

GAYNELLE  
PEACHES p 11-12

Scene 2

*Same time. Lights up downstage left on a bistro table and chairs. This is Java Junction, Sweetgum's coffee shop. Peaches Verdeen Belrose, a flashy dresser, loud-talking and fun-loving, scrutinizes her reflection in the coffee shop "window" (meaning, she faces the audience). She sucks in her stomach, strikes a pose, drops it, pulls her face up as in a facelift, and pats the skin under her chin. Unhappy with what she sees, she turns, studies her butt, and wiggles it a few times as her cousin, Gaynelle Verdeen, quirky and a bit on edge, hurries in from stage left.*

GAYNELLE. Peaches Verdeen Belrose, what in the name of good sense has gotten into you, standing in the window of the Java Junction shakin' your be-hind?! Everybody on Main Street can see what you're doing!

PEACHES. Let 'em look! I'm up to these chins in desperation and I need help, Gaynelle! (*Increasing anxiety.*) When you look at me do you see "foxy mama" or "saggy senior"? I mean, do you think *Pretty Woman* or *Free Willy*? (*Grabs Gaynelle's collar.*) Is your first thought "S-E-X-Y" or "A-A-R-P"? You gotta tell me! Tell me!!

GAYNELLE. *Right now*, my first thought is, "I want your topaz earrings when they haul you off to the nuthouse."

PEACHES. This is serious! Lonny Joe Dorton just canceled our date! He's the third guy this month to bail on me because of *my profession*. Evidently, once a man hits fifty, he's so scared of dying, he'd rather chew off his own foot than cozy up to a *mortuarial cosmetologist*. What am I supposed to do?!

GAYNELLE. You *must* be desperate asking *me* that since I haven't been on a date since Methuselah was in Pre-K.

PEACHES. Look, I am only human! I have *needs*. These lips *need* to be kissed, these curves *need* to be caressed, this trembling body *needs* to be —

GAYNELLE. We know all about your needs. I have 'em, too. And yes, we *need* some new men in the dating pool. And we *need* business

to get better so we can quit working two jobs. But right now what *I need* is to know why you dragged me away from the store.

PEACHES. Oh, right. Actually ... I've got some bad news and I know you don't take bad news very well, so ... you might want to sit down.

GAYNELLE. Oh, no, not just *bad* news, it's *sit-down*-bad news?! (*Wilts into a chair.*) Then just do it quick and get it over with. (*Closes her eyes.*)

PEACHES. Okay. (*Exhales with dread.*) I just found out ... Sumner died.

GAYNELLE. (*Looks at Peaches.*) Sumner Bodeen? My *ex*-husband? Dead?

PEACHES. Yes.

GAYNELLE. The tomcattin' creep who humiliated me in front of every living soul in Sweetgum by running off with that tacky redhead from the Dollar General?

PEACHES. That's who I'm talking about.

GAYNELLE. The jackass who drained our bank account and, when I tried to get my money back, attempted to commit me to a mental institution?

PEACHES. That would be the one. And you gotta find a way to accept it.

GAYNELLE. Oh ... (*Beat. Then bursts into a smile, stands, and dances and boogies like a wild woman, happy out of her mind. She looks down and yells.*) Hey, Sumner, how you doin' down there? Not hot enough for you?! Then let's crank up that thermostat! (*Stomps three times and throws herself into the dance.*)

PEACHES. (*Watches a moment, then.*) Well, I guess we all grieve in our own way. (*Gaynelle dances joyfully. Blackout.*)