

at home alone rearranging my sweaters according to cashmere content. And I may have stumbled on to a masterful way to heal body and spirit — yoga! (*Gets into it, indicates her costume.*) Obviously I have prepared and I am ready for the adventure. *This will be wonderful!* (*Her pin spotlight goes to black as another pin spotlight comes up downstage left on the lobby/ juice bar in a yoga studio — bistro table, three chairs. "Spa"/new-age music plays softly in the background. Dot Haigler, daffy and endearing, in glasses, colorful exercise pants and top, is seated in a chair, fans herself vigorously. Randa, gasping, exhausted, joins her from stage right.*) That was the most horrible thing I've ever been through! Forcing otherwise sane women to squat and contort themselves in a small room, then cranking the heat to a hundred fifty degrees?! *Really?!* What homicidal maniac thought *that* up?! (*To Dot.*) Excuse me, mind if I collapse in this chair?

DOT. Please do! You certainly lasted longer than I did. I thought "hot yoga" meant it was fun and hip. Who knew we signed up for Lucifer's little sweatshop?

RANDA. (*Laughs.*) I guess what counts is that we tried.

DOT. I agree. Honestly, I'm at the age where all I usually exercise is *caution*. (*Extends her hand.*) I'm Dot.

RANDA. I'm Randa. Good to know at least *two* of us were smart enough to get out of there alive. (*They shake as Marlafaye Mosley, earthy, boisterous, good ol' Texas gal, in baggy sweatpants, sweatshirt with sleeves cut out, staggers in stage left, near collapse, drags a gym bag behind her.*)

MARLAFAYE. The pearly gates — they're openin' up! (*Croaks.*) Must ... have ... water! (*The others are alarmed. She sinks to her knees at the table.*)

RANDA. Oh! Okay, I'll go get — (*Marlafaye grabs Randa's bottle, chugs all of it, slams it back on the table.*) Or ... just ... help yourself to mine.

MARLAFAYE. Thank god I didn't slather on the baby oil this morning. I would've come out of that hellhole chicken fried. (*Indicates Dot's fan.*) Hey, could I get a little bit of that action?

DOT. Sure. At least this way I'll burn a *few* calories. (*Fans Marlafaye, who basks in the breeze.*) So, I take it you don't work out that much, either?

MARLAFAYE. Please. If it weren't for mood swings, I'd get no exercise at all. But that's okay, 'cause it just wouldn't be fair to the women of Savannah if I was *this* gorgeous, smart, funny, *and* thin. It's a public service, really.

DOT. How very thoughtful. (*Fans.*) Gee, what a waste of a perfectly good morning. I drove in all the way from Tybee Island to get here.

RANDA. That's the only positive part for me. I just had to walk from the end of the block. Mine's the house with the jasmine-covered verandah.

MARLAFAYE. Nice digs. (*Wipes her forehead.*) Boy howdy! I'm sweatin' like a hooker at altar call. I swear I've got a towel in here somewhere. (*Plops gym bag on table, rummages in it.*) By the way, I'm Marlafaye.

RANDA. I'm Randa. Randa Covington.

DOT. Dot Haigler. I was named for my great-aunt Rebecca. (*Off their looks.*) Oh, she had a huge mole in the middle of her forehead. We always called her Aunt Dot. (*Marlafaye pulls out various items from the bag, including a two-foot terrycloth rag doll. Dot picks it up.*) Oh, my. And who's *this* little fellow?

MARLAFAYE. (*Glances up, slightly embarrassed, takes it back.*) Don't think I always traipse around with a big ol' doll. I've been *encouraged* to keep it handy. It's what they call a mobile therapy device.

DOT. Oh. That's what my late husband used to call his whiskey flask.

MARLAFAYE. My ex's divorce lawyer forced me to take anger management classes. Turns out Mr. Happy Pants failed to see the humor in me cuttin' the crotch out of every one of his business suits.

RANDA. Going out on a limb here, I take it your husband cheated on you?

MARLAFAYE. (*Anger slowly rises.*) Yeah. With a twenty-three-year-old dental hygienist. Now every time I brush my teeth, I think of them sneakin' around, livin' the high life, while I was bustin' my hump on the job and wonderin' what was wrong with my marriage! (*Loses it, beats the doll against the table. Louder.*) I should've known Waylon was tomcattin' when he started flossin' between meals! That's just not normal! (*Stops. Pants. Smiles, relaxed.*) Whew! (*Offers it to Dot.*) Got any man problems you'd like to get over?

DOT. Me? (*Takes it.*) Oh, no. Ross and I had a wonderful marriage. He passed away suddenly eight months ago just after we moved here. We always planned for a golden retirement, to live near the water, make new friends. But Ross kept putting it off. We did finally get here, but — (*Determinedly upbeat.*) No. I don't have any man problems, but thanks. (*Puts the doll on the table.*)

MARLAFAYE. How about you, Randa? Want to take a shot? It's the least I can do to thank you for the water. (*Unseen by them, Dot studies the doll with increasing interest, picks it up, starts to shake and choke it. Her vigor builds.*)

RANDA. Oh, no. Men haven't been in the picture for years. I'm a dyed-in-the-wool career gal, devoted my whole life to it. No, I don't have a — *(They notice Dot.)*

DOT. *(Fiery.)* I told you we were waiting too long! You wasted the best years of our lives. Now you've left me all alone in a strange city with a drawer full of sexy underwear that's absolutely useless to me! A woman has needs! *(Slaps the doll repeatedly.)*

MARLAFAYE. *(Gently pulls doll away.)* Whoa. Kinda early in the day for that much information, Dottie. You okay?

DOT. *(Refreshed.)* You know, you're right. That little doll's a real winner. Oh, come on, Randa. Take a crack at it. Feels great!

RANDA. Oh, no, I haven't been involved in a relationship for years. I'm sure there's no *therapy device* for my particular situation. It's career-related. You see, I was recently the victim of a vicious corporate downsizing.

MARLAFAYE. I am so sorry. How many employees did they fire?

RANDA. *(Confident façade shatters. Sobs.)* One! *(Wails.)* They gave my job to a thirty-year-old twit. He wears bow ties! *(Grabs doll, screams as she smashes its head repeatedly against the table.)*

MARLAFAYE. Hey, now! Easy, girl! That doll's got to last me another couple months. *(Marlafaye pulls the doll away.)*

RANDA. *(Calms down.)* I ... don't know where that came from, but I feel much better now. I'm fine. *(Beat. Grabs the doll, gives it another whack, Marlafaye snatches it from her.)* Okay, now I'm fine.

MARLAFAYE. Wow! We may have bombed out of hot yoga but we sure let off some steam here today, right, girls? *(Shoves the doll into her bag.)*

DOT. I say good for us! And I don't think we bombed out here at all. Maybe we were meant to meet each other.

RANDA. Yes, maybe. It's ironic because I always avoid places like this. I'm starting to think the only way I'll ever expand my social horizon is to hire a life coach or find a miracle worker.

MARLAFAYE. Well, you won't catch *me* here again. I'm done with this exercise bull. I only joined this stupid class because my ex-husband bragged about how he and his trophy wife go to the gym and how he's lost fifty pounds since our divorce. He asked if I know what his ideal weight is and I said, "Sure. Four pounds *includin'* the urn." *(They laugh. She checks her watch.)* Gotta go. It was great to meet y'all.

RANDA. Yes, it *really* was. Another fifteen minutes and I would've invited you both over for drinks at my place. *(Laughs.)*