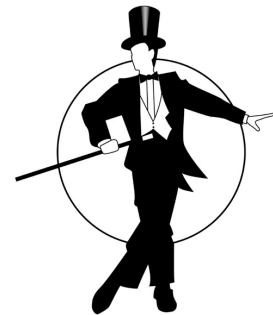


On the RAC(K)

Donald R. Fried



ArtAge
Publications



ArtAge supplies books, plays, and materials to older performers around the world. Directors and actors have come to rely on our 30+ years of experience in the field to help them find useful materials and information that makes their productions stimulating, fun, and entertaining.

ArtAge's unique program has been featured in *Wall Street Journal*, *LA Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *American Theatre*, *Time Magazine*, *Modern Maturity*, on CNN, NBC, and in many other media sources.

ArtAge is more than a catalog. We also supply information, news, and trends on our top-rated website, www.seniortheatre.com. We stay in touch with the field with our very popular e-newsletter, *Senior Theatre Online*. Our President, Bonnie Vorenberg, is asked to speak at conferences and present workshops that supplement her writing and consulting efforts. We're here to help you be successful in Senior Theatre!

We help older performers fulfill their theatrical dreams!

ArtAge Publications
Bonnie L. Vorenberg, President
PO Box 19955
Portland OR 97280
503-246-3000 or 800-858-4998
bonniev@seniortheatre.com
www.seniortheatre.com

NOTICE

Copyright: This play is fully protected under the Copyright Laws of the United States of America, Canada, and all other countries of the Universal Copyright Convention.

The laws are specific regarding the piracy of copyrighted materials. Sharing the material with other organizations or persons is prohibited. Unlawful use of a playwright's work deprives the creator of his or her rightful income.

Cast Copies: Performance cast copies are required for each actor, director, stage manager, lighting and sound crew leader.

Changes to Script: Plays must be performed as written. Any alterations, additions, or deletions to the text must be approved.

Permission to Film: You do not have permission to film, record, or distribute the play in any medium. You are also not allowed to post on electronic services such as, but not limited to, YouTube. Exceptions must be granted by written permission from the publisher.

Royalty: Royalties are due when you perform the play for any audience, paying or non-paying, professional or amateur. This includes readings, cuttings, scenes, and excerpts.

The royalty for amateur productions of this show is posted online. It is payable two weeks prior to your production. Contact us for professional rates or other questions. Royalty fees are subject to change.

Insert the following paragraph in your programs:

Performed with special permission from ArtAge Publications' Senior Theatre Resource Center at 800-858-4998, www.seniortheatre.com

On the RAC(K) © 2009 by Donald R. Fried

ON THE RAC(K)

Five people attend a meeting of the Residents Advisory Committee (RAC) at a senior residence. The conflicts are continual, and nothing ever seems to get accomplished. Who's to blame? The residence's administration? The other members of the committee? Themselves? Old age? No one? Is there any hope that anything will actually get done?

CAST

The play is written for the five characters to be played by two actors. The actors should use costume devices - wigs, glasses, hats, scarves, canes, etc-- as well as distinctive accents and physical mannerisms, to indicate when they are changing characters. If you have five actors, then use all of them.

All characters are in their mid-seventies or older.

LIVY
STEPHANIE
HELEN
SIDNEY
DAN

Place

A table with two or more chairs.

Time

The present

ON THE RAC(K)

SIDNEY: We might as well get started.

STEPHANIE: (*checks a clock which she has in front of her.*) It's four minutes early.

SIDNEY: Come on, everybody's here.

STEPHANIE: We have to call the roll.

SIDNEY: Are you kidding? There's just the four of us.

STEPHANIE: We have to call the roll.

SIDNEY: Fine! Call it.

STEPHANIE: Sidney?

SIDNEY: (*long-suffering.*) Here.

STEPHANIE: Stephanie? I'm here. Maggie?...Maggie?

SIDNEY: You can see she's not here!

STEPHANIE: Absent. Dan?

DAN: (*dozing.*) Huh?

STEPHANIE: You're supposed to say "here."

DAN: Huh?

STEPHANIE: Or "present."

SIDNEY: He's here! And Helen.

HELEN: (*she's been writing angrily.*) Whaduya want?

SIDNEY: There. Everybody's here.

STEPHANIE: Maggie's not here.

SIDNEY: But you said she told you she isn't coming.

STEPHANIE: She did.

SIDNEY: Then what are we talking about?

STEPHANIE: I was just being clear. You said everybody was here, which wasn't the case. You should have said, "Everybody whom we are expecting is here."

SIDNEY: *(under his breath, but loud enough to be heard.)* Oh, hell!

STEPHANIE: This is an open committee.

SIDNEY: Nobody else ever comes.

STEPHANIE: But they may. And we've still got...*(she checks the clock.)*...two minutes.

SIDNEY: Then we'll wait.

(LIVY enters.)

LIVY: Excuse me. Are you on the rack? *(SIDNEY looks at her blankly. She looks at a piece of paper.)* The Residents Action Committee?

SIDNEY: Oh, the R - A - C! The rack - that's good. Yes, I suppose one way or another, we're all on the rack.

LIVY: Then I'm in the right place?

SIDNEY: Hmm? Oh, sure. I'm sorry, it's just that I've never heard it called that.

HELEN: Don't mind Sidney. He thinks he's in charge. Maggie, who really is in charge, isn't here today. This is Stephanie, who keeps us honest. This is Dan, and I'm Helen.

SIDNEY: She's here to complain.

HELEN: What do you suggest? That we sit around thinking up ways to tell the administration what a wonderful job they're doing?

SIDNEY: I didn't say there's anything wrong with being a complainer. It may be the world's oldest profession. No, wait. Make that the second oldest. (*turning to LIVY.*) And you are...?

LIVY: I'm Livy. I moved in last week.

SIDNEY: Last week! Well done. None of the rest of us got angry enough about anything to start coming to these meetings for at least a year. Except Helen, of course, but it's in her genes. Is it time to start the meeting yet? Good. Since Maggie's not here, I'll act as Chairman today. First, the Secretary will read the minutes...

STEPHANIE: Point of order!

SIDNEY: What is it now, Stephanie?

STEPHANIE: Point of order.

SIDNEY: Remind me what that is.

STEPHANIE: It's, uh, its...there's nothing in the bylaws that says who takes over the meeting when the Chairperson is absent.

SIDNEY: There's nothing much of anything in the bylaws. Do you want to chair the meeting?

STEPHANIE: I'm taking notes.

SIDNEY: OK, then. Anybody else? No, well, then...

STEPHANIE: Shouldn't we vote on it?

SIDNEY: Vote on it??!! Fine. All in favor--

STEPHANIE: We can't vote until there's been a motion.

SIDNEY: Alright, I quit!

HELEN: I win!

DAN: No way.

HELEN: Don't be a sore loser, Dan, pay up.

DAN: I thought I had under ten minutes.

HELEN: (*checking a sheet.*) No, I had under ten, and twenty to thirty. You had ten to twenty and thirty to forty. (*To LIVY*) Anything over forty, Stephanie wins, even though she doesn't play. But that doesn't matter, because he never makes it that long.

SIDNEY: Stop that!

LIVY: I take it this isn't the first time he's quit.

SIDNEY: This is why we never get anything done.

LIVY: Since it's not explicitly in the bylaws, and we're not voting on anything that's making a commitment, perhaps we could make the selection by consensus.

STEPHANIE: Everybody else? OK, Sidney, go ahead.

SIDNEY: Right, Stephanie, would you read the minutes from the last meeting, please?

STEPHANIE: I'm not the Secretary, I'm the Parliamentarian. Dan's the Secretary.

DAN: The minutes aren't done yet. I meant to write them up yesterday, but I fell asleep in yoga class and the instructor didn't wake me up. Then I had a doctor's appointment. And then...

LIVY: Can you read us your notes?

DAN: Oh, I never take any notes. I write them from memory.

LIVY: Then would you summarize what happened? That would help me a lot.

DAN: Oh, I can't remember it all now. I will when I sit down to write it all up, though. And anything I don't remember, I'll call Stephanie for.

STEPHANIE: I do take notes. But I don't have them with me.

SIDNEY: Well, if we don't have them, and nobody can remember them, then there's nothing we can do about it, is there? Can you try to have them by the next meeting,

Dan? What's next on the agenda, Stephanie?

STEPHANIE: Food.

SIDNEY: Alright, does anybody have anything about food?

HELEN: Can't we talk about food later in the meeting?

SIDNEY: What does it matter?

HELEN: Talking about it always makes me hungry. Then we have to sit through another hour of the meeting, and then it's an hour before lunch.

SIDNEY: Then bring something to snack on.

HELEN: I'm on a diet.

SIDNEY: Fine, we'll talk about it later.

HELEN: It's too late now. We're already talking about it. (*switching topics.*) So, I went to see John in catering about the bagels again, but I'm sure he's not going to do anything.

SIDNEY: Don't be so negative.

HELEN: This is the third time I've talked to him about it. He listens and nods, but he never does anything. Everybody who works here does that. They listen and nod, and then they ignore us. I think it's part of their training.

SIDNEY: That's not fair.

HELEN: Then why haven't they done anything about the bagels?

SIDNEY: They change lots of things we talk to them about.

LIVY: Excuse me, Helen, but what's wrong with the bagels?

SIDNEY: There's nothing wrong with them.

HELEN: They're all the same.

SIDNEY: Bagels are supposed to have personality?

HELEN: They put out bagels in the coffee area every morning, but they only have the plain ones. I don't see why they can't have a variety. Some with sesame seeds and some with garlic.

DAN: The garlic give me heart burn. I like those ones with the little black seeds. What do you call them?

STEPHANIE: Poppy.

DAN: Right, poppy. And the everything bagels.

STEPHANIE: I thought you said the garlic gives you heartburn.

DAN: It does.

STEPHANIE: But there's garlic in everything, even bagels.

DAN: No way!

STEPHANIE: At least there is in the ones we get at Safeway.

SIDNEY: Can we get back to the subject, please? Is there anybody besides Helen who has a problem with there only being one kind of bagel in the coffee area?

END OF FREEVIEW

You'll want to read and perform this show!