



Blood and Bone – Menopause, the Time of Your Life

by Pauline Hosking

EXTRACT

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Cast

The play can be performed by four actors playing multiple roles

ELAINE, Schoolgirl 1, various

LIZ, Yobbo 2, Young Mother, Barrel Girl, Mirror

DORA, Adolescent girl, Schoolgirl 2, various

NANCY, Yobbo 1, Professor, Stepmother

Staging

The play was created to be toured and performed in non-traditional venues using minimal props and costumes. No lighting or scenery is required. In previous productions all props and costumes were created out of household items and painted red.

Scene One	The Garden
Scene Two	Two Yobbos
Scene Three	Fear and Loss
Scene Four	In the Sauna – Physical Symptoms
Scene Five	Solo – Psychological Symptoms
Scene Six	Solo – Letter to a Mother
Scene Seven	Solo – Respect
Scene Eight	Menopause Misinformation
Scene Nine	Who is There to Guide Me?
Scene Ten	Fractured Fairytale
Scene Eleven	The Garden

BLOOD AND BONE

Menopause – the Time of your Life

SCENE ONE

THE GARDEN

Enter ELAINE doing some gardening. She works around the audience who are sitting in the garden.

ELAINE Going to be an early autumn. Leaves are starting to fall. I don't mind leaves, they make good mulch, it's having to rake them up!

She asks an audience member to hold the rake. Stretches her back.

Oww! Getting old! I started getting interested in gardening a few years back. They say it's what middle aged women do. Instead of looking after kids you look after plants. I like it out here....being close to nature. You don't have to think too much. It's peaceful.

Vibrant Spanish music. Enter DORA dressed as a Spanish dancer. She does a few noisy, showy steps.

What's that racket?

DORA: Ole! *[speaking with a strong fake Spanish accent]*

ELAINE raises eyebrows to the audience.

I am dancing the flamenco. Don't try to stop me. You can do it too! Raise your arms—

ELAINE: What is this, Dora?

DORA: Your feet, down with the heels---

ELAINE: You burst in here---

DORA: The head is proud----

ELAINE: I'm not interested! Go away.

- DORA: Is no flamenco?
- ELAINE: No.
- DORA: Okay, then is Irish dancing. This with the arms down by the sides and the little feet tappy tappy tappy---
- ELAINE: I'm not dancing at all.
- DORA: Whassamatter, Elaine?
- ELAINE: I'm 55 years old.
- DORA: So? They dance the flamenco in Spain when they're fifty – when they're sixty and seventy. When they have no teeth and their face is a mass of wrinkles. Women, I'm talking about, women. Nobody says the flamenco, dance of passion and seduction, is for the young. Nobody says 'you're too old. This is not appropriate'! Listen to the beat in your blood...and dance.
- ELAINE: I've been dancing to someone else's tune all my life – parents, husband, kids, grandkids. My life's changing. I need some time to myself.
- DORA: Yes, but how long? A month – a year? You going to stay in this garden for the rest of your life? Thassa long time. Thirty or forty years maybe.
- ELAINE: I don't feel...strong.
- DORA: There was once a flamenco contest in Jarez. The heats were won by an eighty-year old woma, even though she was competing against beautiful young girls with waists like flowing water. The old one stepped forward, raised her arms, threw back her head and stamped. It was what was inside her – not what was on the outside – that won her the prize.
- ELAINE: It's not that simple.
- DORA: For me, it is. No one is going to stop me dancing. Aye, Carambal
- She dances again, encouraging the audience to clap to the beat.*
- Ole! You see!
- ELAINE: No, no. Not yet. I'm not ready.
- Exit ELAINE and DORA*