

**ACT ONE**

(Lights up dim in Ada's hospital room.)

ADA

(In a stage whisper) I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Mama, Mama. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Mama. I'm sorry. etc

(The whispering subsides as lights come up full in the hospital's waiting room. Dorothy is seated toward front. Behind her and to the side is Ruby Mae. Television is on. Heather enters.)

DOROTHY

Oh. Oh. Excuse me. You wouldn't by any chance be Heather Sue, would you?

HEATHER

No. Yes. Heather. It's Heather. And you are . . . Dorothy?

DOROTHY

Oh. Oh. I'm so glad to meet you. I am sorry. I just wouldn't have known. Excuse me. She's resting now. We can't go in.

HEATHER

I just . . . . (Moving toward the room)

DOROTHY

(Stopping her) She's resting. I'm so glad you're here. How was your flight?

HEATHER

Fine.

DOROTHY

Oh, that's so nice. No one would ever guess that you were in Istanbul yesterday. My, my what a place to visit! What on earth did you do there?

HEATHER

I bought a rug.

DOROTHY

Oh.

HEATHER

When did you last see her?

DOROTHY

Oh, Oh, just an hour ago. She's so looking forward to seeing you. Now, I don't

want you to be shocked honey, but she's looking bad. Still has that charming personality, but she looks quite, well, I just don't think I can prepare you with words.

That's quite all right. HEATHER

I just can't. DOROTHY

I appreciate the effort. HEATHER

Is there anything I can get you? We have a candy machine right here, and I believe there's a coke machine down the hall. DOROTHY

Thanks, but I'm fine. HEATHER

Good. That's good. You career women are always so self sufficient. It's so comforting. You don't mind living alone? DOROTHY

No. HEATHER

Well, that's convenient. DOROTHY

Yes. Have you talked to any of the medical personnel? HEATHER

New York. What a place to live. I was going to visit there once, but Bobby said there were just too many people. Do you have trouble keeping things clean? DOROTHY

No. HEATHER

Well, isn't that nice. Who would have thought? Are you sure you don't want a co'cola or something? DOROTHY

I'm sure. HEATHER

DOROTHY

I wanted to get a hair dresser in here yesterday when I knew you were coming but the Doctor wouldn't let me. Can you imagine? Said that's not what she needs now. Well, I just didn't know what to do so I went out and bought her a turban. There I was in Rich's with all those other women, you know, the ones that wear turbans because it's their culture. And there I was. I tried on turbans with the best of them! I used a hair net of course and when I found one that I thought would do for your Mother, I made sure I got it from stock so we know it's never been worn. I hope you like it.

HEATHER

I'm sure I will.

DOROTHY

Oh, I hope so. After all that's what you do.

HEATHER

I'm sorry?

DOROTHY

Shop!

HEATHER

Oh. Yes.

DOROTHY

When your mother told me that's what you did to earn a living I like to died! What'll they think of next? They really pay you to go shopping?

HEATHER

Yes. I'm a buyer, senior buyer for . . .

DOROTHY

Isn't that sweet?

HEATHER

About Mother's condition . . . .

DOROTHY

From a missionary to a buyer . . . . .

HEATHER

I'm sorry?

DOROTHY

Your Mother told me that when you were little you wanted to be a missionary just like our Lottie Moon, our missionary to the Chinese.

HEATHER

Yes. About Mother's condition, I was wondering . . . .

DOROTHY

Do you remember her? Lottie Moon?

HEATHER

As I remember she made good cookies.

DOROTHY

The way to a Chinaman's spirit is through his stomach apparently. I just can't get over it. You look so much like your Mother, you know.

HEATHER

No. I didn't know.

DOROTHY

There is a little something else.

HEATHER

Yes?

DOROTHY

Well for some reason your Mother--well--anytime one of the nurses tries to get anywhere near your Mother with a washcloth--well—well—she screams.

HEATHER

Yes?

DOROTHY

The preacher said he'd be by later. Do you like football?

HEATHER

Excuse me?

DOROTHY

Football? Do you like it? I just love it. That's why the preacher's late. He's at the game.

HEATHER

I'm a little concerned. You said she won't let anyone bathe her?

DOROTHY

That's right. You're a football fan?

HEATHER

Well, I attended all the games my high school team played, but I wouldn't say . .

DOROTHY

How sweet of you!!

HEATHER

I was in the band.

DOROTHY

What did you play?

HEATHER

I was a majorette.

DOROTHY

I know your Mother was proud of you. High School's just the best time in a person's life. Don't you think?

HEATHER

Well, that's individual.

DOROTHY

Just the best time. I told my daughter that and she didn't believe me then, but now she does. I still have all my high school friends. Do you?

HEATHER

No.

DOROTHY

Oh. Oh. well.

**(Pause)**

HEATHER  
You know

DOROTHY  
I

HEATHER

Go ahead.

DOROTHY

No you.

HEATHER

Well . . . .

DOROTHY

I just have to ask – did you just get your hair cut?

HEATHER

No.

DOROTHY

Oh. I'm sorry. It's just that it looks real good and well, your Mother always said you wore your hair too long for you age. But it's just beautiful. That's why I didn't recognize you right off. I was looking for someone with hair too long.

HEATHER

I see.

DOROTHY

But it's just beautiful.

HEATHER

Thank you. I was just going to say, I appreciate all you've done.

DOROTHY

It's just what you do.

HEATHER

Well, I appreciate it. Her doctor--I was wondering . . .

DOROTHY

We have prayer meeting tonight. Our subject is "How to be a fruit inspector".

HEATHER

It is?

DOROTHY

Yes. It's very important. Would you like to join us?

HEATHER

You inspect fruit for your church?

DOROTHY

Oh yes. We have to.

HEATHER

What kind of fruit do you inspect?

DOROTHY

All kinds. We inspect whatever kind of fruit people have.

HEATHER

Really?

DOROTHY

Oh yes. Sometimes it's good. Sometimes it's bad.

HEATHER

I see.

DOROTHY

That's why we have to inspect it. You should join us.

HEATHER

Well . . .

DOROTHY

You would learn a lot.

HEATHER

I see. Um, how is the peach crop this year?

DOROTHY

I don't know.

HEATHER

You're not inspecting peaches?

DOROTHY

Oh no!!! I don't mean that kind of fruit!! How silly!! I mean--you know--good works. The bible says, "Judge not lest ye be judged!" Well now, how are we supposed to get along without judging? Cause if you can't judge, you can't make decisions. Right? Right. But the bible also says, "By their fruits ye shall know them." So there's the answer. We can learn to be fruit inspectors!

HEATHER

I see.

DOROTHY

I'm gonna have to have me a co'cola. You sure you don't want one.

HEATHER

I'm sure.

DOROTHY

I'll be back in a jiffy.

(Dorothy exits. Heather digs in her purse for her cell phone.)

RUBY MAE

I wanted to be a majorette.

(Heather nods in Ruby Mae's direction, finds cell phone and dials.)

RUBY MAE

They wouldn't let me.