

D. I. Y
(A Comedy
in
Two Acts)
by
JOAN GREENING

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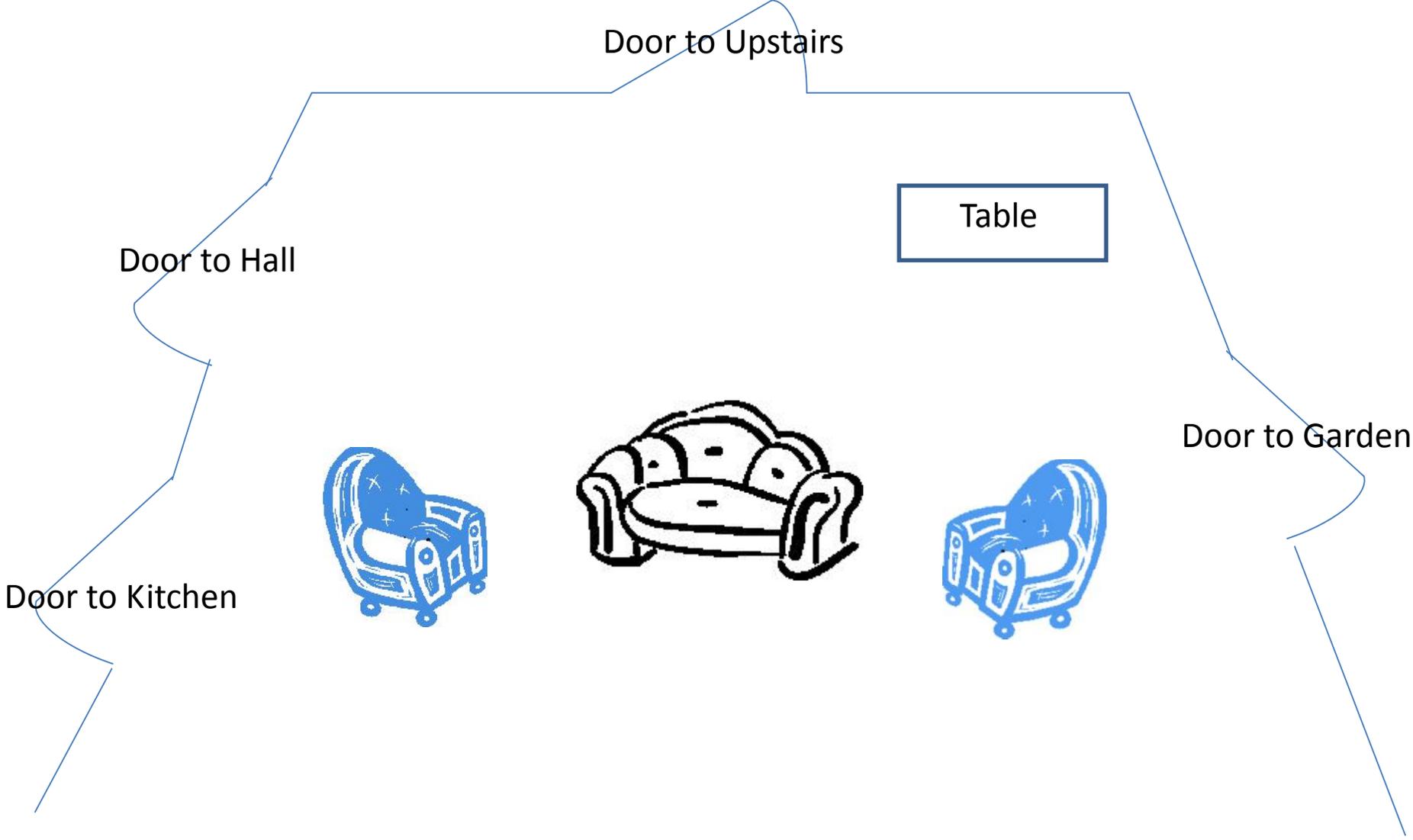
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CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

Mags Carter	50, divorced. Looks after her sister, Pat, who is intellectually challenged. Pat: has had a child, Jan:, who Mags brings up as her own child. Mags is kind hearted, forceful but is a worrier.
Jim O'Flaherty	45-65, married with a son. He is Irish, full of blarney, totally unreliable and relies on his charm to get him through difficult situations. Very attractive to women and mostly likeable.
Pat Carter	Mags sister. She is 45 and intellectually challenged. She is very childlike but is fascinated with words. She often muddles reality with fairy stories.
Jan Carter	Twenties, at university studying law. She is very pretty, likeable and extremely Patient with 'Aunty Pat' - her real mother.
Brian O'Flaherty	Jim's son. 25-35 and bored with being a decorator. He is good looking and intelligent. He is studying to take 'A' levels so he can go to university. He finds his father an embarrassment and wants a better life.
Phyllis Moore	Mags' next door neighbour. 55 and widowed. She is a silly woman who fancies any man who crosses her path.
Rosie Wood	35-45, very pretty in a tarty way. She is Jim's girlfriend and is loud, vulgar and common.
Constance Carter	Mag's cousin. 70. Very forceful woman who is extremely wealthy. She terrorises for the fun of it. It turns out her bark is worse than her bite.

DIY – Stage Layout



ACT 1, Scene 1

Monday

(Mags and Jim enter from hall)

Mags: This is the room.

Jim: And what a lovely room it is.

Mags: Yes, but I don't want you to admire it.....

Jim: What a terrible room it is!

Mags: And I'm not paying you for humour.

Jim: That's a shame. I like a bit of humour. I've been told I'm a very funny man. Yes when I working for.....

Mags: Well.....

Jim: Me or the room?

Mags: You know what I mean

Jim: Indeed I don't.

Mags: Can you do it?

Jim: I can do lots of things. I've been told I'm very versatile. Now let me think... oh yes I'm very good at.....

Mags: The room. Can you decorate it?

Jim: Of course I can. I'm a decorator aren't I?

Mags: That remains to be seen. I need it done by Friday.

Jim: This Friday?

Mags: Yes....

Jim: But that's only four days away

Mags: I'm well aware of that....

Jim: Friday.... I don't know. If you don't mind my saying so.... You've left it very late.

Mags: I know but she only rang today.....

Jim: Who?

Mags: My cousin.... She's coming to stay on Friday and she's very particular. She told me last year to get this room redecorated.

Jim: But you didn't?

Mags: No, I never got round to it.

Jim: And now you're in a pickle.

Mags: Yes.

Jim: Lucky you've found me.

Mags: Time will tell.

Jim: I see we have a little problemnot insoluble....but a little problem non-the-less. Do you happen to have a kettle?

Mags: Of course I've got a kettle....

Jim: Could you be putting it on.....

Mags: Why?

Jim: I can't work without my throat being lubricated....

Mags: Don't you paint with your hands?

Jim: It's not about the paint....I need to think....Friday....you make the tea and I'll see how best I can accede to your considerable demands.

Mags: Look I'm having second thoughts. I think I'll get another quote. Thank you for coming Mr O'Flaherty but I'll.....

Jim: You won't get anyone else to do it by Friday.

Mags: Are you sure you can?

Jim: I'm as certain as I am there is a constellation orbiting Venus as we speak.

Mags: Is there?

Jim: Oh yes. I know all about stars....

Mags: I don't know what to do.....

Jim: Put your trust in Jim O'Flaherty and you can't go wrong.

Mags: How did you get on with Phyllis?

Jim: Phyllis?

Mags: My next door neighbour.

Jim: Ah yes, Phyllis.

Mags: She recommended you.

Jim: Lovely lady. We got on grand. She was a pleasure to deal with. And a good baker. She made me a date and walnut loaf to make your mouth water. Utter perfection. She said the secret of making a good date and walnut loaf, and this was a very good date and walnut loaf is.....

Mags: Never mind the date and walnut loaf. What about the decorating?

Jim: I can get it done by Friday for you

Mags: I don't know...

Jim: No problem at all.

Mags: Are you sure?

Jim: I am. It'll all be done and dusted by Thursday night and you won't even know I've been here.

Mags: Except for the newly decorated room.

Jim: Yes, except for that.

Mags: (Relents) I suppose you take milk and sugar.

Jim: That I do. Four sugars please.

Mags: That's excessive.

Jim: Helps me work faster.

(Mags exits to kitchen)

(Jim sits down on the sofa and his phone rings)

Jim: O'Flaherty's Decorators.....Indeed it is..... Good-day to you as well.....This week.....Where are you?.....Sure should be no trouble at all.....I'll be round in half an hour to give you a quote. Oh yes.....very reasonable.....reliable? Am I reliable? I've got references you wouldn't believe. You'd think I'd written them myself. That's fine.....I'll see you in half an hour.

Mags: I've put the kettle on.

Jim: And I'm sure it suits you.

Mags: I said 'no humour'. Well?

Jim: Very. But I've....

Mags: You're certain about Friday?

Jim: This room?..... Friday.....No problem. I'll tell you what'll I do to put your mind at rest....I'll bring my boy with me and you'll be sorted in no time.

Mags: Good.

Jim: And I'll just charge you a daily rate so you'll be getting two great workers for the price of one.

Mags: Sounds very good.

Jim: I can't be fairer than that, can I?

Mags: How much?

Jim: Let me see.... Do you want paper or paint?

Mags: I've told you....on the phone....whatever's the quicker.

Jim: You're not my only customer.....

Mags: So you've got a bad memory...

Jim: No ma'am, I've got a very good memory.

Mags: Paper or paint then?

Jim: That's for you to decide surely.

Mags: Whatever's quicker.

Jim: Paint....

Mags: Then paint it is.

Jim: It'll be done in no time.

Mags: How long is that?

Jim: Thursday, if not before.

Mags: Excellent. It must be finished by then. It's vital. Absolutely vital.

Jim: Relax ma'am. You're a terrible worrier. It shall be done. Put your trust in me.

Mags: I'll try to.

Jim: Now what colour were you thinking?

Mags: Cream. I want it cream.

Jim: Cream would look a treat.

Mags: When will you start?

Jim: Tomorrow morning.

(Pat enters from kitchen with tea tray)

Pat: Hallo. I've made the tea. Did I do right Mags. I saw the kettle was on so I made the tea.

Mags: Yes, Pat: you did very well.

Jim: Hallo lovely lady. I'm Jim. It's a kind thing you've done all right. I've a throat as parched as a dried up river bed.

Pat: You're a man.

Mags: Ignore her. She's my sister.

Pat: You're the man.

Jim: I am a man, that's for certain.

Pat: I like a man.

Mags: Go away Pat. I'm busy.

Pat: How are you busy?

Mags: If I say I'm busy, then I'm busy.

Pat: You're just standing about.

Mags: I'm not. I'm talking to this man.

Pat: That man?

Mags: Yes, that man. Is there another man?

Pat: I don't know. Is there? I like men.

Mags: Please go away Pat.

Pat: Oh can't I stay. I like him. He's got the look of the other about him. Do you like me? (Pat peers at Jim)

Jim: I must be off. I've work to do.

Pat: But you haven't drunk your tea. Drink your tea. I made it myself.

Jim: Then of course I must drink it.

Mags: And you haven't told me how much.

Jim: I have so.

Mags: No you haven't.

Jim: I told you it'll be a daily rate and you'll get two grand workers for that.

Mags: How much is the daily rate? You haven't said. You can't just say a daily rate...I need an amount.

Jim: It'll be very reasonable.

Pat: I like that word. 'Reasonable'. Words are nice. I like words.

Mags: It's not enough to say very reasonable.

Pat: I think it is. I like 'very reasonable'.

Mags: Be quiet.

Jim: I like it too. Very reasonable.... It sounds....

Pat: Very reasonable.

Jim: Indeed it does and that's what it will be.

Pat: Very reasonable.

Jim: Indeed. That's good. That's settled. Daily rate... all agreed.

Pat: Is a Daily rate like a Daily Mail?

Jim: No nothing like that. Daily Mail – that's a newspaper.

Pat: I know. He had one.

Jim: Who?

Pat: The man.

Jim: And what man would that be?

Mags: Pat – forget it.

Pat: The man who gave me the baby....

Mags: Don't be ridiculous Pat:.

Pat: I did have a baby....

Mags: And would this be the baby who had a bad fairy that appeared at her Christening and cursed her and.....?

Pat: She fell asleep for a hundred years.

Mags: You're getting mixed up with Sleeping Beauty.

Pat: Oh yes. And the handsome prince kissed her and woke her up.

Jim: That's a grand story all right. Must be off

Mags: Not so fast.....I want a figure.

Jim: Indeed you do.....

Pat: She's got a very sweet tooth.

Jim: As I have myself.

Pat: I have as well but I also love cheese.

Jim: Yes, cheese is good. With a digestive biscuit.

Pat: I like a cream cracker.....

Mags: This is intolerable.....

Pat: With thick butter. And then you lay the cheese on top.

Mags: (Shouts) How much?

Pat: (Indicates) A piece this thick.

Mags: How much to decorate this room?

Pat: You are silly Mags. You can't decorate a room with cheese. I thought you wanted it painted.

Mags: Yes I do. Paint. How much?

Jim: I'd need to work it out. Several gallons I'd say.

Mags: Not the paint – the money.

Pat: Gallons – that's a nice word. Reminds me of the sea.

Jim: No, that's galleons. Gallons are a measure. You measure paint in gallons.

Pat: You're so nice explaining things to me. I really like you.

Jim: See you in the morning. Bright and early. I've got another call to make.

Mags: How early?

Jim: Eight o'clock at the very latest. I'm an early riser and I like to start work early so I can crack on and see the progress at the end of the day.

(Jim exits to hall)

(Mags follows him to hall shouting)

Mags: You haven't told me how much.

(Mags enters through hall door)

Mags: Dreadful man.

Pat: I liked him. He explained things to me.

Mags: He didn't tell me how much.

Pat: You worry about things that don't matter.

Mags: Someone has to worry. We're on a limited budget. I'm having to cut back to help Jan: through university. We can't just throw away money. Someone has to take control. Someone has to make sure this room is ready for Constance.

Pat: Constance? Who's Constance?

Mags: Our cousin. You've known her all your life.

Pat: Yes I know her.

Mags: Yes I know you know her.

Pat: Do I?

Mags: Yes. She's coming next week. The house has to be immaculate.

Pat: Immaculate – I like that word.

Mags: She insists on it. Dreadful old battle axe. She terrifies me and I'm not known to be a shrinking violet.

Pat: I like that in my bath.

Mags: What are you talking about?

Pat: Violets. I have violet bath salts.

Mags: Yes so you do. Anyway I don't want you to worry. I'll see to her.

Pat: Who?

Mags: Constance.

Pat: She's always nice to me.

Mags: Everyone's nice to you. (Kisses her on the forehead)

Pat: No they're not. The man in the paper shop shouted at me.

Mags: How dare he! I shall go in and see him and give him a piece of my mind.

Pat: Won't you need it?

Mags: What?

Pat: The piece of your mind.

Mags: It's an expression. Only an expression. It just means I shall go and tell him off for shouting at you.

Pat: I only wanted a Daily Mail.

Mags: I'm not surprised he shouted. The Daily Mail! Everyone who is anyone reads The Telegraph.

Pat: I thought it sounded nice. It reminded me of something.

Mags: Oh no.

Pat: Daily Mail – does it mean.....

Mags: No it doesn't. Whatever you are thinking – don't.

Pat: The man – I remember.

Mags: Forget it. You must forget all about it.

Pat: What?

Mags: The time you got lost.

Pat: Oh yes. I remember. I met a man.

Mags: Forget it.

Pat: He said I was nice.

Mags: What did I just say.....?

Pat: I've forgotten it.

Mags: Good.

Pat: He brought me home.

Mags: Yes, that was very good of him.

Pat: What did he say to me?

Mags: Let's not go there.

Pat: Oh yes. I remember.....

Mags: I said you must forget it.

Pat: The man said.....

Mags: Forget it.....

Pat: The man in the Paper Shop.....

Mags: Oh that man.

Pat: He said I had to pay for it.

Mags: Yes, if you buy something in a shop you have to pay.

Pat: But I didn't have any money.

Mags: You should have asked me.

Pat: You were in the Post Office. And the man shouted at me and said I was no better than a thief.

Mags: You took it without paying?

Pat: Because I didn't have any money. I thought he wouldn't mind but he did. He snatched it out of my hand and said that Daily Mail is mine.

Mags: Because it belonged to him. Pat, you mustn't take things from shops. It's wrong. I'll have to go in and explain to him. I'm sure he'll understand. Don't worry about it anymore. We've got enough to worry about with Constance coming.

Pat: Constance?

Mags: Yes.

Pat: Do I know her?

Mags: She's our cousin.

Pat: I know I've known her all my life.

Mags: Yes, that's right.

Pat: She's our cousin.

Mags: She's coming to stay.

Pat: Does she have to?

Mags: Yes but I'm not being caught out again. I've found out the exact time of her arrival and this time we'll be ready.

Pat: Last time she found a sweet paper under her bed. And she kept saying 'I found a sweet paper under my bed.' 'Not much cleaning done around here'.

Mags: And I wonder who left the sweet paper under the bed? I wonder whose room she was staying in? Do you eat sweets in bed?

Pat: No because you've told me not to.

Mags: Well remembered.

Pat: If I eat sweets I must clean my teeth.

Mags: So it wasn't you?

Pat: No, I'd never eat sweets in bed.

Mags: Good.

Pat: I eat toffees though.

Mags: You will try and keep everything tidy when Constance is here?

Pat: Who's Constance?

Mags: Our cousin.

Pat: Oh yes I remember. Dreadful old battle axe.

Mags: And you will forget I've said that....

Pat: What?

Mags: And you will remember....

Pat: No toffee papers under the bed.

Mags: Exactly. This time everything must be pristine.

Pat: Pristine. Nice word. Pristine.

Mags: Yes. Especially this room. I can't have her thinking it's shabby.

Pat: Even if it is.

Mags: But it won't be when Mr O'Flaherty has finished.

Pat: No, then it will be pristine. No sweet papers and Constance will be pleased with us.

Mags: Sometimes I think there is something in that head of yours.

Pat: Yes there definitely is. I've got a brain and my brain has got one hundred and twenty thousand brain cells.

Mags: How do you know that?

Pat: Because I've counted them.

(Curtain)