

*Daphne and her Mother are in mid-conversation about getting help around the house.*

DAPHNE

Mother, really. We talked about this. You can't be on your own. It's not safe.

MOTHER

I've told you. I'm not moving. I'm staying on my own. Not going to that place with all those doddering fools. I like being by myself. I'm not going to dinner when somebody tells me to. I'm not going to take part in those stupid games. Watch people sitting around drooling. You saw them. When you made me go there.

DAPHNE

Mother, it was an assisted living place and no one was drooling.

MOTHER

I saw someone with a wet face.

DAPHNE

You need help with every day things. They provide meals. Nursing assistants. You have buzzers you can ring if you fall down.

MOTHER

I fell down once.

DAPHNE

You wouldn't have to think about cooking.

MOTHER

I don't cook anymore.

DAPHNE

Because you nearly burned the condo down.

MOTHER

But I didn't, did I? I found the fire extinguisher and put it out. Safe. No harm done.

DAPHNE

Every apartment in the building was evacuated. All the smoke detectors went off. There was smoke damage.

MOTHER

Four units. Big deal. Those people are lying. They smoke like chimneys. They just want free money. I'm not paying.

DAPHNE

Please, Mother.

MOTHER

Don't *please Mother* me. I am not moving.

DAPHNE

I've finally realized that.

MOTHER

And, I don't want people in my house. One of those big bossy women who can lift me up over their heads. I don't want to be told what to do. If I want to walk around naked, I will. If I want ice cream for a meal, that's what I'll eat. I remember when Dad asked for ketchup for his hotdog and you said no. "Too much sugar. You're not supposed to eat sugar." He was eighty-nine years old and in bad health. What difference did it make if he had ketchup on his hotdog? It's what he liked. But you know everything. With all your medical advice. Picked up on medical shows. We used to call you Dr. Daphne behind your back. Didn't know that, did you?

DAPHNE

I still have power of attorney from when you were in the hospital last year. I'll use it if I have to.

MOTHER

I'm calling David in the morning. Tell him what's been going on, and ask to sign a new power of attorney. You read about situations like this...about how children or caretakers take over people's lives. This is my life. You think you know what's best for me, but you're wrong. And I will damn well live the way I want to.

DAPHNE

Mother, you're not taking care of yourself. Look at the way you're dressed.

MOTHER

I dress for myself. Not for you or anyone.

DAPHNE

You're dirty. You're clothes are dirty. The kitchen is a mess. There are things stacked everywhere.