

Maggie's Little Helper

Scene: EXT. A front door

Characters: STEPHANIE, aged 16

MAGGIE, aged 73

(STEPHANIE is standing outside the door with a bag full of groceries and rings the doorbell. After a beat, the MAGGIE opens the door from the inside.)

STEPHANIE: Good morning, Maggie!

MAGGIE: Yes, I suppose it is. Can I help you? You're not selling anything are you? If you're selling, you can turn around and hop off home!

STEPHANIE: No, I'm not selling, I'm delivering!

(STEPHANIE lifts up the bag of groceries. MAGGIE peers over her glasses at it before looking back at STEPHANIE.)

MAGGIE: Oh, Stephanie! It's you! Sorry, dear.

STEPHANIE: That's quite alright, Maggie. I'm a little bit earlier than we discussed but there were hardly any queues.

MAGGIE: That's good, that's good. (MAGGIE pauses) Did you get everything?

STEPHANIE: Yes.

MAGGIE: Even the... (MAGGIE lowers her voice) the 'secret' thing I told you to get?

STEPHANIE: (normally) You mean the pen knife?

(MAGGIE starts waving her arms around frantically, making shushing noises)

MAGGIE: Keep your voice down, girlie! I don't need the whole street thinking I'm a murderer now, do I?

STEPHANIE: Sorry. (STEPHANIE lowers her voice) Why do you need a pen knife?

MAGGIE: (in a hushed tone) I've got a can of beans that I can't open and I can't find my tin opener anywhere so I thought, 'Hey! Why not get that girl who looks after you (that's you, dear) to buy me a pen knife and I can cut it open!'

STEPHANIE: Wouldn't it just be easier to buy a new tin opener?

MAGGIE: No, no, no, no, no. I know it's here somewhere.

(A pause. STEPHANIE is trying not to laugh.)

MAGGIE: Now then. Chivvy, chivvy, chivvy! Inside with you!

(STEPHANIE steps through the door. MAGGIE shuts it behind her)

Scene: INT. MAGGIE'S living room

Characters: MAGGIE

(MAGGIE is sitting on the sofa with her feet propped up on the ottoman).

MAGGIE: And then she just turned to me and spat at my feet! I mean, really, who does that anymore? Oh, the cheek of it! She thinks she's a right young adult, but we know different, don't we Steph?

STEPHANIE: (from offstage) I'm sure we do, Maggie.

MAGGIE: Yes, that's right. (A pause) Anyway, that's why I don't go out shopping anymore. My ego's been bruised you see. It was beaten into a wretched pulp and left to shrivel into a prune in the sun. I fear I shall never again feel the handle of a shopping cart trolley. The price tags of cheese and milk will never again burden my eyes!

(Enter STEPHANIE.)

STEPHANIE: Oh, I wouldn't be so sure of that if I were you.

(STEPHANIE passes MAGGIE a receipt and exits the way she entered)

MAGGIE: (angrily) How much for a packet of biscuits?

STEPHANIE: (from offstage) That's what I said. Prices have gone way up since Justin Bieber visited and tried some.

(MAGGIE tuts and puts the receipt on the coffee table)

MAGGIE: (spitting distastefully) Justin Bieber. His music makes my ears bleed. You want a good musician to listen to? Frank Sinatra. Now he was amazing.

(MAGGIE looks longingly in front of her)

MAGGIE: Come on, girlie! Where's my cup of tea?

(Enter STEPHANIE. She is carrying a cup of tea in a beautifully decorated cup.)

STEPHANIE: Right here, Maggie.

(STEPHANIE hands the cup to MAGGIE. She takes it and has a sip.)

MAGGIE: Lovely. Oh, did you put the (she lowers her voice) pen knife (she raises her voice) away?

STEPHANIE: Yes, I put it in the cutlery drawer.

MAGGIE: Good.

STEPHANIE: Would you like me to open the tin of beans for you?

MAGGIE: (appalled) Good heavens no! It's only half past ten. I won't be having my beans until supper time!

(STEPHANIE rolls her eyes while MAGGIE takes another sip of tea)

STEPHANIE: Of course.

MAGGIE: (snaps her fingers) Paper, please, Stephanie!

(STEPHANIE picks up the newspaper from the coffee table and hands it to MAGGIE before sitting in the armchair opposite the sofa. MAGGIE opens the paper and puts it in front of her face. STEPHANIE looks around awkwardly.)

MAGGIE: Oh, listen to this! 'Anna Hardwick, aged 26, finds her loaf of bread full of crusts'!

STEPHANIE: (laughing) Well, that's England for you.

MAGGIE: (sighing) Honestly, if you're going to be a reporter, report important things, not bread.

(MAGGIE shuts the paper and throws it onto the empty seat next to her)

MAGGIE: Well, thank you, dear. I now bid you adieu!

(STEPHANIE stands up and shakes MAGGIE's hand and exits.

MAGGIE takes another sip of tea)