

Eleanor and Adelaide

Characters:

Eleanor and Adelaide - Aged 70 plus

The scene: The living room of Adelaide's home. Adelaide, plainly dressed and seated in one of two chairs placed together, either knitting or crocheting, and Eleanor, flamboyant, with a beret, painting at an easel which is facing away from the audience. A third chair with a coat and purse on it, is beside the easel. There is also a small table with a CD player. Each chair has an afghan on it. There is at least two afghans on the floor., next to Adelaide.

(As a scene opens, the two women are quiet and lost in their own thoughts. Adelaide lets out a big deep, heavy sigh. Eleanor stops her paint strokes. She freezes, decides to ignore it and goes on with her painting. After a slight pause and another very deep sigh, Eleanor can't help but speak.)

Eleanor: Adelaide, dear, must you sigh every five stitches?

Adelaide:What are you talking about Eleanor? I'm not sighing.

(They continue in silence for a bit and then Adelaide sighs again.)

Eleanor: There! You did it again.

Adelaide: I am sitting here as quiet as a mouse.

Eleanor: Well, Missy mouse, you have been sighing loudly for a while now making it very difficult to paint.

Adelaide: Put some music on so my breathing doesn't bother you so much.

Eleanor: Good idea! I'll do it, I'm up. (goes to table with CD player and puts on Bing Crosby.) There! This should be to your liking.)

Adelaide; Yes, it is - Bing! - He was the best. Wasn't he?

Eleanor: Well, one of the best. I always preferred Dean. He was SO handsome!

Adelaide: Ha! He was a drunk - and he smoked like a chimney!

Eleanor: I don't care if he did. He could have put his shoes under my bed anytime.

Adelaide: Oh, my - - that's an expression I haven't heard in a while. My grandmother used that one -(chuckles to herself and sighs.)

(They work quietly for a bit - - - Eleanor stands back and looks at her painting and grumbles and growls.)

Adelaide: Well, we're gonna need louder music if you are going to start growling at your painting.

Eleanor: Oh, I'm sorry, but it's just not right.

Adelaide: , Eleanor, your paintings are wonderful. You could sell them, you know! I've told you that 100 times but you don't listen to me - -What do I know? You know, if you sold all the ones that you have stored in your attic, we could go on a cruise! They would sell, you know - - the only reason they don't sell is that you can't part with them! You paint these wonderful pictures and then give them away to family and friends or you keep them for yourself, because you can't part with them.

Eleanor; Well, Miss Adelaide - - you are the one to talk. If I had a dollar for every afghan that you've crocheted and

kept - - - I'd be able to buy a ship! And - - How many have you sold? - - I'll tell you - - - None! Nada! Zip! - - The big goose egg!! No guts! No glory!

Adelaide: What is that supposed to mean? Anyway, it's not true. I do too part with them.

Eleanor: Oh, you do, do you? Ha - ha! Just look around this room. There are plenty here and I have just as many at my house as does anyone that knows you. You don't sell them because you can't part with them, really. In fact, I think when you come to visit me, my you're really there to visit them!

Adelaide: Yes, I could part with them! In fact, just because I don't personally make money off of them, I have donated them for sale before, at the church bizarre!

Eleanor: That's true. I remember seeing one there - - - but, if I recall correctly, (looks at Adelaide over her glasses.) and I'm sure I do, you bought it yourself!

Adelaide: Only because no one else had bought it, and I thought I'd save myself the humiliation.

Eleanor: My dear Adelaide, plenty of people would have bought your afghan, you didn't give them the chance.

Adelaide: And plenty of people would love to buy your paintings. You don't have the courage of your own convictions! No guts and glory, indeed! (Adelaide start sniffing and blowing her nose.)

Eleanor: Adelaide? Are you upset?(Stops painting, crosses, and sits on the chair beside Adelaide.) This isn't like you. You don't have to sell your afghans if you don't want to. It's nothing to get upset about.

Adelaide: I'm not upset about that - - - it's just that today is my birthday, and you didn't remember. I mean, usually on my birthday, you bring me a card or something to let me know you remembered. (Beginning to cry harder.)

Eleanor: Hey, honey, I did bring you a card and I brought a box of chocolates too.

Adelaide: You did?

Eleanor: Yes, of course. (goes to pick up her coat and purse on another chair and retrieve them.) I ate the nutty ones, though, because I know you don't like them.

Adelaide: Oh- - - thanks, Eleanor. I'm sorry, I just thought you had forgotten. (Still sniffing) You're my best friend.

Eleanor: I hadn't mentioned it yet because my gift to you isn't quite finished yet.

Adelaide: Where? What?

Eleanor: it's what I'm painting for you!

Adelaide: Oh, Eleanor! (blowing her nose as only Adelaide can do.) How nice. May I see it now?

Eleanor: Yes, of course, but don't touch. The paint is still wet.

(Adelaide gets up and goes to look at the painting.)

Adelaide: Why Eleanor, it's me! It's quite good - - - but I'm not that pretty!

Eleanor: You are. You're beautiful to me - - Good enough to sell? (laughing) Perhaps for a bus trip?

Adelaide: Oh, no - -

Eleanor: (Perhaps a bit miffed) Not good enough for a bus trip, huh?

Adelaide: Sorry- - - not even a bus trip - - - not for any amount of money - - it's priceless to me!
(they hug.)

Eleanor: Well, dear - - Happy birthday! I must be getting on my flying red horse. It's yoga night!

Adelaide: I don't know how you twist yourself into those positions.

Eleanor: Oh, I don't really - - everyone else has their eyes closed in concentration, so they haven't thrown me out yet for my inability to impersonate a Boy Scout knot! Ha!

Adelaide: (laughing) Yeah, well I've gotta get going too. It's choir night and last year for my birthday, they gave me a coconut cake. I'm hoping for the same thing again tonight. - - - Yum!

Eleanor: (laughing) I hope they do so again. See you Sunday!

Adelaide: You bet! And remember in two weeks it's the church bizarre again! Perhaps you could bring a couple of your paintings to sell!!

Eleanor: (Thoughtful pause.) OK I will. I will! That is, if you have the guts to bring a couple of your afghans to sell! How about it?

Adelaide: (deep sigh) All right then, it's a deal!

Eleanor: Gotta go, Hon- bye-bye.

(She exits - Adelaide sits and begins to crochet again and heaves a deep contented sigh)