

shared by two friends. After the laugh gradually dies out, there is a moment of awkward silence and then with an attempt at renewed gaiety, MOTHER says) Mr. Velasco . . . Where are my clothes?

VELASCO Your clothes . . . ? Oh, yes . . . (He takes a piece of paper out of his pocket) Here.  
(He gives it to her)

MOTHER I'm sure I wore more than that.

VELASCO It's a cleaning ticket. They're sending them up at six o'clock.

MOTHER (Taking the ticket) Oh, they're at the cleaner's . . . (After a moment's hesitation) When did I take them off?

VELASCO You didn't . . . You were drenched and out cold. Gonzales took them off.

MOTHER (Shocked) Mr. Gonzales??

VELASCO Not Mister! . . . Doctor Gonzales!

MOTHER (Relieved) Doctor . . . Oh, Doctor Gonzales . . . Well, I suppose that's all right. How convenient to have an M.D. in the building.

VELASCO (Laughing) He's not an M.D. He's a Doctor of Philosophy.

MOTHER (Joins in the laughter with great abandon) Oh, no . . .

(CORIE comes out of the bathroom with aspirin and a glass of water, and watches them laughing with bewilderment)

CORIE (Goes behind the couch) Here's the aspirins.

VELASCO Thank you, but I'm feeling better now.

MOTHER I'll take them.  
(Takes an aspirin and a sip of water)

VELASCO (Gets up and hobbles to the door) I have to go.  
I'm supposed to soak my foot every hour . . .

MOTHER Oh, dear . . . Is there anything I can do?

VELASCO (Turns back) Yes . . . Yes, there is . . . Would you like to have dinner with me tonight?

MOTHER (Surprised) Me?

VELASCO (Nods) If you don't mind eating plain food.

MOTHER I love plain food.

VELASCO Good . . . I'll call the New York Hospital for a reservation . . . (He opens the door) Pick me up in a few minutes . . . We'll have a glass of buttermilk before we go.

(He exits)

MOTHER (After a moment, she turns to CORIE on the stairs and giggles. Takes the grapes from the coffee table) You know what? . . . I'll bet I'm the first woman ever asked to dinner wearing a size forty-eight bathrobe.

CORIE (Lost in her own problem) Mother, can I talk to you for a minute?

MOTHER (Puts down the bunch of grapes, gets up, and moves right) I just realized. I slept without a board . . . For the first time in years I slept without a board.

CORIE Mother, will you listen . . .

MOTHER (Turns to CORIE) You don't suppose Uzu is a Greek miracle drug, do you?

(She flips a grape back and forth and pops it into her mouth like a knichi)

CORIE Mother, before you go, there's something we've got to talk about.

MOTHER (Moving to CORIE) Oh, Corie, how sweet . . . You're worried about me.

CORIE I am not worried about you.

CORIE /  
MOTHER

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BAREFOOT IN  
THE PARK

START

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lected Plays  
Neil Simon

MOTHER (*Looks in the mirror*) Oh, dear. My hair. What am I going to do with my hair?

CORIE I don't *care* what you do with your hair.

MOTHER If *he* can dye it, why can't I? Do you think black would make me look too Mexican?

CORIE Mother, why won't you talk to me?

MOTHER (*Moving back of the couch*) Now? . . . But Victor's waiting . . . (*She turns back to CORIE*) Why don't you and Paul come with us?

CORIE That's what I've been trying to tell you . . . Paul isn't coming back.

MOTHER What do you mean? Where'd he go?

CORIE I don't know. Reno. Texas. Wherever it is that men go to get divorced.

MOTHER *Divorced???*

CORIE That's right. Divorced. Paul and I have split up. For good.

MOTHER I don't believe it.

CORIE Why don't you believe it?

MOTHER You? And Paul?

CORIE Well, you just saw him leave here with his suitcase. What did you think he had in there?

MOTHER I don't know. I know how neat he is. I thought maybe the garbage.

CORIE Mother, I believe *you*. Why won't you believe me?

MOTHER (*Moves left to the bentwood chair and sits facing CORIE*) Because in my entire life I've never seen two people more in love than you and Paul.

CORIE (*Tearfully*) Well, it's not true. It may have been yesterday but it sure isn't today. It's all over, Mother. He's gone.

MOTHER You mean he just walked out? For no reason at all? . . .

CORIE He had a perfectly *good* reason. I *told* him to get out. I did it. Me and my big stupid mouth.

MOTHER It couldn't have been all your fault.

CORIE No? . . . No?? Because of me you're running around without your clothes and Paul is out there on the streets with a cold looking for a place to sleep. Who's fault is that?

MOTHER Yours! . . . But do you want to know something that may shock you? . . . I still love you.

CORIE You do? . . .

MOTHER Yes, and Paul loves you, too.

CORIE And I love him . . . Only I don't know what he wants. I don't know how to make him happy . . . Oh, Mom, what am I going to do?

MOTHER That's the first time you've asked my advice since you were ten. (*She gets up and moves to CORIE*) It's very simple. You've just got to give up a little of you for him. Don't make everything a game. Just late at night in that little room upstairs. But take care of him. And make him feel important. And if you can do that, you'll have a happy and wonderful marriage . . . Like two out of every ten couples . . . But you'll be one of the two, baby . . . (*She gently strokes CORIE's hair*) Now get your coat and go on out after him . . . I've got a date. (*She crosses to the coffee table and picks up her handbag*) Aunt Harriet isn't going to believe a word of this . . . (*Flourishing her bathrobe, she moves to the door and opens it*) I wish I had my Polaroid camera . . .

END