

MARLAFAYE. The very words I said on my weddin' night. (*Off their looks.*) Ah, come on. Sex is like a brownie — when it's good, it's really good. And when it's bad ... it's still pretty good!

DOT. This is tasty ... of course, that turkey leg was so salty, I'd drink dishwater right now.

RANDA. Oh, there's one other thing — at the reading of the will, I got a door prize. (*Pulls the box from her pocket.*) Of course, Alden used the solemn occasion to announce he's running for State Senate, which will be much easier now that he's inherited Grandmother's *entire* estate. (*Holds up the box.*) Except for my little box.

DOT. Your grandmother left you a box? Is anything in it?

RANDA. Probably a poisoned dart. I just haven't had the nerve to open it and confirm my suspicion.

DOT. But maybe she wanted to make up for the two of you having such a bad relationship all those years. It could be something *good*.

RANDA. I seriously doubt it. This is the woman I turned to when I was thirteen and asked, "Grandmother, as I get older, do you think I'll lose my looks?" Her response was, "Yes, if you're lucky."

JINX. Which leads me to believe you don't bear a grudge against me for the fatal birthday surprise?

RANDA. Grudge? I only wish you'd come up with it twenty years earlier. (*The others howl, lift their glasses to her.*)

MARLAFAYE. I'm thinkin' Coach here would say it's time to hitch up your big-girl britches and open the dang box.

JINX. That's exactly what I'd say, if I spoke Texan.

RANDA. O-kay. (*Deep breath. Starts to take the lid off, stops.*) I can't do it. Here. (*Hands it to Jinx, who opens box, pulls out a note.*)

JINX. (*Reads.*) "I bequeath this to my only granddaughter, Miranda, although it's doubtful she'll ever own a decent dress with which to wear it."

RANDA. Yep, it's from her, alright. (*Wads up the note, stuffs it in her pocket. Jinx pulls a brooch from the box. They gasp, stare at it.*)

DOT. Zounds and forsooth! Thou art the recipient of *bling*!

RANDA. It's probably paste or glass. Trust me, Alden got all the heirlooms.

JINX. Wait a minute. The guy I followed to Seattle was a gemologist ... *and* a crossdresser, but *that* story would take a whole lot more than mead. (*Studies it.*) Hey, do you have a magnifying glass?

RANDA. Somewhere in my office. (*To Marlafaye.*) Come help me look. Let's just get this over with.

MARLAFAYE. Hey, that's the *other* thing I said on my weddin' night. (*She grabs the jug as she and Randa exit into the kitchen.*)

JINX. Oh, before I forget, can you drive these costumes back over to the rental place tomorrow?

DOT. Oh. Uh ... actually, no. (*Off Jinx's look.*) I ... lost my driver's license. I failed the vision test — for the fourth time. We were having so much fun today, I didn't want to bring it up.

JINX. (*Arm around her.*) Listen, one of my customers, who couldn't paint on a decent set of eyebrows to save her neck, is an ophthalmologist. I'll call her first thing tomorrow and get you in. We're going to take care of this, okay? (*Dot nods in agreement as Randa and Marlafaye enter from kitchen.*)

RANDA. (*Hands Jinx a magnifying glass.*) I still think this is a waste of effort. The old snake wouldn't have left me anything of value.

JINX. (*Inspects brooch, gasps.*) Then she screwed up, because these boulders are real diamonds and the brooch is signed. Get this sucker to a jeweler a.s.a.p., sell it and save your home!

---

RANDA. (*Takes it, her hand trembles.*) Are you saying the only way anyone in my family has ever come to my aid was unknowingly, unwillingly, and totally by accident? (*Thrilled!*) I'll take it! (*They all hug, celebrate.*)

MARLAFAYE. Woo-hoo!!! I'll bet the old girl's twirlin' in her grave like a giant turkey leg on a spit!

DOT. Me thinketh this momentous occasion deserveth more than mere mead! What sayeth we go downtown and hit-eth the bars?

JINX. Yeah! Why not? We're Renaissance women. We can do anything we want ... (*They head for kitchen door.*) As long as we drink responsibly.

MARLAFAYE. Absolutely! And any joker knows "drink responsibly" means *don't spill it!* (*Laughter. Lively Renaissance music comes up as Jinx, Dot, and Randa take magnifying glass, box, and brooch, exit into kitchen, and light fades to black as downstage right pin spotlight comes up. Marlafaye crosses downstage, walks into spotlight, removes the fool's cap.*) I guess this is the way it happens — *life*, that is. One day you're locked in a sweatbox with some health nuts thinkin' you're either gonna blow your groceries or stroke out. Next thing you know, you've got yourself a handful of potential friends. Funny how that works. It's been a few months since we started gettin' together and I gotta say, all four of us *seem* to be "re-energizin'" our lives — which is a loosey-goosey way of sayin' "gettin' off our cans and takin' care of business." 'Course Jinx forcin' the four of us to traipse off to the opera one night was nothin' but a bust. I mean, who sings for twenty minutes when they're dyin'?! And it wasn't even in English! Other than that, it's all been pretty good. But right now, there's trouble a-brewin'. Jinx has given us a "courage challenge" that's way over the top. She said we all had to do somethin' good for our hearts, but I told her no way, no how was I eatin' *kale!* That stuff is some kind of nasty. Then she explained she *meant* we all had to suck it up and get ourselves dates for *Valentine's Day* — which is almost as bad as eatin' kale. (*Sighs.*) But I did it. We all did. (*Beat. Guiltily.*) I kinda run hot and cold about *my* date and even though I've been thinkin' about him for a while now, it makes me nervous. I know what I'd *like* it to lead to, and I also know that's puttin' the cart before the horse. (*Confident.*) So I'm not tellin' the girls much about this 'cause I'm not about to tempt Fate. (*Puts fool's cap on at a jaunty angle.*) No sirree Bob ... my mama didn't raise no fool! (*Looks down at her costume, realizes what she's wearing, sighs. Blackout.*)