

Woodstock Reunion

A Drama/Comedy

by Kathleen Maule Holen

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Cast of Characters

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <u>KIT RISING</u> | Hippy Grandmother from South Dakota |
| <u>CRESSIE RISING BROWN</u> | Kit's daughter, a family-oriented housewife |
| <u>BECCA BROWN</u> | Kit's Granddaughter, a rebellious teenager |
| <u>JOYCE HEATH</u> | Becca's BFF, a quiet, timid teenager |
| <u>ROY RODGER</u> | A grieving son from Michigan |
| <u>UNCLE TERRY</u> | The brother of Roy's mother |
| <u>ANDREW MCGREEDY</u> | Funeral Director |
| <u>PAT BARKER</u> | Master of Ceremonies |

Place and Time

STORY OF THE PLAY

Roy Rodger hasn't even left the funeral home with his father's ashes when he is faced with some tough choices. Should he remain in his home town, live in the family home and continue to run the family business? What about the job offer in South Dakota? And should he comply with his father's strange last wish that his ashes be spread in Bethel, New York? Meanwhile in Canyon City, South Dakota, will Becca really disobey her mother and sneak off to Woodstock 5.0? What about the Miss South Dakota Pageant? Can she and her BFF Joyce pull off the caper of a lifetime? Grandma Kit knows all about adventures like that. She went to the original Woodstock in 1969. She could throw a monkey wrench in Becca's plans, but only if Joyce chickens out or if her Mom, Cressie uncovers the truth. In a field in Bethel, New York, surrounded by the racket, mud and smoke of Woodstock 5.0, the family finally comes together. The more things change the more they stay the same. But who is that stranger? And what about Joyce?

ACT I

Scene 1

Setting: It's April 2019 in Saginaw, Michigan in the foyer of the Mc Greedy Funeral Home. There is a sofa, chair and a table with a large funeral arrangement.

At Rise: Roy, a well-dressed middle-aged man paces nervously. Uncle Terry, a crusty older gentleman dressed in his Sunday suit and tie, enters and approaches Roy.

UNCLE TERRY
Roy.

ROY
Uncle Terry, I'm so glad you're here. Thanks.

UNCLE TERRY
How are you holding up, son?

ROY (begins to cry)

UNCLE TERRY
Too soon?

ROY
Yeah (composes himself.) Seems like yesterday we were planning Mom's funeral, and now Dad is gone too.

UNCLE TERRY
These last few years have been rough on you. Come on. Let's get you outta here.

ROY
Not yet. Waiting for the urn with Dad's (...) the ashes (breaks down again)

UNCLE TERRY
Come here kid (embraces him) I know. Let it go. Nobody here to see. Just let it all out.

ROY (after he is able to compose himself)
At least he was at peace when he passed. Those hospice people were so good to him.

UNCLE TERRY

Yeah, let him smoke as much pot as he wanted.

I-1-2

ROY

For the pain, Uncle Terry.

UNCLE TERRY

I know I was usually pain free just from sitting in the same room with him. I'd get high every time I visited.

ROY (chokes on a laugh)

UNCLE TERRY

Maybe that's why the nurses were so nice.

ROY (laughs out loud)

Thanks Uncle Terry. I needed that.

(The Funeral Director, MCGREEDY enters carrying an urn.)

ANDREW MCGREEDY

Mr. Rodger?

ROY

Yes.

ANDREW MCGREEDY

I'm very sorry for your loss. I believe this is the urn you selected. Is that correct?

ROY

Yes, Mr. McGreedy. But it looks smaller than it did in the catalog.

ANDREW MCGREEDY (indignant)

People are always surprised at how little is left after cremation.

ROY

I just meant (...)

ANDREW MCGREEDY

Trust me. This urn contains all of your father's ashes with plenty of space remaining to seal the lid.

UNCLE TERRY

Thanks for those reassuring words. We're comforted, aren't we Roy.

ANDREW MCGREEDY (gives Terry a haughty look)

Sign here.

(MCGREEDY hands ROY a clip board and pen and after ROY signs and returns the clipboard, hands him the urn.)

ROY

Thank you.

ANDREW MCGREEDY

Thank you for choosing Mc Greedy Funeral Home.

(MCGREEDY exits. ROY stares at the urn unsure what to do next.)

UNCLE TERRY

Come on, Roy. Sit down. Let's talk for a minute.

(They sit.)

ROY

I'm just not sure what to do next.

UNCLE TERRY

Do you need help settling the estate?

ROY

Not really. Dad knew he was on borrowed time for over a year, so he had his finances in order. I sat down with him and his lawyer back in February.

UNCLE TERRY

The business, then?

ROY

Sort of. The drug store was transferred to my name. I can go on managing it and live in Mom and Dad's house.

UNCLE TERRY

But...?

ROY

I'm not sure I want to stay here.

UNCLE TERRY

In Saginaw? I guess I can see that...

ROY

No, in Michigan.

UNCLE TERRY

But you've lived here all your life.

ROY

Exactly. I'd like to see what else is out there. I've sent my resume to several pharmacies all over the country. When, that is if I get an offer, I'll have a big decision to make.

UNCLE TERRY

Several big decisions, I'd say. Would you sell the house? And what about the drug store?

ROY

That's what I mean Uncle Terry.

UNCLE TERRY

And you just lost your Dad. Are you sure of your timing, Roy?

ROY

Right now, I'm not sure of anything. I don't even know what to do with these.

UNCLE TERRY

The ashes?

ROY

Dad and I talked about his wish to be cremated but he never told me what to do with his ashes.

UNCLE TERRY

That I can help with. He told me exactly what he wanted. I just assumed he told you too.

ROY

No. He never really talked to me about personal things.

UNCLE TERRY

No man to man talks? Not even about ... women?

ROY

Never.

UNCLE TERRY

You and I should probably have a little talk, especially before you leave Michigan.

ROY

That's ok, I'm good. I was married for five years you know.

UNCLE TERRY

And divorced. That happened right about the time your Mom died, right?

ROY

Sure did. Those next few years were the worst of my life. Dad was there for me. Otherwise I wouldn't have gotten through it. Didn't say much, but he always seemed to do the right thing.

UNCLE TERRY

He was good like that. Seemed to know how it felt to be empty and lost.

ROY

I still can't understand why he told you where to scatter his ashes and not me.

UNCLE TERRY

He said he didn't have the energy to explain.

ROY

Explain what?

UNCLE TERRY

Well, where would you guess he would want his ashes left?

ROY

Somewhere near Mom's grave?

UNCLE TERRY

Really? No.

ROY

Why wouldn't he want to spend eternity with her.

UNCLE TERRY

Because he'd spent most of his life with her.

ROY

How can you say that? She was your sister and a great Mom to me

UNCLE TERRY

In a way. Your Dad and I served together in Nam. Lonely kid. Never talked about a family or much about his past. The Navy was a kind of refuge for him, I think. Said it made a new man out of him. We got to be close. Like brothers.

ROY

He always called you brother. I thought it was because of my Mom, your sister.

UNCLE TERRY

I sort of introduced them you know.

ROY

No, I didn't.

UNCLE TERRY

After we got home, we both got stationed at Great Lakes.

ROY

The Navy training center.

UNCLE TERRY

Right. I wasn't that far from Saginaw, so every holiday I'd head home and take him with me. He never seemed to have anywhere else to go. I never noticed that he and Linda were spending time together and next thing we knew she was pregnant, and you came along. That's when he left the Navy and settled down in Saginaw permanently.

ROY

But they weren't happy?

UNCLE TERRY

Mostly. My sister wasn't the easiest person to live with.

ROY

She was a great mother.

UNCLE TERRY

Oh yeah, the best. But there was always a sadness about her. Anyway, that's not where he wanted his ashes.

ROY

I never knew all that. I just remember being happy growing up. Dad went off to work in his drug store every day and Mom seemed happy staying at home. I learned a lot working in the drug store after school.

UNCLE TERRY

Is that where you got the idea to become a pharmacist?

ROY

Kind of. But it was really Dad's idea. It was his dream. He used to say, "You can always trust a pharmacist." That's where he wants his ashes. At the drug store.

UNCLE TERRY

Nope.

ROY

Lake Michigan near the Training Center?

UNCLE TERRY

Not even close.

ROY

Please, don't tell me it's somewhere off the coast of Vietnam.

UNCLE TERRY

Of course not. I see why he didn't tell you where to spread his ashes. He would have spent what little time he had left explaining why he didn't want all those places.

ROY

So, where is it?

UNCLE TERRY

Bethel, New York.

ROY

Bethel, New York! Where in the world... Why?

UNCLE TERRY

Not exactly in Bethel. At a Dairy farm nearby. He wants his ashes spread at the site of the Woodstock Music Festival in 1969.

ROY

Woodstock?

UNCLE TERRY

You never heard of it?

ROY

Of course, I've heard of it. I can't imagine my Dad at Woodstock, even in ash form.

UNCLE TERRY

He was there all right, in the flesh. Told me so himself.

ROY

So were a lot of other people. Did any of them return there after death?

UNCLE TERRY

Uh, Ritchie Havens.

ROY

Well, ok. But Woodstock was a life changing event for him. Dad was just a regular guy. Nothing special ever happened to him.

UNCLE TERRY

Apparently, he didn't agree. Told me he lost a close friend at Woodstock. The guy was killed there. Your Dad said, "That crazy peace loving, tree hugging hippie was the reason I went to Nam"!

ROY

But that still doesn't explain why he wanted me to deliver *his* ashes to Woodstock.

UNCLE TERRY

In honor of their friendship, I guess. Maybe he heard about Woodstock 5.0.

ROY

Woodstock 5.0? Now what are you talking about?

UNCLE TERRY

There's a crazy group of old hippies trying to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the original Woodstock this year. Here, maybe he explained it in the letter he wrote you.

ROY

He wrote a letter. When?

UNCLE TERRY

Last month. Right after he went into Hospice.

ROY

Dad never wrote a letter in his life.

UNCLE TERRY

I guess he never had that much to say. Till now. Here. (hands a sealed envelope to Roy) Just remember he was high on pot most of the time there at the end.

(Uncle Terry exits. Roy carefully examines, then opens and reads the letter to himself. First angry, then wiping away tears but also smiling, he nods and picks up the urn.)

ROY (addressing the urn)

Thanks Dad. Looks like we're going to Woodstock.

CURTAIN

ACT I

Scene 2

Setting: A living room in Canyon City, South Dakota. There are two chairs, a coffee table and an end table center stage and a hall tree type coat rack downstage left. It's the first of June and the Brown family is looking forward to the high school graduation of their only daughter, Becca.

At Rise: Cressie Brown, a middle-aged housewife, is compulsively tidying. Suddenly the doorbell rings.

CRESSIE

Who could that be? Oh, that's right. Becca said Joyce was coming over.

(CRESSIE answers the door and is shocked to see her mother with a suitcase and large bag.)

CRESSIE

Mother! What in the world are you doing here?

KIT

I thought I was visiting my loving family. Maybe I'm not welcome.

CRESSIE

Of course, you're welcome! I meant, what a nice surprise. Why do you always take everything I say in a negative way?

KIT

Because you always say everything in a negative way.

CRESSIE

You're not even in the door and already...

(BECCA enters and rushes to break up the argument that's about to begin. She pushes past her mother.)

BECCA (greet's KIT with a hug)

Grandma Kit!

KIT

Wouldn't have missed your graduation for the world.

CRESSIE

Let's see, I think you were in Florida at a convention when I graduated.

KIT

That was work related and couldn't be helped. Your grandmother and grandfather were there. Besides, that was over 30 years ago. Can't we move on?

CRESSIE

And what a pleasant way to remind me that I turn 50 this year.

BECCA

Mom, Grandma Kit, please don't spoil my graduation.

KIT

Becca is right. This is her big day, Cressie. Let's try to put our past differences aside while I'm here.

CRESSIE

And how long do you plan to stay?

KIT

Becca, will you help me?

(KIT and BECCA go back outside and bring in two more suitcases.)

KIT

A while.

CRESSIE

Let's sit down. Becca will you get us some coffee and a plate of those cookies I baked yesterday.

BECCA

Sure Mom. I'm glad you're here Grandma Kit.

(BECCA exits.)

CRESSIE

Alright mother. What's going on. There's more to this visit than Becca's graduation.

KIT

You're right. I have bad news, but I don't want to upset you right now.

CRESSIE

So, when do you plan to upset me? On my wedding anniversary or my birthday?

KIT

I thought after the graduation and before your anniversary. You have a really busy schedule this summer and I'm trying to be as considerate as I can.

CRESSIE

You. Considerate? Of my schedule? My feelings? That's rich.

KIT

Really, Cressie. Now you're just being cruel. Maybe someday you'll tell me why I'm being punished.

CRESSIE

Why don't you just tell me your bad news?

(BECCA enters and places the coffee and a plate of cookies on the coffee table. CRESSIE immediately rearranges the cookies on the plate. BECCA rolls her eyes and sits down next to KIT. KIT acknowledges BECCA'S frustration.)

KIT

I've been diagnosed with breast cancer.

BECCA

Oh, no. Grandma Kit. How awful! That's terrible!

CRESSIE (jumping to her feet)

I'll say it's terrible!

CRESSIE (talking to herself, pacing.)

It means Becca and I are at increased risk! When was my last mammogram? I think it's been over a year. I'll call Dr. Andersen in the morning.

BECCA

Do you have to have an operation, Grandma Kit?

CRESSIE

I wonder when you should start having mammograms, Becca. I'll check on that.

KIT

The surgery is all done, and I'm pretty well recovered.

CRESSIE

You didn't bother to tell us you had surgery?

KIT

I didn't want you to worry. Anyway, I was too far away for you to come.

BECCA

Colorado's not that far away.

KIT

I know, but you are in school. Your senior year. You shouldn't be taking time off. And your mother is so busy with her community projects.

CRESSIE

We would have made time mother. But why are you here now?

KIT

The surgery's over but not the treatment. I'll have several months of chemo and I could get pretty sick from it. I decided I want to be with my family.

BECCA

We're here for you, Grandma Kit.

CRESSIE

Of course, mother. You know I'll be there for you. What would people say if I wasn't?

KIT

Always, the dutiful daughter.

(Doorbell rings.)

BECCA

That must be Joyce. I'll cancel my plans to go shopping with her.

CRESSIE

Don't be silly! Graduation is this Saturday. You need to pick out some dresses for us to choose from.

KIT

Becca can't choose her own graduation dress?

(BECCA rolls her eyes. CRESSIE opens her mouth to confront her mother.)

KIT

Don't cancel your plans because of me. I need some time to unpack and do my yoga practice.

(BECCA goes to answer the door.)

CRESSIE

Yoga? Since when?

KIT

Since I'm fighting for my life. The doctor told me to meditate and relax.

CRESSIE

Hippie Colorado doctors. What about your job?

(BECCA returns with her best friend, JOYCE, a very plain, nerdy looking awkward teen).

KIT

Well hello. Joyce Heath? I remember you. Why you've grown into a... a *charming* young lady.

JOYCE

Thank you, Mrs. Rising. You haven't changed a bit.

CRESSIE

Sit down Joyce. Have a cookie.

JOYCE

Thanks Mrs. Brown. Yum.

(JOYCE and BECCA have a cookie. CRESSIE hands them napkins and brushes crumbs from Becca's chin.)

KIT

So, Joyce, you must be graduating this Saturday too.

JOYCE

Yes, Mrs. Rising.

KIT

How exciting. Have you decided on what you'll do afterward?

JOYCE

I have no real plans for graduation night. Probably just watch some TV with Mom and Dad and go to bed. I imagine I'll be exhausted after all the excitement.

BECCA

I think she means with the rest of your life.

JOYCE

Oh yes. I want to become a geologist.

(JOYCE'S affect changes completely as she talks about her future plans.)

KIT

A geologist. Unusual career for a woman.

BECCA

Joyce loves rocks!

CRESSIE

Grey ones, I imagine.

JOYCE

I've already been accepted at Northern Manitoba Mining Academy.

CRESSIE

Manitoba, in Canada?

BECCA

Joyce loves Canada.

KIT

Well I never. Sounds like you have an interesting future ahead of you. What about you Becca? What does the future hold?

BECCA (Talking with a mouthful of cookie)

No plans yet Grandma Kit. I may just drift for a while.

CRESSIE

Drift? Don't be silly sweetheart. We've got big plans for you.

BECCA (whines)

Mawm.

CRESSIE

Mother, you know how Becca has been involved in the South Dakota Beauty Pageant scene since she was little.

BECCA

Mawm.

CRESSIE

After graduation, she can go national!

BECCA

Mawm.

CRESSIE

Meet the next Miss South Dakota!

BECCA

Please, Mom. Not today.

JOYCE

How exciting!

BECCA

Want to come shopping for dresses with us, Grandma Kit?

CRESSIE

No, she doesn't. She has to practice her yoga. Come on, mother. I'll help you unpack.

(They exit with the luggage, squabbling all the way.)

KIT

I don't need any help.

CRESSIE

Of course you do. You have no idea what dresser to use, or where the bathroom is. I'd better get you a night lite. We don't need you falling in the middle of the night and ruining Becca's graduation.

JOYCE

Wow! Your mother and Grandma are still at each other's throats?

BECCA

Oh, yeah. Neither of them can forgive or forget whatever it is that originally teed them off.

JOYCE

How do you stand it?

BECCA

I can't. And now Grandma Kit is going to be staying here for months.

JOYCE

Why so long?

BECCA

She's sick with cancer. She's going to chemo at the hospital here in Canyon City.

JOYCE

It's great she's here for your graduation but, don't they have hospitals where she lives?

BECCA

She doesn't really live anywhere, permanently that is. She travels a lot for work. When I was little, I'd get birthday and Christmas presents from all over the country.

JOYCE

That sounds exciting! But she's still working; at her age?

BECCA

I guess. She loves her job. She wasn't around much when Mom was growing up.

JOYCE

Maybe they never spent enough time getting to know each other.

BECCA

Maybe. But I'm not sure Dad and I can survive them trying now.

JOYCE

I can see why you'd want to get outta here.

BECCA

It's not just that. I need to get away from Mom.

JOYCE

Get away from your mother. Why?

BECCA

You don't see what she's like? She makes all my decisions, runs my life. I want to be my own boss. Graduation day can't come soon enough.

JOYCE

Maybe you need to travel the world like you Grandma and find your true self.

BECCA

Like she has?

JOYCE

She's taken up yoga.

BECCA

That should do it. No, I have a feeling that pretty soon something is going to send me in a new direction.

JOYCE (dramatic and animated)

Just watching and waiting for your chance. Like a bird of prey circling and circling...

BECCA

Cool it, Joyce! I need to act!

JOYCE

I know, let's have lunch at the Chinese restaurant. One time I got a fortune cookie that said I had fame in my future.

BECCA

You believe in fortune cookies? Maybe *you* should take up yoga.

JOYCE

Really?

BECCA

No, not really. Look, Joyce. We can have Chinese food for lunch but I 'm not seeking the guiding light in a fortune cookie or yoga. I have a better idea.

JOYCE

What is it?

BECCA

A surprise for you!

JOYCE

Becca, you know I don't like surprises. Especially the kind you come up with. I usually wind up grounded.

BECCA

Joyce be a risk taker for once! Just listen. You've heard of Brendon's Raiders?

JOYCE

The rock group?

BECCA

Yeah. They're coming to Canyon City in August and look at this.

(Takes a pair of tickets from her purse and hands them to Joyce.)

JOYCE

You got tickets?

BECCA

For us! We're going to a Rock Concert!

(Both squeal in excitement.)

BECCA

Shhh. Shhh. I think we need to keep this between us.

JOYCE

You're right! But it's sure to be advertised all over town. The college kids will probably come over from Rock Falls. It will be wild! Oh, I can't go. My parents will never let me! Yours either!

BECCA

I've got that covered. You tell your parents you're spending the night here and we'll tell mine we're going to a party at church.

JOYCE

But the youth group party isn't until the end of August.

BECCA

Joyce, it's a lie. They'll never know.

JOYCE

I can't lie to my parents. I'll really get in big trouble.

BECCA

You won't be lying to your parents. I'll be lying to mine. And I have to lie, or I'll never get to live my own life.

JOYCE

But (...)

BECCA

Just relax and go with the flow for once, Joyce. Don't let life pass you by. Take a chance. We can do this if we stick together. For all you know this is a once in a lifetime opportunity.

JOYCE

But I (...)

BECCA

Let's go shopping.

JOYCE

Ok. But I think you probably wasted your money on those tickets.

BECCA

Don't be so sure. Not before we have lunch at the Chinese Restaurant and check out the fortune cookies.

(CRESSIE enters.)

CRESSIE

What's this about eating out for lunch?

BECCA

After we go shopping, Mom.

CRESSIE

Becca, you know you need to watch your weight. The Miss South Dakota Pageant is less than two months away. You don't want to balloon up and ruin your figure.

BECCA

Don't worry, Mom. I'll skip the fortune cookie.

JOYCE

Miss South Dakota. You're so lucky, Becca. I wish I had your talent. You're sure to win.

BECCA

Don't sell yourself short, Joyce. You have a beautiful singing voice.

(CRESSIE pets and primps BECCA who resists.)

CRESSIE

Oh, Joyce. Winning the Pageant takes a lot more than a mediocre talent like singing. Becca has poise, charm and beauty. Everything it takes.

JOYCE (dejected)

Yeah. I guess so.

BECCA

Come on Joyce, let's go.

(As they exit, BECCA pokes her head back in the open door.)

Mom, I think you hurt Joyce's feelings.

CRESSIE

Don't be silly, honey. I simply told the truth. I probably saved her from a major disappointment later in life.

BECCA (slams the door.)

Errrr!

(KIT enters. CRESSIE moves about the living room tidying up, dusting. KIT gets her large bag and begins setting up her yoga equipment. CRESSIE moves it behind the couch. This becomes a silent battle over where Kits yoga items will be placed.)

KIT (indicates the door)

What was that about?

CRESSIE

Oh, we were talking about the Miss South Dakota Pageant. Becca said Joyce was talented, so I pointed out that she lacked the other qualities needed to win. I guess Becca thought I was too... blunt.

KIT

Subtlety was never your forte.

CRESSIE

Sometimes honesty is the best policy.

KIT

I'll remember that.

CRESSIE

Mother, I'd like to ask you to do me a favor.

KIT

Me? A favor for you? You've never asked me for a favor.

CRESSIE

Actually, Walt wants me to ask you.

KIT

Of course. If it's for Walt, anything. I love your husband. He's a saint.

CRESSIE

You know our anniversary is August tenth.

KIT

How could I forget. The day you got married was the best day... I mean, it was very special to me.

CRESSIE

Thanks, Mother.

KIT

So, what's the favor I can do for Walt?

CRESSIE

Walt and I always go somewhere special for our anniversary, but we usually just spend the day. I can't leave Becca alone overnight.

KIT

God, forbid.

CRESSIE

I'll ignore that for Walt's sake. This year we'd like to spend the night, and since you're here, I thought maybe you'd be willing to babysit.

KIT

Babysit? Becca is eighteen years old. I don't believe Walt thinks she needs a babysitter?

CRESSIE

No, Walt knows that I need a babysitter for Becca so that I can relax and enjoy myself.

KIT

I can see his point. (a beat) Certainly, it's the least I can do for Walt. So where are you going.

CRESSIE

Deadwood. Same as always.

KIT

Deadwood. That's only two hours away. Why not fly somewhere and make a weekend of it? Becca and I would have a blast. We need some time to bond.

CRESSIE

Oh no.

KIT

What are you afraid of?

CRESSIE

You, you old Hippie. She's already too much like you. I don't want her abandoning her goals and going off the deep end.

KIT

But she told us she doesn't have any goals.

CRESSIE

I told you what her goals are. You saw how excited she is about becoming Miss South Dakota.

KIT

I guess I missed that. It sounded to me like she wanted a wider world view.

CRESSIE

Becca needs structure in her life. Surely, we can agree on that?

KIT

I agree, just so long as it doesn't crush her heart's desire.

CRESSIE

Finally, we can call a truce. Of course, I would never ruin her chances of becoming Miss South Dakota. Discipline can only help her there! Let's have lunch, Mother. You'll love it. I've got a wonderful kale salad in the fridge.

(CRESSIE exits to the kitchen.)

KIT (sarcastically to the audience.)

Peace, love and a kale salad. My life goals have been achieved. I can die happy.

(CRESSIE calls from the kitchen.)

CRESSIE

What's that?

KIT

Just saying how happy I am to be here.

CURTAIN

ACT I

Scene 3

Setting: It is August 11, 2019 in the Brown's living room at 4:30 am.

At Rise: Grandma Kit enters and sets up her yoga mat behind the couch. Becca and Joyce stumble in returning from the concert and all-night party. Unseen by the girls, Grandma Kit is practicing Yoga behind the couch, but every now and then the audience sees a leg, or a butt rise above the back of the couch. Overcome by drunken instability, Becca drops her purse and cell phone. With slurred speech the girls review the night they've just experienced.

JOYCE

Oh no, Becca! Shhhh!

BECCA

It's not broken, thank God.

JOYCE

You *better* pray. What if this racket wakes up your parents?

BECCA

Don't worry, Joyce. They're not home.

JOYCE

What? My parents said I could spend the night with you, if your parents were here to supervise. Where are they?

BECCA

Deadwood! They always go to Deadwood to celebrate their anniversary. Don't worry. You didn't lie to your parents. Grandma Kit is here.

JOYCE

Where is she?

BECCA

At 4:30 in the morning? She's probably sound asleep. She goes to bed at eight.

JOYCE

So, she was asleep, and you snuck out to meet me at the concert?

BECCA

You bet. Lucky for me or I would've missed the best night of my life.

JOYCE

The music was good but so loud! I couldn't hear half of what you and those two guys were talking about.

BECCA

Well let me fill you in, girl! Those guys are practically famous.

JOYCE

Practically?

BECCA

Well, they know famous people. They're roadies for a famous rock group.

JOYCE

What rock group?

BECCA

"Minutes to Deadline"

JOYCE

Never heard of 'em.

BECCA

You will. They'll be headlining at the Woodstock 5.0 Concert.

JOYCE

I never heard of Woodstock 5.0 either.

BECCA

For heaven's sake, Joyce. Are you the only 18-year-old in South Dakota who actually lives under a rock?

JOYCE

Just because I'm not as popular as you are (...)

BECCA

You know what, Joyce? You're too much like my mother. Except you and I are better friends.

JOYCE

Your Mom likes to keep things organized and quiet. Me too.

BECCA

There must be something exciting you want to happen.

JOYCE

Sure, for once, I'd like to be important. You know, the center of attention. All eyes on me. The famous Joyce Heath. Just isn't in the cards for plain old me, according to your Mom.

BECCA

Will you forget that! She doesn't know. Besides, anything could happen when we get to New York.

JOYCE

New York! *Now* what are you talking about?

BECCA

The plans we made last night, with those guys. They're giving us a ride to Woodstock 5.0. We're meeting them at 6 in the morning next Wednesday at the junction.

JOYCE

I never agreed to any of this. We can't just leave town. What do we tell our parents?

BECCA

We tell them we're going camping for a week. They'll never know the difference.

JOYCE

This is a mistake on so many levels. You don't know those guys. You have no idea where you're going. You have nowhere to stay. You have no plan to get back home.

BECCA

You are like my mother! I thought you wanted to be famous!

JOYCE

Famous not infamous. Your plan has "permanently grounded" written all over it.

BECCA

We'll solve the technical problems when we get there. Right? Right!

JOYCE

Not right. What about the pageant. You're Canyon City's candidate for Miss South Dakota.

BECCA

That's my Mom's idea. I hate it. Going to Woodstock is a once in a lifetime opportunity.

JOYCE

Unlike becoming Miss South Dakota, I suppose.

BECCA

That's not me.

JOYCE

You're defying your own mother. How do you think she's going to feel?

BECCA

How does she think I feel? Does she ever even give that a thought? Noooo!

JOYCE

Of course she does. She's trying to take good care of you.

BECCA

She's smothering me. Making me into something I'm not.

JOYCE

How?

BECCA

Look at me Joyce. Do I look like Miss South Dakota material to you?

JOYCE

Well, now that you mention it, you're kinda short. But with heels and some make-up...

BECCA

Face it, Joyce. I'm a tomboy. I'd rather be riding horses than dressing in formals.

JOYCE

I ride horses, too, but dressing up should make you feel like a princess. I sure would.

BECCA

I'm really tired of everybody telling me how I should feel.

JOYCE

Hey, you asked me!

BECCA

I'm sorry, Joyce. I didn't mean to snap at you. You're my BFF.

JOYCE

Then why are you trying to make me do things I don't like to do?

BECCA

What do you mean? Like what?

JOYCE

Like the all-night party for one. I was ready to come home after the concert. But, Noooo!

BECCA
Didn't you have fun?

JOYCE
Not really.

BECCA
Why not for heaven's sake?

JOYCE
We didn't know anybody there.

BECCA
It was a chance to make new friends.

JOYCE
How? The music was blaring. It was so loud we couldn't even hear each other.

BECCA
You've never heard of body language? In biology we learned that 85% of communication is non-verbal.

JOYCE
Don't try to quote science to me. You just made that up!

BECCA
Didn't you like the food?

JOYCE
Pizza? Who doesn't? But I didn't like all the drinking. Some guy practically forced me to drink that beer I had.

BECCA
There were plenty of non-alcoholic drinks

JOYCE

For example?

BECCA

They had iced tea and lemonade and soda.

JOYCE

Ok, ok. It's no use arguing with you. But I need to think more about this plan of yours.

BECCA

Don't think. Just do it! Why not be free and have some fun!

JOYCE

I've had enough fun for a while. I'm not feeling very well. I think I'll just go home.

BECCA

NO! You can't do that. Your parents will ask all sorts of questions. It will ruin everything. Go to bed. We'll sleep in and talk things over when we get up.

JOYCE

Alright. This is just drunk talk.... I hope.

(JOYCE stumbles off to bed.)

BECCA (calling after her)

It's not either. I mean it Joyce. I'm making a promise to myself right now. I'm going to live life my way and I'm going to start with a trip to Woodstock 5.0!

(BECCA stumbles off to bed. KIT peeks out from behind the couch, then stands. She is astounded at what she has heard.)

CURTAIN

END ACT I

INTERMISSION

II-1-35

Act II

Scene 1

Setting: Later that morning in the Brown's living room.

At rise: Kit talks to herself.

KIT

What do you know? Those girls are going to Woodstock! Just like I did fifty years ago. Well not exactly like I did, I hope. Now that was a *real* trip.

(KIT begins to hum then sings a song as she remembers it from Woodstock 1969.)

KIT (hums then sings)

SOMETIMMES I FEEL LIKE A MOTHERLESS CHILD

SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE A MOTHERLESS CHILD

SOMETIMES I FEEL LIKE A MOTHERLESS CHILD

WHEN WILL HE COME HOME?

WHEN WILL HE COME HOME?

OMMMMM OMMMMM

Adapted from: Burleigh, H.T., "*Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child*" (1918.) Historic Sheet Music Collection. 1283.
<https://digitalcommons.concoll.edu/sheetmusic/1283>.

(KIT sits in deep meditation. CRESSIE enters carrying an overnight bag. KIT'S meditation is disturbed.)

KIT

You're back early. Lose all your money the first night?

CRESSIE

No. Well, yes, but that's not why we're back. Walt had a premonition about that mare of his, so we rushed home. Sure enough, she delivered her foal early this morning. He's tending to her now.

KIT

Not much of an anniversary celebration.

CRESSIE

What do you mean? It was perfect. Walt watched TV. I gambled. We had a nice dinner in a fancy restaurant. *And* got home in time to take care of business.

KIT

Walt didn't take care of business last night?

CRESSIE

Mother!

KIT

So, you cut your anniversary celebration short because of Walt's horse.

CRESSIE

Don't you criticize my husband. Or my lifestyle!

KIT

All I said was (...)

CRESSIE

I'm happy to be home. I have so much to do getting Becca's pageant costumes and makeup ready for next week. Oh, let me show you her dress.

(CRESSIE exits and returns bringing out the dress, make-up kit and small suitcase. She holds the dress up to herself and twirls around.)

CRESSIE

Lovely, isn't it?

KIT (dryly)

You could almost wear it yourself.

CRESSIE

Oh, Mother. It's not about me. I do all this for Becca.

KIT

Really?

CRESSIE (reluctantly hangs the dress on the coat rack)

Really. There. I can't wait for her to see it when she gets up.

KIT

You may be waiting awhile.

CRESSIE

Why's that?

(CRESSIE fiddles with contents of make-up case and packs suitcase with costumes and swim suit.)

KIT

Joyce slept over last night. They were (...) up late.

CRESSIE

She and Joyce have been thick as thieves since graduation. I'm not sure she's a good influence on Becca.

KIT

She seems harmless. Hasn't changes much since elementary school. Same long stringy hair, glasses...

CRESSIE

Not very good looking either. All she has going for her is a sweet personality. And the fact she's Becca's best friend.

KIT

I guess opposites attract.

CRESSIE

Just what does that mean? Becca is a beautiful girl *and* she has a beautiful personality. The proof of that will be when she becomes Miss South Dakota.

KIT

You're sure that's what she wants?

CRESSIE

What are you trying to say?

KIT

I'm just saying I think Becca wants to make her own choices.

CRESSIE

Here we go. I thought we agreed. Now you're lecturing me on my parenting skills again.

KIT

No.

CRESSIE

Of course, you are.

KIT

I am honoring Becca's spirit and independence.

CRESSIE

You've been living with us for just over a month. How is it you're an expert on me and my daughter?

KIT

I'm your mother. I'm just suggesting you try to be a little less "hands on" with her.

CRESSIE

Well aren't *you* Mother of the Year! Let's talk about your parenting skills. Moving me all over the country. A new school every year. No friends. And you were never around.

KIT

I was a single parent. I had to work to support us.

CRESSIE

I know that now, as an adult. As a child, I just felt abandoned.

KIT

So, you're trying to make up for that by making me feel abandoned?

CRESSIE

Mother, enough with the psychoanalysis. When you showed up and said you needed a place to stay during your Chemo, I immediately offered our home.

KIT

You did. And I'm grateful.

CRESSIE

That's the first time you've expressed any gratitude.

KIT

You are my only family. I shouldn't have to face breast cancer alone.

CRESSIE

You've always faced life alone. You never remarried. I never had brothers and sisters.

KIT

Now you're blaming me for that. Remember, it was your Dad who died and left me!

CRESSIE

My father died a hero, in Viet Nam.

KIT

Yeah, well. He was gone, and I had to do the best I could. I was too busy with my career and raising you to have any serious relationships.

CRESSIE

Your career? Mother, you sold cosmetics door to door.

KIT

Excuse me? I was a national distributor. That job took us all over the country. I love it. If it weren't for this breast cancer, I'd still be traveling and living life my way.

CRESSIE

Your way. It's always been about your way.

(BECCA enters looking *very* ragged.)

BECCA

Oh! You're home.

CRESSIE

Becca, what's wrong. You look terrible! Do you have the flu?

KIT

Brown Bottle Flu, I suspect.

BECCA

Grandma Kit!

KIT

She's hung over, Cressie.

BECCA

Thanks, Grandma.

CRESSIE

From drinking alcohol? Where did you get your hands on that?

BECCA

Mom, Joyce and I went to a party. We drank a little beer.

CRESSIE (to KIT)

And you allowed this?

BECCA

She didn't know.

CRESSIE (to BECCA)

You were in her care. She was supposed to know.

KIT

She's right. I should have set a different intention for the day. But what's done is done.

CRESSIE

You're falling back on Yoga to resolve this?

KIT

Let it go Cressie. Becca is a sensible girl, mostly. She just stretched her wings a little and probably learned a lesson about irresponsible alcohol use. Just because you never did...

CRESSIE

Oh, go *Om* yourself!

BECCA

Mother!

CRESSIE

Becca, you have to protect your reputation. Miss South Dakota can't be attending wild parties and participating in excessive drinking. Promise me this was a once and only occurrence.

BECCA (crosses her fingers behind her back)

Yes Mom, it was the only time.

(KIT smiles knowingly.)

CRESSIE

Then I am willing to put it behind us.

BECCA

Yeah, me too.

(They hug. BECCA makes a face at KIT who responds in kind.)

CRESSIE

Ok, let's talk about our plans for next week.

BECCA

Well, my plans...

CRESSIE

You'll be busy every day working on your piccolo solo.

BECCA

Mawm

CRESSIE

We'll need to style your hair and practice your make-up. We'll squeeze that in on Thursday.

BECCA

Mawm

CRESSIE

And you'd better try your dress on right away (...)

(CRESSIE gets the dress, holds it up to herself and then to BECCA.)

CRESSIE

(...) in case it needs alterations.

(The beautiful gown is much more suited to CRESSIE than to BECCA. This becomes obvious as CRESSIE holds it up to her but CRESSIE doesn't really notice.)

BECCA

MOM!!!

(CRESSIE jumps, coming back to the present with a start.)

CRESSIE

What? Don't you just love the dress?

BECCA

Yeah, it's nice.

CRESSIE (holding the dress up to herself.)

Nice? It's fabulous. Perfect color. Shows off your figure to a tee.

BECCA

Mom, I need to talk to you about your plans for the Pageant.

CRESSIE

Of course, you do. This has been a whirlwind. I understand. Ask your questions. Don't be nervous.

BECCA (obviously nervous)

I (...) the thing is (...) I'm not going to participate in the Pageant.

(Long uncomfortable silence)

CRESSIE

What?

KIT

She said she's not going to-

CRESSIE

I heard what she said. Explain yourself young lady.

(KIT retreats to a yoga position downstage right)

KIT (to audience)

I should have gotten an academy award for the explanation I concocted for my mother back in '69. Let's see if that kind of talent runs in the family.

BECCA

I've made another commitment and I have to keep my word.

KIT (to audience)

Excellent opening. Appeal to Cressie's crippling sense of integrity.

CRESSIE

Another commitment? To whom?

BECCA

To my very best friends in the whole world who I've grown up with and may never see again after this summer.

KIT (to audience)

Perfect follow-up. Go right to the heart strings. I'm tearing up.

CRESSIE

Are you talking about Joyce Heath?

BECCA

Yes, sweet Joyce and all my dear friends from school. We'll all go off to college, or new jobs or get married. Our friendships will never be the same again.

CRESSIE

So, what is this commitment and how does it interfere with our Pageant schedule?

KIT (to herself with gesture)

Bring it home, girl!

BECCA

We've been planning a retreat for months. A camping trip to commune with nature and deepen our friendships to endure forever. Pastor Julie has agreed to chaperone, and of course she'll lead the Bible study.

KIT (to audience)

Bible study? Nice touch. Why didn't I think of that?

BECCA

But we have to leave Wednesday morning in order to accommodate Pastor Julie's busy schedule.

KIT (to audience)

The pupil has surpassed the master. I feel like Yoda!

CRESSIE

So, your retreat is scheduled for the exact time as the Pageant?

BECCA

Pastor Julie's schedule is really tight.

(JOYCE enters looking perky.)

BECCA (thankful to be out of the spotlight.)

Oh, Joyce. There you are.

CRESSIE

How are *you* feeling?

JOYCE

Fine. A little tired, but fine.

BECCA (aside to JOYCE)

How did you manage to recover so fast?

JOYCE (aside to BECCA)

I made myself throw up last night.

