACH:** I believe ever’body is here. Can I have your
28 attention, please? Now, we know it’s Christmas Eve, but
29 it’s also another very special occasion.
- 30 **IDA MAE:** Yeah, it’s Sadie and Harley’s fiftieth weddin’
31 anniversary. *(ALL applaud.)*
- 32 **NURSE PEACH:** Tonight is a double celebration. A husband’s
33 and wife’s undyin’ love for one another, and God’s undyin’
34 love for all mankind.
- 35 **ALL:** *(Ad-lib applauding and calling out to HARLEY)* Speech, speech!
- 36 **HARLEY:** We’re much obliged to ever’body. It’s a real nice
37 surprise. I wouldn’t have wanted to share my last fifty
38 years with anybody but my sweet little Sadie. Ever’ step I
39 took since the moment I could walk was a step toward
40 findin’ her. *(Everyone applauds politely. SADIE is holding her*
41 *doll wrapped in a blanket.)*
- 42 **NURSE PEACH:** Sadie, today is your anniversary.
- 43 **SADIE:** What?
- 44 **NURSE PEACH:** Your weddin’ anniversary. You’ve been
45 married for fifty years. *(SADIE doesn’t respond. She holds her*

- 1 *wrapped doll tightly against her, rocking it and humming "Hush,*
 2 *Little Baby."* Holds out the anniversary cake.) **Happy**
 3 **anniversary, Harley and Sadie.**
- 4 **HARLEY:** *(To everyone, with his hands on SADIE's shoulders.)* I'm
 5 afraid we're not havin' a good day.
- 6 **SADIE:** What are all these people doin' here? Are you goin' to
 7 take me home?
- 8 **HARLEY:** Honey, you are at home.
- 9 **SADIE:** I need to warm the bottle up for the baby.
- 10 **NURSE PEACH:** Miss Sadie, look around. You're surrounded by
 11 your family. We love you.
- 12 **SADIE:** *(Standing, with great effort)* Why are y'all tryin' to keep me
 13 here? I got so much I need to be doin'.
- 14 **GRANDMA:** *(Crossing to her and taking her by the arm)* Honey, why
 15 don't you come over here by me?
- 16 **SADIE:** *(Pulling quickly away from her)* No! I'm takin' my baby
 17 home! *(She heads for the door.)*
- 18 **HARLEY:** *(Heading her off)* Honey, why don't you stay here just a
 19 little while longer?
- 20 **SADIE:** *(Looking around confused, she becomes a little short of breath.)*
 21 I don't know who — My baby's been cry —
- 22 **GRANDMA:** *(Concerned)* Miss Sadie ...
- 23 **NURSE PEACH:** Would you like to take a little walk? *(Looks back*
 24 *at everyone.)* She'll be OK. She's just a little confused.
- 25 **HARLEY:** I'll come with you. *(They exit with SADIE.)*
- 26 **IDA MAE:** It breaks my heart to see her goin' downhill this way.
- 27 **GRANDMA:** I ain't never saw her this confused.
- 28 **PETUNIA:** What a terrible disease.
- 29 **MIMI:** It seems so unfair.
- 30 **GRANDMA:** After a little walk she'll be better, and they can bring
 31 her back in. *(ALL go back to their respective conversation areas.*
 32 *HARLEY re-enters looking sad. GRANDMA approaches him.)*
 33 Harley, are you all right, hon?
- 34 **HARLEY:** She don't know who I am.
- 35 **GRANDMA:** She's just havin' a bad day. It won't always be like
 36 this.
- 37 **HARLEY:** It will only get worse. I know she won't ever be the
 38 same. *(He sits.)*
- 39 **GRANDMA:** How about a cup of punch?
- 40 **HARLEY:** Fifty years of memories, and she doesn't even
 41 remember who I am. It's like sayin' a long good-bye to
 42 somebody you love so much.
- 43 **ELMER:** *(To GLENDA MAE)* Are you goin' to open up my present?
- 44 **GLENDA MAE:** OK, but if I don't like it, you're goin' to be in real
 45 hot water.



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