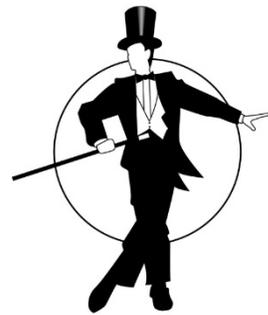


Out to Lunch

Lennie Singer



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Publications



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OUT TO LUNCH

By Lennie Singer

CAST

WALTER: Probably pushing Ninety-five. Pretty slow and crotchety. Can't hear for beans. Shuffles when he walks. Sharp wit though.

AGNES: Seventies. Pushy, edgy, and a bit crass.

ROSIE: Seventies. Wants to live life to the fullest. She's full of energy and laughter. Vivacious and fun.

BEA: Late seventies, early eighties. Still on the newest fad diet after all these years. She's very careful about her appearance and primps a lot.

GLADIS: Late seventies, early eighties. Tends toward gossip and is incredibly flighty.

Place

A restaurant.

Time

Noontime.

OUT TO LUNCH

Setting: A restaurant. There are two tables at opposite ends of the stage. One table is center left, the other down right. Tables both have four chairs.

At Rise: Slowly, Walter is spreading the tablecloth onto the table center left. Then he places a vase with artificial flowers in the center, immediately knocking it over. He replaces the flowers into the vase, carefully sets it down. As he puts glasses on the table, he knocks over the vase. Again, flowers spew out of the vase. He carefully puts them back, sets out the napkin-rolled utensils. As he does the last one, he—once again—knocks over the vase. Exasperated, he looks around to see if anyone is watching and then just scatters the flowers around the table and removes the vase. He then thinks for a moment as if he's not sure what he's supposed to do next. He leaves, then comes back with a pitcher and pours water in the glasses. As he places four menus on the table, he hears gleeful chattering and turns to see four ladies looking for a table.

WALTER: Ladies. *(He beckons them to the table, but they're too busy chatting to notice him. Ladies. (He beckons once more, to no avail.) Ladies. This way!*

(No response. Finally, he saunters up to the chatty groups and takes the arm of Bea to show her the table. Bea is as giggly as a teenager as she beckons others to follow. They all sit.)

AGNES: *(to Bea)* Do you want me to help you with your sweater Bea?

BEA: *(annoyed)* No no no no no. It's chilly in here. I'll leave it on.

AGNES: It's not chilly. It's fine. Here, take it off. *(trying to remove the sweater)*

BEA: I said no. Why are you always arguing with me? I said I was chilly.

GLADIS: You're always chilly. Maybe you're sick.

BEA: I'm not sick.

GLADIS: Well, maybe you should ask your doctor just in case. *(other three agree and hover)*

BEA: Hah! Which doctor? I go to a different doctor every day. Sit down. Sit down. I'm fine.

(They look at each other and shrug as they start to sit. Then Gladis and Rosie decide to change places. Agnes tries to sit where Bea is sitting. They fumble about, chattering as they switch.)

ROSIE: I need to sit with my bad knee stretched out...over on the end. No no. Not that end. It's my other knee. Hurt it in Zumba class. *(struggles to get to the other end of the table, sits, and moans a little)*

GLADIS: You're just too old for Zumba. It's nonsense.

(Rosie starts to argue and realizes it's a lost cause. Agnes looks toward window. Pushes Bea a bit.)

AGNES: I don't see so well, Bea, dear. I need to sit closer to this window. More light. Could you change with me?

(Bea begrudgingly gets up and changes with her. The women are all struggling to step over and around the other women to get to their new places. They're finally settled and get their purses out to fetch glasses, etc. They pick up their menus. But Bea interrupts the process.)

BEA: Actually, I think we would be better off if we sat over there at that table. It would be more comfortable, and there's more light. *(They agree and get up just as Walter is back to take their order)* Walter. We're moving over there. That's all right, isn't it? Here, we'll take our waters.

(They move to the other table, chattering orders to each other as they move, eg: "Here, you take the glasses, I'll take the napkins, Don't forget the forks. Leave the flowers. We don't need flowers. You forgot your purse." Etc. Again, they scramble for the seat they want, getting up and down a couple of times before settling in. Walter just stands at first table, not quite comprehending what just took place. He shakes his head and exits.)

AGNES: Ahhh. Better. Much better. Don't you think this is better?

(All mumble approval and partial approval.)

BEA: *(picking up menu)* Hmmm. What should I have? What should I have? I'm dieting, you know.

ROSIE: You're always dieting. Have a salad. You always have a salad. You'll get the dressing on the side. You always get the dressing on the side.

BEA: Don't tell me what I need to get. Maybe I'll get fish. Fish is good for diets. I'm so tired of salads. What do you think, ladies? Should I get the fish?

AGNES: Get the fish. You like fish. It's a good diet meal. It's got riboflavin.

BEA: Ribo what? I'm so tired of fish. I eat fish four times a week. I'm growing scales. Look at my lips. I'm starting to look like a guppy. *(makes fish lips)*

GLADIS: *(to Bea)* That's not the fish. It's a bad Botox job. *(smirks)*

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!