

BAG OF TRICKS

(Lucille and Alice stop by to visit their friend Marcia.)

LUCILLE

I hope Marcia has something good to eat today. Last time we were here she served Ritz crackers and cheese and..... (Alice notices Marcia has opened door and pokes Lucille)
OW! Marcia, so nice to see you. What a lovely dress.

MARCIA

Come on in. *(sarcastically)* And I baked some brownies for today.

(All three walk into the living room and sit around a table)

ALICE

I was sorry to hear about your back injury. I hope it's better. How have you been feeling?

MARCIA

The doctor gave me some wonderful medicine for pain and it has really worked.

LUCILLE

I really need a cup of tea but I sure could use something a lot stronger. My knee has been driving me crazy. I can't sleep at night and it takes all morning to stop limping.

MARCIA

Tea I have. And you came to the right person for something stronger. I have a closet full of magic potions. Let me go get a few. Maybe there's something there that will make that pain go away.

(Marcia leaves the room)

ALICE

Lucille, don't you take any of her pills. That could be dangerous.

(Lucille gives Alice a "look" just as Marcia comes in carrying a tray with a teapot, cups, a plate of brownies and a huge bag of medicine bottles.)

MARCIA

Here we are. *(Dumps pills out onto the table)* I'll bet we can find something here to take care of that pain.

ALICE

Did you rob a pharmacy?

MARCIA

I keep all the leftover medicines I have ever taken. You never know when you might need something and I don't want to bother the doctor every time I have a pain. Besides prescriptions today cost too much to just throw out.

LUCILLE

That is quite a selection. *(Picks up a few bottles and looks them over.)* I'll bet there's something here to take care of my pain.

ALICE

(Picks up one of the bottles and looks at the label) This one has an expiration date of October.

MARCIA

So?

ALICE

October – 2002!

MARCIA

Oh, don't pay any attention to that. It still does the job. Why just the other day my shoulder was bothering me and I took one of these. Just like magic, the pain was gone.

LUCILLE

You can give me one of those right now.

ALICE

(Picks up some of the pill bottles) This pill is for thyroid, this one for blood pressure, these three all say "for pain".

(Picks up a few more) These prescriptions are all different, and the instructions are all different. And there's even one here with someone else's name on it. It's a wonder you haven't killed yourself taking these.

MARCIA

(Takes prescription from Alice) Oh, that belonged to my friend Marie. She lent it to me last year. She died a few months ago so I decided to keep it. Never know when I might need it again. Alice, you worry too much. Maybe you need one of my magic pills. *(Holds up another prescription bottle)* Always makes me feel better.

LUCILLE

Marcia, don't pay any attention to her. Just look at all of these. I'm sure something here will work for me.

ALICE

Yes and maybe you'll end up like Marie.

MARCIA

No need to worry. If you're concerned you can start with a smaller dose. You can cut the pill in half. I do that with my kitchen knife.

LUCILLE

How do you know you're getting the same dose every time?

MARCIA

Not a problem. If today's half a pill is smaller, and tomorrow's is bigger, it all evens out in the end.

ALICE

I don't believe what I'm hearing. I need some more tea.

LUCILLE

Now you don't do that with those capsules, do you?

MARCIA

Sure, just pull the two pieces apart and scoop the innards into each half. Works just fine.

ALICE

I think I need something stronger than tea. Lucille, don't listen to her. Marcia, don't you know this is dangerous? I think you should call your doctor before taking any of these. And the same goes for you Lucille.

LUCILLE

Well, I don't know. The pain will probably get better. Besides, when you get old, everything starts to hurt.

ALICE

Age has nothing to do with pain. And if you have pain, you don't have to live with it.

MARCIA

You're right. So take one of these now and I guarantee you'll feel better real soon. I take them all the time and I feel great.

LUCILLE

But I'm afraid of pain killers. I don't want to become a drug addict.

ALICE

Taking pain medicine doesn't lead to addiction... (*Gives Marcia a stern look.*) ...as long as you're receiving medical care along with the medicine and following the doctor's orders. As for you Marcia, I'm beginning to wonder!

MARCIA

OK, if it will make you feel better I'll pay more attention to what I take. But I will still cut them in half, especially when they cost a lot of money.

ALICE

For heaven's sake Marcia. That's just plain crazy. I'm surprised you're still here. Lot's of pills are time release. If you cut one of those in half, how does it know what time it should release?

MARCIA

I don't know what else to do. If I go to the doctor with every ache and pain, he'll think I'm a pain. So far these (*points to pills on table*) have worked.

ALICE

Let me suggest something. Why don't you make an appointment with your doctor and I'll go with you. We can take all these pills with us and get his opinion on what is safe for you take. I know he'll understand and will find a way to help. And why we're on the subject Lucille, you get on the phone right now and make an appointment for yourself. No more raiding Dr. Marcia's magic assortment of pain remedies. I care about the two of you too much. Now pass me a brownie.