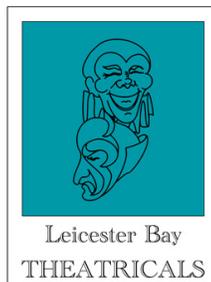


PERUSAL SCRIPT



A short play
by
Jerry Walker



Newport, Maine

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THE CRANES: Harry and Evelyn

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THE CRANES: HARRY & EVELYN by Jerry Walker 1m 1f A long-married older couple look back on a life well-lived. He plays the curmudgeon, she the ever-willing-to-listen wife, as they try to live their lives with dignity and humor facing the onset of a place they have never really faced before. *Order #3220*

Cast

HARRY

EVELYN

SETTING: a simple kitchen counter and a door

COSTUMES: Contemporary

RUNNING TIME: About 15 minutes

Jerry Walker is a retired **Band and Theater** director. He was the director of bands at **Oxford Hills High School** in South Paris and **Stearns High School** in Millinocket. While in Millinocket he was also the theater director and directed the Jazz Ensembles. Since his retirement in 1999 he has acted in and directed plays and musicals at **Schoolhouse**: *The "Hobbit,"* and *"Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep,"* *"The Odd Couple"* and a group of one-act plays; **Lake Region Community Theater**, where he directed: *"The Odd Couple,"* (*female version*), *"Oliver"* and *"You Can't Take It With You"*; **Oxford Hills Community Theater**, *"Carnival"*; and **Windham Center Stage Theater**: *"You Can't Take It With You"* and *Once Upon A Mattress"*. He Directed *"My Fair Lady"* and *"Hello Dolly"* at **Deertrees**. Jerry is one of the founders of the **Daytime Players** as well as an actor and director in the ensemble. Some of his acting roles include *Tevye* in *"Fiddler"*, *Fagin* in *"Oliver"*, *Scrooge* in the *"A Christmas Carol"*, *Fred* in *"All I Really Needed To Know I Learned Kindergarten"*, *Kris Kringle* in *"Miracle on 34th Street"*, *Bellomy* in *"The Fantastiks"*, *Sextimus* in *"Once Upon A Mattress"*, *Erroneous* in *"A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum"*, *Birdboot* in *"The Real Inspector Hound"*, *Al Lewis* in *"The Sunshine Boys"*, and *Samuel* in *"A Little Something For The Ducks"*. He reworked and directed the present expanded version of *"Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep"* at **Schoolhouse** in 2004 and 2008. He is presently writing *"Two Guys Seating on a Bench Talking About Stuff of No Importance to Anyone."*

This short play is taken from the longer compilation play **WE AIN'T DEAD YET!** by Jerry Walker, which is also available as an evening's entertainment, being comprised of 8 short scripts with the themes of aging, and life as a Senior. **ORDER # 3223**

NOTES:

The Cranes: Harry and Evelyn

The lights come up on an unlit stage. In the center a man stands

HARRY: *(Looking out over the audience...)* I sometimes think about 26 years ago when I turned fifty. Up until that day, when anyone talked about the 50's we talked about the beginning of "Rock and Roll", how many times we scored in the back seat of our 57 chevy.

(He laughs.)

We call them the good old days. This is not what I am talking about. I am talking about men turning 50... Men! Not women. Men! And it is not pretty. I wrote some lyrics for my musical about it. I started this musical when I was 54, this is the opening song. I call it...

THE FIFTIES: THE AGE NOT THE DECADE

(HE strikes a studly pose and sings.)

WHEN I TURNED FIFTY, I STILL LOOKED PRETTY GOOD.

I STILL HAD HAIR, A LITTLE GRAY, BUT IT STILL LOOKED PRETTY GOOD.

MY STOMACH HAD A LITTLE CURVE, BUT IT STILL LOOKED PRETTY GOOD.

And then in a flash I entered the my 60's... The sixties was a new adventure in my life and I added some more lyrics...

BUT THEN AS IF, SOME MAGIC STUFF WAS POURED UPON MY HEAD,
MY HAIR GREW THIN AND GOT MORE GRAY, MY STOMACH SWELLED, MY
BELT WON'T FIT, AND MY LITTLE BODY ACHES.

Writing my musical sort of took a backseat during this stage of my life. In fact I stopped writing it altogether. I had retired and was trying new things that I had always wanted to do, like play golf every morning, have a beer with my lunch, putter around fixing things around the house, plant gardens, make rock walls, plant trees and just do whatever I wanted whenever I wanted.

(We hear a door open and Harry's wife Evelyn comes into the room carrying a shopping bag full of groceries and places it on the counter.)

EVELYN: What are you up to this afternoon, my dear Harry?

HARRY: Doing some writing.

EVELYN: What are you writing now?

HARRY: My musical.

EVELYN: The one you started when you were 20 or the one you were going to start when you were 50 or when you were 60 or 70 or the one you were thinking about yesterday.

HARRY: Yes.

EVELYN: Yes, you mean all of them?

HARRY: I'm just working on.... Oh, never mind, I'll just stick to "Yes"...

(He crosses over and peeks into the bag.)

EVELYN: Why don't you put the groceries away. Hey maybe you could become a bag boy. They are always looking for someone to bag groceries and there are a lot of guys your age doing it at the grocery store... you could add "Dancing Grocery Guys" to your musical... Oh I forgot to tell you, Elvin Doody passed away last week.

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HARRY: Elvin Doody... oh, my. What happened?

EVELYN: *(hanging her coat over a chair)* Heart attack. He was out mowing the lawn on his riding lawn mower and dropped dead. The mower just kept going and went through Marie's flower garden and took out some of her daisies and she heard it hit a rock and ran out to see what happened and found him.

HARRY: Last week, and you are just getting around to telling me. Is she alright... I mean should we go over and check on her. I can't believe it. He and I were going to start playing "Pickleball" next week. He never said he had a problem with his heart.

EVELYN: *(coming over to him)* Marie has been after him to take off a few pounds and get some exercise, but all he would say is "That's a good idea" and have another beer and some potato chips.

HARRY: *(pulling a bag out of the shopping bag)* Are you trying to tell me something? What the hell is this?

EVELYN: Swiss Chard.

HARRY: What did you get this for?

(He looks over at Evelyn and shakes his head. He knows.)

HARRY: I am about to start my new diet, right?

EVELYN: What have you been saying lately about the fact that you have gained a few pounds and you need to go on a diet and get some exercise.

HARRY: *(searching through the grocery bag)* That's why we were going to play "Pickleball". Alright, I will eat this. How come you didn't get any meat, I need protein you know.

EVELYN: Keep looking.

(He paws around in the bag removing lots of vegetables and finally pulls out a four pack of Protein Shakes.)

HARRY: Shakes... what about all the sugar. I am trying to get my blood sugars under control.

EVELYN: Read the label.

(He reads the label.)

HARRY: *(back to looking in the bag)* I should have known... NO MEAT... NO BREAD? How am I going to have a sandwich for lunch.

EVELYN: Harry, I just spent the morning with Marie and... well let's just say it was difficult. They were going to celebrate their 50th next month. She is crushed, she had the whole thing planned and now it will never happen. Do you think I want to go out and find you face down on the lawn someday. We have been together almost 60 years now. You have been in and out of the ER so many times they have a bed with your name on it. You need to get your act together.

(Putting the groceries away)

I got us a membership in the local health club and we are going to eat healthy and exercise and be active... we are going to do stuff, cancel the cable TV and limit the time you say you're writing your musical to no longer than one hour per day. We are going to have steamed vegetables and a piece of chicken for supper and we are

going to walk to the end of the road and back after supper. Do you understand?

HARRY: When do we start?

EVELYN: NOW! DRINK YOUR SHAKE AND EAT AN APPLE.

HARRY: ALRIGHT!

EVELYN: THANK YOU.

(He drinks his shake and puts the empty bottle on the counter and picks up an apple and begins to eat it.)

HARRY: I'm sorry.

EVELYN: No, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to yell. It's just frustrating to see you not take care of yourself.

HARRY: I know.

EVELYN: Do you really?

HARRY: Yes, I know it bugs you, I know I don't stick to anything, I know I eat too much and usually the wrong things. I know and I promise to do better.

(Rolling eyes and walking away)

I've said this before haven't I ?

EVELYN: Probably two or more times a day. I love you Harry and I don't want to lose you. You know what you have to do and... OK, let's move on. We have to go to the Health Center tomorrow morning at 7 am to meet with our new trainer and he is going to set up a program for us.

(Harry looks in the refrigerator.)

EVELYN: What are you doing?

HARRY: I'm getting a bottle of water. Don't worry I am not getting a piece of that yummy pie you made yesterday... In fact, I think we should throw it out so I won't be tempted later.

EVELYN: OK, you're right.

(She takes the pie out of the fridge and tosses it into the trash.)

HARRY: I can't believe you did that. I really wasn't serious you know.

EVELYN: But, my darling Harry, I am serious and that is the last yummy pie you will be seeing me make until you reach your target weight...

HARRY: I'm going for a walk.

EVELYN: Good, I will go with you.

HARRY: You don't have to.

EVELYN: I want to.

HARRY: I'm just going to walk down to the store and get some coffee milk, we are out.

EVELYN: I am still going with you.

HARRY: You don't trust me do you.

EVELYN: Nope.

HARRY: Why not?

EVELYN: Why not? You are asking me why not? Why do you think I don't trust you to walk down to the store for some coffee milk. Hmm... let me see. Do they have ice cream at the store? Maybe some cookies or a bunch of candy bars or a lot of other little goodies you might be tempted to buy... Come on Harry, you know what you plan to do.

HARRY: I am going to get some coffee milk and that's all. I promise that is all I will get.

EVELYN: Is this like the promise you made last week. You remember your promise last week don't you? I remember you saying, "I will only have one cookie with a small glass of milk."

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(Harry sits quietly at the table and thinks about last week for a moment.)

EVELYN: Well, do you remember what happened.

HARRY: I'm thinking.

EVELYN: *(tapping her fingers on the counter)* I'm waiting.

HARRY: Alright, I had more than one cookie.

EVELYN: Let's try the whole box. And a quart of milk. Harry, you can't keep doing this. You can't.

HARRY: OK, I'm sorry. I will stop eating them if you stop buying them and I will try harder to watch what I eat... and you will go to the doctor to find out what is going on with you.

EVELYN: You promise?

HARRY: Do you promise?

EVELYN: Do I promise what?

HARRY: Calling the doctor... you need to find out what is going on with you.

EVELYN: Yes, I will call tomorrow morning.

HARRY: No, this afternoon, in fact I am going to dial his number right now.

(He crosses to the phone and picks it up and then...)

HARRY: What's his number?

EVELYN: *(reaching for the phone)* I'll do it.

HARRY: No, I'll do it. All you will do is dial his number and then claim that his line is busy and then tell me you'll call later.

EVELYN: You don't trust me do you?

HARRY: Nope.

(He exits DL and Evelyn exits UR. The lights dim and then go to black only to slowly come up on Harry.)

4 ½ pages to the end of this play