

# FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE

## By David MacGregor

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## FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE

*A Ten Minute Dramatic Duet*

**By David MacGregor**

**SYNOPSIS:** A man finishes packing up his belongings as he prepares to move out of the home he has shared with his wife for twelve years and to move into an apartment with his younger girlfriend. His wife looks on, trying to figure out how this happened. She would like him to be a monster, but she can't quite convince herself that he is. And he would like to blame her, but he can't quite convince himself that it's her fault.

### CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(1 female, 1 male)*

MARK (m)..... Husband, in his late 30s-40s.  
*(61 lines)*

DIANE (f)..... Wife, in her late 30s-40s.  
*(62 lines)*

**SETTING:** A living room.

**TIME:** Present.

### PROPS

- Moving Boxes
- Packing Tape
- Clothes
- Assorted Personal Possessions

**AT RISE:** *As MARK places various personal possessions into cardboard boxes, DIANE stands with her arms crossed, watching him.*

**DIANE:** I seem to remember you having a lot more stuff than this.

**MARK:** I did have a lot more stuff than this. Ten years ago I could hardly walk through a mall without wanting nearly everything I saw: vibrating back scratchers, glass wine stoppers, DVD collections of old TV shows...just stupid crap. Remember that cast iron wok I bought?

**DIANE:** I think you used it once.

**MARK:** Exactly. Stupid. So, it's gone. Along with all of that other garbage. Such is the beauty of garage sales and e-Bay.

**DIANE:** So what changed?

**MARK:** I guess I did. I got tired of having things, so I just got rid of them.

**DIANE:** And now you're getting rid of me too.

**MARK:** Diane...

**DIANE:** I'm sorry if that hurts your delicate sensibilities, but that's exactly what you're doing.

**MARK:** Okay, fine. That's exactly what I'm doing.

**DIANE:** You never used to agree with me that easily either.

**MARK:** Well, either I got smarter or more beaten down. Take your pick.

**DIANE:** I just can't believe I'm standing here watching you do this. I never thought my life would turn into this particular cliché. Fall in love, get married, live with husband for twelve years, until he leaves me for a younger woman. It's just so...

**MARK:** Evil? Predictable? Asinine? Help me out here.

**DIANE:** Mark, she's fifteen years younger than you.

**MARK:** I'm aware of that. And that makes it...?

**DIANE:** Pathetic, quite frankly. It makes it pathetic.

**MARK:** Okay.

**DIANE:** You don't see that?

**MARK:** No. What makes it pathetic isn't her age, although I'm sure you can find plenty of people to agree with you.

**DIANE:** Then—

**MARK:** What makes it pathetic is this. Why do I want to be with her?  
Because I miss you.

**DIANE:** That makes no sense.

**MARK:** It makes perfect sense. I miss you. What do I see in Carly?  
Someone who reminds me of you. Why do I want that? Because  
you don't remind me of you any more.

**DIANE:** What is that supposed to mean?

**MARK:** It means I miss you wearing a certain necklace just because  
you know I like it. I miss you saving half a candy bar for me. Miss  
you resting your head on my shoulder on long car rides, where our  
only goal was to see if we could get lost so we'd have to find a motel  
room somewhere.

**DIANE:** That's what this is about?

**MARK:** Absolutely that's what this is about.

**DIANE:** That's puppy love stuff.

**MARK:** Which is why people love puppies, I suppose.

**DIANE:** So what you're saying is, over the years, I matured a little and  
you didn't.

**MARK:** Or, I kept my sense of romance and adventure and you didn't.  
Again, take your pick.

**DIANE:** God forbid you should never spend another night in a Red  
Roof Inn in the middle of nowhere.

**MARK:** I happen to like Red Roof Inns in the middle of nowhere. And  
you know what I like even more? What happens inside the rooms  
in a Red Roof Inn in the middle of nowhere!

**DIANE:** This isn't just about you and what you like. Have you thought  
about what our families will think? Our friends?

**MARK:** Sure.

**DIANE:** And apparently you don't care.

**MARK:** If they want to disapprove, if they don't want to talk to me, then  
they won't. It's their call.

**DIANE:** They won't! They're going to think you're making a fool of  
yourself!

**MARK:** Because she's younger than me.

**DIANE:** Fifteen years younger than you! When you were in college  
she was in pre-school!

**MARK:** That seems to be a real sticking point for you. Don't fall in love with someone younger than you. How is that any different than saying a white person can't fall in love with a black person? Or a Jew can't fall in love with a Muslim? Or two men can't fall in love? Or two women?

**DIANE:** You can't compare—

**MARK:** People are always ready to disapprove of any relationship that falls outside of their comfort zone. But love is love. It doesn't know what gender you are, what race or religion you are, and it sure as hell doesn't know what age you are.

**DIANE:** You're missing the point.

**MARK:** As usual. Why don't you enlighten me?

**DIANE:** You want to know why her age pisses me off? Because I can't compete with that. I can't. My breasts, my skin, my libido, they can't compete with hers. She is out of my league. And do you know how that makes me feel? Helpless. Like a turtle flipped on its back waiting to bake to death under a hot sun. I mean, you knew I was going to age, right? That tends to happen to people.

**MARK:** I think you're the one missing the point.

**DIANE:** Oh, come on! She's beautiful! A little unconventional looking, but she's beautiful. She's young and fresh and—

**MARK:** —likes being in the same room with me and likes talking to me and likes doing things with me. She's clearly Satan incarnate.

**DIANE:** You're deluding yourself. You are. Honestly, I feel like I'm talking to a chimpanzee who found a flashlight. Ooh, shiny! Me likee!

**MARK:** Thanks. I'm a chimp and Carly's a flashlight.

**DIANE:** Mark—

**MARK:** You know, I don't think it's absolutely necessary for me to be the bad person here, but if it's that important to you, sign me up.

**DIANE:** I'm not saying that you're a bad person! I'm saying...

**MARK:** What?

**DIANE:** Relationships evolve. They should evolve. What you have with someone when you fall in love is not what you're going to have twelve years later.

**MARK:** So when you say evolve, what is that a euphemism for? Wither? Rot? Spoil?

**DIANE:** Once you get past the lust and the excitement, what keeps people together? It's a sense of friendship. Of connection. Of comfort. It's having a responsibility towards the other person.

**MARK:** I do have a sense of responsibility.

**DIANE:** Really? Which one of those boxes did you pack it away in?

**MARK:** There needs to be more than that. More than just a feeling of obligation in a relationship. Is that what you want? Someone you feel obliged to be with?

**DIANE:** I want...well, it doesn't matter what I want. But I would like to understand what you're doing. At a superficial level, sure, I get it. You want the newer, flashier model. But at any level deeper than that, I don't. And maybe there is no deeper level. Maybe it's purely superficial and I'm an idiot for thinking there's anything more to it.

**MARK:** Why am I doing this? It's like my Dad used to say, "You're a long time dead." The first time I heard him say that, I must have been sixteen or seventeen, and I thought it was pretty funny. It was a joke. But the older I get, the less of a joke it becomes.

**DIANE:** So, the moral of the story is, shack up with hot babes while you can?

**MARK:** Forget it. I can't try and explain something you don't want explained.

**DIANE:** You know, maybe I should have expected this. Maybe every woman should expect this. Look at Bill Clinton or John F. Kennedy or—

**MARK:** —Tiger Woods or Martin Luther King or just about any king who wasn't gay. There you go. You're right. You should have expected it. It's what men do, what men have done, what men will always do. So why is it such a big deal?

**DIANE:** Actually, that's a good point. If a piece of cheese turns into a moldy piece of crap after a few months you don't get mad at it. That's what cheese does. That's cheese being cheese. It's the same with men.

**MARK:** I'm glad I could make you feel better.

**DIANE:** I don't feel better. I feel sick. We spent years building a life together and now what? You're in a one-bedroom apartment with her and I'm in this house by myself? You two should move in here. I'm the one who should get the apartment.

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