

IN THE REARVIEW

A Play in Two Acts

by

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Cast of Characters

GREAT KATE: 71-year-old great grandmother. Wise, strong, in great shape.

JAKE: 14-year-old boy. Tall, lanky, strong and all boy. Great-grandson of Kate and brother to Aubry.

AUBRY: 15-year-old girl. She is pretty and smart. Great-granddaughter of Kate and the sister of Jake.

NANCY: 53-year-old grandmother of Aubry and Jake and daughter of Kate. Looks stern and matronly for her age.

IRV: 60-year-old strong, loyal, long-time neighbor and friend of Kate's.

Flashback Film Cast of Characters

YOUNG KATE: Kate ten years younger. **Same actress.**

FRANK: 61. Young Kate's husband. Father to Nancy. Great grandfather to Aubry and Jake.

YOUNG NANCY: Nancy ten years younger. **Same actress.**

YOUNG IRV: Irv ten years younger. **Same actor.**

YOUNG JAKE: 3-year-old boy.

Author's Note

This play utilizes a movie screen placed upper stage left in front of the proscenium arch - like a rearview mirror. The flashback scenes are filmed and played back during the play.

Scene

A Craftsman-style living room in Denver.

Time

The present.

Act I

Scene 1	Living room	Late Morning
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INTERMISSION

Act II

Scene 1	Living room	Early Evening
Scene 2	Living room	Evening

ACT IScene 1SETTING:

Late morning, springtime. KATE'S living room. The layout includes a large picture window and front door along the back wall and a closet near the hallway to the kitchen stage right. The closet door is angled facing upper stage left. A floor to ceiling empty bookcase fills the side wall. Moving boxes are stacked floor to ceiling in the room. Furniture is replete with boxes and packing material. There are living room chairs, a heavy folding table, and a coffee table and dining table in the room. The couch is buried under boxes marked 'SPICES', 'DEN', and 'HOLIDAY'. Filled boxes are 'FIGURINES' (filled with alcohol), 'PHOTOS', 'FRANKS TROPHIES', 'CURIO', and several boxes of BOOKS. Two brandy snifters are in the liquor cabinet. Nothing is set up for living except a table with a landline phone, antique car model, and FRANK'S photo. There is a pathway around small piles that makes for a fun skateboard obstacle course. A movie screen is outside the proscenium arch.

AT RISE:

KATE wears a Hawaiian shirt and slacks as she unpacks a box. The doorbell rings and KATE goes to the door. Upon answering it, a blast of a blizzard blows in. IRV stand at the door - freezing.

KATE

Irv! Come on in. Gracious! When did it start snowing?

(IRV stomps off the snow.
KATE closes the door and
moves a box from the
couch for IRV to sit.)

IRV

Where have you been? It started a couple of hours ago.

KATE

We've been busy. I thought I missed the winter weather. I don't even own a coat!

IRV

They say if you don't like the weather, wait twenty-four hours. You should be plenty warm. I made sure you had heat and I wrapped all the pipes with heater tape.

KATE

You have been a God-send. Thanks again for taking care of the house. We're warm and dry.

IRV

Looks like you're getting moved back in okay.

KATE

We're making good headway. The bathroom is set up and my bed is finally together. Aubry is working on the kitchen and Jake has carried all the heavy stuff, fixed my cabinet door, and has been a big help. It's hard to believe he is almost as tall as his dad.

(JAKE, enters carrying a box while riding his skateboard. He wears his ever-present headphones and a backwards hat. JAKE exits on the opposite side.)

KATE (CONT'D)

They grew so fast! And they're so polite. I just wish they'd quit ma'aming me. They think I am some doddering old lady who's going to keel over any minute.

IRV

I'm sure they don't think...
(picks up the model car and inspects it.)
Hey, you still have Frank's antique car.

KATE

Do you know how old they think I am? Ninety. Ninety!!! Do I look ninety to you?

(pause)

That's your cue, Irv.

IRV

You know you look fantastic...

KATE

...for my age. And they keep calling me 'Great Granny.' I really, really hate the word 'Granny!'

IRV

What do you want them to call you?

KATE

I don't know, 'Grand Mamma Jamma.' Anything is better than 'Granny' or 'ma'am.'

IRV

Tell them!

KATE

I will... eventually. Right now, we're just playing at being polite strangers. I want them to accept me first. Besides, it's only a couple more hours before Addison picks them up.

IRV

That's why I'm here. Your phone is out of order.

KATE

It can't be.

(KATE picks the phone and listens.)

KATE (CONT'D)

Darn phone company. They promised it would be hooked up by ten.

IRV

Don't you have a cell phone?

KATE

I hate those things. When I retired, I got rid of mine! People think they can just text their brains out and you're supposed to answer any time of the day or night. I hate being interrupted all the time. Call me old school but if someone wants me they can call me here.

IRV

Which reminds me, Addison called me. I haven't talked to your granddaughter in years! She tried to call you. She tried the kids too but their phones went to voice mail.

KATE

What did she want?

IRV

She says the roads are too icy to drive. She wanted to know if you are okay to keep the kids tonight.

(KATE frantically starts looking around for her purse and keys.)

KATE

If we leave now I bet I can get them home--

IRV

It's a full-on blizzard and you haven't driven in snow in over ten years! Besides, do you even own a coat?

KATE

(panicked)

Well, they can't stay here!

IRV

Hold it down, they'll hear you.

KATE

They can't hear me. They have those... things on their ears. Oh Irv, what am I going to do?

IRV

We've got extra blankets and Franny can bring over some food.

KATE

It's not that, what are we going to talk about?

IRV

You? At a loss for words? Publisher of the largest travel magazine in Hawaii? Words are your life! You'll do fine.

KATE

I don't know these kids anymore. We are unfamiliar strangers. What do they like to do? What are we going to talk about?

IRV

Surely you talked to them when you were in Hawaii!

KATE

It was always just hi and a minute of small talk then bye. Nothing of any substance. I have no idea what they like or how to talk to them!

IRV

Ask them!

KATE

I just hope I haven't waited too long to see them again. They are just...so big! Last time I saw them they were small enough to sit on my lap. Now it's hard for them to sit in the same room with me.

IRV

This blizzard ought to give you some real one-on-one time with them.

KATE

Hey, I have a great idea! Maybe you and Franny would like to have dinner here?

IRV

It's Jake, isn't it?

KATE

Don't be silly!

IRV

Are you sure?

KATE

Yes, Irv, I love him.

IRV

So spending real time with him is not going to be a problem?

KATE

Of course not! I just don't know what to say to either of those kids. If you and Franny...

IRV

Kate, aren't you just postponing the inevitable?

KATE

You're right. I'll just have to make it work. After all, they're just kids... Almost full-grown kids who are so polite they make my teeth hurt.

(talking herself into it)

We'll be fine here. I have food, blankets, pillows and I still have Frank's old shirts for them to sleep in. They won't be happy about it, but we'll make it work. Irv, would you call Addison back and let her know we'll be fine?

(adding)

Make it sound convincing.

IRV

Sure. If you get in any trouble, we're right next door.

KATE

You're a good friend, Irv.

IRV

They're just kids, Kate. Kids.

KATE

I know, kids. Ten years...

(IRV exits. KATE leans against the door reminiscing.)

KATE (CONT'D)

Where did the time go?

(Stage LIGHTS Dim.)

**MOVIE SCREEN - FLASHBACK - EXT. PARK PICNIC AREA - DAY
TEN YEARS EARLIER**

FRANK'S Birthday party. Remnants of birthday wrapping paper, birthday cake, and gifts adorn the table. **YOUNG KATE** sits on the arm of a chair occupied by **FRANK**. He is opening a birthday present. (It is the ornate model car that **IRV** handled earlier.) **YOUNG NANCY** holds another gift and **YOUNG KATE** holds **YOUNG JAKE**.

FRANK

Wow! That's a beaut! Thank you, Jake!

YOUNG NANCY

Jake helped Addison pick it out.

FRANK

Is that right Jake? You have very good taste.

YOUNG JAKE

You're not supposed to eat it.

FRANK, YOUNG KATE, and YOUNG NANCY laugh.

Fade to **BLACK**

BACK TO SCENE

(LIGHTS up. **JAKE** enters on his skateboard wearing headphones carrying a table lamp. He tries to skate past **KATE** and almost falls. **KATE** grabs the lamp. **JAKE** dismounts.)

JAKE

(speaking loudly)

Oops. My bad. Sorry, Great Granny.

KATE

(picking up the skateboard)

Would you please get Aubry?

JAKE

Huh?

(**KATE** pulls out one side of **JAKE'S** headphones.)

KATE
Would you please get Aubry?

JAKE
Yes, ma'am.
(bellowing)
Aubry!

AUBRY (O.S)
(hollering)
What?

KATE
A little louder, I still have hearing in my right-

JAKE
(yelling)
Great Granny wants you.

KATE
And there it goes.

(AUBRY can be HEARD
running downstairs.
Entering she puts her
phone in her pocket and
pulls down her headphones.)

AUBRY
Yes, ma'am?

KATE
It looks like you both get to spend the night here.

(JAKE and AUBRY panic.)

JAKE
I can't. I got basketball practice.

AUBRY
And I have to meet Tiffany at five.

KATE
Sorry to disappoint you, but you're stuck with me. There's
a blizzard outside.

JAKE
Huh?

AUBRY
No way.

(JAKE AND AUBRY run to
the window and look out.)

(Slowly they turn back
towards KATE, dejected.)

JAKE

What about school tomorrow?

KATE

It'll be a snow day.

AUBRY

But I need my retainer and I don't have a toothbrush.
And I need to do an experiment for science class!
I can't miss school!

KATE

We can't do anything about the retainer, but I have extra
toothbrushes. I also have plenty of blankets and pillows.
We're going to be just fine. Besides, it's only for one
night. I'm sure the roads will be cleared tomorrow.

JAKE

So now what?

KATE

We're due for a break. I'll fix us some lunch and we can
talk.

JAKE

Talk?

AUBRY

Talk?

KATE

Sure. We can get to know each other again. It'll be fun.

(KATE exits to the kitchen.)

JAKE

This is jacked up!

AUBRY

Shut up. She'll hear you.

JAKE

No, she won't. She's old.

AUBRY

She has hearing like a bat.

JAKE

I'm a slave in an old folk's home *and* she's gonna make me
talk!

KATE (O.S)

I hope you kids like Liverwurst. Oh, and I'm making a Pupu
platter.

AUBRY
(calling to KATE)
Don't go to any trouble, ma'am.

JAKE
Pupu? Sounds like crap to me. This blows chunks!

AUBRY
I want to heave.

JAKE
First, I have to be polite. Then I have to give up my weekend breaking my back, I have to stay here tonight and now she's gonna make me eat Liverwurst and Pupu. On top of that, I have to talk!

AUBRY
Tiff and I were going to meet...some people.

JAKE
Yeah, Ethan.

AUBRY
Nuh-uh.

(JAKE makes kissing sounds.)

AUBRY (CONT'D)
Shut up!

JAKE
(falsetto)
Oh, Ethan. Kiss me you fool.

AUBRY
Stop it!

JAKE
You're so strong. So very, very strong.

(AUBRY punches JAKE.)

JAKE
Ouch!

AUBRY
What's a Pupu platter anyway?

JAKE
Probably cow butt or something really skeevy. Are we being punished?

(AUBRY takes out her phone
and searches for a signal.)

JAKE (CONT'D)

There's no signal here. My phone's got no bars.

(AUBRY continues to search.)

JAKE (CONT'D)

Aubry, no signal! Who you calling?

(Finally, AUBRY finds a spot near the table and dials.)

AUBRY

(into the phone)

Hi dad.

JAKE

Sweet!

AUBRY

(elbowing Jake)

Jake and I are at Great Granny Kate's and we were wondering if you could pick us up.

(pause)

Yeah, it's a little snowy--

JAKE

(in a hushed tone)

What's he saying?

AUBRY

But we have school and I have a test--

(pause)

It's really important--

(pause)

But--

(pause)

Please?

(pause)

But dad--

(pause)

Yeah. Love you too.

(She hangs up dejected.)

JAKE

We're in hell.

(Both AUBRY and JAKE begin to text madly. They elbow each other trying for the best cell reception. KATE brings in a pitcher of lemonade and glasses.)