

# MARVIN'S ROOM

## ACT ONE

### Scene 1

*A doctor's examining room. Bessie, a woman of 40 years, sits. Dr. Wally is seated next to her. He holds a syringe.*

BESSIE. I suppose I should tell you needles bother me a little.

DR. WALLY. Oh, *(He shudders.)* I know what you mean. All right Augustina, could you give me your arm please? Do you mind if I call you Augustina?

BESSIE. Well, my name is Bessie.

DR. WALLY. Bessie. Of course. I'm sorry. Things have been a bit hectic around here. Dr. Serat is away on vacation and this morning our receptionist quit. Usually Nurse Abrams would draw the blood for any blood tests but ... where'd I put the whatchamacallit? The uh, do you see it?

BESSIE. What?

DR. WALLY. You know, that um, um, I tie it around your arm to make your veins pop out.

BESSIE. Tourniquet?

DR. WALLY. Yes, that's it. Oh, I'm sitting on it. How'd that happen? Okay, give me your arm please.

BESSIE. Janine quit?

DR. WALLY. Uh-huh. Did you know her?

BESSIE. Only from here. I bring my father Marvin and my Aunt Ruth in quite a bit to see Dr. Serat. Why did she quit?

Is she getting married?

DR. WALLY. No, no. Unbeknownst to any of us she was harboring a deep-seated phobia about cockroaches. She said she just couldn't work here any longer. It made her itch.

BESSIE. (*Looks around.*) Oh?

DR. WALLY. I think I have seen you out front. Is your father fairly thin?

BESSIE. Dad's a bone. You could snap him like a twig.

DR. WALLY. He's somewhat pale?

BESSIE. He's as white as a bedsheet unless he's choking. Then he gets a little color.

DR. WALLY. He has trouble breathing?

BESSIE. No. He likes to put things in his mouth. I'll walk into his bedroom and he'll be lying there all blue in the face with the Yahtzee dice stuck down his throat. Do you know that game?

DR. WALLY. Yes.

BESSIE. It's a fun game, isn't it?

DR. WALLY. Yes.

BESSIE. Except Dad sucked all the ink off the dice so it's hard to tell what you're rolling.

DR. WALLY. And your aunt, now this is odd, but I remember she kept staring at my shoes.

BESSIE. Ruth has three collapsed vertebrae in her back.

DR. WALLY. Oh, I'm sorry.

BESSIE. I'm always lugging one of them in here for something or other.

DR. WALLY. I hope they are both all right for the moment.

BESSIE. Oh, they're fine. Dad's dying but he's been dying for about twenty years. He's doing it real slow so I don't miss anything. And Dr. Serat has worked a miracle with Ruth. She's had constant pain from her back since she was born, and now the doctor had her get an electronic anesthetizer, you know, they put the wires right into the brain and when she has a bad pain she just turns her dial. It really is a miracle.

DR. WALLY. That's wonderful.

BESSIE. If she uses it in the kitchen our automatic garage

door goes up. But that's a small price to pay, don't you think?

DR. WALLY. *(He begins to tie the tourniquet on her arm.)* It's amazing what they can do.

BESSIE. When does Dr. Serat get back from his trip?

DR. WALLY. Not till the end of the month. I'll have to hire a new receptionist without him.

BESSIE. What will you do about the bugs?

DR. WALLY. Bugs? Oh no, we don't have any bugs. That's the thing. It must have all been in her mind. She saw bugs everywhere. Granted there are bugs everywhere in Florida, but none in these offices. *(He sets up some vials.)*

BESSIE. Are those all for me?

DR. WALLY. These here, I have a few in my pocket, and I'll have to scrape up a couple more out of one of these drawers.

BESSIE. That seems like a lot of blood.

DR. WALLY. Well, June, if it seems like a lot of blood, that's because it is. So if you're feeling anxious because we're drawing a lot of blood, you should. So, what you're feeling is perfectly normal.

BESSIE. Bessie.

DR. WALLY. I'm sorry?

BESSIE. My name is Bessie.

DR. WALLY. Did I call you Augustina?

BESSIE. You called me June.

DR. WALLY. I did?

BESSIE. You're confusing me with your other patients.

DR. WALLY. No, I'm not.

BESSIE. You called me June.

DR. WALLY. June is the name of my dog. So why don't we get this over with. Where are the um, the uh ...

BESSIE. What?

DR. WALLY. *(He pulls out a bag of cotton balls.)* Here they are. The bag is sealed so they're still sterile. *(He opens the bag with his teeth.)*

BESSIE. How many days are left in this month? Maybe I should wait.