

AUNT OLLIE'S HOME AWAY FROM HOME

By Pat Cook

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Aunt Ollie has been having a hard time keeping her hotel open. First it was an inn, then a country club and then a lodge. "And that's just this year," she adds. Her brother, Earl, isn't much help either. Between his bragging and ongoing battle with Bertha, the cook, he is running a still "just to keep off the snakes." Ollie has one hope in keeping her "Home Away From Home" open with investor Judith Pomeroy. Unfortunately, before Judith can get a good look at the place, she accidentally gets a generous dose of Earl's recipe for moonshine. Add one UFO-logist, a psychology major, a fat sheriff and a conniving competitor and this hotel starts looking more and more like a nuthouse. Toad, the mule trainer, sums up the situation when he says, "This is startin' to get on my nerves," just after he gets stuck by lightning ... again!

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 M, 5 W)

OLLIE: A congenial country woman in her mid-forties.

She's the brains and heart behind the business.

EARL: A rather argumentative man in his forties who tends to stretch the truth.

BERTHA: The cook, a feisty lady in her mid-thirties.

JUDITH POMEROY: A snooty upper-class lady, in her late forties.

AGATHA TRUNDLE: Judith's mousy secretary, in her mid-thirties.

TAYLOR BURNS: An inquisitive psychology major in her mid-twenties.

COY DINKINS: Something of a retiring scientist type, around thirty.

TOAD: A very country, very crusty mule trainer.

MAX PACKER: A hillbilly con-man, in his late forties.

SHERIFF HOLLOWAY: An overweight law officer.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES:

ACT I

Scene 1: Summer, the present, at Aunt Ollie's.

Scene 2: Two hours later.

ACT II

Scene 1: Two hours later.

See end of playbook for a complete list of **PROPS** and **SOUND EFFECTS**.

SETTING

The setting for this farce is the very rural, very out-of-the-way lodge somewhere in the deep South. The main room of "Aunt Ollie's" is a large, somewhat cluttered area. A large, well-used couch resides DSR near a large fireplace flanked by two windows on the SR wall. Near the couch is a large, wing back chair and coffee table, both as rustic as the sofa. A rather beaten "antique" dining table with six semi-matching chairs sits USL. There is a large desk near the SL wall on which rests a telephone. The rest of the room is rounded out with various other incidental chairs, end tables, plants, etc.

There are three practical doors to the floorplan. The first is the front door, SR. The second is on the UPS wall, which leads to the kitchen. The third door on the SL wall leads to the game room. A staircase, which leads up to the rooms, is located on the UPS wall.

The decor of the room is rather "woody" with stuffed animal heads and fish hanging on the walls amid pictures of fishermen and campers.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: OLLIE and EARL are standing over the couch, not moving. Ollie is holding a flyswatter and is just about to pounce. They both watch something intently. Finally, Aunt Ollie speaks.)

OLLIE: Why do they always go for the couch?

EARL: WeeeIII, that's the way it is with that type a'bug. Mainly the females. Especially when they's expectin'.

(OLLIE looks hard at EARL.)

OLLIE: You saw as much of this bug as I did, which was somewhere between briefly and not at all.

EARL: I saw the little darling, I did. Blue and green it was, almost fluorescent with a sort of biplane arrangement of wings, not so much top and bottom but with what you'd call stacked, you know, like the washer-dryer, and antennae purt' near an inch from the base of it's head stretching out ... *(OLLIE swats EARL.)* Hey! What'd you do THAT for?

OLLIE: Well, it just come to me I was enjoying the bug more'n I was you.

EARL: *(Moves to the front door.)* Hey, you want to let the little chigger run free and take your revenge out on me, you go right ahead.

OLLIE: Thank you, Earl, that's awful nice of you. Where's the shotgun?

EARL: Get that couch infested, fine, this is your establishment. I'm just yore brother. Ain't no skin off my nose.

OLLIE: *(Moves to the desk.)* Then I didn't hit you hard enough.

(SHE picks up the receiver and dials the phone. She still holds the flyswatter.)

EARL: But I'm telling you, you let one of them go and they'll multiply like cats at a widow's house. We'll be overrun with 'em before the week's out, you mark my words.

OLLIE: You didn't see it, you don't know what it was and you don't know what you're talking about. *(SHE taps her foot, waiting.)*

EARL: *(After a slight pause.)* Locustus Carnivorosis. *(OLLIE glares at HIM.)* Real bloodsucker, too. I once saw one of 'em take hold of a Maple tree and, inside of an hour, the sap was gone.

OLLIE: I wish I had its luck. One ever gets hold of you, there won't be nothing left but your shoes. What is going on down at the station? *(Finally, SHE gets an answer.)* Oh, hey, Myrtle? This is Ollie.

EARL: *(Moves over to the couch.)* Seems like there was something I was supposed to do this morning? *(HE checks the couch and sits, stretching out.)*

OLLIE: Did the ten-fifteen get in on time? Good. Well, did you see our station wagon down there? Yeah, Bertha was supposed to pick up some folks. Oh, she did. The station wagon was there and what? *(SHE stares quickly at EARL.)* And smoke was coming out of the hood?

(Suddenly, the air is pierced by the horrific SOUND of an approaching badly-tuned automobile, which chugs loudly to a grinding halt. A HORN sounds.)

EARL: *(Snaps HIS fingers.)* Water pump! I was supposed to replace the water pump in the station wagon.

OLLIE: Well, what happened? Oh, Bertha rigged it herself? What? No, I think they just arrived. Either that or cyclone season started in already. *(SHE hangs up.)*

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