

SCHMIDT. Focus, officer! How much time are we looking at?

TOM. Oh, uh, I'm not sure – maybe –

SCHMIDT. Who cares! The point is, after years of getting off scot-free paying next to nothing and making my life a living hell, I finally – **FINALLY** – get to take you for every cent you're worth. I'm sure they have a very nice assisted living cell for you to wait out the rest of your days. In the meantime, I'll quadruple the rent on this place, get a rich hotshot in here, and finally make bank!

(There is a knock on the door.)

SCHMIDT. Don't interrupt me!

(HEATHER sheepishly opens the door anyway. CLAIR SCHMIDT stands in the frame. She is in her mid 60s, sophisticated and forceful. She is also married to the only other SCHMIDT in the room. She wears the pants in their relationship, but a dress skirt currently.)

SYLVIA. Oh Clair! I'm so glad you're here –

CLAIR. I'm sorry I was a few minutes late, Sylvia. Gil, what are you doing here?

SCHMIDT. I'm evicting this – you know her?

CLAIR. Of course I do. Daddy loved Sylvia. We always used to visit here together.

SYLVIA. Yes – we did have a very good landlord – tenant relationship. You could have taken a page from his book you know –

SCHMIDT. What – what the hell are you doing here?

CLAIR. I'm picking up my order and few other things.

SYLVIA. Oh yes, Vera, Bridget, Heather – I'd like you all to meet my oldest, dearest and best client, Clair Schmidt.

BRIDGET. She's your big client?

VERA. What? What's going on?

SYLVIA. The one and only –

BRIDGET. The landlord's *wife* is your big client? Why didn't you tell us that?

SYLVIA. It didn't seem important. Clair, dear, a bit of bad luck with your big order. It got delivered to the wrong address. I'll have to get it to you tomorrow, is that okay?

CLAIR. Yes of course, the dress rehearsal isn't until tomorrow night –

(CLAIR looks around at all of the astonished faces. She and SYLVIA are the only ones who seem composed. Explaining.)

I'm the arts director at the Happy Valley Retirement Community. I'm directing an edgy version of *The Pajama Game* and Sylvia made some of the costumes –

SCHMIDT. – Dear?

CLAIR. Yes, Gil, what is it? What on earth is going on here?

BRIDGET. Your husband was talking about how he plans to evict my grandmother and shut down her business –

CLAIR. Nonsense! *(to SCHMIDT)* He won't do that.

SCHMIDT. I – I won't?

CLAIR. No. Let's think this through in a way you can most clearly understand. *(She takes him by the arm and gently guides him downstage center.)* You know that black lacey thing I bought for our anniversary last month? And that certain *something* you like taking off of me so much?

SCHMIDT. *(cannot formulate words.)*

CLAIR. ...Sylvia makes those. So, if you evict her, or shut down her business – or any combination thereof, I will be wearing nothing but flannel pants and

old, smelly T-shirts to bed from now on. In other words, if you shut her down, I'll shut you down.

SCHMIDT. *(cannot formulate words)*

CLAIR. What time shall I come by tomorrow, Sylvia?

HEATHER. I can run back to Saucy Lips and pick up the boxes right now, if you want!

SYLVIA. That would be perfect, Heather dear –

HEATHER. I know I messed up, but do I still have a job?

CLAIR. Of course you do, dear. Doesn't she, Gil?

SCHMIDT. *(distracted)* Uh – yes. What? Yes.

SYLVIA. Mr. Schmidt! Does this mean you're not going to shut down my business?

SCHMIDT. *(looks at his wife, who has her arms crossed and is standing at the door, waiting for him)* Not shutting you down.

BRIDGET. Or evicting her?

SCHMIDT. Not doing that either.

CLAIR. You're a lamb, Gil. *(Crosses to the door.)* Oh, and I want the dinner made and the laundry done by the time I get home. And Sylvia, I'll take five of those pointy red things in the hallway. *(She exits.)*

BRIDGET. Tom? What about you – are you going to, you know, report her?

TOM. Who, me? I'm off duty. I didn't see anything.

BRIDGET. Oh Tom! *(running-tackle hugs him, and gives him a big kiss)*

HEATHER. I'll go get the boxes.

VERA. Where are you going?

HEATHER. *(She is deaf.)* TO GET THE BOXES.

VERA. I MEANT THE ADDRESS. The hearing aid still has some juice left in her. Hey, I'll drive you! It'll be faster.

(She wheels her walker to the door, HEATHER in tow, and they exit.)

(BRIDGET and TOM are still kissing.)

SYLVIA. Thank you –

SCHMIDT. I don't want to talk about it –

SYLVIA. Okay.

SCHMIDT. Okay. *(He walks to the front door. Stops. Turns around. Resentfully.)* I just have to say – you do make some fine lingerie. Very – ahem – detailed.

SYLVIA. I appreciate the male perspective. *(beat)* I've been thinking, maybe it's time I gave you a little more money.

SCHMIDT. What do you mean?

SYLVIA. I could give you a small cut of the profits – sort of a second rent, for the store?

SCHMIDT. How much?

SYLVIA. Ten percent.

SCHMIDT. Twenty.

SYLVIA. Maybe we should ask Clair what she thinks –

SCHMIDT. Ten sounds good. We'll iron out the details later.

SYLVIA. Let's iron them out now. Shall we?

(SYLVIA crosses to him and takes his arm. He shakes his head, but is smiling, and together, they exit.)

BRIDGET and TOM part from their kiss.)

TOM. Bridget, I –

BRIDGET. One second, Tom. You have a little something on your face.

(She smiles and reaches out to rub his cheek gently with one hand.)

BRIDGET. Wow. Nana was right! Your skin is really soft!

(They both laugh and he pulls her into another long, passionate kiss.)

(blackout)

The End